

# **ANXIETY IN SPEAKING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (EFL): A CASE IN INDONESIAN CONTEXT**

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## **Abstract**

Speaking is an anxious triggering activity that makes students anxious when they are in classroom, many learners are highly anxious because of participating in speaking activities. Mainly the most common difficulty is anxiety that hinders them from developing their speaking proficiency. Anxiety is the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system. The objectives of this research were to investigate the sources that cause EFL anxiety faced by the students in speaking class and to investigate the influence of EFL anxiety faced by the students in speaking class. In this study, the writer used qualitative research. It is case study. The research was carried out in the SMP N 1 Ngraho. The source of data were questionnaire, interview and observation. All of the data were taken from the English teacher and the students of VIII A consist of 32 students. According to the result, the causes of foreign language anxiety in speaking class are difficult to express ideas, difficult to use grammar, crowded class, peer's reaction on speaking error, and negative thinking. The result of the influence of foreign language anxiety in speaking class are think less clearly, make more mistakes, work harder to perform task, and not fluent in speaking English. The teacher should create various appropriate media and illustrations to support the understanding. The teacher should identify and teach the vocabulary that related to the speaking to be learned before the students speak English in front of the class. It will make the students easy to understand in speaking English. This study indicated that classroom activities or methods are also important component in making students feel anxious or not. This issue, however is not specifically addressed in this present study.

**Keywords:** EFL, Anxiety, Speaking skill.

## INTRODUCTION

English is an international language that is used to communicate among people all over the world. English is so widely spoken; it has often referred to as a world language, the lingua franca of modern era, and while is not an official language in most countries, it is currently the language most often taught as a foreign language.

One of the most important processes that many people are interested in is teaching and learning English as a foreign language. It is constructed on some basic skills that are essential to accomplish the process; they are categorized into two types: the first one is receptive skill, which entails reading and listening. The second type is the productive skill, that is writing and speaking.

One of the language skills is speaking which is very important in learning English as a foreign language. For English language learners speaking is one of the most important skills that they need to be developed (Tinjaca & Contreras, 2008). It mean that speaking is important to be learnt by students in

language learning process as speaking is one of tools in communication. Harmer (2001) said, "Speaking involves many factors. The ability to process information and language, that makes speaking become a complex matter in a foreign language" (as cited in Madsa, 2012, p.1).

Additionally, based on the researchers experience in teaching practice at one junior high school in SMP PGRI 1 BOJONEGORO, it seems that many students were afraid of or anxious for speaking English. Such as feeling may be due to some problems. First, the students may not have adequate vocabulary. Then, the students may not be able to pronounce the words correctly and it may make them feel embarrassed and it can increase their anxiety to speak because they are afraid of making mistakes. MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) stated, "Empirical research shows that anxious foreign language students are less willing to participate in learning activities, and have lower performance than non-anxious students" (as cited in Wahyu, 2011). Hence, students' anxiety to speak English is very important to be solved

because it can influence their speaking ability. Besides, more practices are needed to make the students better in pronunciation and vocabulary to improve their speaking abilities.

Chan and Wu (2004: 287) conducted a study of foreign language anxiety of EFL elementary school students in Taipei. By the way of questionnaire, interviews, classroom observation, and document collection, they found five sources of language anxiety. They were low proficiency, fear of negative evaluation, competition of games, anxious personality, and pressure from students themselves and their parents. In my research, by the way of interview, observation, and angket. To found EFL anxiety faced by the students' in speaking class.

However, speaking the second language is a difficult task for most learners. This difficulty in speaking is a result of various factors especially the psychological ones, such as; shyness, fear of making mistakes, anxiety and etc, that hinder them from speaking freely. Horwitz et al. (1986: 125) stated that anxiety is "the subjective feeling of tension,

apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system". When they feel anxious, they are unable to speak and cannot show their full potential in doing so even if most of them have many ideas and answers but cannot express them.

According to Horwitz and Cope (1986), "foreign language education is a process, which involves learners' self- perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors particular to environments of foreign language learning." People who do not have difficulty to expressing themselves and comprehending others in their native language have difficulty doing the same in a foreign language, and they perceive all kinds of acts to show in a foreign language as a threat to their self-perception.

In the process of learning English a foreign languages, students can encounter a variety of difficulties especially when they speak in front of an audience. Mainly the most common difficulty is anxiety that hinders them from developing their speaking proficiency.

From statement above the writer use title English as foreign

language (EFL) anxiety faced by the students in speaking class. The research question as follow: (1) What are the causes of EFL anxiety faced by the students in speaking class at the eighth-grade students of SMP N 1 Ngraho in the academic year of 2017/2018?

(2) What are the influences of EFL anxiety faced by the students in speaking class at the eighth-grade students of SMP N 1 Ngraho in the academic year of 2017/2018?

The study is objectived to: (1) To investigate the sources that cause EFL anxiety faced by the students in speaking class at the eighth-grade students of SMP N 1 Ngraho in the academic year of 2017/2018. (2) To investigate the influence of EFL anxiety faced by the students in speaking class at the eighth-grade students of SMP N 1 Ngraho in the academic year of 2017/2018.

## **METHOD**

In this study, the writer uses qualitative research. It is case study. Qualitative method was chosen because this study aims at providing an insight into the case of language anxiety in the eighth-grade of SMP N

1 Ngraho, specifically anxiety in learning English. In conducting this study the researcher uses several ways of collecting the data, they are: (1) Interview is a data collection technique by way of interviewing selected individual as a respondent. (2) Observation is a data collection technique used to collect research data through observation and sensing. (3) Questionnaire is a written form of questions that used to get information from the respondents. Subject of this study was the Eighth-Grade Students of SMP N 1 Ngraho in the academic year of 2017/2018. The students of VIII A consist of 32 students, there are 5 male students and 27 female students. In this case, the object of study were students in learning speaking.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

In conducting this study the researcher uses several ways of collecting the data, they are: (1) Interview is a data collection technique by way of interviewing selected individual as a respondent. (2) Another data collection technique is observation. (3) Questionnaire is a

written form of questions that used to get information from the respondents.

The Causes of EFL Anxiety Faced by the Students in Speaking Class. Based on the questionnaire anxiety that given for class 8A of SMP N I Ngraho, from thirty two students which have high score from questionnaire anxiety there is fifteen students which have high anxiety. The score of students which have high anxiety between 35 until 44. The researcher took 10 students which have high score to interview. The second data obtained from the result of interview to the students is used to support the data obtained through the questionnaire. it shows that speaking activities were the aspects that bothered the participants most about English class. They also spoke of their fear of making mistake and being ridiculed by peers. Then, when asked why feel so anxious, the participants responded that they feel anxious when do not understand what teacher said and do not prepare enough. Again, they also spoke fear of being ridicule by peers so they became anxious. They thought that they feel anxious because only had limited vocabulary

and grammar. They also felt that other students are better than them.

The Influence of EFL Anxiety Faced By the Students' In Speaking Class. The following is the data from observation to know the influence of EFL anxiety faced by the students' in speaking class. The researcher observe ten students who have high anxiety. The percentage of observation are difficult to express ideas 40%, difficult to use grammar 80%, feel anxious to express ideas 40%, nervous in speaking English 70%, cold sweat in speaking English in front of class 10%, not fluent to speak in English 80%, not confidence in speaking English 80%, feel shy when speaking English in front of class 80%, afraid in speaking English 40%, and hand and feet tremble when speaking English 50%. It shows that students might feel anxious at some situations. Students were mostly anxious in speaking activities such as speaking in front of the class, being called on by the teacher or waiting turn to speak. They also worried about grammatical and pronunciation mistake.

It also revealed that students often laughed at student who made a

mistake. Some students appeared to be anxious when their peers ridiculed them. Further, it also appeared that students might feel anxious when the teacher delivered a lesson. They began to feel uneasy when not understand the lesson.

The Causes of Foreign Language Anxiety. The causes of foreign language anxiety is difficult to express ideas, difficult to use grammar, crowded class, peer's reaction on speaking error, and negative thinking. Similar result was found by price (1991) that fear of being laughed at by other as one of the greatest sources of anxiety. Moreover, this finding is also consistent with Oxford (1999), he noted that ridicule is one of the most important issue related to language anxiety. The features of foreign language anxiety from the students are: afraid, uneasiness, nervousness, worry, cold sweat, shy, unconfident, hand and feet tremble, heart beat and not calm. Some of them feel anxious, nervous, afraid to speak in English so they lazy to learning English. They feel English is difficult and afraid to speak in English. Similar result was found by Horwitz et al. (1986: 125)

stated that anxiety is “the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system”. Ormrod (2011: 401) found anxiety is a felling of uneasiness and apprehension concerning a situation with an uncertain outcome.

The impact of foreign language anxiety toward speaking are think less clearly, make more mistakes, work harder to perform task, and not fluent in speaking English. The students must be more diligent in learning English, especially in speaking, increase vocabulary, learn about grammar and practice speaking English with classmates. The teacher must facilitate students, and increase the interest of students to like learning English. The teacher must look for innovations or methods in teaching English, especially in speaking skills.

## **CONCLUSION**

According to the students, there are various the causes to their anxiety. There are at least four causes which are found in this study, they are: difficult to express ideas, difficult to use grammar, crowded class, peer's

reaction on speaking error, and negative thinking. The sources of these factors are not only from the teacher but also from the students. Moreover, those factors were discussed in this study, which deepened our understanding of foreign language anxiety. Based on the result of questionnaire anxiety can be conclude that the features of foreign language anxiety by afraid, uneasiness, nervousness, worry, cold sweat, shy, unconfident, hand and feet tremble, heart beat and not calm. Some of them feel anxious, nervous, afraid to speak in English so they lazy to learning English. They feel English is difficult and afraid to speak in English. Based on the result of the influence of students' anxiety in learning speaking English. According to the students' about the result of observation, they are: think less clearly, make more mistakes, work harder to perform task, and not fluent in speaking English. The experiences of the students provide a great deal of information about students' anxiety in learning English. They offer insights on what may contribute to their anxiety as well as what teacher can do to reduce that anxiety.

These suggestions are very useful for the English teachers, especially for the English teacher at the eighth grade students in SMP N 1 NGRAHO. The teachers should learn better and be more creative in applying the techniques of teaching speaking skill. It used to solve the students' difficulties in understanding the speaking English and improve the students' understanding about material taught. The teacher should create various appropriate media and illustrations to support the understanding. As for the students, they need to get involved to reduce anxiety in classroom. Students should respect each other in order to create a friendly environment. They should help a lower level students when have a difficulty instead of ridiculed them. This would make them feel comfortable with each other. Future similar studies with a larger population or different group of students will be useful to give a better understanding of the issue of foreign language anxiety. In addition, this study indicated that classroom activities or methods are also important component in making students feel anxious or not. This

issue, however is not specifically addressed in this present study. Therefore, further investigations about certain approaches or methods that can help reduce anxiety in learning English are needed.

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