

INVESTIGATING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING ANXIETY IN PUBLIC SPEAKING ACTIVITY AT ENGLISH DEPARTMENT OF UNISMA

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Abstract: This study aimed to investigate about level of EFL students speaking anxiety in public speaking activity at English Department of UNISMA and solution of speaking anxiety. This research used descriptive quantitative and qualitative method with purposive sampling techniques. The participants are the fourth-semester students who are joining public speaking class. The researcher used PSCAS questionnaire and interview as the instrument. Thus, the total participating in this questionnaire was 60 students and 5 students were selected to be purposively respondent to join the interview. The result of this study is the fourth-semester students at English Department of UNISMA had moderate level speaking anxiety. It implies that the students "sometimes" feel anxious using English when they join public speaking class, and based on their anxiety the EFL students have some solutions in speaking anxiety.

Keywords: EFL Students, Anxiety, Public Speaking Activity

INTRODUCTION

Students frequently experience language anxiety, which is a regular occurrence. Students generally struggle with learning languages. When teaching strategies are flawed, students often believe that English is challenging and become afraid to communicate in language in class. Generally speaking, anxiety can be characterized as a complicated idea that does not just depend on a person's level of self-efficacy, and assessment of potential and perceived threats some cases (Huda & Ma'mun, 2020).

As they begin their education and jobs, college students must develop the crucial talent of public speaking. However, people frequently shy away from public speaking because they are unable to control their fear when speaking in front of others. The objective of the present study was to investigate the link between physical flexibility, stress tolerance, and public speaking anxiety (Gallego, 2020). In front of a

sizable audience, public speaking is a type of communication that usually takes the shape of a speech or presentation. It aims to educate, persuade, or amuse the audience. According to Astuti (2011) as cited in Sugianti (2021), public speaking is a strategy for getting a message or concept across to an audience in order to improve their comprehension of the material or alter their perspective. Furthermore, according to Beebe (2013) referenced in Sugianti (2021), pointed that speaking in front of a group of people with a clear message is known as public speaking. The speaker will stand out and rise above typical people whose opinions, qualities, if they can master the skill of public speaking and appearances, society rarely considers and rearranges and features as potential, which merits their attention.

According to Peng (2014) as cited in (Liu, 2018), the anxiety that comes with learning a second or foreign language is said to be triggered by dread of speaking. While speaking English, some of them even experience mental blocks (as cited in Liu, 2006). Anxiety over learning a foreign language has long been studied. Researchers and academics discovered that worry has a crippling impact on the process of learning a second language, which can negatively impact performance over time and even prevent the growth of language proficiency.

One of the most nerve-wracking kinds of communication is public speaking, which is also one of people's most common fears (Dwyer & Davidson, 2012). On the other hand, McCroskey (1997) referenced in Kelsen (2019) claimed that communication-related anxiety it consists of elements that include 2 interrelated factors, namely characteristics possessed by a person (character or nature) and obstacles related to the influence of certain situations (circumstances).

State anxiety is situational anxiety, which happens in certain situations, such as when one is compelled to speak in class or in front of others, whereas trait anxiety is regarded to be largely stable and connected to one's personality. Furthermore, Bodie (2010) referenced in Gallego (2020) pointed that the nervousness a person feels before giving a speech or getting ready to speak in front of others is known as public speaking anxiety. According to Schneier, Heckelman, Garfinkel, Campeas, Fallon, Gitow and Liebowitz (1994) as cited in Gallego (2020), it has been suggested that public speaking

anxiety is linked to both education and impairment (e.g., school dropouts). Ruscio, Brown, Chiu, Sareen, Stein and Kessler (2008) as cited in Gallego (2020) pointed that the most prevalent type of social phobia, also known as social anxiety disorder, is anxiety over public speaking.

Many researchers such as Horwitz and Cope (1986); Young (1992) have claimed that Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) is one of the most psychologically debilitating phenomena that may negatively affect EFL learners' language learning. Furthermore, Young (1991) noted that EFL learners may have to deal with unnecessary levels of anxiety when learning EFL, leading to tension and stress which reduces their self-confidence. According to Horwitz (2001) as cited in Alnahidh and Altalhab (2020), FLA may inhibit the language learning process and is considered one of the most significant issues in psychology and education.

Teachers are better able to support their pupils and provide a more conducive learning environment when they are able to identify the symptoms of worried kids. In addition, recognizing these manifestations will help the instructor differentiate between worried and weak students. To analyze the anxiety of students, it is necessary to define their characteristics and symptoms.

Anxiety with a foreign language has a debilitating component that badly impacts language learners. Students' speaking anxiety has been linked to communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation from the teacher or peers, classroom anxiety, and test anxiety, according to research on language anxiety. The researchers have researched the speaking anxiety of EFL students participating in public speaking activities at UNISMA's English Department. This study's primary objective is to investigate the amount of speaking anxiety among EFL students in order to provide them an opportunity to express their repressed feelings on the negative emotions that frequently arise in language classes, particularly while speaking in public. Then, it would be beneficial to provide them with valuable answers to alleviate their concern.

METHOD

This design of the study was descriptive quantitative and qualitative. According to Stewart, Gill, Chadwick and Treasure (2008) as cited in Essa (2017), that qualitative research design as the methodology for collecting the data. Investigating and defending the reasons behind why a certain occurrence is the way it is a goal of qualitative research. This research was descriptive quantitative and qualitative research due to the researcher want to analyze about the students' speaking anxiety in public speaking activity.

This research was conducted in the University of Islam Malang, specifically in English Department Study Program. The researcher took subject from students of 4B and 4C of English Department in University of Islam Malang in Academic Year 2020/2021. There were 3 Classes in English Department, 4A, 4B, and 4C, but the researcher chose two classes as a subject of the research as they are joining in public speaking classes. Thus, the total of students participated in this study was 60 students. Among 60 students, 5 students were selected using purposive sampling to get the interview. The choices were based on the highest score in speaking anxiety questionnaire. Purposive sampling technique was applied in this study. According to Edelweis (2020), purposive sampling is a sampling technique use by determining certain criteria (Sugiyono, 2008).

In this study, the researcher used two instruments to collect the data. The first instrument was questionnaire and this was adopted from Public Speaking Class Anxiety Scale (PSCAS) (Yaikhong & Usaha, 2012). The questionnaire was validated to the speaking lecturer, and it consisting of seventeen questions. The questions are dealing with the feeling of anxiety faced by the EFL students. The second instrument were addressed to know the students' solutions of speaking anxiety in public speaking class.

The data of this study was analyzed was analyzed quantitatively by using SPSS version 2020. Using SPSS, the data analysis used descriptive analysis to gain the level of students' speaking anxiety in public speaking activity. Further the interpreting the profile use, it shows high if the mean score of use is between 3.45 and 5.00, medium if it is between 2.45 and 3.44, and low if it is between 1.00 and 2.44 (Oxford, 1990). While the

data from interviewed was analyzed by describing and classification it based on the theme of each question.

FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS

The data was obtained from the questionnaire about the speaking anxiety and the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to know the level of students speaking anxiety in public speaking activity. After analyzing the classification of students speaking anxiety questionnaire, the data is processed using SPSS20 for windows to determine the level of students speaking anxiety in public speaking activity. The results of the analysis are presented in table 1.

Table 1. The level of students' speaking anxiety in public speaking activity

Classification Item	Mean	Interpretation
Classification 1	3.40	Moderate
Classification 2	3.41	Moderate
Classification 3	3.13	Moderate
Classification 4	2.41	Low
Overall	3.08	Moderate

The table 1 shows the interpretation level of students speaking anxiety in public speaking activity. There are 4 classifications of communication apprehension factor, fear of negative evaluation factor, test anxiety factor and comfort in speaking English factor. Among 4 classifications, most of the students deployed classification 2 with the moderate level mean 3.41, followed by classification 1 with the moderate level mean 3.40, classification 3 with the moderate level mean 3.13, and classification 4 with the low level mean 2.41. It shows that they have a high level of anxiety in classification 2. Overall level of anxiety in speaking class was at a moderate level. It implies that students "sometimes" feel anxious when using English in public speaking activity.

The first finding is the overall level of student' speaking anxiety at a moderate level and it is supported by Sugianti (2021) who also states that the EFL students experienced at a medium level of public speaking anxiety.

Next, Solutions of English Department Students Speaking Anxiety in Public Speaking Class. This interview is conducted to the students who have high score in speaking anxiety questionnaire aspect fear of negative evaluation factor (FNE) in criteria level of highest anxiety. The result of the students' solutions when they are afraid that other students will laugh at them when their speaking English. The obtained data are as follows.

(S1): *"If I feel excessively anxious, I usually take a deep breath, then motivated myself with the words 'come on you can do it'".*

(S2): *"I try to be confident to speak in front of the speaking class".*

(S3): *"My solution to overcome this, for example when the lecturer gives a public speaking assignment and there is time to prepare it, I will continue to practice and practice so that there are no mistakes when I am public speaking in class".*

(S4): *"Know what you want to convey, clear my mind, and connect with listeners".*

(S5): *"My solution is I always talk to myself like I have to be confident and imagine that in the class it's just you and no one else. One more thing I have a lot of preparation.*

As the data above, the researcher got the results of the student's interview. The result of the students' solutions when they are afraid that other students will laugh at them when their speaking English are they try to motivated themselves with the words 'come on you can do it', they try to be more confident to speak in front of the speaking class, they try to practice their speaking skills so that there are not mistakes when they speak English in public speaking class, they try to connect with the listener and they have must a lot of preparation before speaking English in front of the class.

The finding is the students usually motivated themselves with the words ‘come on you can do it’ when they feel afraid of being laughed and it is supported by Al-Hassani (2022) that the EFL learners need enough time to practice English-speaking skills in the classroom and they should be motivated to speak English with anyone in and outside the classroom. Similarly, the students always practice their speaking skills, it can be benefits to them when they feel afraid being laughed is supported by Al-Sobhi and Preece (2018); Al-Ahdal (2014) state that being able to speak in real life helps a lot with communicating in both the target language and the native language. The EFL students were able to use their native language. When they learn English, they find that the two languages are very different. So, they make a conscious effort to learn English.

Next, the students’ solutions when they feel their heart pounding when they are going to be called to speaking English. The responses are presented below.

(S1): *“Like my previous answer, I’ll convince myself that I can do well, and I won’t be making eye contact and try to practice my speaking with other friends often”.*

(S2): *“Try positive thinking”.*

(S3): *“My solution, every day I study and find out what vocabs I don’t know. And when I am called to speak English in class, I will try my best to be able to speak English calmly and not feel anxious”.*

(S4): *“Prepare material calmly, not too fast when talking, calm down, relax, and smile”.*

(S5): *“Just calm myself”.*

From the data interview above, the results of the students’ solutions when they feel their heart pounding when they are going to be called to speaking English are they will convince themselves that they can speak well, they won’t be making eye contact with other

friends when because it can make they feel heart pounding when they speak English, they try to be positive thinking before prepare to speak, they find out vocabs that they don't know before, they try to not too fast when they are talking and just calmly.

Students practice their speaking skillwith try to speak with their friends while waiting to speak English in the classroom and when body feel heart pounding supported by Alrabai (2014) adds that English clubs should be made available to learners to give them more chances to use the target language. For example, students might tell their classmates about what they do during the day. Students use internet abilities to adds sources getting from internet before prepared to speak English supported by Herreid and Schiller (2013) said that the flipped classroom is appealing because "there are audio and video resources on the internet for almost any subject". They also said that this method seems to have a special appeal to students in this electronic age, where videos in particular have found a special place in the hearts of the awesome generation.

Next, the students' solutions when they feel embarrassed when they are requested to be a volunteer to speak English first. The students' responses are written in the following space.

(S1): *"I am appointed to volunteer in English, I sometimes tell my lectures when Iam not ready. Then I will prepare well for the next lesson"*.

(S2): *"Want to learn and try my best"*.

(S3): *"I will further increase my knowledge of English through books, theinternet, and even certain applications"*.

(S4): *"Practicing and eliminate doubts whether the grammar I use is correct, orthe words I use are correct. just speak confidently and start a conversation with simple sentences"*.

(S5): *"I feel my English not good but I try to practice more and more"*.

As the data shown above, the researcher got the results of the student's interview. The results of the students' solutions when they feel embarrassed when they are requested

to be a volunteer to speak English first are they try to tell their lectures that they are not ready to speak English first, so they have time to prepare well, they always study to speak English, they increase their knowledge of English through reading English books, internet, and even certain applications, they practice and eliminate their grammar that they use are correct or the words are correct, just speak confidently, start a conversation with simple sentences and they always practice their English more.

Students usually practicing and eliminate doubts whether the grammar that they use is correct when they are volunteered to speak English first is supported by Brown (2007) that practicing phonological or grammatical characteristics through a speaking performance can be initiated individually or in couples.

Next, the students' solutions when they feel parts of their body feel very tense and rigid when speaking English. The obtained data are as follows.

(S1): *"Usually, I will take a deep breath because slowly, I will relax and recover."*

(S2): *"Strive and positive thinking".*

(S3): *"My solution, every day I study and find out what vocabularies I don't know. And when I am called to speak English in class, I will try my best to be able to speak English calmly and not feel anxious".*

(S4): *"Stretch my body a few minutes before starting".*

(S5): *"Eat candy gum because it can increase concentration".*

Based on the data interview above, the results of the students' solutions when they feel parts of their body feel very tense and rigid when speaking English are the students try to relax and recover their body before speak English, they strive and study to find out the vocabularies that they don't know, so they can give their best to be able to speak English not feel anxious, they also stretch their body a few minutes before starting to speak, and they always eat candy gum because they think it can increase their concentrations before speak in public.

The solutions of students speaking anxiety in language classrooms using internet to find new vocabs, do more research, practice to speaking English also supported by Rafada (2017) that students' solutions of students speaking anxiety in language classrooms that using internet sites, practice reading English books.

Next, the students' solutions when they feel anxious while waiting to speak English. The students' solution are based on the following data.

(S1): *"To overcome this, I usually read the text I have made or remember whatthings I will say when my name is called"*.

(S2): *"Practice to speak English with my friend in class to not be afraid"*.

(S3): *"While waiting for my turn to speak English, I will practice speaking continuously"*.

(S4): *"Do more research and master the material, change the mindset, practicespeaking more, and be confident"*.

(S5): *"Prepare more about the topic"*.

From the data interview above, the results of the students' solutions when they feel anxious while waiting to speak English are they usually read the text that they have made or remember what things that they will say, they practice to speak with their friends in class to not be afraid, they do more research the material before speak, they try to change their mindset, try to be more confident, and they always prepare more about the topic that they are used to speak.

Next, the students' solutions when they find the difficult to coordinate their movements when speaking English. The data from interview are written below.

(S1): *"I need to learn how to move well when speaking and keep practicing"*.

(S2): *"Keep trying my best and be confident"*.

(S3): *“Before speaking English in class, I practice speaking using gestures as well. So that when talking in class you don’t find it difficult to coordinate movements”*.

(S4): *“Calm my body and mind, broaden your horizons, practice often, and always be confident”*.

(S5): *“I often practice to talk in front of mirror for around 5 minutes”*.

Based on the results above, the researcher got the results of the students’ solutions when they find the difficult to coordinate their movements when speaking English are they need to learn how to move well when speaking, usually they use their body gestures as well to practice speaking when talking in class when they don’t find it difficult to coordinate their movements, they try to broaden their horizons, and they often practice to talk in front of the mirror around 5 minutes.

Students practice their speaking using gestures as well when they have trouble in their movement and when their body feel very tense and rigid when speak English also supported by Tai (2014), in his article "The Application of Body Language in English Teaching," he wrote about the importance of body language for keeping interaction between the teacher and the student, making teaching more effective, and improving reading, listening, and speaking skills.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

From the findings and discussion presented, this current study concludes that the overall level anxiety of the fourth-semester students English Department of UNISMA were at a moderate level with the mean 3.08 of public speaking anxiety. Based on the students’ speaking anxiety in public speaking class, the students’ solutions are trying to be confident, practice their English continuously with their friends in classroom, preparing material to finding out new vocabs by read English book, practicing and eliminate their grammatical that their use is correct and use their body gestures as well when they have trouble in their movements when speaking English, their have searching more research to

speaking English getting the internet or some other and practicing their English as routines.

The findings are supported by some previous studies that students have level of public speaking anxiety at a moderate level. Students' solutions of students speaking anxiety in language classrooms that practice their speaking skill with other friend in their class, using internet sites to search more vocabs and practice reading English books. Students also need motivated when speaking English with anyone in inside or outside the classroom. The students' solution from this situation is they only need support and to be confident in order to minimize their speaking anxiety.

The suggestion for EFL Speaking teachers. This research hopes that the teachers should know their students' condition in learning and know the level of their speaking anxiety. It is purposed to provide appropriate teaching strategies.

Also, it is suggested for the future researcher. The researcher hopes that this research can be a reference for other researchers who have similar research and it could be supplementary to have more extended interview, questionnaire and references. For those who are interested in the similar study, future researchers need to have various or otherspeaking activities such as classroom presentation or role play activities, and they can find out the level of students' speaking anxiety in the class.

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