

## An Analysis of Efl Students' Anxiety In English Speaking: A Case Study At Vocational School

**Firly Putra Diptiya<sup>1</sup>, Praditya Putri Utami<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1,2</sup>Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan,  
Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang

Email: [firlyputradiptiya@gmail.com](mailto:firlyputradiptiya@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>, [praditya.putri@fkip.unsika.ac.id](mailto:praditya.putri@fkip.unsika.ac.id)<sup>2</sup>

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi kecemasan siswa EFL dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus menggunakan kuesioner survei dan wawancara. Data ini diperoleh dari kuesioner yang disebar dan dilanjutkan dengan wawancara semi terstruktur. 10 siswa SMK Sehati Karawang sebagai responden kuesioner dan 5 siswa bersedia mengikuti wawancara semi terstruktur. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa sebagian besar kecemasan berbicara siswa di SMK Sehati Karawang adalah rasa takut membuat kesalahan dan takut dihakimi secara negatif oleh teman-temannya. Rekomendasi yang digunakan untuk mengurangi kecemasan berbicara mereka adalah dengan menarik napas sebelum bergerak maju untuk percaya diri dan membaca kembali konteks yang diberikan.

**Kata kunci:** *Kecemasan Berbicara, Kecemasan, Studi Kasus*

### Abstract

This study explores the anxiety of EFL students in speaking English. This research is qualitative research with a case study design using survey questionnaires and interviews. This data was obtained from questionnaires distributed and followed by semi-structured interviews. 10 students of a vocational high school were involved as respondents for the questionnaire and 5 students were willing to participate in semi-structured interviews. The findings show that most of the students' speaking anxiety categories were the fear of making mistakes and the fear of being judged negatively by their friends. Recommendations that are used to reduce their speaking anxiety are by taking a breath before moving forward to be confident and rereading the given context

**Keywords:** *Speaking Anxiety, Anxiety, Case Study*

### INTRODUCTION

It has become a common belief that anxiety has been the most dominant factor influencing students not to speak English in the classroom. Students can feel threatened, unsafe and uncomfortable when they were asked to speak English in front of their peers in the classroom (Sari, 2017).

Anxiety becomes one of the major issues for many language researchers as they extend the focus and interest from teachers into the students' problem in the EFL classrooms (Bhatti & Memon, 2016). Some factors of EFL students' speaking anxiety have also been identified by some researchers in the context of Indonesian students. Mulyono et al (2019) found three factors contributing to students' feeling of anxiety when interacting with their peers during classroom learning such as language barriers, negative attitudes, and intercultural communication apprehension. Erdiana (2020) found that most students of a state junior high school in Banda Aceh looked scared or nervous when the teacher asked them to speak in English in front of the class. Based on various previous studies, most of the research only focuses on factors of students' anxiety in speaking English. This research attempts to investigate the factors of EFL vocational students' speaking anxiety and their recommendations to reduce anxiety in speaking English.

## METHODS

This research employs the qualitative case study design. The reason the researcher uses this design is that the researcher wants to explore speaking anxiety among EFL learners through various data sources, and it undertakes the exploration through a variety of lenses in order to reveal multiple facets of the phenomenon (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

This research was conducted in a vocational high school. There were 10 participants who experienced speaking anxiety in an English learning class. The data collection techniques used are questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaire was used as the first technique to find out how anxious the students are about their speaking performance. The questionnaire was adopted from Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) developed by Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope (1986). The interview was used as a second technique to find out the EFL learners' anxieties in speaking English and students' recommendations to reduce speaking anxiety. The researcher decides to use semi-structured interviews.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of questionnaires and interviews with research subjects.

### EFL Learners' Anxieties in Speaking English

Based on the result of questionnaire and interview, the factors of anxiety have been categorized into 3 types of anxiety and students' recommendations to reduce anxiety in speaking English, as follows:

#### a) Test anxiety

According to Horwitz in Saputri (2017), test anxiety is an anxiety of performance evaluation by others emerging from a fear of failing the performance and fear of making mistakes. The results of the questionnaire, the students admitted that they were worried about their oral appearance for fear of making mistakes.

*Saya takut kak karna saya khawatir kalo salah ngomong gitu kak kaya vocabnya nanti salah, terus kadang ada yang ketawa gitu langsung gugup. Apalagi pas' guru tiba tiba nunjuk buat bicara bahasa Inggris di depan. (I'm afraid because I'm worried that if I say something wrong, it's like the vocabulary will be wrong, then sometimes someone laughs and gets nervous. Especially when the teacher suddenly points to speak English in front).*

From the above statements, the researcher concludes that test anxiety made the students think that they will fail the speech. Students were mostly afraid of making mistakes in their speech due to lack of vocabulary, unfamiliar topic and grammatical errors.

#### b) Communication apprehension

Communication apprehension has a significant impact on students' ability to communicate. Learners who usually have difficulty speaking in front of other people want to learn a foreign language and develop their communication skills (Horwitz, 1986). Based on the results of the questionnaire, there were five students who clearly stated that they were anxious because they were not confident.

*Kalau saya takut salah pengucapan gitu kak atau salah grammarnya jadi nanti teman aku gak mengerti, dan takut dinilai negative juga. (If I'm afraid of having the wrong pronunciation or wrong grammar, my friends won't understand, and I'm afraid of being judged negatively too.)*

From the statement, the researcher concluded that there were five students typing as their fear of communication anxiety. This study shows that there are two causes of students experiencing communication apprehension. They are insecure and anxious when they make mistakes in speaking English.

#### c) Fear of negative evaluation

Based on the results of the interview, the student revealed that he is afraid of being judged negatively by his friends, even if they make bad comments or laugh. The interview showed her feeling in being anxiety, as follow:

*Kadang ya ngerasa gugup karna ada yang suka ketawa gitu jadinya saya gugup atau ketawa pas ada kata yang salah. Kaya jadi ga pd gitu karna grammarnya, jadi takut di nilai negative juga sama temen. (Sometimes I feel nervous because someone likes to laugh, so I get nervous or laugh when there is a wrong word. It's like it's not like that because of my grammar, so I'm afraid of being given a negative*

judge by friends)

Based on the above statements, the researchers concluded that sometimes friends brought positive feelings to students' improvement, but sometimes not. Unsupportive friends can cause students to fail in their speaking and become anxious while speaking.

### **Student's recommendations to reduce anxiety in speaking English**

After conducting interviews with students, the researcher found recommendations from the students to overcome anxiety in speaking English. The following interview shows a student's feelings in overcoming his nervousness in speaking English, as follows:

*Ya kadang saya suka tarik nafas dulu sebelum berbicara supaya pd. (Sometimes I like to take a breath before speaking so that I can speak)*

*Kadang saya juga sebelum maju ke depan suka dibaca baca dulu konteksnya biar lancar. (Sometimes I also like to read the context before going forward so that it runs smoothly)*

Based on the statement above, the researcher concludes that most students reduce anxiety by taking a breath first so that they feel confident and feel calm. There are also those who read the context first so that it runs smoothly.

There were three factors that caused the students' anxiety in learning English at a vocational school based on Horwitz's theory (2011) is a communication apprehension in which students cannot speak English because they have weak English language experience and do not always practice English. Test anxiety when students feel anxious because they have to do the test that the teacher gives them of the students do examination and fear of negative evaluation. Where the students are afraid that the teacher and their friends will laugh if the students make mistakes.

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the finding and discussion, the researcher concludes that there are four factors that cause students' anxiety in speaking English, the first factor that most trigger students' anxiety is the fear of making mistakes, especially when they perceive themselves having low ability in English and fear of being wrong in their performance. The second factor is the lack of vocabulary experienced by the students that leads to be anxious in producing spoken language. Third, students lack confidence in speaking English in front of the class. Fourth is a classmate who is not supportive and laughs at making students anxious. There are also ways for them to overcome nervousness in speaking English such as preparing themselves first, there is also encouragement from their friends to try to be confident, and learn English outside of school or at school.

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