

## **STUDENTS' ANXIETY IN SPEAKING ENGLISH AT SMP NEGERI 2 MARTAPURA TIMUR.**

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### ***ABSTRACT***

English is one of the lessons to be learned in school, especially in Junior high school. In learning English, the ability to speak English is one of the skills that students need to master, but there are still many students who feel anxious when speaking in front of many people.

This research was conducted to see student anxiety in speaking English among junior high school students in 8th grade SMP Negeri 2 Martapura Timur. This study aims to determine the causes of student anxiety when speaking English and how students deal with anxiety. Researchers use qualitative methods, interviews as a type of research, and two methods are used to collect the required data, namely: observation and interviews. Three students were selected as participants.

From these results, it was found that fear of being ridiculed by others, limited vocabulary, fear of mistakes and lack of preparation are factors that contribute to students' anxiety in speaking English. Students' ways to overcome their anxiety were preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, and resurrection.

***Keywords:*** *Students, Speaking, Anxiety*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Speaking is one of language skills in learning English. Richards (2008:19) states that the mastery of learning skills in English is a priority for many second language or foreign-language learners. But for most students, speaking is a difficult aspect to learn. In fact, there are many students who are not fluent in speaking English. According to Pollard (2008: 34) states that speaking is one of the most difficult aspects for students to master. Many students still find difficulties when they have speaking activities in the classroom. One of problems the students face is whenever they try to speak English, they feel nervous. Most of them know how to form sentence, understand information from material they listen to and read, and write sentences in good order. But when it comes to speaking, they barely want to perform. And although they perform their speaking skill, they appear nervous and remain fidgety. These conditions are called anxiety.

There are several causes of students' anxiety in speaking. The first one is fear of making grammatical mistakes. Fear of mistake becomes one of the main factors of students' reluctance to speak in English in the classroom (Tsui in Nunan,1999; Yi Htwe, 2007; Robby, 2010). The second is students' fear of being laughed at by other students or being criticized by the teacher. As a result, students commonly stop participating in the speaking activity (Hieu, 2011). Then having less confidence of their own ability, or even they do not have ideas in their mind if they are asked to practice their speaking, those make them keep silent during the activities in the classroom. In addition, they prefer to use their first language when they have speaking activities obviously, these speaking problems may hinder the students to develop their speaking skills which are needed to become good speakers.

Related to this research, Darmawati (2017) in her thesis with the title Students' Anxiety In Speaking English At Second Grade Students Of Sma Pesantren Mahyajatul Qurra' Takalar. Found that dari tiga belas siswa mempunyai communication apprehension as their type of anxiety. Seven of them had fear of negative evaluation as their type of anxiety. Based on the result of her research, eight students showed that their anxiety in speaking English was from learner

beliefs about language learning. They said they felt anxious because they assume their English is not good. Meanwhile nine students indicated that their anxiety was from personal and interpersonal anxiety, mainly they felt anxious because they do not believe about themselves and they felt shy whenever they were in front of their friends.

The reason behind this research is to find out about student anxiety and what methods are used by students to overcome these anxiety. Because anxiety can have a big effect on learning, it is important to find out more about student anxiety.

## **METHOD OF RESEARCH**

The research design used interview research design. The interviewer can pursue in-depth information around the topic. The research design for the interview was chosen because the researcher attempted to find out in depth information about the anxiety that students experience when learning to speak English and how they overcome with it. There are several reason why the researcher decided to do this reseach, namely : The reason why the researcher chose this place because researchers have done PLP at that school. This school is an Adiwiyata school and is active in carrying out religious activities with students. In this study, the researcher used a technique of data analysis based on Miles and Huberman (1994) cited Sugiyono (2014: 247-252) which involves three steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing / verification

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

### **A. Findings**

1. Factors cause the students' in anxiety to speak English

From the results of the interview, the researcher found several causes for the students' anxiety to speak in English, namely fear, nervousness, lack of self-confidence, teasing from others, lack of vocabulary . They

thought they felt anxious because they only had limited vocabulary and grammar. The lack of vocabulary makes students confused as to the assembly of words in the sentence they want to say, in addition to the fact that they also lack grammar in English. Due to the limited vocabulary, students tend to be less confident and think that their other friends are better than them.

When asked how people would react if they made mistakes, they all responded that their friends would laugh at them. It also makes students anxious to speak in front of many people as they are afraid of being ridiculed by their peers if they make mistakes when speaking, such as incorrect pronunciation and their grammar is broken. The author also examined student beliefs about the English language. Most of the students admitted that English was difficult.

## 2. Students' strategies to overcome the anxiety

According to the research results, most of the methods students used to overcome their anxiety were to prepare and relax. The preparation they did before speaking in front of the class was to study more and dare to speak in front of the class. They also motivate themselves to be more confident when speaking in English.

Then they also use relaxation to overcome their anxiety. Before speaking in front of the class, they will breathe slowly to make them relax and calm down in decreasing the feeling of anxiety during presentation performance. Then they will have positive self-motivated thoughts that everything will be fine. Convince themselves that they can.

## B. Discussion

### 1. Factors cause the students' in anxiety to speak English

Based on the results of interviews conducted, there are several factors that contribute to students' anxiety to speak English in class. based on the findings, the factors that contribute to anxiety can be classified as follows:

Most of the students responded that they were very concerned about having to speak in front of the class. They often answered that they felt that English was a difficult subject. Most of them mentioned that they were afraid to speak English because of vocabulary problems. Not knowing the meaning of words or sentences can make students feel anxious to speak. Having limited vocabularies, students find it difficult to convey what they wanted to say. This condition can create students' anxiety resulting in their reluctance to speak (Gebhard, 2000). Brown (2001); Eli, 1986 as cited in Keramida (2009) state that students lack confidence and feel that they cannot speak English because they think that they do not have the ability to speak English well and their limited knowledge of the language. This kind of feeling, for sure, hinders them from trying to speak English. they believe that in order to understand and speak English fluently they must understand every word.

Therefore while observing the researcher found that many students were afraid to be active in class. because of their worries to speak they prefer to be passive in class. They feel insecure about speaking in front of many people, which makes them less active in class. They prefer to only listen to the teacher, and follow what the teacher says. In response to this, Tsui cited Nunan (1999) says

that student who lack of confidence about themselves and their English necessarily suffer from communication apprehension. Regarding this, teachers should create a supporting learning atmosphere in which students can build their confidence and learn cooperatively each other so that teachers can minimize derision among them. Besides, it is very necessary for the teachers to convince their students not to be worried about expressing their ideas since the language is a foreign language and that everyone in the class is also studying the language.

Another factor that plays a great role in contributing the participants into anxious feeling is unsupportive manner such as ridicule by peers or teachers. They all think that if they make mistakes in speaking in front of the class, everyone in the class will laugh at them. Fear of mistakes becomes one of the main factors of students' reluctance to speak in English in the classroom (Tsui in Nunan, 1999; Yi Htwe, 2007; Robby, 2010). In other words, they all worry about being laughed at by others or making fun of them in public.

Moreover some of them have painful memories because they were teased by lassmates. They admit that their colleagues are often ridiculed for being wrong in their pronunciation and they are even yelled at. That immediately makes them lose focus and then feel embarrassed. They also found that it identified the reason why they became nervous about speaking in front of the class.

In addition, this research is supported by the results of observations which indeed most of the students like to laugh at their colleagues with the mistakes he made. The bad thing is if students who are laughed at start losing focus. Their minds become blank and

forget what they want to say. They look disturbed, uncomfortable, worried, even sweating. While of them just smiled and also laughed to cover their nervousness.

## 2. Students' strategies to overcome the anxiety

Based on theory from Kondo (2004) there are five strategies that can be used by students to reduce anxiety. They are preparation, positive thinking, relaxation, peer of seeking and resignation. The results obtained by researcher from interviews are the ways students use to overcome anxiety to speak English in front of the class is preparation and relaxation.

The first strategies is Preparation, in this strategy students attempts to control their own self by improving learning and study strategies (example:study hard, trying to obtain good summaries of lecture notes). Students who choose to prepare practice it by trying to remember words and practice their pronunciation. which will be conveyed. Many of them try not to be nervous by remembering words, memorizing, and even asking friends about the correct way to pronounce sentences in English. The way it is done so that they are not wrong and to reduce nervousness when they come to the front of the class.

The second one is Relaxation, the goal of this strategy for reducing anxiety symptoms. Making relax the body by doing something (example: take a deep breath' and try to calm down). The more one relaxes, the more anxiety loses. Take a deep breath is strategy which was used by mostly of respondents to make them relax and calm down in decreasing the feeling of anxiety during presentation performance. By using it strategy, the students can keep control their feeling of frightened and when students in

relax condition it will help them to speak English calmer in front of class.

The third strategy is Positive Thinking, it is characterized by cooling down of pressure problematic cognitive processes that underlie students' anxiety, think that everything can be well. They use positive thinking to overcome their anxiety believing that they will definitely be able to speak English and that everything will be fine. There was also students who show their way to reduce anxiety with two ways; relaxation and preparation.

## CLOSURE

### 1. Conclusion

This study focuses on students' anxiety in speaking English in junior high school especially in the eighth grade. This research shows the results about the causes of anxiety felt by students in speaking. There are at least two factors that cause student anxiety found by researchers, namely: students' beliefs, and being laughed at by others. These factors come from students and are discussed in this study, to deepen our understanding of student anxiety in speaking.

The first strategy that is widely used by students to reduce their anxiety in speaking English is to preparation. Then the second strategy used by students is relaxation. But there are also students who use both strategies to reduce their anxiety; preparation and relaxation.

Through the experience of students who were examined in this study, many provide information about students' anxiety in speaking English. The experience provides insight into things that contribute to student anxiety and what can reduce that anxiety. In other words students provide valuable information about their anxiety in

speaking English, so that it can be a reference for teachers to be able to create a more relaxed learning atmosphere for them.

### 2. Suggestion

From the findings that were presented in chapter 4, here are some suggestions that can be taken as consideration:

#### a. For the teacher

As discussed in advance that one of the causes of anxiety is classroom procedure which includes how the correction scares students, it can be considered to the teachers to make atmosphere of class enjoyable for students. So students can learn at ease without being afraid of making mistake. And motivation from teacher is very much needed by student when the anxiety students feel makes them difficult to learn. Motivation from teacher hopes to make students become more confident and brave to learn and speak English in front of class without being afraid of correction from their teacher.

#### b. For the next researcher

By knowing the level of anxiety, the cause of anxiety, and students' way to reduce it, researcher hopes for the next researcher to study about strategies that can be applied for class who is in anxiety case, especially in speaking English.

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