

# An Analysis on Students' Speaking Anxiety at Tenth Graders of MA Mu'allimat NW Pancor

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## Abstract

This study is aimed at investigating students' speaking anxiety at the tenth graders of Religion class of *MA Mu'allimat NW Pancor* in the academic year 2017-2018. The purposes of the study were: 1) to know what kinds of anxiety the students experience in speaking English; 2) to find the factors of students' speaking anxiety; 3) to learn on what proper method and technique to decrease students' speaking anxiety. This research was a descriptive qualitative research. The participants were consisted of 15 students and have been chosen using purposive sampling. Finding reveals that there are three types of students' anxiety, which are trait anxiety, state anxiety and specific-situation anxiety. For the result of questionnaire, the formula that used was the gained score of respondent divided to total score of five aspects times 100%. The result showed that there were 73.3% agree respond which indicated students faced English speaking anxiety, 17.62% chose neutral, and the rest chose disagree option with 9.05% percentage. Beside questionnaire, the observation and interview result also showed that majority of the students had English speaking anxiety with various factors.

**Keywords:** students' anxiety, speaking ability, speaking English

## 1. Introduction

Language is one of the media to communicate with other people. It is the expression of ideas by means of speech-sounds combined into words, and the sentences. These combinations answer to the idea into thoughts. According to Chomsky (1957) language is a set of finite number sentences, each finite in length and constructed out of a finite set of elements. First, notion of language as stated means of communication between members of the public in the form of a symbol of the sound produced by means of said human. Second, language is a communication system that uses sound which is arbitrary. Most people using language in questions, comment, directions and even to express their feelings, desires, thoughts and needs.

In wider world interaction, people use international language to communicate in international forum, to discuss, to learn science (math, biology, chemistry, physic, biochemistry, etc.), technology (computers, internet), diplomacy, and tourism. The language is English. It is the main language in international communication and considered as the main language of media industry. Speaking English as a foreign language provides additional

opportunities for internships, research or service learning abroad. Pop in Mirabela & Ariana (2012) stated that studying a foreign language, from kindergarten to university, provides an individual with a better understanding of grammar, which in turn will train him or her to clearly express their thoughts. Furthermore, there are four main skills or aspects to measure the students' ability in learning English. The main skills are listening, speaking, reading and writing.

The four skills of English are the important things to learn during the teaching and learning process. To train these skills, some methods are used, depend on which one is delivered to students, whether it is receptive (listening and reading) or productive (speaking and writing) skill. According to Harmer in Bastias & Riquelme (2011) any of the four skills of the English language demand considerable language activation on the part of the learner; the brain is engaged with texts learners interact with.

Among those four skills, speaking skill is the main aspect which often requires as a measurement of students' ability in English. According to Brown (1994), speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and also processing information. The meaning of speaking depends on the context, including the participants themselves. Burns & Joyce (1997) stated that speaking has its own skills, structures, and conventions different from written language.

Teaching speaking skill at school is quite challenging for some teachers. This problem might exist because majority of English teachers do not apply the proper methods to teach speaking which caused slow improvement in students' speaking motivations. Based on the researcher's experience in teaching senior high school students, the majority of the students did not feel confidence in speaking English. The lack of confidence of producing English words and sentences might due to the wrong technique used by some previous teachers. In the researcher's previous observation, the classroom activity always used teacher-centre which caused the minimum opportunity for students to explore their English ability. The low chances for students to practice their speaking ability might cause an under-pressure feeling to show off their speaking skill and lead to the anxiety.

Language anxiety or foreign language anxiety is usually associated with situational anxiety since it is a particular language learning situation that triggers a learner to grow anxious. Young in Gudu (2015) stressed the language learning contexts as the provoking factors for language anxiety and defined it as a construct peculiar to language learning situations. In term of students' language anxiety, Worde (1998) reported that non-comprehension, the pace and the risk of being singled out in speaking activities, the limited time devoted to pedagogical and instructional practices, the risk of being humiliated through error correction and the presence of native speakers could make them more anxious than usual. Moreover, it is the intrinsic motivator, the learner's self in particular, that usually result in anxiety-breeding situations of students.

Based on the description, the researcher had a great intention to conduct an analysis of students' speaking anxiety at tenth graders of MA Mu'allimat NW Pancor.

## **2. Method**

### **2.1 Participants**

Participants of the study are some people who take part in a research that are selected base on research question, theoretical perspectives, and evidence (Sargeant, 2012). In this research, the researcher took 15 students as the participants. Researcher used purposive sampling to choose the participants.

### **2.2 Data Collection**

#### **2.2.1 Instrument of Collecting Data**

Instrument refers to devices used to collect data such as questionnaires, tests, structured interview schedules and checklist (Seaman, 1991). The researcher conducted questionnaire (to ask participants' personal perspective), interview (to recheck the trustworthiness of the previous information), observation (to collect data based on what researcher discovers at classroom), and recording (to record everything which is stated by the participants during the interview and/or observation).

#### **2.2.2 Techniques for Collecting Data**

Researcher conducted questionnaire test as one of the instruments of this study. Researcher arranged 14 statements related to English speaking anxiety and asked the participants to answer the questionnaire based on their personal perspectives. They could choose strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree boxes. The result was checked by the researcher whether the students dealt with the speaking anxiety or not.

Beside questionnaire, the researcher also conducted interview test to the participants in order to confirm their previous answers. Researcher applied semi-structured interview during the question and answer section. Semi-structured interview helped researcher to develop the question according to the students' answer. In this section, researcher used recording to record the students' answer during the interview. Researcher compared the result of questionnaire with interview section to decide in which level the students' anxiety in speaking.

In addition, the researcher also conducted observation in classroom. Researcher observed how the teaching and learning process activity runs during speaking class, and analyzed the students' problems and progress in speaking skill. Researcher wrote some notes and combined the result with the questionnaire and interview section.

### **2.3 Data Analysis**

After collecting data by using three instruments; questionnaire, interview and observation, the data were analyzed by some steps. First, all question items was collected to be processed by the researcher. Second, the data was tabulated using percentage. The formula used was the gained score of respondent divided tototal score of five aspectstimes 100% Third, the data are classified into three categories based on the students' answers in kinds and factors of their speaking anxiety.

## **3. Findings**

Based on the respondents' responses on the table above, this study showed that there were 154 (73.3%) who answered with Strongly Agree and Agree choices which indicated

they had speaking anxiety with varies factors. About 17.62% chose neutral and the rest (9.05%) chose Disagree and Strongly Disagree which indicated few of them did not really have anxiety in speaking.

Researcher asked 4 to 5 questions related to English speaking anxiety and recorded the students' answers. Most of the students said that they quite afraid to speak English because they did not know much vocabularies, the grammar rules and really rare practicing their English speaking skill. The high possibility of using their mother tongue did not make them aware to practice their English, even in English subject which did not often provide them to speak.

From the classroom observation, researcher can summed up that the students' confidence in speaking English should be supported by various elements, such as teacher motivation, proper topic of the speaking, and make sure they had enough vocabularies and knew the grammar rules.

#### **4. Discussion**

Referring to the result of research, researcher concludes that the majority of the students at the tenth grader of MA Mu'allimat NW Pancor had same type of speaking anxiety which was state anxiety. State anxiety is the anxious type which often occurs when someone gives response to some outside stimulus or reactions. The response will lead them to nervousness, tensions and hesitations. Only few of them had trait anxiety.

Why researcher categorized them into state anxiety? It can be seen from the observation, questionnaire, and interview result. In observation section, most of the students started to lost their focus when the audience gave responses to their speaking. When the teacher encouraged the students to arrange short and long sentences of surprise and amazement expressions and asked them to come forward in front of class to mention it without brought the paper, there were various responses.

When students were asked to present the expressions, almost half of the students came to the front of class with self-confidence. When they tried to speak, they spoke with good excitement but hesitated when they used wrong grammar and basic many vocabularies while speaking. The strongest things which distracted their focus were the laugh they got from making a mistake and the sudden correction from the teacher.

Meanwhile trait anxiety was happened to two or three students. These students did not feel confident not only in speaking English, but also other activities which needed practices or stood in front of people.

The questionnaire result also showed that they had state anxiety. The majority of them answered 'strongly agree' or 'agree' in the type of statements that indicated state anxiety, such as afraid of incorrect grammatical rule, incorrect vocabularies, fear of forgetting what they would say while speaking, fear of judgment from other students, and fear of negative comment or sudden correction from the teacher. By those answers, we can conclude that most of them worried about other reaction about their speaking ability. Meanwhile interview result showed that they rarely practiced their speaking. Most of the materials did not provide them to train and improve their speaking.

There were some factors of students' speaking anxiety at the tenth graders of MA Mu'allimat NW Pancor. First, like always mentioned above, they had little vocabularies. They learnt many new materials but never tried to memorize certain words. Even in classroom interaction they rarely tried to speak English because the materials were almost all about writing and answer questions in paper, so they almost never practiced their vocabularies. Other factor was did not really know the grammatical rule. It could be seen when they came forward to practice their speaking. They struggled to arrange proper basic sentence in English.

The students also had psychology factors such as fear of negative comment, audience response, or they often thought that they would not be able to finish their speech because they simply could not. The students said that whenever they tried to prepare some words or sentences, they often afraid that they would forget anything they would say in front of many people.

Looking at the result of the observation, questionnaire and interview above, the students' confidence in speaking English should be supported by various elements, such as teacher motivation, proper topic of the speaking, interesting media and technique, and make sure they had enough vocabularies and knew the grammar rules. To reach these achievements, the teacher's role is really important. Teacher can guide the students to understand their need in order to improve their speaking ability in English.

#### 4. Conclusions

Corresponding with the research result and discussion taken from the perception of the students, the researcher draws some conclusions. First, there are three types of speaking anxiety. The types are trait anxiety, state anxiety, specific-situation anxiety. During the research, researcher found that the students had two types anxiety, which were trait and state anxiety. Majority of the students had state anxiety due to their nervousness or tensions in certain events in response to some outside stimulus. It also can be seen from their fear of other students' reaction or the direct correction from the teacher. Only few of them had trait anxiety, which could be seen from their refusal respond whenever they were asked to show something in front of many people.

Meanwhile the third type of speaking anxiety, specific-situation anxiety, had not been found during the research by researcher. The students did not feel their tensions in a specific situation. They just hesitate of outside respond or simply afraid in any situation.

Furthermore, the responds of the students on questionnaire sheets showed that 73.3% with positive responds which indicated they still had speaking anxiety in English. There were 9.05% chose Disagree and Strongly Disagree which indicated few of them did not really have the categories or the factors of anxiety.

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