AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' ANXIETY DURING SPEAKING ACTIVITIES

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Abstract: *The purposes of this research are to analyze the causes and strategies of students' anxiety during speaking activities. This research is a qualitative research design which utilize case study. The sample of this study was selected using purposive sampling. The participants were six students in the fourth semester who are majoring English language education of Abulyatama University. To collect the data, interview was used. The semi structured interview questions consist of 10 questions about the causes and strategies dealing with students' anxiety. Then, the interview data was analyzed using Miles and Huberman theory (1994). The result of interview reveals that the general causes of students' anxiety in speaking are a lack of vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, self-confidence, and knowledge. The strategies the students used when they dealt with anxiety are collecting a lot of vocabulary, having self-confidence, having preparation before start speaking, having self-relaxation, and having knowledge*

Key Word: Speaking, Anxiety, Strategies

Abstrak: Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis penyebab dan strategi kecemasan siswa selama kegiatan berbicara. Penelitian ini adalah desain penelitian kualitatif yang menggunakan studi kasus. Sampel dari penelitian ini dipilih menggunakan *purposive sampling*. Para peserta adalah enam mahasiswa di semester keempat jurusan pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Universitas Abulyatama. Untuk mengumpulkan data, dilakukan wawancara. Pertanyaan wawancara semi terstruktur terdiri dari 10 pertanyaan tentang penyebab dan strategi yang menangani kecemasan mahasiswa. Kemudian, data wawancara dianalisis menggunakan teori Miles dan Huberman (1994). Hasil wawancara mengungkapkan bahwa penyebab umum kecemasan siswa dalam berbicara adalah kurangnya kosa kata, tata bahasa, pengucapan, kepercayaan diri, dan pengetahuan. Strategi yang digunakan siswa ketika berurusan dengan kecemasan adalah mengumpulkan banyak kosa kata, memiliki kepercayaan diri, memiliki persiapan sebelum mulai berbicara, memiliki relaksasi diri, dan memiliki pengetahuan.

Kata kunci : Berbicara, Kecemasan, Strategi

Based on the writer's personal experience as an English learner, she feels that speaking skills is one of the interesting skills in English. However, many students have difficulties in speaking. Most of the time, the difficulty deals with anxiety. The causes of anxiety are usually about having the lack of vocabulary and confidence. It said by Adelina (2017) that adequate

vocabulary mastery will make someone able to communicate. The more vocabularies mastered, the easier it is for someone to receive or convey broader and more complex information and speak confidently (confidence speaking), which is the initial stage of speaking ability.

In Indonesian context, English is taught from elementary school up to senior high school, but the students still have difficulties in speaking English. The large number of school graduates who cannot communicate in English has become a national problem in Indonesia (Mayangta, 2013). According to Ikhsaniyah (2022), the ability to speak English is often seen as a productive skill and the main purpose of learning English. Speaking is often used as a parameter to assess a person's English ability. The fact is that speaking English is the skill that often causes anxiety among students.

Especially at the university level, the students majoring English also encountered the similar problem in speaking English. The problem is primarily dealing with anxiety. According to Palazzolo (2020), everyone has positive and negative emotions. Generally, positive emotions are thought to mostly facilitate a student's performance, and negative emotions are generally associated with anxiety that makes performance seem to be reduced. It said by Tridinanti (2018) that one of the most common problems in conversation classes is the anxiety of speaking.

One of the keys for successful speaking is self-confidence. The English department students whom later become English teachers are required to have the confidence to show off their abilities later in front of their future students. As someone who will be an educator who will interact with a lot of people, this anxiety will happen frequently, and if we do not find a way to cope with it, then it will become harder. As stated by Diehl *et al*. (2019) that anxiety is specific to a given situation and may be triggered by factors associated with social interactions. Through increasing their self-confidence, the students are expected to have the courage to be skillful in speaking English (Adelina, 2017). Then, another thing that greatly affects this skill is students' vocabulary knowledge. If not, when they speak it will stop their speech because they do not find the suitable vocabulary which then can lead to confusion. A study conducted by Al-Eiadeh *et al*. (2016) reveal that many problems related to speaking

skill, such as confusion and shyness. These aspects have a high potential to cause anxiety in students' speaking.

Another study was conducted by Сеpiк *et al.* (2021) about an analysis of students' speaking anxiety in English classroom. The result revealed that many students show their incompetence and often admit that they do not want to speak English. This happens because some students are uncomfortable speaking in front of other people. When they were forced to speak, it will cause great anxiety. They never feel confident about themselves when speaking English. According to Сеpiк *et al.* (2021), anxiety in speaking is very common. If a student is speaking in front of many people, it is natural for them to be anxious, insecure, shy and nervous. Because every student has a different psychological condition, some of them can speak confidently in front of the class, and some of them cannot speak English because they are shy and nervous.

Thus, this study aims to find out what reasons causing the students' anxiety in speaking are and to uncover the best strategies of students in overcoming their anxiety in speaking.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Overview of Speaking

Skills for learning English generally include four skills; listening, reading, writing and speaking. Reading and listening are considered receptive skills in language learning and use, while writing and speaking are productive skills that need to be integrated in the development of effective communication. Of the four English skills, speaking seems to be the most important skill needed to communicate.

According to Kita *et al.* (2017), speaking is a form of sentence creation process. Regarding the process of making sentences, it is stated that sentence making includes four main processes, namely: conceptualization, formation, pronunciation, and self-monitoring. Conceptualization deals with planning the content of the message. It refers to the background knowledge of pattern discourse. Conceptualization includes a "monitor" that checks everything that happens in an interaction to ensure communication goes according to plan. It

allows the speaker to correct his own expressions, grammar, and pronunciation. Morphology involves finding words and phrases that convey meaning, sorting them, and placing appropriate grammatical markers (such as inflections, particles, and articles).

Anxiety of Speaking English

Anxiety when speaking English is one of the consequences of emotional factors caused by various factors such as lack of knowledge, lack of preparation, fear of making mistakes, and difficulty understanding the instructor's instructions. Language anxiety is the anxiety that people feel when learning English. Anxiety is said to be a major factor inhibiting the learning process. Anxiety itself is a subjective feeling of tension (nervousness), a state of trepidation, nervousness, and fear associated with the awakening of the autonomic nervous system caused by an inexplicable fear indirectly related to something (Damayanti & Listyani, 2020). Then, Ikhsaniyah (2022) asserts anxiety is one of the big challenges for students learning languages. So that, it can affect the process and student learning outcomes, especially student speaking performance. He also claimed that anxiety has become a rather interesting problem in language education settings as it constitutes a significant obstacle to foreign language learning that students need to overcome.

According to Pusvitasari and Jayanti (2021), anxiety as an unpleasant emotion characterized by worry at different levels for each person. Anxiety is an emotional state that begins with unpleasant feelings and then physical sensations that warn a person of imminent danger. They explained the causes of public speaking anxiety are: 1) not knowing what to do; 2) not knowing how to start a conversation; 3) not being able to predict what the audience expects; and 4) not being ready to speak. They further identified the causes of public speaking anxiety as: 1) not knowing what to say or convey in public; 2) fear of hearing comments from the audience; 3) fear of being laughed at; and 4) fear of doing error. Therefore, students will feel frightened, nervous, and panic when asked to speak. They are spying and refusing if the teacher or someone asks them to speak in English, they prefer to be silent than to speak (Ikhsaniyah, 2022).

Of all the problems caused by anxiety when speaking, we need to immediately start to find ways to overcome them little by little. As said by Cepiк *et al.* (2021) anxiety does not need to be removed and should not even be eliminated. It is better to manage the fear and then make it the driving force (positive energy) used in the preparation for speaking. Because no matter how difficult this skill is, students must continue to strive to be better than before in terms of speaking. Further, they argue that speaking is an essential skill for English language students to study at the university level, as it is necessary for them to enhance their ability to communicate verbally by expressing their thoughts in real-life settings. Especially in this era of globalization, there have been many drastic changes all over the world. A remarkable change especially in the world of competition between human resources. This will only happen when people have a strong desire to something. Similarly, Rao (2019) said that people's desires are fulfilled when they clearly express their ideas and opinions with others.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGI

This research was conducted at Abulyatama university involving students majoring in English education program. This research uses qualitative research methods and this study uses case study design. The population of this study is all English department students at Abulyatama university and the sample of this study is all English students in the fourth semester. The sample for this research consists of six students in fourth semester which are selected based on their ability recommended by their lecture. Because this research has the standard to select the sample by selecting students that meet the criteria to be the source in this research, this research uses purposive sampling approach.

The technique of collecting data, this study uses interview as the main instrument. This research uses semi-structured interview. Interview in this study be held face to face between the researchers and students. In addition, this interview takes place within 10-15 minutes for each students. The interview in this study provides several questions to get answers to the researcher's research questions. To analyze the result of the interview, descriptive analysis technique used. The Miles and Huberman theory (1994) is the basis of data analysis.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

According to the interview, it was concluded that almost all students were impaired in speaking English due to anxiety arising from a lack of vocabulary mastery, a lack of grammar skills, a loss of pronunciation skills, interlocutor factor and a lack of general insight. However, one of the students managed not to feel anxious when speaking due to a very high level of confidence in herself. Then, the strategies to cope with anxiety as purposed by students are collecting a lot of vocabulary, having self-confidence, having preparation before start speaking, having self-relaxation, and having knowledge. In this research also founded several ways to improve speaking skill are building an environment, consistent in learning, practice every day, and looking for motivation to improve English.

Discussion

According to interview, there are several causes of anxiety when speaking English, the first one is a lack of vocabulary, because vocabulary is the primary tool in building communication. Second is grammar, without grammar we cannot speak well. Third is pronunciation, if the pronunciation is not well, listener cannot understand what we say and the conversation will not be going well. The last one is interlocutor factor, there are two students in this study explained that when they spoke English with a friend, they did not feel anxious because they assumed that a friend had the same ability to speak and that there wasn't much to worry about. However, it is different when they talk to a lecturer or another important person. The anxiety arose because they were not confident because students realized that the skills and knowledge of the lecturers and other important people were above them, where it would be easy to detect the mistakes they made when speaking. Then, the strategies to cope with anxiety as purposed by students are collecting a lot of vocabulary, having self-confidence, having preparation before start speaking, having self-relaxation, and having knowledge.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

After doing research on students' anxiety during speaking activities, it can be

concluded that a lack of vocabulary, grammar, knowledge, and self-confidence have caused the student's anxiety when speaking English. These reasons may be a reason why many students of English education at the University of Abulyatama still cannot speak English fluently. Some of those sources of anxiety prevented students from speaking in front of people because they are afraid of making listeners's boredom. However, it is important for students to improve their speaking skills by trying to correct things that are still lacking in them, such as a lack of vocabulary, grammar, self-confidence, and the knowledge needed to speak English.

Second, this study has also discovered and concluded that there are some strategies the students can use to cope with speech anxiety. Those strategies are collecting a lot of vocabulary, having self-confidence, having preparation before start speaking, having self-relaxation, and having knowledge. The students can try to implement those strategies in order to minimizing their anxiety in speaking.

Suggestion

a. For the students, in this study's interview, the researchers also found some startegies to lowering the anxiety, and several ways to improve speaking skills that are highly feasible. The writers hope all of students can try the trategies and the ways in this research to improve their speaking skill.

b. For the lecturers, with this research, the author hopes to help the lecturer understand the student's problems in speaking English more specifically. Through this, the lecturers can find new ways to help students improve their English-speaking skills more specifically according to their problems.

c. For further researchers, this research could be reference for further researchers who want to conduct the similar issue in this field. Future researchers can also include classroom observation discover something new in addition to what this research has obtained through the interview. Hopefully, this research can be an encouragement for future researchers to find even better speaking strategies so that students can speak English better.

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