

**FACTORS CAUSING STUDENTS' SPEAKING ANXIETY IN EFL
CLASSROOM: DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF 6TH SEMESTER STUDENTS
AT ENGLISH DEPARTMENT UNIVERSITY OF MATARAM
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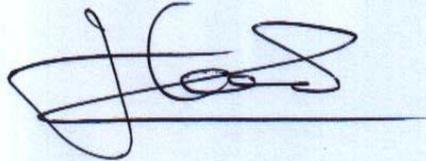
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APPROVAL

An article Entitled: *Factors Causing Students' Speaking Anxiety in EFL Classroom:
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Factors Causing Students' Speaking Anxiety in EFL Classroom: Descriptive Study of 6TH Semester Students at English Department University of Mataram Academic Year 2017/2018

Abstract

This study entitled “Factors Causing Students’ Speaking Anxiety in EFL Classroom: Descriptive Study of 6TH Semester Students at English Department University of Mataram Academic Year 2017/2018” is aimed to describe factors causing students’ speaking anxiety and to describe students’ strategies to lessen their speaking anxiety. The method used in this study was descriptive qualitative. The population of this study was forty eight from sixth semester students morning class in English department at University of Mataram but only eleven anxious students were selected as the participants. The data were gathered through semi-structured interview and questionnaire. The result of the study shows that *Communication Apprehension, Test Anxiety* and *Fear of Negative evaluation* were the three factors causing students’ speaking anxiety in English as a Foreign Language in classroom. Then, students’ strategies to lessen their anxiety is *Preparation, Relaxation, Positive thinking* and *Peer seeking* meanwhile, *Resignation* is not consider as a strategy that students use to decrease their anxiety.

Key words: *Student’s Anxiety, speaking, EFL (English as a Foreign Language*

Introduction

Learning English as a foreign language for students of English department at University of Mataram has always been a problem. Even though they had been taught English subject when they were at senior high school, yet some of the students are struggling to learn English on first semester. To be able to communicate with other people in the target language, students of English department at University of Mataram are expected to master speaking skill because speaking is a challenging task for students, not like the other skills that can be practiced alone, for speaking skill students need to make an effort for it and cannot practice it alone. In addition for learners of English as a foreign language the main goal of learning English language is to master good communication skills in the language (Mai, 2011: 1).

In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom not all the students of English department at University of Mataram are able to speak in English. Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) point out since speaking in the target language seems to be the most threatening aspect of foreign language learning. The reason why students' anxiety emerges when speaking English is because they have

no enough time to express their mind, giving opinion and so on in classroom. It can be said that being able to speak fluently is essential in students' language learning to communicate both inside and outside the classroom. This is why out of the other skills that most students surface anxiety is speaking skill, based on Young (1990: 539) "Speaking in the foreign language is often cited by students as their most anxiety producing experience".

Students' language anxiety may come from some components. Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) describe three components that cause students' language anxiety these are communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. Lecturer should aware about students' language anxiety and they are not close their eyes over this situation which always happens during the learning process to any English students. On the other hand, the students must find the best strategies to resolve their own problems in order to decrease their speaking anxiety.

These are the reasons why the researcher is interested to conduct this research on students' speaking anxiety in EFL classroom at English Department University of Mataram to find out the causes that overcome from anxiety also to find out the strategies

that students use to lessen their anxiety at sixth semester students at English department University of Mataram academic year 2017/2018.

Literature Review

MacIntyre and Garden (1989) view that anxiety as feeling of worry and emotional reaction that arises while learning and using a second language. English is a foreign language for students of English department at University Mataram. In classroom there is also factors that can emergence student's anxiety, based on my own experience it may come from student's himself/herself, from lecturer for example the way one lecturer teaches students are different from other lecturer and the atmosphere of the classroom.

According to explanation above that is why it is very common situations in EFL classroom students have faced a problem called anxiety when it comes to speak in English. Uncomfortable feeling that they feel such as nervousness and worrying being in an EFL classroom that make them unable to concentrate during learning process. EFL learners feel anxious while learning and particularly speaking English in some situations. They faced both internal and external

factors and these can emergence students anxious in class any time. Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) identify three main components of foreign language anxiety these are communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. Horwitz et al (1986: 128, cited in Tanver, 2007: 11) define communication apprehension as "a type of shyness characterized by fear or anxiety about communication with other people" which means that not all the students have the same characteristics and how they act in classroom some of them might feel shy to communicate in target language even though they talk with their friend beside her/him meanwhile some of them are not. The second component is test anxiety, described by Horwitz at al. (cited in Tanveer, 2007: 12) a type of performance anxiety stemming from a fear of failure to pass elements of assessment, students experienced anxiety when they face particular test such as oral presentation, pair work and so on. They are afraid of failure to pass the test, although the students already prepare very well before the

test but when their anxiety comes, suddenly what is already in their mind is gone. Fear of negative evaluation refers to feelings of apprehension about others' evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations and the expectation that others evaluate one negatively (Horwitz and Young 1991: 31). Students tend to avoid talking during the learning process, it is clearly because she/he does not want to get evaluate negatively by other students when she/he makes mistake while she/he performances in front of the class because students get stressed over if their friends ridiculed her/him, in result she/he won't get involved in any speaking practice anymore.

When students are dealing with a situation that they think made them anxious, the first think that comes out from their mind is to avoid the situation. In fact use avoidance is not a good option because they are expected to find other way to cope with the anxiety. Kondo and Ling (2004) investigation toward 209 students from two universities in Japan, they discovered 70 strategies used by the students to reduce their anxiety. These 70 tactics were put into five strategy types: preparation, relaxation, positive

thinking, peer seeking, and resignation.

Research Method

This current research uses a descriptive qualitative research design. Descriptive qualitative research has been chosen in order to know in-depth about the phenomenon of students' anxiety in EFL class of English Department at University of Mataram.

In order to collect the data that is needed in this research, there is more than one instrument used and those instruments are questionnaire and interview. The questionnaire for this research is used to find out strategies that students use to reduce their anxiety in speaking English. The questionnaire consists of both close-ended questions and open-ended questions. Questions from the questionnaire are divided into 5 categories on how students reduce their anxiety suggested by Kondo and Ling (2004).

The data is also obtained through interview to gather participant's answer and in order not to lose information. From the scale that has been distributed to the sample of this study, the result shows that they are 11 students who have highest anxiety among the others, so the 11 students have been chosen as the participants to interview with. The type of the interview is a semi structured interview and the questions

are based on three factors by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) that has been explained in the previous chapter before, focusing on to find out the factors which cause students' anxiety in EFL classroom.

Technique of recruiting subjects of research. Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) based on Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) distributed to the sample of the study along with one of the instruments that I use in this research which is questionnaire. Actually, there are 33 questions in FLCAS but I adopt only 15 questions because these 15 questions which are suitable with the classroom setting and FLCAS is translated into Indonesian in order the students easily to answers the questions.

Analysing the data from questionnaire which is the percentage for close-ended questions is calculated by using the following formula from Prihartini (2014) as follows;

$$P = \frac{\sum \text{Yes/No}}{N} \times 100\%$$

P: Score percentage

∑: Number of statements “Yes/No”

N: Number of respondents

100: Constant number

Next, there is one question in open-ended question in the

questionnaire. The question is about students' strategies to lessen their anxiety according to their own experience so that they can explore more about their strategies which is not provided in the close-ended questions. The process of analyzing data from interview is divided into three main components based on framework of qualitative analysis developed by Miles and Huberman (1994). They are data reduction, data display and drawing and verifying conclusions.

Discussion

The findings suggested that they are three factors causing students' anxiety in speaking English. They are; Communication Apprehension, Test of Anxiety and Fear Negative Evaluation. It is indicated that those factors were not only come from internal factors but also it comes from external factors that students feel when they have to deal with their anxiety.

Communication apprehension, whenever the student asked to speak in target language in front of the class it made her/him anxious especially when they have to speak individually because everyone in the class pay attention to the speaker, as T said “I’m so nervous when lecturer asked me to speak in English in front of the class”.

Therefore it’s difficult for student to express their thoughts when they had anxiety attack based on

Cubukcu (2007) communication apprehension in foreign language learning derives from the personal knowledge that one will almost certainly have difficulty understanding others and making oneself understood. In line with one of the respondents' statement SRD responded that "I feel anxious whenever I try to convey my ideas in English because I'm afraid that my classmates misunderstand what I'm trying to say" this is the reason why students remind silent to avoid speaking in English.

Test of anxiety, in form of failing the test in EFL classroom all the respondents said that they were afraid of failing the test even though they have prepared very well. Student NA says based on her own experience, before an oral test was held the lecturer gave students topic to talk to so that they can prepare but when I had an oral test and have to face to face with the lecturer it made me anxious, in result I cannot give my best performance. Tanveer (2007) described this test anxiety is found to have a detrimental effect on students' ability and confidence.

Fear of negative evaluation. Students tend to keep silent during the learning process because others' opinion influenced them especially if it was negative opinion towards the speaker. Liu (2007) explains that Fear of negative evaluation is the anxiety associated with the learner's perception of how other onlookers;

instructors, classmates or others; may negatively view their language ability. As it said by S "I made mistakes when I speak English in classroom so everyone is laughing at me and it made me feel embarrass" which make most of them not actively get involved in speaking practices.

Here the result for students' strategies that they use to decrease their speaking anxiety. The result comes from two parts, first result comes from close-ended questions and second one comes from open-ended questions. The result of close-ended questions shows the variety of students' answer toward provided questions in questionnaire which is related to five strategy aspects by Kondo and Ling (2004). Those are; Preparation, Relaxation, Positive Thinking, Peer Seeking and Resignation.

Moreover, the result of open-ended question which is about students' strategies to lessen their anxiety based on their own experience that they use when they were having anxiety attack in EFL classroom. The strategies are also classified based on Kondo and Ling's (2004). However, not all the strategies that found in students' answer on open-ended question, those strategies are only Preparation, Relaxation, Positive Thinking and Peer Seeking.

Conclusion and Suggestion

From the findings and discussion presented earlier, it is concluded that:

There are three factors that may contribute to students' anxiety. They are Communication Apprehension in that students' anxiety has increased when they have to speak in front of the class. This is particularly true when they have to speak alone and the pressure is even greater. In the context of Test of Anxiety, students are afraid of consequence of failing in speaking test especially when they have oral test. The last cause is Fear of Negative Evaluation, the situation when students fear negative opinions that come from their peers or lecturer in particular.

Furthermore, there were various strategies that students of sixth semester in English department at University of Mataram academic year 2017/2018 used to lessen their anxiety in speaking English. They are Preparation, Relaxation, Positive Thinking, Peer Seeking and Resignation.

Even though this research was carried out to a small number of respondents, the result provides useful information that can be used by students and others to improve their speaking skills. Based on the result of the study, there are a number of suggestions the following.

For the Students, hopefully, this research help the students to know about their weaknesses related to factors that cause the anxiety and recognize their situations so that they can change and improve their skill in order to decrease their speaking anxiety by using suggested strategies to deal with their anxiety.

For the Lecturers, they should not ignore the fact that students' anxiety exists in learning specifically in English Foreign Language classroom. It is hoped that lecturer's awareness over this phenomenon can help the students to cope with their anxiety by applying appropriate teaching process and always encouraging them because making mistakes is natural part of language learning.

For future researchers it is necessary to find more about factors causing students' speaking anxiety due to limitations of this research, which can be further explored in the future. On the other hand, hopefully this study can be used as a comparative study to give a better and deeper understanding of the issue of students' anxiety.

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