



ASSESSING STUDENT'S ANXIETY ON SPEAKING AT JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN SOUTHWEST ACEH

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to investigate the level of students' anxiety students in speaking performance in class. This study used a quantitative cross-sectional design. 157 participants from SMPN 2 Susoh and SMPN 1 Jeumpa in Southwest Aceh participated in the study. 100 data point was analyzed descriptively through SPSS software. Oetting's (1983) scale of students' anxiety level in speaking Performance. The result and discussions were presented further in the study. in class.

Keywords: anxiety, speaking, classroom, SMPN 1 Jeumpa, SMPN 2 Susoh

INTRODUCTION

English is a language that has been approved as an international language (Basri, 2019). As the world's lingua franca, of course, it is very important to teach English to students all over the world, including Indonesia, starting from an early age. students in Indonesia have started learning English since elementary school, but the fact is that many students have not been able to master the basic use of English, especially in the field of speaking. Nunan (1990) states that speaking is a very important skill and is the most important thing in learning a second language such as English because speaking is something that is used to communicate. Furthermore, speaking is one thing that determines a person's success in learning the language used inside and outside the classroom. Therefore, in learning English, the most important thing in terms of mastery is speaking, but when learning English, of course, many factors make it difficult for students to learn it, one of which is anxiety within them.

According to Sutarsyah (2017), several variables can affect students' speaking performance. Among these variables, language anxiety is a very common problem affecting students' speaking performance. Language anxiety, a complex psychological construct, is considered an affective variable in language learning. This means that language anxiety has also become one of the factors involved in the success of language learning, either positively or negatively. Thornbury in (Basri, 2019) states that lack of mastery of vocabulary, fear of being wrong when practicing, and lack of confidence in his statements are some of the things that make students feel anxious about mastering English. It doesn't only happen to students who are still in school, but this also happens to people who



need knowledge of English, for example, such as female workers who want to work abroad.

Speaking a foreign language in a non-native English-speaking country can be a big challenge in speaking activities. Limited exposure, cultural differences, and differences in sound systems are the main factors in dealing with difficulties in speaking in Asian countries, one of which is Indonesia.

In Indonesia, this research is not something that has been studied. There have been many previous studies that have discussed students' anxiety in speaking English. such as Ningsih (2017) stating that there are several factors obtained from the results of their research that come from the teacher or the students themselves. In another previous study conducted by Erdiana, Daud, Sari, & Dwitami, (2020), investigating the speaking anxiety of grade 2 junior high school students in Banda Aceh, the results showed that 59% of students experienced moderate levels of speaking anxiety. Therefore, it can be concluded that the level of anxiety in speaking English is a challenge in speaking performance. Therefore this study aims to find out students' anxiety levels that possibly cause students to always feel anxious and not dare to speak English in front of their friends and public. For that reason, this research is very useful for readers and as a reference for students who experience the same thing. Thus, the researcher proposed two questions to guide this study which include: (a) What is students' anxiety level in speaking performance? And (b) What factors affecting students' anxiety in speaking performance?

METHODS

This research is a quantitative study that aims to analyze the level of students' anxiety about speaking performance. In collecting quantitative data, researchers used a cross-sectional survey. A mathematical method called descriptive statistics is used to analyze quantitative data, Creswell (2012). Descriptive statistics are used to explain or provide an overview of the characteristics of a data set without drawing general conclusions (Ghozali, 2016). The presentation of descriptive statistical data is usually in the form of diagrams or tables. Descriptive statistical analysis consists of the average, median, maximum, minimum, and standard deviation values.

In general, the population is a group of people who are used as respondents in a study. Rangkuti (2014) argues that the population is all objects or subjects in a particular field and has expertise related to the research problem being studied. Moreover, sampling is an important part of research. Therefore, the writer took students from SMPN 2 Susoh and SMPN 1 Jeumpa as the population. The sample of this research is the seventh and eighth-grade students of the school. The number of samples is 157 students. The research was conducted in two locations, namely SMPN 2 Susoh and SMPN 1 Jeumpa. The first place is SMPN 2 Susoh, this school is located in Padang Baru, Susoh, Southwest Aceh. then the last place is SMPN 1 Jeumpa which is located in Cot Mane, Jeumpa, Southwest Aceh.

Questionnaires are used to collect data in this study. The instrument was taken by HORWITZ (1986). The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

(FLCAS) from HORWITZ (1986) was adapted for understanding junior high school students' anxiety levels. The questionnaire consists of 33 items. The questionnaire uses a Likert scale consisting of five choices from one to five. The instrument was translated into Bahasa Indonesia to get the students to respond to the instrument well. The translation process has been done under the supervision of an English Education department lecturer in Indonesia.

After the data collection process, there were 157 data. After cleaning the data, 100 data went through a data analysis process. Data from the questionnaire were analyzed using a statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) 29 version to determine the frequency of scores of students' anxiety in speaking performance and level. Student anxiety scores in speaking performance are categorized based on the Oetting scale (1983). After analysis, the data was included in a percentage diagram differentiating the level of anxiety experienced by respondents.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to determine the level of students' anxiety in classroom speaking performance where in this study the level of "very anxious" was 8% and "Anxious" had a higher percentage than other levels, namely 35%. This research is also in line with the work of Kirana & Mursida (2022). Their research suggested that students' anxiety in speaking English is at more anxious level than at other levels, which was at 63.3%. At the next level, followed by the mildly anxious level of 32% which showed that 32 students experienced "moderate" anxiety. Following the words of Erdiana et al., (2020), stated that the results of the study showed that 59% of students experienced a medium - level of speaking anxiety where 59% has several reasons for fear of speaking in front of their friends in class, namely: the fear of receiving bad comments and fear of being corrected by the teacher in front of his friends. Finally, the "relaxed" level is 19% and the "very relaxed" level is only 6%. The percentage of "very relaxed" is the lowest present of any other level. This shows that students in southwest Aceh have greater anxiety in classroom speaking performance. This research is in line with Bidari et al., (2021) research. The research indicated their research students have a greater percentage of "anxious" levels than relaxed, namely "relaxed" by as much as 18% and 1% who only feel "very relaxed" in classroom speaking performance.

The reasons causing students' high anxiety in speaking performance included item 2, (I worry about making mistakes in language class). This item shows 44% students' rate for the "strongly agree" option. According to Abdullah & Rahman, (2005) that speaking is a difficult skill because students are required to speak and respond directly in an appropriate manner, while students' ability to choose the right vocabulary and correct grammar is still lacking. It was obvious that vocabulary and grammar become students' concerns in speaking voluntarily.

Furthermore, item 22, (I feel pressure to prepare very well for language class) received 43% students' responses in the "agree" category. This means the students requires good self-preparation prior to attending English class. Therefore sometimes they think that attending English class was wasteful and useless. As



Vitasari et al., (2010) indicated that students have different expectations from reality in preparing to start class which ultimately causes anxiety in students learning when it did not meet their expectations.

The last, item 5, (It would bother me at all to take more foreign language classes) received 42% students' response in "agree" option. This means the language is difficult to understand and students' lack of motivation to learn, feel they don't need to take additional classes and students also think that taking additional classes is just a waste of time learning English.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research that has been done, it can be concluded that the anxiety level of Junior High Schools: SMPN 2 Susoh and SMPN 1 Jeumpa in Southwest Aceh has 35% level of anxiety and 8% very anxious level which shows that these students experienced anxiety in class speaking performance. The main reason for the anxiety is when speaking English in front of the class, they are afraid of receiving negative comments from the teacher and other students, they are afraid of being corrected by the teacher in front of other students, they are not confident in speaking English in class, and they feel embarrassed to speak English in front of them, other students. Therefore, this research can help educators to overcome student anxiety and reduce student anxiety in classroom speaking performance making students confident in classroom speaking performance.

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