

SPEAKING ANXIETY IN EFL CLASSROOM AMONG TENTH GRADERS OF SMA MUHAMMADIYAH 3 YOGYAKARTA

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ABSTRACT

Speaking is one of the basic skills used to communicate with other people. Being the first foreign language introduced at school is of course something that still often causes anxiety among Indonesian students. Therefore, a study was conducted to determine the perceptions of Indonesian English students at SMA Muhammadiyah 3 Yogyakarta regarding the anxiety they experience when speaking a foreign language. This study has two main objectives, namely to find out the level of foreign language anxiety felt by Indonesian students, especially in private schools in Yogyakarta, when speaking English in an EFL classroom and to find the reasons for the foreign language anxiety felt by Indonesian students, especially private schools in Yogyakarta, when speaking English in EFL classroom.

This study used a mixed methods research design; the data were collected through the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) questionnaire and interview, and both quantitative and qualitative methods were used for analysis. The respondents of this study were tenth graders of a private school in Yogyakarta consisting of 98 students, 52 males, and 46 females.

The results of the questionnaire analysis showed the level of anxiety, that of the 98 students who were respondents, sixty-two students (63.3%) had a moderate level of anxiety, twenty-three students (23.3%) had a high level of anxiety, twelve students (12.2%) had a low level of anxiety, one student (1%) had a very low level of anxiety, and no students had a very high level of anxiety (0.0%). Meanwhile, the results of the interview analysis show the reasons that contribute to students' anxiety in English, including lack of self-confidence, feeling embarrassed and nervousness, grammatical errors, lack of preparation, being laughed at by other people, limited vocabulary, and fear of making mistakes.

Keywords: EFL Classroom, Indonesian Students, Speaking Anxiety.

1. INTRODUCTION

English is one of the foreign languages studied in Indonesia and is designated as the first foreign language; this is in accordance with the Ministerial Decree Education and Culture No. 096/1967 dated December 12, 1967 (Kartono, 1980, p. 126). Many considerations made English the first foreign language in Indonesia, as stated by Kartono (1980: 125) that the national language that we currently have cannot be used as a means of communication with other countries, and because Indonesia is also incorporated as a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN. So, for the sake of smooth communication and friendship with

other nations, it is necessary to have a language that becomes an international language, namely English; besides that, English is also used in science, modern technology, trade, and politics, and is used in almost all fields.

In learning English, Indonesian students are oriented towards developing 4 language skills, consisting of listening, writing, reading, and speaking. The four language skills are learned from elementary school to university level. These skills have the aim of improving students' ability to communicate orally and in writing. However, the state of learning English in Indonesia has only a few that lead students towards achieving these goals. According to Sumardi (1992: 206), in the process of learning English in schools, teachers dominate learning. Teachers provide more provisions in the form of theory and language knowledge rather than prioritizing language skills, both oral and written. Then, of the four skills mentioned, speaking is an important part that is used to be able to communicate with others. This is something that needs to be learned from English as a foreign language.

For language learners, several things make speaking anxiety. A mental block is the first thing that causes problems from speaking anxiety. Horwitz et al. (1986) stated that some students claimed to have mental blocks when they were about to learn or start speaking a foreign or second language. The mental block that students have makes students feel restless, not confident and also nervous. The second thing that is a problem for foreign language learners is related to fear. According to Talbot (2016), anxiety often occurs on tests, and this anxiety develops because of the fear of negative evaluations; this is similar to social phobia and then causes the fear of being judged negatively. Students spend much of their time worrying about test results and about how others rate their performance rather than the exam itself.

The third thing that becomes a problem in speaking anxiety is anxiety that comes from a limited vocabulary, difficulty expressing ideas verbally (speaking), inadequate language skills (grammar), difficulty pronouncing words, and lack of courage to start speaking. The teaching curriculum is the fourth thing that is included in students' speaking anxiety. In Indonesia, the language teaching curriculum has changed several times, starting from the 1984 curriculum, which focuses on mastering grammatical matters. Then, it shifted to the 1994 curriculum change and underwent the next change to the 2004 curriculum, then continued to the 2006 and 2013 curriculum. The last one was the independent learning curriculum, which Medikbudristek officially published in February 2022, which was related to the

COVID-19 pandemic for the application of flexibility for schools in meeting student learning needs. Basically, every existing language teaching curriculum expects students to have good language and communication skills. Nevertheless, in reality, according to Maksan (inutama, 1998), students have not been said to be able to speak (English) properly and correctly, orally and in writing, at every school level, from elementary to high school. In addition, because in Indonesia, the teacher dominates in every English lesson, students have less opportunity to be able to speak and convey their thoughts while studying. The teacher communicates more, and students are only given few opportunities to respond (Ritthirat & Chiramanee, 2014).

This research aim to know the level and reason of speaking anxiety experienced by students of SMA Muhammadiyah 3 Yogyakarta when speaking in English and the potential triggers. The further aim of this research is to be a distinct source of information for relevant future studies.

Literature Review

According to Horwitz et al. (1986), a learner may experience anxiety while studying a foreign language because of a problem related to one of the three features of anxiety: communicative apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, or test anxiety. In regards to communication apprehension, Horwitz et al. (1986) defined communication apprehension as a form of shyness marked by worry, fear of conversing with others, or challenges speaking in front of large groups of people. According to Luca *et al.* 2011 (quoted in Maisarah, 2019), communication apprehension is characterized by stress and anxiety when conversing with others, as well as difficulty speaking in front of an audience, listening to, or picking up spoken words.

The second feature of anxiety is fear of negative evaluation. Horwitz et al. (1986) defined that fear of negative evaluation is the anxiety about other people's opinions. It can also mean avoiding judgmental situations and anticipating negative judgments from others. Fear of negative evaluation is more common because it can occur in any social situation where someone will evaluate you, such as a job interview or speaking at a language course. Different from other academic subjects, continuous evaluation in learning a foreign language should always be carried out by a teacher who has fluency in speaking the foreign language. In addition, students may be more sensitive to real evaluations that their classmates will convey.

Test-anxiety is the third anxiety feature. Horwitz et al. (1986), performance

communication, anxiety brought on by a fear of failing is what is known as test anxiety. Students who are test-anxious frequently hold themselves to unreasonably high standards and think that anything short of perfect test performance is a failure. Foreign language lessons are full of tests and quizzes, and even the smartest and best-prepared students occasionally make mistakes. Oral tests can cause students' anxiety towards oral.

2. METHOD

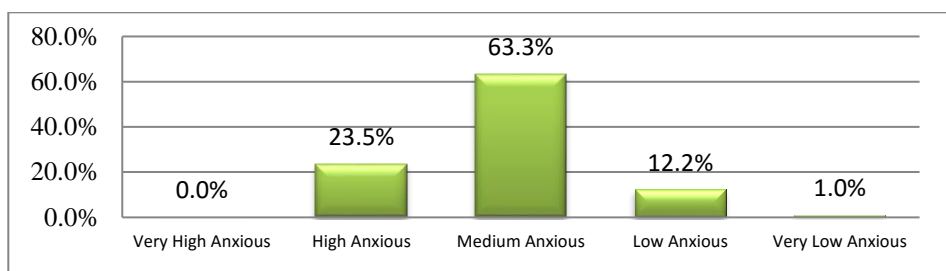
This type of research is mixed methods research. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2007, p. 120) consider that the definition of mixed methods is the most complete method because mixed methods research is a class of research in which the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts, or language into their own or set of related study. They further state as: *"The reason more people are choosing these types of research is because both qualitative and quantitative data are simultaneously collected, analyzed, and interpreted."* As for the research setting and participants, the research was conducted at SMA Muhammadiyah 3 Yogyakarta for four weeks long on 18 January-13 February 2023 involving 98 students of the stated school of grade 11.

The data collection methods in this study included questionnaires and interviews. The questions were derived from Horwitz et al.'s Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (1986). There are twenty-two items on the five-point scale in the questionnaire. Strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree are the point scales. Questionnaires were distributed directly to schools in hard copy form. Concurrently, the interview guide has seven items that are adapted from Price (1991:103) in the Musthachim (2014) journal article titled "Students' Speaking Anxiety in EFL Classroom." For interviews, seven students were taken and conducted face to face. Microsoft Excel was used for analyzing the questionnaire data after it had been collected. Concurrently, data from the interview were analyzed qualitatively involving such stages as transcribing, member checking, data coding, data interpreting, and conclusion drawing.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Findings

The anxiety level perceived by tenth grade students of SMA Muhammadiyah 3 Yogyakarta in speaking English in EFL classroom



Using the percentages from chart 3.1, it can be concluded that one student (1.0%) has a very low level of anxiety, twelve students (12.2%) have a low level of anxiety, and more than half of the respondents, namely sixty-two students (63,3%) have a moderate level of anxiety. Twenty-three students (23.5%) had a high level of anxiety, and no student (0.0%) had a very high level of anxiety. Therefore, from the explanations and bar graphs shown, it can be seen that most students have high and moderate levels of anxiety. The most anxiety factor faced by tenth graders of SMA Muhammadiyah 3 Yogyakarta in learning English in class is fear of negative evaluation (27.97%).

The anxiety reasons perceived by tenth grade students of SMA Muhammadiyah 3 Yogyakarta in speaking English in EFL classroom

Data on reasons for foreign language anxiety experienced by tenth grade students of SMA Muhammadiyah 3 Yogyakarta in speaking English in an EFL classroom were gathered through interview with seven student respondents based on the analysis of the FLCAS questionnaire results. Three students are highly anxious, while four are moderately anxious. After being analyzed meticulously following the qualitative analysis protocol starting from data transcribing, member checking, data coding, data interpreting, and conclusion drawing, it was concluded that there are seven categories of reasons why Indonesian students feel anxious when learning speaking. The following interview excerpt describes the details of the respondent's statement regarding this problem:

1) Lack of Self-Confidence

This anxiety factor was expressed by *respondent 1* as follows:

“Mmm. I'm still not confident enough to speak English, because I'm not used to using it in classroom or in my daily life so I can't speak fluently and feel that the delivery of sentences is still convoluted.”

Conveying convoluted sentences and not being used to using English in the classroom or everyday life is the reason for respondent 1 feeling less confident in speaking English.

2) Feeling Embarrassed and Nervousness

Furthermore, almost all respondents expressed feelings of embarrassment and nervousness when asked by the researcher about how they felt when speaking English. Some of the reasons that make them feel anxious about this include fear of being laughed at by friends and fear of making mistakes.

Respondent 5 said: “Feeling nervous on the other hand, I also feel embarrassed because I can't speak English fluently, especially when seen by many people. So, the more people saw me, the more embarrassed I felt, like that.”

Respondent 4 added about his feelings when speaking in English, as follows:

“While studying, I feel normal. However, when did I was appointed to come to the front of the class and speak English, I felt nervous and embarrassed.”

From what was said by respondent 4 she admitted that she felt nervous if she were asked to speak English in front of the class because she thought if she made a mistake, her classmates would laugh at her.

3) Grammatical Error

Based on interview data conducted by researchers, it was found that 1 respondent admitted that she experienced grammar anxiety when speaking English. As stated by *respondent 2*:

“Then the grammar is also afraid it's not right... If the vocabulary is still basic, I can still do it but when I get into grammar it's difficult.”

4) Lack of preparation

Lack of preparation is the next factor found by researchers. There was 1 student who said that he experienced this anxiety when speaking English, namely:

Respondent 5:

“I can't answer questions in English or can't speak English directly. So I need to prepare myself first, because the results will be different between those who are ready and those who aren't ready.”

The conditions stated by respondent 5 above show that he will feel better if everything is done with preparation beforehand and feels the results will be less than optimal if he does not prepare.

5) Being laughed at by others

Some respondents said they felt anxious when speaking English near classmates or other people. Most of them were worried that their classmates would give them a negative reaction. This is what they said when asked how their classmates reacted when they made mistakes in speaking English:

Respondent 3:

“Sometimes my friends laugh at me, sometimes I get nervous. But several times I tried to laugh with them, to cover up my nervousness.”

Respondent 7:

“If I made a mistake, they would immediately laugh at me it made me feel very embarrassed.”

6) Limited Vocabulary

Vocabulary is one of the important things in the speaking process. That means if you have a limited vocabulary, it will be a problem in the

speaking process or cause anxiety. As expressed by respondent who have limited vocabulary when speaking below:

Respondent 2 said:

"It's quite difficult, if the vocabulary is still basic, I can still do it but when I get into grammar it's difficult."

7) Fear of Making Mistakes

In this factor, some students revealed that they were fear of making mistakes in speaking English, especially fear of making mistakes in pronunciation.

Respondent 2 said:

"I'm afraid the vocabulary is wrong. Then, the grammar is also afraid it's not right. Besides that, I also feel afraid of mispronunciation especially if the teacher pays too much attention to me."

Respondent 3 said:

"Because in English. The writing and pronunciation are different, I'm quite worried that if the pronunciation of the word is wrong, it will change the actual meaning or other people don't understand what I want to convey."

Discussion

From the results of the questionnaire data, it was found that 10th-grade students at SMA Muhammadiyah 3 Yogyakarta for the 2022-2023 academic year experience anxiety in speaking English. More than half of the respondents in this study had moderate levels of anxiety. This can happen because, on several occasions, they feel confident enough to be able to communicate in English and feel it is okay to volunteer when asked by the teacher or asked to come to the front of the class to explain something.

However, in this study, there were still many students who experienced anxiety from the low appreciation around them, so this became the dominant factor for their anxiety. Fear of negative evaluation (FNE) becomes the dominant factor of their performance anxiety. Based on this study, speaking anxiety was found to be the most prevalent type. The conclusions from the questionnaire data are similar to (Saragih Effendi's

(2022) research; it was found that most respondents were at a moderated level of anxiety when learning a foreign language. These findings, however, differ from the study of Noviyanti (2022), who found that English students at the Ushuluddin and Humanities faculty of UIN Walisongo Semarang have high anxiety in speaking English

Furthermore, it was found that some factors had contributed to the students' anxiety during the speaking learning process based on the findings of the interviews.. The first causal factor is a lack of self-confidence. This is in line with what was conveyed by Indrianty (2016), that another reason for anxiety in spoken English classes is difficulty in expressing ideas due to lack of confidence. Feelings embarrassed and nervousness become further anxiety factors. As a foreign language in Indonesia, English is enough to make students feel embarrassed and nervous to speak. Nervousness naturally happens to everyone when they have to speak (Moghaddam & Ghafournia, 2019). Meanwhile, fear of negative evaluation is the third anxiety factor. Respondents are too worried about the opinions and assessments expressed by other people. They are also afraid of their appearance being evaluated in public, especially if the evaluation is in the form of negative comments. The fourth factor is fear of making mistakes in pronounce and vocabulary. According to Jannah and Fitriati (2016), the reason why language learners are having problems when they speak is because they are poor in pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. The fourth factor is grammatical errors. The biggest source of stress for students, according to Taysi (2015), is their fear of making grammatical errors/mistakes when speaking English; students feel that teaching grammar rules and language structure has too much emphasis. Lack of preparation, is the last anxiety factor. Some admit that they feel they cannot express their ideas without prior preparation.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the majority of tenth-grade students from SMA Muhammadiyah 3 Yogyakarta have moderate levels of anxiety. The following details: of the total 98 students who were respondents, sixty-two students (63.3%) had a moderate anxiety level, twenty-three students (23.3%) had a high anxiety level, twelve students (12.2%) had a low anxiety level, one student (1%) was at a very low anxiety level, and no students were at

a very high anxiety level (0.0%). It can also be seen that the most dominant anxiety faced by tenth-grade students at SMA Muhammadiyah 3 Yogyakarta when speaking English in the classroom is fear of negative evaluation (27.97%).

Based on interview data, tenth-grade students admitted that various factors contributed to their anxiety in speaking English. The following are several factors that have been found in this research. The first is lack of self-confidence, where students feel lacking in their ability to convey ideas in public. The second is feeling embarrassed and nervous because they are worried that they will be overly corrected in front of classmates or teachers if they make a mistake. Third, grammatical errors because students feel that constructing sentences with appropriate grammar is something complicated. Fourth, lack of preparation because they feel that the results with preparation will be better than without preparing first. Fifth, being laughed at by others is also a factor that contributes to their anxiety. Sixth, limited vocabulary adds to their list of anxieties about speaking a foreign language. Lastly, there is a fear of making mistakes in the pronunciation of each word.

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