

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS SPEAKING ANXIETY IN LEARNING ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT

This article was conducted to find out the level of speaking anxiety in students and why students are anxious when learning speaking in English class. The participants in this study were eighth graders of junior high schools in several schools in Indonesia. Participants consisted of 41 grade 8 (VIII) students. The data was collected by using quantitative survey research method. The instrument in this study used the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) questionnaire adapted from Horwitz and Cope (1986). The results show that junior high school students experience anxiety at various levels. The dominant level of speaking anxiety by Junior High School learners was in anxious level of speaking anxiety. Of the 41 students, 16 (39%) students were anxious, 15 (37%) students were at the very anxious level, 8 (19%) students were mildly anxious, 2 (5%) students relaxed, and none (0%) of the students were at the very relaxed level. Based on factors that make students nervous when learning English, it can be concluded that grade 8 students are anxious with the highest score of 3.82 concerning about Fear of Negatif Evaluation. It means, when they feel afraid about how if their peers will judge their speaking ability, they are worried about being negatively evaluated. Then, the second highest is about Test Anxiety with a mean of 3.65. It means, students experience anxiety if they fail in the language test. Furthermore, the lowest average score of 3.58 is Communication Apprehension about they cannot fully understand what is said or corrected by the teacher.

Keywords: Speaking Anxiety, English Speaking, EFL Students

INTRODUCTION

Students have been learning English for years, but at this time many students still cannot speak English confidently and clearly. This is supported by Brown & Yule (1983) claim that the spoken language production is the most challenging parts of language acquiring. When studying English, numerous students have a tendency to remain quiet and simply absorb the information conveyed by the teacher. They lack the desire to engage in conversation with one another or with their educators. If students find themselves in such a situation, they may not be able to communicate proficiently. These situation about of anxiety experienced by students.

Anxiety is a feeling of tension, apprehension, and nervousness associated with the situation of the respective language learning (Horwitz et al., 1986). Anxiety is a sensation of apprehension regarding something that is going to occur or a mental occurrence that takes place within the human body. Anxiety is not just a feeling inside the body, but it has been observed that anxiety is caused by some causes outside the human body. Indicators of anxiety can be found in body language or verbal expression. Experiencing unease, panicky, fearful, stuttering or tense is a simple sign of anxiety as a clear indication of anxiety. Numerous students appear distressed, concerned, and apprehensive about being mocked, which is one of the primary origins of anxiety (Perkasa et al., 2022). (Santoso & Perodin, 2021) argue the main reason for the participants' anxiety while speaking was their worry about being accurate and using correct grammar.. Research conducted by Perkasa et al. (2022) found that effects of classroom anxiety on English learners causing negative thoughts, emotions, and feelings.

Negative anxiety reactions, tend to attract an anxious student tends from speaking activities. This happens because anxiety can cause students to struggle with comprehending and expressing themselves using oral communication (Horwitz et al., 1986). According to Dewi et al., (2020), speaking abilities and listening abilities are strongly associated since during contact, The ability to comprehend language and grammar, recognize sounds, and understand information are all skills that students need to develop. Mahdalena and Muslem (2021) contend that the ability to effectively learn speaking is not solely affected by cognitive factors, but also by factors relating to effectiveness.

Many researchers have carried out investigations on the fear of speaking in a classroom setting. A research on anxiety at students of senior high school was carried out by Hasanah, Marafad, and Kammaluddin (2019). The results of this study show that some things make pupil feel anxious when speaking English : mocked by peers, the teacher's personality, the difficulty of the English language, limited vocabulary, incomprehensible input, and overwhelming study materials.

From the previous study, anxiety is one the factor that most influences the activity of speaking English as a second language. Self-anxiety is assessed to be able to hinder students' speaking ability. So, the objective of this study is to investigate what factors of anxiety when communicating in a foreign language. However, these studies have focused on senior high school and university education. The gaps in the existing literature suggest that junior high schools rarely receive attention. Thus, this study was carried out to fill a gap in previous studies that intended to investigate the level and causes of speaking anxiety in middle school students' in some Indonesia schools. The researcher wanted to formulate the level and factor that students experienced about anxiety in speaking based on the previous background. In particular, it aimed to determine what factors might contribute to anxiety in the context of learning to speak English, focusing on the learners. Additional investigation into the anxiety related to speaking is necessary as a way to improve the English language acquisition of EFL students. The findings of this research can also help teachers' understanding of this occurrence, enabling them to enhance their instructional methods to alleviate students' fear of speaking. They can also employ suitable strategies and methodologies in teaching oral communication to decrease student apprehension in the classroom.

In order to further research, the researcher is interested in examining “ Students' Speaking Anxiety in Learning English in Some Junior High School Learners ” for his study.

METHOD

This research uses quantitative survey methods to find out about speaking anxiety level in students and why students are anxious when learning speaking in English class. To obtain complete data in analyzing the level that cause anxiety in students and what the factor is.

To select participants, the researcher do not require students to fill out the questionnaire, the questionnaire is filled out for those who are willing. Researchers examined 6 of junior high school from various Indonesian schools, namely SMPN 02 Tempursari, SMPN 01 Tempursari, SMP Islam Anurania, MTsN 02 Semarang City, Mimi School Surabaya, and SMPN 03 Umbu Ratu Nggay Barat. Participants consisted of 41 grade 8 (VIII) students, were (females = 24 ; males = 17). The ages of the participants ranged from 13-15 years.

This research using FLCAS questionare, In order to thoroughly analyze data in analyzing the levels and factors that trigger anxiety in students. To the participant, the Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) developed by Horwitz et al. (1986) questionnaires were distributed. The FLCAS (Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale) consists of 33 items that are rated on a scale from 1 to 5. Scale

from 1 to 5 is used rate each of the 33 items on the FLCAS (Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale), where 1 indicates 'Strongly Agree', 2 'Agree', 3 'Neither Agree nor disagree', 4 'Disagree', and 5 indicates 'Strongly Disagree'. Additionally, the researcher translated Horwitz's (1986) questionnaire from English to Indonesian to make it easier for the students in completing it. Fitri Awaliyatush Sholihah, English lecturer in the English Education Department at the University of Islam Malang, has been validated this questionnaire.

In order to thoroughly analyze data in analyzing the levels and factors that cause anxiety in students, 33 questionnaire items FLCAS questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data. The first step is distributing link of google form to the participants. In this study, a questionnaire used by researchers is a closed questionnaire because the respondent only has to choose one of the answers provided on the answer sheet. The questionnaire in this study was in the form of a Likert scale that are rated on a scale from 1 to 5. Where 1 indicates 'Strongly Agree', 2 'Agree', 3 'Neither Agree nor disagree', 4 'Disagree', and 5 indicates 'Strongly Disagree'. After the students finished filling out the questionnaire, the researcher collected it directly. Then the researcher analyzed it to be more explicit explanation. Through this analysis (questionnaire) the researcher gained the data about how far the students perceived anxiety in their learning and what the level of their anxiety.

After the data from the questionnaire was collected, I then tabulated the data into Excel software to be ready for processing. The data for every answer provided by the participants in analysis the levels of students' nervousness when they speaking were calculated to determine the total score. Positive statement point was ranging from 1-5 then the point for negative statement was ranging from 5-1. The range for the scores Is from a minimum of 33 thirty-three to a maximum of 165. The greater the level of anxiety felt by the participant, the higher the overall score. Once the scores for each participant's anxiety level were determined, they will be grouped into different categories. Next, to demonstrate the comparison of the overall results for each level of anxiety reported by the participant, the data was calculated and transformed into percentages. Next, in analyzing the factors that make students feel anxiety, researchers used 22 negative statements from the FLCAS questionare from Horwitz (1986). Then, from all the negative statements, the data were calculated based on the category of each type of student's speaking anxiety in FLCAS. Then, the data was calculated and organized according to the quantity of statements in each classification of anxiety classifications. Ultimately, the data is transformed into an average to see which category of anxiety types are have the highest average.

The following table displayed the likert scale by Horwitz et al., (1986), used to determine student participation levels of anxiety using FLCAS:

Statement	Scoring				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Positive	1	2	3	4	5
Negative	5	4	3	2	1

This FLCAS includes three primary categories of regarding language anxiety:

ANXIETY TYPES	QUESTION NUMBER
Communication Apprehension	1, 4, 15, 24, 27, 29, 30.
Test Anxiety	3, 6, 10, 12, 16, 17, 20, 21, 26
Fear of Negative Evaluation	7, 13, 19, 23, 31, 33

The individuals' anxiety levels were classified using an adopted Oetting's (1983) scale. The findings demonstrated that the anxiety level was determined by the classification of FLCAS scale as follows:

Range	Level
124-165	Very anxious
107-123	Anxious
86-106	Mildly Anxious
65-85	Relaxed
33-64	Very Relaxed

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this data analysis, the FLCAS questionnaire present the level and factor of junior high school students' speaking anxiety. The following paragraphs provide clearer information about the data obtained from the FLCAS questionnaire.

The Levels of English-Speaking Anxiety

The data collected from FLCAS questions was tabulated and calculated to determine each student's overall score, and the data then divided into various category levels. The levels of anxiety derived from the data analysis can be divided in five categories: very relaxed, relaxed, mildly anxious, and very anxious. The following table displays the levels given in the FLCAS questionnaire:

The Summary of Students Speaking Anxiety Levels

Range	Level of Anxiety	Students	(%)
107-123	Anxious	16	39 %
124-165	Very Anxious	15	37 %
86-106	Mildly Anxious	8	19 %
65-85	Relaxed	2	5 %
33-64	Very Relaxed	-	0 %
		41 Students	100 %

Based on table, it can be seen that the level of students speaking anxiety, there were varieties (Verayitis) of responses from the all respondents. The writer found that there were 16 (39%) students at the "anxious" level. There were 15 (37%) students at the "very anxious" level. The level of "mildly a students' was 8 (19%) students. 2 students (5%) were "relaxed" level in this data. Nevertheless, the writer found an interesting phenomenon, whereby out of the 41 participants not one (0 %) had "very relaxed" levels. This implies that speaking in English causes anxiety for each and every person. The results of the data findings, the majority of students by Junior High School learners was in anxious about speaking.

The Factors of English-Speaking Anxiety

The results consisted of 41 student responses with 22 statements negative which were classified into three domains; communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation.

Communication Apprehension

Statements	Mean
FLCAS 29 • I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.	3.58
FLCAS 24 • I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.	3.46
FLCAS 27 • I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.	3.46
FLCAS 4 • It frightens me when I do not understand what the teacher is saying in foreign language.	3.24
FLCAS 1 • I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.	3.14
FLCAS 30 • I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.	3.14
FLCAS 15 • I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.	3.07

Based on the table above, the high average is 3.58 (Mean) is in the statement FLCAS no 29 “I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says”. This implies that most students when learning English have experience anxiety when they don't understand the teacher's explanation due to lack of vocabulary mastery.

Test Anxiety

Statements	Mean
FLCAS 10 • I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class	3.65
FLCAS 16 • Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it	3.53
FLCAS 26 • I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.	3.41
FLCAS 12 • In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know	3.07
FLCAS 20 • I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class.	3.04
FLCAS 6 • During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.	2.82
FLCAS 3 • I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.	2.76
FLCAS 21 • The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.	2.56
FLCAS 17 • I often feel like not going to my language class.	2.51

Based on the table above, the high average is 3.65 (Mean) is in the statement FLCAS no 10 “I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class”. Students are worried about failing a language exam. Furthermore, they are concerned about their preparedness.

Fear of Negative Evaluation

Statements	Mean
FLCAS 23 • I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.	3.82
FLCAS 7 • I keep thinking that the other students are better at language than I am.	3.73
FLCAS 19 • I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	3.73
FLCAS 33 • I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.	3.73
FLCAS 31 • I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.	3.46
FLCAS 13 • It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.	3.19

According to the questionnaire results, the highest score of students in anxiety type came from “Fear of Negative Evaluation” as shown by item 23, with an average is 3.82 “I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do”. It implies that the most of the students in the class experience the anxiety.

DISCUSSION

The aim of this study is to determine the level of anxiety among students who are learning to speak English in junior high school as well as the contributing factors. Related to the first research question about the levels of English-speaking anxiety, Junior High School students the large number was in “anxious” level of speaking anxiety. 16 participants (39%), or those with a high level of speaking anxiety, fell into the ‘anxious’ category. 15 (37%) of the participants had “Very anxious” experiences, according to the results. That means half of the students experience anxiety when learning to speak English. Similarly Abrar (2016), in his findings found that the participants during the English speaking learning activities experienced a high level of anxiety. Then from 8 (19%) participants are at the level of “mildly Anxious”. Meanwhile, there are 2 (5%) students who are at the “Relaxed” level. It implies that they are not experiencing any anxiety-related issues. In this research study, the author discovered that there were 0% of respondents which is on the level “Very Relaxed”.

Related to the second research question about the factors can contribute to students experienced anxiety, which are:

Communication Apprehension

Students are worried because they cannot fully understand what is said or corrected by the teacher. This study’s findings support support with Umisara et al., (2021), Researchers discovered that

learners difficulty to speak and understand information in English, which makes them anxious while communicating in the language.

In addition, one of the things that might make learning English anxiety is factor vocabulary. Because of limited vocabulary, so that students do not really understand what their teacher conveys. Noerjanah & Dhigayuka (2020), in their findings also found that the difficulties most students face in speaking are students who lack mastery vocabulary.

Test Anxiety

In this case, the students experience anxiety if they fail in the language test. Umisara et al., (2021) discovered a comparable outcome, where students who displayed fear of failure in problem-solving also afraid about encountering failure in speaking activities.

Fear of Negatif Evaluation

Findings from the questionnaire, “Fear of Negative Evaluation” is the highest average type of student anxiety. It can be concluded that they feel afraid about how if their peers will judge their speaking ability, they are worried about being negatively evaluated. A similar result was found by Hasanah (2019), where other students smiled and laughed when a student make a mistake while speaking in public.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The aims of this study is to identify speaking anxiety level and factor of students in 8 grade of junior high school from various Indonesian schools. Firstly, according to the preceding chapter’s findings and discussion, most of the students admitted that they were getting anxious in speaking English. Junior high school students experience anxiety at various levels. The dominant level of speaking anxiety by Junior High School learners was in anxious level of speaking anxiety. The percentage of students’ response was also categorized into five type levels of anxiety. Of the 41 students, 16 (39%) students were anxious, 15 (37%) students were at the very anxious level, 8 (19%) students were mildly Anxious, 2 (5%) students relaxed, and not one (0%) of the students were very relaxed level. Student response the FLCAS questionnaire proved that almost all students answered that they felt anxiety when learning to communicate in English. Therefore, it is important to control the level of speaking anxiety because it can hinder students’ speaking performance.

Secondly, based on factors that make students nervous when learning English, it is possible to conclude that grade 8 students are anxious with the highest score of 3.82 concerning about Fear of Negatif Evaluation. It means, when they feel afraid about how if their peers will judge their speaking ability, they are worried about being negatively evaluated. Then, the second highest is about Test Anxiety with a mean of 3.65. It means, students experience anxiety if they fail in the language test. Furthermore, the lowest average score of 3.58 is Communiatiom Apprehension about they cannot fully understand what is said or corrected by the teacher.

Suggestion

From the conclusion provided above, the author wishes to give suggestion to:

1. Teachers

Teachers need to know the level of student anxiety from the start, so they can take good care of it during the learning process.

2. Students

Students should not mock and laugh at their friends if their friends make mistakes. Instead, students must be able to work together to create a comfortable classroom atmosphere.

3. Future reseacher

Further research on specific methods to help students overcome anxiety when learning English is urgently needed.

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