

STUDENTS' ANXIETIES IN SPEAKING CLASS

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Abstract

This qualitative research discussed the anxieties the students of semester 3, English Department, IAIN STS Jambi faced during the speaking class. The result of the research indicated that the causes of the students' anxieties were the lack of grammar mastery, pronunciation problem, lack of vocabulary, unconfident feeling, fear of making mistakes and feared of being laughed by other students. But the dominant factors found were the lack of grammar, the lack of good pronunciation, and lack of vocabulary mastery. The lecturer had taken part to overcome these problems by giving them motivation not to give up easily, how to cope with vocabulary problems, and how to prepare well before coming into the class.

Key words : *Anxieties, the causes of anxieties.*

1. Introduction

For some Indonesians, English language is a foreign language, where the people learn English in different majors for different purposes. For university students, English is very important as they have to deal with many activities using English, such as, reading text books in English or others. Speaking is also one of the activities they should develop as speaking is very important for them to communicate with other people. Nunan (2000 : 39) says that speaking is one of the key aspects of learning a foreign language. As a productive skill, speaking should be mastered fluently by the students in order to be understood by their interlocutors. Developing students ability, in this case, fluent in speaking is not an easy matters. Many obstacles are ahead them, as well as their teachers. So, no wonder that, for several students, they need highly motivation and persistence for a long time.

During the *groundtour* research in the class, I found that some students have problems in their speaking smooth where different students had different flow. It was very markedly noticed when they were asked to speak in front of the class. Some of the weaknesses appeared to the surface are losing the vocabulary, confusing to apply appropriate grammar rule, and others. Some of them looked to be very shy and felt helplessly anxiety. Their anxieties took my attention as they felt very uneasy to speak in front of the class. Longman (2003:16) defines that "anxiety is fear and worry". Anxiety will bring about fear and worry which will impair self-confidence and obstructs the step to develop the ability. Anxiety is one of the factors disturbing to students to develop their achievement in speaking. Arnold and Brown's (1999 : 8) concludes that anxiety is quite possible as

the effective factor that most pervasively obstructs the learning process especially in speaking. Feeling anxious can make them stuck in the middle of the conversation and cannot deliver the topic of the conversation. The students of university that have anxieties tend to be less active and less interested in following the lesson. This would be detrimental and difficult to achieve their goals in speaking class. Anxiety, as it is natural to occur, not only happen at the freshmen, but also occurs in senior level.

In this research, based on the pre observation which took place in English department at third semester in class-C, it provent that some of them had the problem with anxiety. I argued that the their carelessness, their avoiding the conversation, their low response to verbal production and their lack of voluntering the class they showed were the symptoms of anxieties. Oxford, in Fetty (2010), confirming that lack of verbal production and lack of voluntering the class are the symptoms of anxiety.

So, for me, it is very important to know the causes of students' anxieties in speaking class. By knowing the student's anxieties, we can help them to reduce their anxiety and help to increase confidence in their speaking class. Each student has different way to anticipate their anxiety in speaking class. This research, for this purpose, will highlight the anxieties occurred to the students of english department, IAIN STS Jambi, semester 3, class-C, consisting of 15 students. I will highlight the causes as well as their the lecturer's anticipation of the anxiety they face.

Many people have contributed to the writings of anxiety. One of them is Muhammad Saukat Ansari's (2015), work entitled: *Speaking anxiety in ESL / EFL classrooms : A holistic approach and practical study*. In this research, he discussed the characteristics of students who suffer from second / foreign language speaking anxiety, the sources and incorporation of case study finding and supportive classroom atmosphere help target students overcome

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their anxiety. Employing a qualitative design and case study approach, the data for this study were collected in a classroom context where the participants are thirty students in the higher secondary level (12 th class) at L.N.Mithila University. The result indicate that about ten of these students were experiencing english language speaking anxiety as a result of fear of negative evaluation from their peers and perception of low ability in relation to their peers. This research also found that about thirteen students were not in a mood to engage themselves into speaking exercises at all.

The similarity of the research is that we have the same focus, that is, anxiety in speaking English. While the differences are in the subject of this research where my research is focus is quite simple, namely, to look for the causes of their anxieties during English speaking class and the probabel way they handle them. Saukani's research focus on the characteristic of students who suffered from anxiety. As both the reseach is qualitative in nature, the deep of the content is also different. Saukat found that by incorporating many resouces including applying supportive atmosphere of the class, this will reduce students anxiety in their speaking class. While for my research, atmosphere of the class is not concluded and formatted before.

2. Method

This research is qualitative in nature. Moleong (2014) stated that the source of data in qualitative research can be collected through observation, interview, documentation, field note, photo, recording, and picture.

Observation, as stated by Heigham & Croker (2009:166) is a conscious noticing and detailed examination of participants' behavior in a naturalistic setting. I took primary data from observation in C class of students in English education program IAIN STS JAMBI. Here, I acted as non-participant observer which only observed the event without involved being a participant.

Moreover, I used the recorder and field notes as the supporting instument to collect the data. I collected the data by using recorder to record the activities in the class and also the causes of students' anxiety in speaking class.

Interview, In this research, I conducted face-to-face interviews with the lecturer and the participants. In this research, I used purposive sampling to choose the students who predictably have anxiety. I proposed some questions related to the research question to get the information and their experiences deeply. This kinds of interview also known as dept interview, where technically is more flexible than the structured one (Sugiyono, 2006:320). Notetaking is also applied to get additional information during the interview. For analysing the data, I employed Miles and Huberman's (1994:24) flow analysis models. He

divided flow analysis models into three flow activities which were used in this research. Those analysis components are data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing.

Data reduction refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data that appear in written from field notes or transcriptions. In this research, after collecting the data through the activity of observation, recording and interviewing, I selected, transcribed, and organized the raw data which refer to the research problems being investigated in the research. In other words, the data which were not relevant were discarded and excluded and the relevant data were included.

Miles and Huberman's (1994:24) second major flow of analysis activity is data display. Display generically means organized, compressed assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and actions. Data display was the second form of data analysis after the process of selecting, simplifying, and organizing raw data. The selected and organize data were then displayed carefully in the form of descriptive text. In displaying the data, the formulation of research questions were taken to be considered in order to make the data displayed always meet the research questions. The data that were displayed here were the main data.

The last steps are conclusion drawing. Drawing some inferences are the final step after the data presentation. The initial conclusions are remained temporary to provide possibility of changings if other valid evidences supporting to the findings are collected later.

3. Findings.

a. Class activities

Before coming into the findings of this research, I will demonstrate the facts of what happened in the class when the students were treated with the activities, speaking activities. The responses provided would lead us into conclusion whether they were in anxieties or not. In this research, I used observation checklish to identify the students anxiety in speaking class. Most of them have anxiety but the level of their anxiety is different from one to another. I have videotaped the students when they were asked to do activities of speaking both with their friends or when they were asked to speak in front of the class. In This way, I could see the symptoms of students who had anxiety in their physical actions.

I found some anxiety symptoms such as low levels of verbal production and lack of volunteering in the class in my first making of the observation. Low levels of verbal production produce students to keep silent, or giving very slow response to the command given to them. Lack of volunteering in the class was in the form of keeping silent and keeping reluctant to do what the teacher asked them to do

until one of them voluntarily did what the teacher asked them to do. (Observation, 18th 2016).

In second meeting on 26 september 2016, the teacher assigned students to deliver their speech in front of the class personally. They would be singled to speak in front of their friends. The students seemed to have burdens in their brain, but the teacher gave motivation before they started to speech in order to be able to speech without thinking about the risk and the grade they would have. This was done to diminish the students anxiety when the students gave the speech in front of the class.

The lecturer chose the students randomly to deliver their speech and this situation made the student anxious. When one of them was called to come forward, he/she seemed to be worry and afraid to come forward and took a long time for him/her to come forward. In deed, Most of the students have made the preparation before, but in reality, several of them stucked in the middle of the speech. Several of them could only delivered the speech for 1-2 minutes. Several of them couldnot deliver the speech fluently. They found difficult to use English and make a good sentences. They just spoke in front of the class for 1 minute and then kept silent wanting help from their friends using eyecontact and other gestures. It seemed that their preparation was very insufficient, not enough.

In my last observation and interview, 3 oktober 2016, I found that the students kept repeated the same mistakes that they have done in the speaking class before. They did not focuss on the lesson. They chatted with his or her classmate during the lesson was occuring and some of them was doing the asigments. The students did not focuss to study as they were thinking about another homework. Some students seemed to be very anxious waiting the lecturer call her or his name to come forward to speech. I found that several of the students seemed hesitant to come forward and felt worry before they started to speech.

After three meeting in speaking class, I found that the students in class-C were lack of participation in class. I kept some names on them. Several of them just kept silent and sometimes they were busy with their work like playing with their handpones, doing other homework and making jokes with their classmates. Using interview, I found the data about the causes of students' anxiety and how the lecture anticipate and help them with their anxiety. There were 15 students from third semester from class- C class who I interviewed in this research. (Interview, 3-5 Oct 2016).

2. Causes of anxieties

Based on interview with the Students, I found that there were some causes bring about anxieties to students. Grammar is one of causes of students anxiety in speaking class. Most all of the students I had interviewed have a problems in

grammar. One of them (RA) said " the causes of my anxiety is grammar, and lack of vocabulary. So I have difficult to say something ". Grammar has a big impact in speaking. Most of students kept thinking about grammar before speaking and this make them stuck when they speak.

The second causes of students anxiety in speaking class is pronunciation. They tended to make wrong pronunciation. The student, (M) said " I am afraid if the pronunciation is wrong ". If the pronunciation is not clear or wrong, the massage from the speaker would not be delivered well. The students felt bashful to interact in the class using English because of the pronunciation problem.

Vocabulary is the third causes of student's anxiety in speaking class. Lack of vocabulary was identified as a big problem faced by the students in speaking class. Some students said " firstly, my grammar is not good and I am lack of vocabulary "(NS) and (NL) said " Iam afraid if the sentence is wrong, because of lack of grammar and also the vocabulary". Statements like this clearly indicated that the students often become anxious in speaking when they should deliver the speech in front of the class because of the problems.

The four causes of students anxiety in speaking class is their lack of preparation. The student, (MSG) said " Because it is not my habit and I study here started from low level ". The statement indicated that the students did not have enough preparation and had low level of english proficiency.

Fear of making mistakes is the causes of student's anxiety in speaking class no five. Probably influenced by the confusion ideology emphasizing perfect performance, the students in the present study also feared of making mistakes, which made them very anxious when speaking english in the class or in front of the class. They said " I am afraid if the sentence, grammar, and also the vocabulary are wrong, " said (NL), and other students , (MJ) said " I am just afraid of making mistakes".

Fear of being laughed caused many students to become anxious when they must speak English in front of the class. As one student, (YS), stated, " the causes of my anxiety is my afraid if my friends do not understand what I say, fear from being laughed and I have problem with pronunciation ".

Unconfident feeling also caused many students to become anxious when they speak English. For example, one student, (NH), stated, " I am not confident enough in my grammar, in vocabulary I use". I interviewed the lecturer, (ER), and he concluded the result of the interview. Based on the result of the interview, he said if the students in the class have suffered from anxieties. " Anxiety, otomatically yes. Every normal people who deliver speech in public, of course, will feel anxiety". And the causes of students anxiety in speaking class according to the lecturer is because the students' lack

of vocabulary, lack of grammar, lack of pronunciation and lack of practice.

3. Teacher's part

After following the lecturer for some days in this research, I was tickled to ask him, interviewed him, (October 6th, 2016) about his part in anticipating his students anxieties in his speaking class. It seemed that his students suffered from anxieties which prevented them from being perfect in their performance in the class. I got quite satisfying answer dealing with his students problem. He enumerated some steps taken to, at least, reduced his students problem on anxieties.

" I keep remind them to practice at home before they come into the class", the Lecturer said. When confirmed the students, I found that 12 of them keep practising at home before coming into the class. I keep telling them that practice makes perfect", the lecturer added.

Marion Williams and Robert Burden suggest that motivation is a state of cognitive arousal which provokes a decision to act, as a result of which there is sustained intellectual and / or physical effort' so that the person can achieve some previously set goal (William and burner sated in Jeremy Harmer, 2007). I observed, that the lecturer, in this case, tried to motivate the students not to give up easily with their condition.

Students are also having problem with the insufficient stock of vocabulary. " I have taught them the way to memorize vocabulary", he said. But indeed, " during my class, I observed that their vocabulary development is just far from being developed well. I must work hard for this', he added. I also asked them to remain calm and concentrate and focus in their study, but it seemed that I still have to work hard. I also open their horizon by opening positive-self talk, relaxation techniques (Wooldroo, 2006) to stimulate them the importance of having self consciousness in study. I hope it will work someday," the lecturer closed the conversation.

4. Conclusion

Based on the result of research, I can conclude that the causes of students anxieties in speaking class are their lacking mastery of Grammar, Pronunciation, vocabulary. They also felt unconfident with their own ability, they are feared of making mistakes, feared of being laughed, being lacked of practice and being lacked in preparation. Of all the causes, I conclude that there are three dominant causes of students anxieties in speaking class, those are about lack of grammar, lack of pronunciation ability and lack of vocabulary building. Almost all of the students have experienced problems with that causes.

The lecturer also took his parts in his effort to reduce his students anxieties. Some of the steps taken are encouraging and reminding his students to keep practising before coming into the class, motivating them not to give up with their anxieties very easily and providing his students with the way to memorize the vocabulary.

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