

Anxiety of Speaking English in English Education Students Association Universitas Muhammadiyah Parepare

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ABSTRACT

Speaking is an essential part of learning a language because it enables students to express their ideas, feelings, and thoughts to others. However, many students experience anxiety when speaking English, which affects their performance. The purpose of this study were to determine the factors that contributing to English language speaking anxiety among members of the English Education Students Association Universitas Muhammadiyah Parepare

This research used qualitative descriptive by design conducted with students. The participant of the research is the members of English Education Students Association Universitas Muhammadiyah Parepare. The respondents of this research consist of four respondents. In addition, the researcher conducted observation checklist and interview to obtain the data.

The findings show that speaking anxiety among EESA's member is significantly influenced by a variety of factors, including a restricted vocabulary, grammatical faults, a lack of preparation, self-confidence, and a fear of making mistakes. The discussion underscores how these elements are consistent with earlier research, emphasizing how crucial it is to address psychological and preparation-related concerns to enhance speaking abilities. In summary, considering these aspects will help lecturers create engaging lesson plans that will lower students' anxiety levels and improve their speaking skills.

Kata Kunci: Speaking anxiety, EESA's member, Internal and external factors

Introduction

Speaking is an interaction of thoughts, ideas, or feeling between two or more people. It is a productive part of the language learning process. The ability to speak a language is the product of language learning. It will be important for students in their daily life, for example: describing something, complaining to other and making conversation with foreign as the tool of commerce. By mastering speaking skill students will be able to communicate each other to build a good interaction. Speaking is an important part of everyday interaction and most often the first impression of a person is based on his/her ability to speak fluently and comprehensively. However, speaking is not easy for the student.

The purpose of speaking is to communicate. Communication is the sending and receiving of messages or news between two or more people so that the message in question can be understood. Therefore, in order to convey the message effectively, the speaker must understand what will be conveyed or communicated. Through speaking students can give opinions, suggestions, and ask questions to someone or listeners verbally.

In addition, speaking is a very important skill that must be learned by students, students are asked to practice speaking English in everyday life, especially in class. Learning to speak will help students to get habits and fluency so that they can improve their speaking skills, because by getting used to speaking will contribute greatly to improving students' ability to speak English.

In the context of speaking English, being able to speak to friends and even speak with foreigners, in their language which both of them understand is surely the goal of many learners of English. Yet, speaking in foreign language is very difficult and competence in speaking takes a long time to develop. However, the biggest problem of English learners face is to be able to speak English. Consequently, many reasons to take into consideration might be the lack of confidence in terms of anxiety about making errors as stated by Boonkit (2010). It can be stressful when they are expected to speak in the second or foreign language before fluency is achieved.

In psychology, Alrabai (2014) states that anxiety is a state characterized by the sensation of vague fear, nervousness, discomfort, and apprehension that is not linked to a specific cause or situation. Then, it can be assumed that anxiety related to fear, panic, and worry of person. The feeling of nervousness associated with language learning is termed as language anxiety. Other study found that there is a negative correlation between students' achievement and their anxiety.

Anxiety is defined as an unmanageable state that may impact negatively on a language learning setting. Although the learners bring many unique characteristics to the learning process, anxiety will cause stress when they cannot manage it (Sener, 2015).

Anxiety holds a big role in learning second or foreign language. It will bother students' ability to get successfully in learning language. Recent studies have further explored the impact of anxiety on language learning. Teimouri, Goetze, and Plonsky (2019) found that students with high levels of anxiety are more likely to avoid speaking activities and participation in class, which are critical for developing language proficiency. This avoidance behavior creates a vicious cycle where lack of practice lead to poorer performance, which in turn increases anxiety.

Moreover, research by MacIntyre and Gregersen (2021) highlights that anxiety can affect cognitive functions essential for language learning, such as memory and attention. When students are anxious, they may find it harder to concentrate, recall vocabulary, or process the grammatical structures, leading to mistakes and reduced confidence. This cognitive interference is a significant barrier to language acquisition, as it prevents student from fully engaging with the learning material.

As a student at the Muhammadiyah University of Parepare, the researcher looked at many occasions where many participants of experienced feelings of anxiety and discomfort when they tried to speak English. Their anxiety can interfere with their explanation and performance and also prevent them from succeeding in mastering speaking English. With regard to the statement above, the researcher interested in investigating the factors cause English language speaking anxiety among EESA's member.

Method

The researcher conducted descriptive qualitative research, because the researcher found out the data at the field on the fact of students' speaking anxiety at English learning classroom. Ari (2010) state that basic qualitative study also called basic interpretative study by some, provide rich descriptive accounts targeted to understanding a phenomenon, a process, or a particular point of you from perspective of those involved. The researcher used this research design because the researcher analyzed the factors of students' speaking anxiety in English learning classroom.

In this research, the researcher used interview and observation checklist because the researcher did not involve in the teaching in learning process. The researcher will observe the students' anxiety during speaking that collect the data and analysis them with use an

observation checklist and interview. This research engages with the member of English Education Student Association in speaking.

Results and Discussion

The result in this research shows the factors that caused EESA's member anxiety in speaking English. The data was collected on Thursday, April 20th 2023 through observation checklist and interview. Based on the result of data collection there are some factors caused EESA's member anxiety in speaking English.

Table 1. Matrix of observation checklist

No.	Observation Case	Result							
		R 1		R 2		R 3		R 4	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
1	Students are afraid when they speak wrong English	✓	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓	-
2	Students feel shy when speaking English in front of the class	✓	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓
3	Students feel very confident when speaking English in front of the class	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓
4	Students have high motivation in speaking English	✓	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓	-
5	Students look scared when their friends laugh at their mistakes in speaking English	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓
6	Students feel anxious when their friends correct the mistakes they made when they speak English	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓
7	Students have sufficient vocabulary	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓
8	Students experience difficulty in pronouncing certain words	✓	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓	-
9	Students use the perfect grammar	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓
10	Students feel nervous talking when their friends are watching	✓	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓
11	Students have sufficient preparation	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓

The observational data reveals key factors contributing to students' anxiety when speaking English, including the fear of making mistakes, insufficient vocabulary, and grammatical errors. These issues create significant barriers to their confidence, leading to heightened nervousness and self-consciousness. Additionally, inadequate preparation further exacerbates their anxiety, as students often feel unprepared, impacting their confidence levels. To gain deeper insights, interviews were conducted to explore students' personal experiences and perceptions, providing a more detailed understanding of the challenges identified in the observational data. This comprehensive analysis allows for a better grasp of the difficulties students face in speaking English.

A. Fear of making mistake

Fear of making mistakes was the first factor that found in this research. Fear of making mistake is internal factor that caused students anxiety in speaking. They were afraid to making mistakes because their limited English proficiency. Being afraid to making mistakes in grammar and pronunciation were the most checked reason which made them anxious in their speaking performance. The following statement shows the anxiety of EESA's member in order to speak English:

Respondent 1

"Iye kak, takutka salah ucap".

"Yes, I'm afraid of mispronunciation".

Respondent 2

"Iye, ketika saya salah dalam berbahasa Inggris saya merasa takut untuk berbicara kedua kalinya".

"Yes, when I am wrong in speaking English I feel afraid to speak in the second time".

Respondent 3

"Kalau saya kak takutka salah pengucapan atau salah grammar".

"I'm afraid of mispronouncing or making grammar mistakes".

Respondent 4

"Untuk ketakutan tentu ada kak, entah itu takut salah grammar juga kadang takut lain yang ingin disampaikan lain juga yang keluar dari mulut".

"Of course I have a fear, whether it's a fear of grammatical errors or sometimes the fear of mistaken what I want to convey is different of what will come out of my mouth".

The research identified fear of making mistakes as a primary internal factor contributing to students' anxiety in speaking English. This fear stems from limited English proficiency, particularly concerns about making grammatical and pronunciation errors. Respondents expressed apprehension about mispronouncing words or using incorrect grammar, which makes them anxious and less willing to speak. The fear of negative judgment from peers, teachers, or listeners exacerbates this anxiety, aligning with Horwitz's (1986) concept of anxiety related to fear of negative evaluation. Overall, the research concludes that this fear significantly contributes to the speaking anxiety among members of the English Education Students Association (EESA).

The result align with Ming-yueh Shen and Tzu-yen Chiu's (2019) theory, which highlights psychological issues like nervousness and fear of mistakes as primary obstacles for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. These psychological barriers hinder students' ability to speak English confidently. However, successful learners often overcome these fears through strategies such as repeated practice and participation in social activities. This suggests that addressing the fear of making mistakes is crucial for reducing speaking anxiety and improving English proficiency among students.

B. Lack of self-confidence

The second factor that caused EESA's member anxiety in speaking English is lack of self-confidence. Lack of confidence is internal factor that caused students anxiety in speaking. The following statement shows the anxiety of EESA's member in order to speak in English:

Respondent 1

"Iye kak, saya takut membuat kesalahan itu membuat saya kurang percaya diri karena dengan membuat kesalahan di depan umum saya mungkin ditertawai oleh banyak orang".

"Yes, I am afraid of making mistakes that makes me less confident because by making mistakes in public I might be laughed by many people".

Respondent 2

"Iye, ketika saya salah dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris saya merasa takut untuk berbicara kedua kalinya dan membuat saya kurang percaya diri untuk berbicara di depan umum".

"Yes, when I am wrong in speaking English I feel afraid to speak in the second time and it makes me less confident to speak in public.".

Respondent 3

“Saya masih merasa gugup dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris hal ini yang membuat saya kurang percaya diri untuk berbicara didepan banyak orang”.

“I still feel nervous in speaking English, which makes me less confident to speak in front of many people”.

Respondent 4

“Saya merasa kurang percaya diri untuk berbicara didepan umum karena saya merasa gugup dan mungkin karena kurang pembiasaan”.

“I feel less confident about speaking in public because I feel nervous and maybe because of lack of habituation”.

The study identifies a lack of self-confidence as a significant factor contributing to the anxiety experienced by members of the English Education Students Association (EESA) when speaking English. Respondents expressed fear of making mistakes, nervousness, and anxiety about speaking in public, which diminishes their confidence. The fear of being laughed at or judged when making errors hinders their willingness to engage in conversations or speak publicly. This aligns with Horwitz's (1986) concept of communication apprehension, where students with low self-confidence struggle to communicate effectively in the target language, leading to increased anxiety.

Lack of self-confidence is a critical factor in students' anxiety when speaking English. This is consistent with Cubukcu's (2007) theory, which states that anxious students are more likely to perform poorly in foreign language learning, while those with higher confidence tend to succeed. The findings suggest that building students' confidence is essential for improving their language skills. Lecturers should prioritize strategies that enhance students' self-confidence, drawing on both theoretical insights and practical experience to create a supportive learning environment.

C. Lack of preparation

The third factor that caused EESA's member anxiety in speaking English is lack of self-preparation. Lack of preparation is external factor that caused students anxiety in speaking. The following statement shows the anxiety of EESA's member in order to speak in English:

Respondent 1

“Iye kak, karena tanpa persiapan, saya sering merasa panik dan sulit untuk fokus pada apa yang ingin saya sampaikan”.

“Yes, because without preparation, I often feel panicked and difficult to focus on what I want to say”.

Respondent 2

"Iye, saya merasa tertekan karena tidak memiliki kepercayaan diri jika tidak mempersiapkan diri dengan baik".

"Yes, I feel pressured because I do not have the confidence if I do not prepare myself well".

Respondent 3

"Iye, karena saya khawatir jika kurang persiapan saya tidak dapat menyampaikan ide-ide saya dengan jelas dan membuat orang lain tidak mengerti apa yang saya maksud".

"Yes, because I am worried if I am underprepared I will not be able to convey my ideas clearly and make others do not understand what I mean".

Respondent 4

"Iye kak, saya merasa sangat tertekan jika kurang persiapan karena saya takut terlihat bodoh di depan orang lain".

"Yes, I feel very depressed if I am underprepared because I am afraid of looking stupid in front of others".

The third factor causing anxiety among EESA members in speaking English is a lack of self-preparation. This external factor significantly impacts their ability to speak confidently. The respondents express that without adequate preparation, they feel panicked, pressured, and struggle to focus, which hinders their ability to convey ideas clearly. Additionally, they fear looking foolish in front of others, further exacerbating their anxiety. This aligns with Horwitz's (1986) concepts of test anxiety and communication apprehension, where insufficient preparation increases anxiety during oral assessments and spontaneous conversations. The researcher concludes that lack of preparation is a significant factor contributing to EESA members' anxiety in speaking English.

The data confirms that lack of preparation is a key factor contributing to EESA members' anxiety in speaking English. This finding supports Liu's (2006) theory, which identifies preparation as a crucial strategy for overcoming anxiety. Therefore, it is evident that insufficient preparation plays a major role in heightening students' anxiety in speaking classes.

D. Limited vocabulary

The fourth factor that caused EESA's member anxiety in speaking English is limited vocabulary. Limited vocabulary is external factor that caused students anxiety in speaking The following statement shows the anxiety of EESA's member in order to speak in English:

Respondent 1

"Iye kak karena ketika kita tidak menguasai kosakata itu kita tidak dapat berbicara Bahasa Inggris dengan lancar dan benar".

"Yes, because when we do not master the vocabulary we cannot speak English fluently and correctly".

Respondent 2

"Berpengaruh kak, saya merasa sangat cemas karena saya sering kehabisan kata-kata saat berbicara dalam bahasa Inggris".

"It is affected, I feel very anxious because I often run out of words when speaking in English".

Respondent 3

"Iye, sangat berpengaruh kak, kadang Saya merasa cemas karena sering kali saya harus berhenti sejenak untuk mencari kata yang benar dalam bahasa Inggris".

"Yes, very influential, sometimes I feel anxious because I often have to pause to find the correct word in English".

Respondent 4

"Sangat mempengaruhi kak, jika saya tidak tahu banyak kosakata, saya merasa tidak bisa mengekspresikan diri dengan baik orang lain".

"It really affects me, if I do not know a lot of vocabulary, I feel like I cannot express myself well".

The fourth factor causing anxiety among EESA's members in speaking English is limited vocabulary, an external factor that hinders their ability to communicate effectively. The respondents expressed that their anxiety stems from not mastering enough vocabulary, which prevents them from speaking fluently and correctly. One respondent mentioned feeling very anxious due to frequently running out of words, while another highlighted the need to pause to find the correct word, which adds to their anxiety. Another respondent noted that a lack of vocabulary affects their ability to express themselves well, leading to increased anxiety. This aligns with Horwitz's (1986) concept of communication apprehension, where insufficient vocabulary causes students to feel anxious about participating in conversations.

The data confirms that limited vocabulary is a significant factor causing anxiety in EESA members when speaking English. This finding supports Eda Tasyi's (2015) theory, which states that limited vocabulary is a primary cause of students' anxiety. The inability to effectively use the vocabulary they possess often leads to anxiety when attempting to communicate.

E. Grammatical error

The fifth factor that caused EESA's member anxiety in speaking English is grammatical error. Grammatical error is external factor that caused students anxiety in speaking. The following statement shows the anxiety of EESA's member in order to speak in English:

Respondent 1

"Iye kak, saya sangat khawatir karena tata bahasa saya sering salah, dan saya takut orang lain tidak akan mengerti apa yang saya maksud".

"Yes, I am very worried because my grammar is often wrong, and I am afraid that others will not understand what I mean."

Respondent 2

"Tentu saja, saya selalu cemas kalau-kalau saya menggunakan tense yang salah, terutama saat berbicara spontan".

"Of course, I am always worried that I'm using the wrong tense, especially when speaking spontaneously."

Respondent 3

"Saya selalu merasa cemas tentang grammar karena saya sering ragu apakah saya sudah menggunakan kata yang tepat sesuai dengan konteks".

"I always feel anxious about grammar because I often doubt whether I have used the right word according to the context".

Respondent 4

"Iye, saya takut membuat kesalahan grammar, karena saya tahu itu bisa membuat saya terlihat tidak profesional".

"Yes, I am afraid of making grammar mistakes, because I know it can make me look unprofessional".

The fifth factor contributing to EESA members' anxiety in speaking English is grammatical errors, an external factor causing significant concern. Respondents expressed fear that mistakes in grammar would lead to misunderstanding or make them appear unprofessional. For example, one respondent worried about using incorrect grammar and being misunderstood, while another was anxious about using the wrong tense in spontaneous speech. This anxiety relates to Horwitz's (1986) concept of fear of negative evaluation, where students fear judgment or criticism due to grammatical errors,

leading to increased anxiety. The researcher concludes that grammatical errors significantly contribute to EESA members' anxiety when speaking English.

The findings show that grammatical errors are a significant source of anxiety for EESA members, consistent with Susi Damaiyanti's (2021) theory that students frequently make grammatical errors, such as misusing parts of speech, when speaking English. This anxiety may stem from the influence of their first language, which can disrupt communication in a second language like English. In Indonesia, where English is a second language, students often struggle with grammatical errors, leading to low confidence and anxiety in communication.

In conclusion, EESA members' anxiety in speaking English is primarily caused by fear of making mistakes, lack of self-confidence, lack of preparation, limited vocabulary, and grammatical errors. These factors align with Horwitz's dimensions of Foreign Language Anxiety, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions to support effective language learning.

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