

FACTORS INFLUENCING SPEAKING ANXIETY AT ONE PUBLIC UNIVERSITY IN JAMBI: LANGUAGE AND ACADEMIC ASPECTS

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ABSTRACT

The general purpose of this study was to explore what are the factors influencing English learners' felt anxious while speaking and the strategy used by the students' to overcome they speaking anxiety. This study used qualitative method with case study approach; to collect the data the researcher used interview and documents. The result of this study indicated there were two factors influencing students speaking anxiety (language proficiency and academic proponent). Other than that the students also has their own strategy (language related management and self-management). The finding shows that language proficiency is the most significant factor made the English learner felt anxious when they want to speak. Language related management is best way for English learners to overcome their speaking anxiety.

Keywords: speaking anxiety, language, academic aspects

INTRODUCTION

Essentially there are four skills in English study program. There are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Of all skills, speaking is one of the most important skills to master. In order to be able to speak English well, students have to feel confident, comfortable and enjoyable in practicing their speaking skill. By having confidence and feeling comfortable, students will not fear of making mistakes when speaking English. As mentioned above that speaking skill is one of the most difficult skills in learning English many students often feel anxiety, not confidence, uncomfortable, and fear of making mistakes when speaking in English.. Anxiety, recognized as an affective factor in language learning, is a frequent-observed issue which certainly governs students' performance (Chastain, 1975; Scott, 1986) and contributes to the students' worry and nervousness in learning process (Arnold & Brown, 1999; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993; Oxford, 1999). This problem is often seen in English as a foreign language (EFL) classes, particularly in speaking modules (Horwitz & Cope, 1986; Palacios, 1998; Price, 1991) because the learners have to think and talk simultaneously.

METHOD(S)

Design of the study and participants

The purpose of this study was to explore what are the factors influencing students speaking anxiety and the way the students overcome their speaking anxiety. The study used qualitative approach with a case-study design. According to Bogdan and Bikien (1982) a case study is a detailed examination of one setting or a subject or a document storage place or a particular event. In this study, the researcher adopted intrinsic case study as this study focuses on one phenomenon and the case for this study is limited to only a particular group (Students in Jambi University). This research adopts explanation case study using Yin's (2012) classification because this study explores the perceptions and experiences from the participants.

This study took place at one public University in Jambi. The participants were English students from the third, fifth and seventh semester. The participants were 12 participants, from third semester were 2 participants, from fifth semester were 5 participants and from seventh were 5 participants.

The sampling procedure was purposive with several criteria; first the participants were those who felt anxious in speaking. Second, the participants had willingness to participate voluntarily in the research. Last, the researcher had a good access to the participants.

Table 1 data of the participants;

No	Initials	Semester	Genders	Places	Minutes
1.	S1	7 th	F	Jelutung	25.33
2.	S2	7 th	F	Jelutung	21.54
3.	S3	7 th	M	Jelutung	16.42
4.	S4	5 th	M	Foresthree coffee	12.28
5.	S5	5 th	M	Foresthree coffee	23.21
6.	S6	7 th	M	Foresthree coffee	16.55
7.	S7	3 th	M	Kedainenek	13.24
8.	S8	3 th	M	Kedainenek	14.45
9.	S9	5 th	F	Café pintukecil	12.40
10.	S10	5 th	M	Café pintukecil	13.03
11.	S11	7 th	F	Café pintukecil	15.12
12.	S12	5 th	M	UPT	20.15

Data collection, Analysis and Trustworthiness

In this study, data were collected through semi-structure interview guided by an interview

protocol and documents. There are three forms of interview; structured, semi-structured and unstructured (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). From Semi-structured interview the participants can share their experiences, semi-structured interview is indeed the main data collection technique in the study. Interviewing is a process which allows people to talk about their experiences in life, and thus makes it possible for researchers to get the authentic information (Holstein & Gubrium, 2003).

Documentation was the technique used by researcher to collecting the data. The selection of this technique was none other than to assist the researcher to collect more data from the participants. The recent speaking anxiety research conducted by Asparanita (2020) also used documentation to help her to collecting the data. Thus, in this research, the researcher provided some pictures while interviewing like in the figure below:



Figure1 the researcher provided some picture while interviewing

In these research the author used thematic analysis technique. Thematic Analysis is an approach to analysing qualitative data to answer broad or narrow research questions about people's experiences, views and perceptions and representations of a given phenomena. Thematic Analysis is an established data analysis technique in qualitative research (Braun & Clarke, 2006). However, there are six clear and detailed key stages of thematic analysis to reduce the criticism given by Braun and Clarke (2006). Those key stages are outlined in the following figure



Figure 2.the phases of Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis (2006)

According to Thomas (2006), in qualitative study, trustworthiness is essential part to be considered. Lincoln and Guba (1985), defined trustworthiness as a way for researchers to be able to convince readers that their findings are worth to be mindful by considering four criteria such as credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability. To do this, in its implementation, the researcher employed member checking by returning the transcription of interview to the participants to be checked or revised before going to the process of data analysis.

RESULTS

The purpose of this research is to find out the experiences of the participants who have been joining this research. The result of the study indicated that there are two main issues which influence the student feeling anxious in speaking. There are several factor influencing students speaking anxiety and the researcher break it into two themes following Moustakas' (1994) steps of analyzing data in a phenomenological study, clustered the significant statements into themes or meaning units. Throughout this process, the researcher had tentative themes such as, language proficiency, vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, fluency, lecturers, classmates, and topics of speaking modules. Going through all of the themes, the researcher finally identified overarching themes and subthemes including (1) Language proficiency (vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and fluency). (2) Language proponents (lecturers, classmates, and unfamiliar topic). The interrelated theme and sub-theme of the findings can be seen the table below:

1. Challenges

Table2. Themes and sub-themes of participants' issue

	Themes	Sub themes
Participants Issues	Language proficiency	Grammar Vocabulary Pronunciation Fluency
	Language proponents	Lecturer Classmates Unfamiliar Topic

Language proficiency

All the participants mentioned that they really like English. Yet, they found it difficult for several skills and speaking skill is one of the most difficult skills for students. Based on the result of the study, the students found it hard to speak their ideas in English language, although they had a high score or a good achievement in the classroom context. The students felt afraid to deliver their opinion because of lack of vocabulary, felt anxious if the grammar was not correct mispronunciation, lack of vocabularies and not fluent. All The participants shared that grammar was the main problem for them. Like, S3 said; “At that time I was afraid, for example, is that the correct grammar for the past or present or in future, well, if for example we are a little wrong, this is correct or not . How to use DID is the FIND I have to use V1 or V2 that is what I'm confused about” And similarly the S4 shared her experienced when she want to speak but she was anxious with her grammar “I don't really know when to use that word what time I have to add this word. Sometimes I don't really know”. Grammar was a general problem for almost EFL students Grammar was one of the important aspects in learning English. As we know that the main purpose of speaking is to deliver the idea, if the used of the grammar is not correct the idea that someone wants to convey is not well received. Grammar also is the hard subject to learn and hard to apply in classroom context. From the data above almost all the participants felt anxious about grammar and fear of being wrong.

Another factor influenced the students felt anxious to speak was pronunciation. Students were required to have many vocabularies. In addition, S3 explained that; “If you say it is difficult, there are difficulties, for example in the field of education there are many words that we might not be familiar with, but if for example we are practicing how to do pronunciation, speaking, I am still learning until now.” S4 also added: “Yes, sometimes vocabulary is obstruct me in English. As I said earlier, my vocab is limited, so this is also one of the factors that make me anxious.” It is clear that, vocabulary was one of language proficiency aspect which influences students speaking anxious English vocabulary is kind of complicated to learn, because what is written is different from the pronunciation.

The next sub theme in language proficiency is pronunciation. It was clear that pronunciation can made students felt anxious to speak, because the written is very different from the spoken. S1 explained that “Maybe the first one is pronunciations. Because when speak, there may be miscommunication because of mispronunciation”. The next participants is S5, he shared his bad experience related in pronunciation “Previously, my Mama supported I took course of grammar and pronunciation. But pronunciation has been a case and causing trauma for me. In the past, because our pronunciation was messed up, there was a teacher from my school who scold

me directly, it become traumatic until now and still main problem I am worried about speaking out. There is a sentence that I like to say but that become difficult because of that problem. So my pronunciation is still lacking.” Based on the participants’ experiences,pronunciation was one of most common problems which English learners faced in order to speak English without the feeling of anxiety. It is related to the distinctive way Indonesian people pronounce the words in Bahasa Indonesia. S8 had a difference experience about Pronunciation, the unforgettable moment in the past that made him Trauma and being anxious to speak.

The last language proficiency was Fluency. Fluency was an aspect of overall speaking proficiency, also described as fluency in the narrow sense (Chambers, 1997; Lennon, 1990).Here only one participant had anxious with fluency, S9 stated that “For me personally the factor that makes me anxious the most anxious is fluency. Because yeah..I try to be like a native yeah fluency”. It can be concluded that he tries to be fluent like native, but the real meaning of fluency is usually described in terms of speedy and smooth delivery of speech without filled pauses, repetitions, and repairs. From this data, it is clear that all the participants still felt anxious to speak English in classroom or in outside of the classroom. The participants became anxious because ofgrammatically incorrect, lack of vocabulary, anxious of being mispronounce and not as fluent as a native.

Language proponent

The last theme developed from this data analysis was language Proponents. In this theme, the researcher found three interrelated issues. The first sub theme is lecturer, the second sub theme is classmates and the last is unfamiliar topic. The Indonesian EFL student teachers voiced that they felt the lecturer, classmates and topic that unfamiliar sometimes affected their speaking skill. The first sub theme was lectures. The participants argued that lecturercan cause them to feel anxious in speaking English or sharing their opinion in classroom. Like S3 for example stated that; “For example, during the class, the lecturer asking for questions, and at that time I really did not understand, right... yes, it is usually difficult in some subject. So yes, I’m afraid to speak up for example, asking questions. I usually, afraid of being underestimated at that time, like I have explained before and you still do not know? I’m afraid about that.”Then S4 also added“Maybe while the presentation, everyone is silent, when everyone is already focused on the presenters and we are explaining and at that moment the lecturer immediately ask us as the presenters, like interrupts us. But the lecture is only test us as the presenter”Nevertheless S6 felt anxious because the lecturer would corrected him “From the lecturer, sometimes I feel a bit hesitant to convey

what I think because I have to adjust my attitude too then sometimes I feel uncomfortable when I got corrected from the lecturer.”It turns out that from the data above, the existence of a lecturer can actually cause students to felt anxious to speak and too shared their opinion, asstated by the participants. They felt anxious because the lecturer corrected what they said or what they shared and they will be judged because of the presentation in classroom. The last is because what the lecturer has explained has not been understood by the students.

Next finding in this language proponent was classmates. S2 stated that “They will taunt who can do better than them.in other word they feel envy because they cannot do that.” It is clearly enough that several students hate their classmates who were better than them. In other hand S5 has a difference experienced with S2, S5 shared to the researcher that “they only give me a bad expression” it was like he got underestimated by his friends in classthat make him more anxious to speak up during the classroom activity. These participants had different experiences, but it cannot be denied that the behaviour of their classmates makes them anxious to speak up. Regarding the subtheme of unfamiliar topic, the participants also shared their experiences. For instance S7 commented, “Sometimes there are several topics which I’m not understand at all.” “Actually, general words are not difficult. But if it's more specific or if we discuss one of the fields of legal economics or health, it's really difficult to talk about it because we have to know more.”Moreover S10 shared his experience; “Based on my experienced. I am not always understood the topic of the talk since sometimes the topic itself is far from my expertise like probably math. We are Indonesians usually just using simple term like plus or minus while in outside there is abbreviation, or the use add rather than plus is totally different especially in sentence or something. So yeah sometimes is hard.”All participants’ responses indicated that unfamiliar topic of discussion hindered their eagerness to engage more in speaking activities.

2. Strategy

Table3. Themes and sub-themes of participants managing struggle strategies

	Themes	Sub themes

Participants Issues	Language related Management	Practicing the language Being well-prepared Having a discussion with friends Finding unfamiliar word or Translating the language Speeding up or slowing down the intonation
	Self-management	Praying Being confidence Calming down Taking a deep breath

Language Related Management

Language related management is a strategy which consent about dealing with language problems. Practicing the language in here is to improve the ability and to minimize students' anxiety when they speak during the learning process. Like S2 stated "first I prefer to practice, before speaking so that it is more helpful to speak a sentences or a words" similarly S6 said that "In term of pronunciation, practice the key, if we do not know this word, we just need to find out but still with a lot of learning and practice too." 2 participants who shared their strategies too face their anxiety by being well-prepared. S1 told that "first of all yeah increase my vocabulary and how to read the words correctly by well- prepared" another one is S12 shared "first thing in speaking class if we are requested to present in front of class, of course at the night I have to learn first."

Discussion with friend can improves speaking skill and can easier practicing the language. Therefore S3 confirmed "maybe discussing with friends, in case we have a same opinion, it is better to discuss with friends and I'm not afraid if we have a difference opinion because still with friends". S5 also commented "before going home, I have to discuss with my friends, which is part that I was wrong, and it will help me the next day" By brainstormed or shared the difference idea with friends, students were more comfortable to speak up in classroom and also increase their confidence to speaking. Learning language was not only about language proponent, linguistic but also learned about economics, cultural, politic, and other. It means that students certainly found unfamiliar words. S9 also commented; "I don't know the English of something in English sometimes I just directly speak it in Indonesian or I just ask my partners like how do you said it in English". If the participants found unfamiliar word they had they own strategy. S3 and S11 had same strategy; they search the unfamiliar word in Google to found the meaning. S9 have a differenced way, he directly speaks Indonesian language.

Speeding up or slowing down the intonation was a unique strategy to manage the anxietylike S2 confirmed” If in grammar, if I feel awkward or anxious, I will speed up my intonation or not think about grammar anymore” the way he minimize his anxiety is he speed up his intonation when he speak. On the other hand, S9 stated “The way I overcome it I slow down my speed when I speak English so that’s why my problem is fluency. In my opinion, fluency is like the speed when we talk in language. so that’s why my problem sometimes I don’t really I am not really fluent in English because sometimes I have to translate it in my brain like what the English of this word”. This way was different because both of them faced a different problem while they speak.

Self-management

The last theme in this section is self-management; it was like how the students overcome their anxiety inside themselves. The first self-management is praying. S4 stated “*praying is effective, so I’m not too nervous*” this strategy is very effective for this participant, because praying can make her not to nervous when she wants to speak. Being confident means you know that outcome whatever it will be, that is the result. There will be another opportunity and if there is another opportunity you will create a new result which is better than before. S2 confirmed “I’m not think too much just being confidence”. The result was he is not think too much just being confidence,

There were 2 participants choose to calm down their self before continuing to speak like S6 “So if someone asks, then I can’t answer, so I would take a few minutes to breathe, and then I feel a bit better, I feel calm down and then I can continue it again.” Likewise S8 “First is calming down myself and I will start to speak again” calming down is the immediate steps you can take to calm anxiety. When we are anxious, we tend to tense up, so calming down is very important for everyone when they want to speak in front of many people. When deep breathing is focused and slow, it can help reduce anxiety. S3 stated “For me is taking a deep breath at least 30 minutes until my hands are not cold anymore” for anxious person taking a deep breath was very important and it takes time because they have to make sure that they ready to speak. Self-management was the best way to reduced anxiety when students want to speak.

DISCUSSIONS

After done the research findings, the researcher would like to discuss about the research discussion. The purpose of this research was to find out the factors influencing students' speaking anxiety at one public university in Jambi, Indonesia. The participants who took part of this research were 12 participants. The following research questions guided this study: what are the factors influencing students speaking anxiety? and how the students overcome their speaking anxiety? The researcher found overarching themes and sub-themes including (1) language proficiency (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and fluency) (2) language proponent (lecture, classmates and unfamiliar topic) (3) language related management (practicing the language, being well-prepared, having a discussion with friends, finding unfamiliar word or translating the language, speeding up or slowing down the intonation) (4) self-management (praying, being confidence, calming down, taking a deep breath)

In language proficiency they revealed that there were some of factors (e.g. grammar, lack of vocabularies, and bad pronunciations fluency) that cause the students anxious to deliver their ideas in English in classroom context. This theme is related to McCroskey and Bond (1980, 1984) mentioned that one of the seven factors that could make students quiet in the classroom was low speech skill. In this study, because of the low speaking ability of the participants, they were afraid to speak because they were always worried about their ability to speak. Our participants pointed out that one of the reasons for being quiet in the classroom was due to their lecturer. They explained that they were afraid of getting direct corrective feedback or comments from their lecturers when they were speaking. This theme is related to Harmer (1991) mentioned that direct feedback may affect the conversational flow.

Nunan (1991) stated that the success of speaking can be measured by whether the speakers are understandable or not. There are two participants mention their ideas. The first one she mentioned by finding the unfamiliar word and how to pronounce that word. The last one he mentioned if he does not know the English, he just directly speak the with Indonesia language. The participants stated that by discussing with friends it would help them to reduce their problems. This strategy was also revealed in another research Kadir (2018) that learning with friends can be useful for students so they could learn and help each other

The results of this research revealed that self-management was used by the students to reduce or overcome their problem, in this case, their speaking anxiety. There were four ways employed by the students including take a deep breathe, practice, just being confident, calm down, well-prepared. It was supported by the results finding of Zahradita Widhayanti (2018)

which mentioned that by calming down it would help the students to reduce the feeling of anxiety.

These findings give the readers information that almost English learners may face the same cases in or outside the classroom, with or within their friends and lectures. This study is to find out the reason why students' in university still feel anxious and when speaking English in class.

CONCLUSION

The researcher drawn conclusion that there were seven factors encountered by the students such as grammatically incorrect, lack of vocabulary, mispronunciation, not fluent, lecturer, classmates and unfamiliar topic. Other than that, the researcher concluded that students have some strategies to reduce or overcome their problems which were their speaking anxiety. There were nine strategies applied by the students including practicing the language, being well-prepare, having discussions with friends, finding unfamiliar word or translating the language and speeding up the intonation or slowing down the intonation, praying, being confidence, calming down, and taking a deep breath.

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