

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DRAMA TECHNIQUES ON FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM ANXIETY REDUCTION OF THAI EFL STUDENTS

ประสิทธิผลของเทคนิคการละครที่มีต่อการลดความกังวล
ในการใช้ภาษาต่างประเทศในชั้นเรียนของผู้เรียนที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษ
ในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศ

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Abstract

The study aims to explore the types of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) that Thai EFL students have; to study the effect of drama techniques on the levels of FLCA of Thai EFL students; to examine drama activities that affect English language learning of Thai EFL students with FLCA; and to improve drama techniques for reducing FLCA. The participants were 44 non-English majored university students selected via non-random sampling method. The research instruments were eight drama technique-based lesson plans, FLCA questionnaire and guided questions for focus group discussion. The quantitative data were analyzed by mean, standard deviation, and t-test while the qualitative data were analyzed by content analysis technique.

The results of the study indicated that, before the experiment, all 44 participants had overall FLCA at the moderate level. When classifying according to types of FLCA, the participants had Communication Apprehension to a high degree, but Fear of Negative Evaluation and Test Anxiety to a moderate degree. After learning through drama techniques,

the students' FLCA reduced significantly at the .05 level. From the analysis of qualitative data, prepared-improvised drama and drama games were indicated as the most effective drama activities on reducing FLCA. In addition, the participants suggested that the teachers have a friendly personality, have a sense of humor, use non-threatening words, pay careful attention to their performance, and find ways to engage the students not participating in group activity.

Keywords Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety, Drama Techniques, Thai EFL Students

บทคัดย่อ

การศึกษาค้นคว้าครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อ 1) สำรวจประเภทของความกังวลในการใช้ภาษาต่างประเทศในชั้นเรียนของผู้เรียนไทยในระดับมหาวิทยาลัยที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศ 2) ศึกษาผลของเทคนิคการละครที่มีต่อระดับของความกังวลในการใช้ภาษาต่างประเทศในชั้นเรียนของผู้เรียนไทยที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศ 3) ตรวจสอบกิจกรรมละครที่มีผลกระทบต่อการเรียนรู้ภาษาอังกฤษสำหรับผู้เรียนไทยที่มีความกังวลในการใช้ภาษาต่างประเทศในชั้นเรียน และ 4) พัฒนาเทคนิคการละครเพื่อลดความกังวลในการใช้ภาษาต่างประเทศในชั้นเรียน กลุ่มตัวอย่างที่ใช้ในการทดลอง คือผู้เรียนที่ไม่ได้เรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นวิชาเอกจำนวน 44 คนโดยเลือกกลุ่มตัวอย่างแบบไม่ใช้ความน่าจะเป็น เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในการทดลองและเก็บรวบรวมข้อมูลคือ แผนการจัดการเรียนรู้ที่ใช้เทคนิคการละครเป็นฐานจำนวน 8 แผน แบบสอบถามความกังวลในการใช้ภาษาต่างประเทศในชั้นเรียน และแนวคำถามสำหรับการสนทนากลุ่ม วิเคราะห์ข้อมูลเชิงปริมาณโดยใช้ค่าเฉลี่ย ส่วนเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐาน และ สถิติการทดสอบ t ส่วนการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลเชิงคุณภาพใช้วิธีการวิเคราะห์เนื้อหา

ผลการศึกษาพบว่า ก่อนการทดลอง ผู้เข้าร่วมทั้ง 44 คน มีความกังวลในการใช้ภาษาต่างประเทศในชั้นเรียนโดยภาพรวม อยู่ในระดับปานกลาง เมื่อแบ่งความกังวลออกเป็นประเภทต่างๆ พบว่า ผู้เข้าร่วมมีความกังวลในการสื่อสารในระดับสูง แต่มีความกลัวในการได้รับการประเมินทางลบและความกังวลในการสอบในระดับปานกลาง ภายหลังจากเรียนรู้ด้วยเทคนิคการละคร พบว่าความกังวลในการใช้ภาษาต่างประเทศในชั้นเรียนของผู้เรียนลดลงอย่างมีนัยสำคัญที่ระดับ .05 จากการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลเชิงคุณภาพ พบว่า กิจกรรมการแสดงสดโดยให้มีการเตรียมพร้อม และกิจกรรมเกมการแสดงได้รับการระบุให้เป็นกิจกรรมที่มีประสิทธิภาพสูงสุดในการลดความกังวลในการใช้ภาษาต่างประเทศ รวมทั้งผู้เข้าร่วมยังแนะนำให้ครูมีบุคลิกที่เป็นมิตร มีอารมณ์ขัน ไม่ใช้คำพูดที่คุกคามความตั้งใจของการแสดงของผู้เรียนและหาวิธีสร้างการมีส่วนร่วมของผู้เรียนที่ไม่มีส่วนร่วมกับกิจกรรมกลุ่ม

คำสำคัญ ความกังวลในการใช้ภาษาต่างประเทศในชั้นเรียน, เทคนิคการละคร, นักเรียนไทยที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศ

Background

Wittgenstein (1922) - an Austrian philosopher of great renown - once wrote “The limits of my language mean the limits of my world”. For the term ‘language’, he would refer to English language which is now considered the world’s most frequently used for international communication. That means English language is the powerful means to help people of different languages understand one another. It helps guarantee learner self-reliability in educational information retrieval, academic further study, and future career (Wiryachitra. 2004). In Thailand, English is taught in educational institutes as a foreign language and Thai Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 (A.D. 2008) requires school students to learn four strands of English language learning which are 1) language for communication 2) language and culture 3) language and its relationship with other learning areas and 4) language and its relationship with community and the world (Ministry of Education. 2001).

School students learn these four learning strands as their basic foundation applied into their curriculum. University students also are required to extend their English language learning by enrolling at least 6 credits or three compulsory English language courses to ensure that they are able to use English as a tool to communicate in their daily lives and to understand the English materials provided in their majored courses while studying in the universities.

Despite the ten years in school system and at least six credits in university, it is claimed that Thai students, especially at the university level, had difficulties in communicating in English. In Khaosim’s study (2004), it was found that most fourth-year students from three Rajabhat universities in the northeastern part of Thailand demonstrate ‘low’ and ‘very low’ levels in using English to communicate. Although Thai EFL students had spent more than ten years learning English, they took up English lessons for examinations only (*Thai Children and English*. 2005: 10; *Thai Children are Still not Competent in English Because of Reciting in Stead of Understanding*. 2008: 10; *Chula Instructors Stated the Problems of Teaching English – not Being Confident and Thai Children Lack of Practice*. 2004: 27). Wiryachitra (2004) stated that Thai students face difficulties in learning English because they are passive learners and too shy to use the language to communicate in class. Such difficulties can be seen as the internal or affective challenges of EFL learners.

Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) is seen as one of the factors among the many affective variables such as motivation and self-confidence that has debilitating affect to language learners (Krashen. 1982). Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety can be defined as “worry and negative emotional reaction aroused when learning or using a second language” (Young. 1999). According

to Horwitz; Horwitz; & Cope (1986), there are three kinds of FLCA: Communication Apprehension (being afraid of using a foreign language to communicate with another person), Fear of Negative Evaluation (fear of being criticized both verbally and non-verbally), and Test Anxiety (the worry about the failure or poor performance in both formal and informal tests). On the other hand, FLCA can be divided into two types: facilitating anxiety and debilitating anxiety. Both types of FLCA provide contradictory effects on foreign language learning; however, researchers have focused more on studying the debilitating anxiety (Piniel. 2006). This is because the debilitating anxiety causes negative effects such as the ignorance or even the avoidance of students to participate in classroom activities (Horwitz, Horwitz; & Cope. 1986) and the lack of ability to perform (Wörde. 2003). The debilitating anxiety also brings other relevant trouble with self-esteem, self-confidence, motivation, and risk-taking ability (Wörde. 2003; citing Crookall; & Oxford).

It can be seen that FLCA has become one of the barriers of language acquisition for students and university students seem to have the most challenging situation. That is because while school students are required to take up English lessons every semester, undergraduate students are required to enroll only at least six credits of compulsory English language courses out of approximately 150 credits. Together with the nature of Thai EFL students who are passive and too shy to participate in English language classroom (Wiriyachitra. 2004), some students with FLCA will probably stop enrolling other English language courses as soon as their requirement is met, even postponing the enrollment of English language courses until the last minute (Horwitz; Horwitz; & Cope. 1986). In the United States of America, the same challenging situation of the college students stopping the enrollment of foreign language courses such as Spanish, French, or German when the requirement is met has become a problem as well (Young. 1999).

Many studies have been exploring strategies to decrease the level of FLCA after this realization. Wörde (2003) interviewed a group of students on factors that could decrease their FLCA. One of the factors affecting the learners' anxiety was pedagogical practices and classroom environment. The examples given were anxiety-reducing activities such as skits, plays, and games, including relaxed atmosphere, and instructional material relevant to the learners' lives. According to Scrivener (2005) skits and plays are included as one of six drama activities which are role-play, simulation, drama games, guided improvisation, acting play script, and prepared improvised drama. Drama techniques could be defined as situational and instructional settings that allow learners to be themselves or someone else using their emotional content to understand and practice the language meaningfully (Holden. 1981; Maley; & Duff. 2005). However, the focus is to complete the task given, not to present to the class unless the learners are willing to (Gaudart. 1990). Moreover, drama

techniques not only focus on emotional content for examples, student's personality, past experience, and imagination as medium to provide language learning context but also create a relaxed and informal classroom with fun activities encouraging the students to freely produce the language (Maley; & Duff. 2005; Helderbrand. 2003). Through this, affective variables related to language learning such as student's self-esteem, risk taking ability and motivation are developed (Maley; & Duff. 2005). According to the above suggestions for creating a low-anxiety classroom, together with the definition of drama techniques, it can be seen that drama techniques should be a solution for reducing EFL students with FLCA.

According to the above significance of FLCA and the advantages of drama techniques, the researcher was interested in studying the use of drama techniques in order to reduce FLCA of Thai EFL students.

Objectives and Significance of the Study

According to the above background, the purposes of this study were to explore the types of FLCA that Thai EFL students have; to study the effect of drama techniques on the levels of FLCA of Thai EFL students; to examine drama activities that affect Thai EFL students' FLCA in English language learning; and to improve drama techniques for reducing FLCA.

The results of the present study would provide a better context on the levels and types of FLCA among Thai EFL students including showing whether drama techniques can reduce FLCA of Thai EFL students. EFL teachers and researchers can apply the obtained findings from the study as a guideline for designing their activities within their classes and for further study.

Scope of the Study

The population of the study was non-English majored EFL Chulalongkorn university students. The sample of the study was 44 students of the Department of Secondary Education majoring in science and social sciences, and the students of the Department of Primary Education majoring in science in the second semester of academic year 2010 selected by the non-random sampling methods. The students were equally allocated in the control group and the experiment group; 22 in each group. Eight English classes (two hours per class) for each group were organized. The total hours for the experiment were 16 hours for both the control and the treatment groups. The

variables of the study included drama techniques as an independent variable and the students' FLCA as a dependent variable.

Research Design

The design of this study was a quasi-experimental study with a randomized control group pretest-posttest design comprising of two groups, treatment and control groups.

Treatment Group	R	O	X1	O
Control Group	R	O	X2	O

Figure 1. The Randomized Control Group Pretest-Posttest Design

According to Figure 1 above, R refers to the random assignment of students to treatment and control groups while O refers to the test used before and after the treatment. X1 refers to the lessons with drama techniques and X2 refers to the lessons with regular classroom activities.

Research Instruments

To investigate the existing types of FLCA that Thai EFL students have, the effectiveness of using drama techniques on reducing the levels of FLCA of Thai EFL, and how drama techniques can be improved for reducing FLCA, triangulation methods for data collecting were employed including lesson plans based on drama techniques, the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety questionnaire, and guided questions for focus group discussion as discussed in details as follows.

Instrument Construction

1. Lesson Plans for Control and Treatment Groups

In the present study, the compulsory English course, namely, Activating Skills in English was selected for teaching both the control and the treatment groups. Activating Skills in English is a three-credit compulsory course for the students of the Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University. This course was provided by the Department of English for Social Sciences and Humanities, Chulalongkorn University Language Institute. The course aims to develop integrated skills of English, and the content of the course is divided into five units: expressing opinions, giving advice, asking questions, paraphrasing, and summarizing. According to the duration of the experiment (eight lessons), the first four units: expressing opinions, giving advice, asking questions, and paraphrasing were included while summarizing was omitted.

1.1 Lesson Plans for the Control Group

The researcher applied the communicative-approach-based lesson plans developed by instructors of Department of English for Social Sciences and Humanities, Chulalongkorn University Language Institute.

1.2 Lesson Plans for the Treatment Group

The researchers constructed their lesson plans that integrated drama techniques as the main teaching technique as in the following steps:

1. Studying the course description and course syllabus.
2. Studying the textbooks, *Activating Skills in English* produced by Chulalongkorn University Language Institute.
3. Studying related documents and research for various dimensions of using drama techniques in English classes.
4. Constructing eight lesson plans that include six types of drama activities including role-plays, drama games, simulations, acting play scripts, guided improvisation and prepared improvised drama.
5. Having an advisor to examine the lesson plans.
6. Having three experts to check the content validity, the appropriateness of the activities and the time allocation of the first three lesson plans.
7. Revising and editing the plans according to comments and suggestion. In the study, the experts suggested drama activities be integrated into every procedure of English language teaching such as introduction, presentation, and production in order to check if drama activities are practical for every procedure or some specific procedures of English language teaching. However, it was not necessary to have the integration of drama activities at every stage of one lesson plan.

Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Questionnaire.

The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety questionnaire consists of two sections: personal data constructed by the researcher and Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) originally constructed by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope. (Horwitz; Horwitz; & Cope. 1986). Section 1 comprises personal data consisting of two parts of personal data: general data and background on the frequency of English language use. Section 2 contains 33-item five-point Likert Scale of FLCAS translated into Thai by the researchers and approved by three experts in the field of Teaching English as a Foreign Language. The scale includes 24 positively worded and nine negatively worded items adapted from Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope. (Horwitz; Horwitz; & Cope. 1986). The researchers followed the following steps of construction.

1. Having three experts in the field of Teaching English as a Foreign Language examine the translated FLCAS for the appropriateness of the

translation and the comprehension. All 33 items were examined for content validity by the experts using Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) and the value of the validity for each item was between 0.67 and 1.00.

2. Revising and editing the questionnaire according to comments and suggestions. In the study, the terms “foreign” and “language” were suggested to be more specific to the context by using “English language” instead.

3. Trying-out the revised FLCA questionnaire with the 30 students of the Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University in order to investigate the reliability of using the questionnaire in the experiment. The results were that all items were approved with the total correlation between 0.32 and 0.72.

The 33-item FLCA questionnaire is used to measure overall anxiety. Moreover, some certain items of the questionnaire can be used to measure the three types of FLCA including Communication Apprehension (Items 1, 4, 9, 14, 18, 24, 27, 29, and 32), Fear of Negative Evaluation (Items 7, 13, 15, 20, 23, 25, and 31), and Test Anxiety (Items 2, 8, 10, 19, and 21). The details are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Questionnaire Measuring Foreign Language Learning Anxiety

No.	Component	Item Number on Questionnaire	The Numbers of Items
1	Overall Anxiety	1, 2 (r), 3, 4, 5 (r), 6 (r), 7, 8 (r), 9, 10, 11 (r), 12, 13, 14 (r), 15, 16, 17, 18 (r), 19, 20, 21, 22 (r), 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28 (r), 29, 30, 31, 32 (r), 33	33
2	Communication Apprehension	1, 4, 9, 14 (r), 18 (r), 24, 27, 29, 32 (r)	9
3	Fear of Negative Evaluation	7, 13, 15, 20, 23, 25, 31	7
4	Test Anxiety	2 (r), 8 (r), 10, 19, 21	5

3. Guided Questions for Focus Group Discussion

The purposes of the guided questions were to collect data on self-reported level of FLCA, the effectiveness of drama techniques, the drama techniques that can reduce the level of FLCA

the most including the suggestions for improving drama techniques on FLCA reduction. Ten participants in the treatment group were asked to participate voluntarily in the focus group discussions which were held twice: after learning the fourth lesson and after the eighth lesson.

In terms of the procedures of conducting the focus group discussion, the students were informed in the third class of the experiment that there would be two focus group discussions in the next class and the last class. Therefore, ten volunteered participants were needed in order to gain some more information about how they felt about the classes.

In the focus group discussions, all ten volunteered participants were informally asked questions based on the guided questions for focus group discussion. Each time took approximately 30 minutes and all the discussion was audio-recorded and note-taken for transcriptions later.

Data Collection Procedure

The researcher collected the data by following these steps:

1. Having every participant of both control and treatment groups complete the FLCA questionnaire in order to investigate the level of FLCA of Thai EFL university students.
2. Teaching the sample using the lesson plans constructed. Each lesson plan will be taught two periods (60 minutes per period) for four weeks (two classes a week). Each unit took two days. Therefore, the students totally received 16 hours and four units of instruction.
3. After finishing the fourth lesson, ten volunteered participants from the treatment group participated in the first focus group discussion in order to self-report the level of their FLCA and the effectiveness of drama techniques, as well as, to suggest how drama techniques can be improved to reduce level of FLCA the most for the first four lessons.
4. After completing the eighth lesson, the ten volunteered participants from the first focus group discussion participated in the second focus group discussion to self-report the level of their FLCA and the effectiveness of drama techniques as well as to suggest how drama techniques can be improved to reduce the level of FLCA the most in the last four lessons.
5. Having every participant complete the FLCA questionnaire again in order to investigate the level of FLCA of Thai EFL university students after the experiment.

Data Analysis

The data analyzed in the study were both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data were self-ratings from FLCA questionnaire while the qualitative data were transcriptions from the focus group discussion.

Data from FLCA Questionnaire.

Descriptive statistics were used for analyzing the mean scores of overall FLCA and the three types of FLCA (Communication Apprehension, Fear of Negative Evaluation and Test Anxiety) of the control and the treatment groups altogether to explore FLCA of the participants before the experiment as well as to determine the differences among groups to find out the effect of drama techniques on reducing FLCA. The detailed interpretation of the mean scores is shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Extent of Foreign Language Learning Anxiety by the Mean of the Questionnaire Score

Mean	Extent of Foreign Language Learning Anxiety
1.00-1.49	No Anxiety or Strongly Little
1.50-2.49	Little
2.50-3.49	Moderate
3.50-4.49	High
4.50-5.00	Strongly High

To study the effect of drama techniques on reducing FLCA, the inferential statistics, independent t-test analyzed by the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used to determine the differences among the data of following groups whose results are also shown.

1. The difference between the pretest results of the control group and of the treatment group.
2. The difference between the pretest results and the posttest results of the treatment group.
3. The difference between the pretest results and the posttest results of the control group.
4. The difference between the posttest results of the control group and of the treatment group.

Data from Focus Group Discussion.

To analyze the data from the focus group discussion, the transcriptions of ten volunteered participants in the treatment group were analyzed using content analysis technique. The transcriptions were classified according to the research questions of the study.

Findings

The research findings from FLCA questionnaire can be concluded in accordance with the research questions as follows. Firstly, the pretest mean scores of overall FLCA and the three types of FLCA (Communication Apprehension, Fear of Negative Evaluation and Test Anxiety) of the control and the treatment groups altogether showed that the students possessed FLCA. The overall mean of FLCA of all 44 participants was at the moderate level (3.34). When classifying into three types of FLCA, the students had Communication Apprehension at the high level (3.50) while Fear of Negative Evaluation and Test Anxiety at the moderate levels (3.45 and 3.18 respectively).

Secondly, the analysis of self-reported data from FLCA questionnaire revealed that the levels of FLCA of the control and the treatment groups before the experiment are not significantly different at the 0.05 level (sig. = 0.97). After the experiment, FLCA of both the control and the treatment groups significantly reduced at the 0.05 level (sig. = 0.015) and at the 0.001 level (sig. = 0.000) respectively. However, when comparing the results of FLCA from the control and the treatment groups, it was found that FLCA of the students in the treatment group was significantly lower than FLCA of the students in the control group at the 0.05 level (sig. = 0.014). The above results showed drama techniques were effective on reducing the overall FLCA. However, the data from the transcriptions of the focus group discussions gained from volunteered participants in the treatment group revealed that the teacher is a factor influencing the students' FLCA.

Thirdly, for drama activities affecting the students' overall FLCA, prepared improvised drama and drama games were indicated by 40% and 30% of the volunteered participants in the treatment group respectively the most effective on reducing FLCA. The reasons from the volunteered participants were the combination of the sense of community and the freedom to produce the language in order to complete the tasks given for prepared improvised drama and the combination of the sense of competition and enjoyment for drama games. On the other hand, role-play was indicated by 90% of the volunteered participants the least effective on reducing FLCA because the students did not know if they produced the language grammatically or not while doing the activity as well as there was no teacher monitoring their performance all the time.

Finally, in the focus group discussions, the volunteers were also asked to provide suggestions in order to make drama techniques the most effective on reducing FLCA. The suggestions from all volunteered participants focused on the teacher. They suggested the teachers have a friendly appearance, sense of humor, and use non-threatening words to help the students feel safe in class, as well as, pay a careful attention to the students' performance in order to help correct their mistakes. Moreover, the teachers should also find ways to engage the students who do not participate in a group activity.

Discussion

The discussion is presented in four sections according to the research questions as follows.

Research question 1: *What types of FLCA do Thai EFL students have?*

The findings from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety questionnaire revealed that all the students possessed FLCA. This is consistent with the findings from Wörde's study (2003) in which all American participants from three different language classrooms (German, French, and Spanish) in the study had FLCA. When classifying FLCA into types, the findings are consistent with the study of Paranuwat (2011) that Thai EFL university students have Communication Apprehension at the high level while Fear of Negative Evaluation and Test Anxiety at the moderate levels. However, in Paranuwat's study (2011), other sources of FLCA which are fear of being less competent than others, beliefs about language learning, and negative attitudes toward language learning were as well explored.

Research question 2: *Do drama techniques reduce the levels of FLCA of Thai EFL students?*

The findings from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety questionnaire together with the focus group discussions revealed that drama techniques were effective on reducing FLCA. This incident partially responds to Fung's study (2005) on the effect of anxiety in a drama-oriented second language classroom that FLCA of the most students English as the medium of instruction (EMI) secondary school in Hong Kong reduced but there was a small group of students still experienced FLCA occasionally. The slight different results between Fung's and the present studies are probably because the class in the present study was conducted as a tutoring class, as a result, the participants came to class without any worries about failing the course. However, in the present study, the t-test results still show that FLCA of the participants in the treatment group was lower significantly than FLCA of the participants in the control group, although the participants in both control and treatment groups shared the above condition together.

To conclude, the above discussion reveals that drama techniques are effective on reducing Thai EFL university students' FLCA. Also, the techniques can be an applicable alternative for teachers of English seeking to reduce their students' FLCA.

Research question 3: *Which drama activities affect the levels of FLCA of Thai EFL students?*

The findings for discussion in this section are from two focus group discussions (The first was after the fourth lesson and the second was after the eighth lesson.). In terms of the drama activities

affecting the students' FLCA, they all agreed that every activity helped reduce FLCA, however, the two drama activities indicated by most of the volunteered participants the most effective on reducing FLCA were prepared improvised drama and drama games.

Prepared improvised drama was indicated as the most effective activity on reducing their FLCA. The reasons indicated by the volunteered participants were the combination of the sense of community and the freedom to use imagination and to produce the language in order to complete the tasks given. The reason about the sense of community is consistent with the factor reducing FLCA contributed by the participants in Wörde's study (2003). They mentioned in the group interview that group work and study partner could help reduce FLCA. They also suggested the students do activities in order to be familiar with one another personally outside the classroom such as having lunch (Wörde, 2003). Furthermore, Helderbrand (2003) suggests drama techniques provide freedom to the students to say what is in their minds, as a result, a relaxed and informal classroom is brought. When discussing in detail, it might be argued that the sense of community or the freedom to use imagination and to produce the language in order to complete the tasks given is also included in other drama activities. One factor which might explain the above observation is that prepared improvised drama provides not only the sense of community but also the freedom to use their imagination to create roles and responsibilities of characters to complete the tasks. On the other hand, for other drama activities such as role-play, simulation, and acting play script, the roles and responsibilities of characters are assigned by the teacher. To be more specific, prepared improvised drama was indicated the most effective drama activity on reducing FLCA probably because it combines the sense of community and the freedom to imagine and to produce the language.

Another drama activity found the most effective on reducing FLCA was drama games. During the drama techniques-based class, drama games were applied several times in order to warm-up and contextualize the students. For example, in the 'Learn How to Say No' lesson, one student was asked to sit down on a chair located in front of the class and not to let anyone take the seat unless he or she was convinced with an acceptable reason. Then, the other students would go out one by one to try taking the seat such as acting like a drunken person who was about to throw up at the seat.

The reasons which made drama games most effective on reducing FLCA indicated by some of the volunteers were the sense of competition and enjoyment. According to the activity above, they explained that it was enjoyable because they had to come up with ideas in order to get their friend out of the chair including finding reasons to keep their seat as long as possible. Moreover, the finding on the enjoyment of the activity was similar as Helderbrand (2003) mentioned that drama contains activities which help the students learn and have fun at the same time.

On the contrary, role-play was indicated the activity reducing FLCA the least. The volunteered participants explained that there was no teacher monitoring their language performance all the time because during the small-scale performance, the students did not know if they produced the language grammatically while doing the activity or not. This finding is different from the finding from Fung's study (2005) indicating that role-play was an activity that helped decrease secondary school learners' FLCA. The contradictory answers could be explained by the age difference of the participants in Fung's study (secondary school students) and this present study (university students).

Research question 4: *How can drama techniques be improved for reducing FLCA the most?*

The volunteers were also asked to provide suggestions in order to make drama techniques the most effective on reducing FLCA. All of the suggestions focused on the teacher. They suggested the teacher have friendly appearance, sense of humor, and use non-threatening words to help the students feel safe in class, as well as, pay a careful attention to the student's language performance in order to help correct their mistakes. Moreover, the teachers should also find a way to engage the students who do not participate in a group activity. This is also consistent with the factor reducing FLCA contributed by the participants in Wörde's study (2003). In the interview, they recommended that the teacher strives to create a friendly learning environment, use gentle methods of error correction, and offer words of encouragement.

In the present study, although the data from the focus group discussions on how to improve drama techniques for reducing FLCA the most might not be considered reliable or valid enough to claim the improvement of drama techniques, in the perspectives of research and development, it can be useful qualitative data which can be considered for developing a research tool related in the future, for example, more effective drama techniques-based lesson plans for EFL learners with high FLCA. However, According to Kaemkate (2008), one limitation of focus group discussion is the capacity of data generalization, hence; it is strongly recommended that any developed research tools based on this data should be checked on validity and reliability.

In the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety questionnaire, all 44 participants in the control and the treatment groups were also asked to provide information on the background on the frequency of a foreign language use before the experiment. It was found that FLCA of the students who have and have not taken an additional English course was significantly not different while FLCA of the students who have been abroad was significantly lower than those who have never been abroad before. According to Mejías and associates (MacIntyre. 1999; citing Mejías and associates. 1991), it was found that the background of the participants on the frequency of a foreign language use can affect the level of FLCA. In this research, taking an additional course of English does not help reduce FLCA of the students because the use of English is not frequent enough. It is possible that, after class,

the students will stop using English and start communicating in Thai. On the other hand, having been abroad helps reduce FLCA of the students probably because they are required to use English to communicate both inside and outside the classroom.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of the study are as follows:

1. The time given of the study was only one month. The experiment conducted with a longer period of time may yield more findings.
2. According to the convenience sampling method applied in the study, the participants in both control and treatment groups were the volunteers from Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University who were not officially enrolling in the course of Activating Skills in English prior to the experiment. Hence, the experiment may allow more findings with the participants who are from other faculties and who are officially enrolling in the course of Activating Skills of English prior to the experiment.
3. Although background on a foreign language use was recognized as a factor influencing learners' language proficiency and probably learners' FLCA, it was not formally included in the analysis in order to adjust for the effect of other variables which, in the study, is the language proficiency of the participants in the experiment.

Pedagogical Implication

The research found that drama techniques are effective on reducing FLCA. It may be useful for teachers or others who are interested in applying drama techniques in English language teaching. However, in terms of pedagogical implication, the teachers should recognize that the teachers themselves are a factor influencing their students' FLCA too and carry on the suggestions indicated by the volunteered participants and find ways to apply drama techniques appropriately in a foreign language class.

Recommendations for Further Studies

Based on the results of the study, some recommendations for further studies are the followings:

1. Researchers should extend studying the effectiveness of drama techniques on reducing FLCA with different targets of EFL learners such as primary and secondary EFL learners.
2. A comparative study of each drama activity on reducing FLCA of Thai EFL learners should also be studied.

3. For more precise results, background of the participants on a foreign language use should be considered as a variable influencing FLCA in a further research in order to ensure that FLCA of Thai EFL students reduce because of the effectiveness of drama techniques merely not the background of the participants on a foreign language use.

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