LANGUAGE ANXIETY AND ITS EFFECT ON STUDENTS' SPEAKING PERFORMANCE

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Abstract

This study is about the analysis of language anxiety factors affecting Technical department 51 Batch 4th semester cadets' speaking performance. The aim of this study is to list the language anxiety factors that affect cadets' speaking performance and to explain how the language anxiety can affect cadets' speaking performance. The data of this study were taken from questionnaire, open-ended interview, and students' speaking performance score. There were 60 cadets from two classes on class F and G of Indonesia Merchant Marine of Semarang. The questionnaire data were analyzed based on Horwitz's theory of Language Anxiety. Then for the language anxiety factors, each statement was calculated to know five chosen statement. The relation between language anxiety and students' speaking performance were analyzed based on students' interview answer, speaking score, and anxiety level. There were five factors of language anxiety affects students' speaking performance: 1) lack of preparation during language class, 2) peer-pressure in language as a whole, 3) sudden-activity in class, 4) peer-pressure in English speaking, and 5) students' negative attitudes toward English language. There were no solid correlation between students' speaking performance and language anxiety, what made their speaking performance differ from one to another was their linguistic competence and how they cope with their anxiety during speaking class.

Keywords: language anxiety, speaking performance, anxiety factor

INTRODUCTION

English is becoming more important and getting much attention in the world of education, nowadays. It becomes one of the success keys to the future of students or an individual to master English. For years back, English has become an international language and because of that English is taught in every country including Indonesia. As a language, English has four aspects inside. There are speaking, listening, writing, and reading. Speaking seems to be the most important skills among all the four skills because people who know a language are usually referred to as speakers of that language (Ur, 1996). Speaking and listening is considered as productive skill, those need more and more practice to develop an accurate sense of competence and mastery of those skill. The major goal of all English language teaching should be to give learners the ability to use English effectively, accurately in communication (Davies & Pearse, 1998). However, not all language learners after many years studying English can communicate fluently and accurately because they lack necessary knowledge.

Speaking is a highly anxiety-provoking situation (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986). This reality essentially points to the psychological construct termed as "anxiety", which has been in the limelight of language research since 1980s (e.g. Horwitz et. al., 1986; Young, 1991) and has been found to excessively influence students' speaking skill (Fang-peng & Dong, 2010). Based on Demirezen (2004), psycholinguistics is the study of relation between language and mind. Generally, it is defined as the study of mental processes that a person uses in producing understanding and storing language and how humans learn their mother tongue and foreign languages. Anxiety is a negative way to present human feelings. When we are feeling anxious, we feel nervous, worried, and fearful. We

struggle, tremble, perspire, and our hearts beat quickly. In general, anxiety can be defined as a complex concept dependent upon not only on one's feelings of self-efficacy but also appraisals concerning the potential and perceived threats inherent in certain situations (Tobias, 1986). In plain words, anxiety is usually associated with unpleasant feelings and is similar to fear (Lader, 1975). Anxiety in communicating in a foreign language, especially when that language is English can have a debilitating effect and can influence students' adaptation to the target environment and ultimately their educational goals. There is also a well-asserted agreement that anxiety is related to performance, and that anxiety has been shown to have a counter-productive negative effect on learning and achievement.

There are many studies have been done in this field since anxiety is becoming the most reason of students' anxiety in acquiring English as a foreign language in general. First research is by Mauludiyah (2014) entitled The Correlation between Students' Anxiety and Their Ability in Speaking Class. The purpose of the research was to find out the correlation between students' anxiety and their ability in speaking class. Other research entitled ESL Students' Language Anxiety in In-Class Oral Presentations conducted by Chen (2015). The research aim is to explore connections between ESL students' speaking-in-class anxiety and their presentation performance, factors causing oral anxiety during presentations, and strategies to regulate second language students' speaking anxiety in presentations. The fifth research with title A Descriptive Analysis of Students' Anxiety on Presentation Performance in Teaching-Learning Process by Roflatulumah (2014). The purposes of the research are to explain the levels of students; anxiety, the sources of the students; anxiety and the strategies that there are use to decrease the anxiety when presentation.

Methodology

This research can be classified as a case study. A case study is an exploration of a "bounded system" or a case (or multiple cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context (Creswell, 1998). Case study can be defined as an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a sigle entity, phenomenon or social unit. Case studies are particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic and rely heavily on inductive reasoning in handling multiple data sources (Merriam, 1998).

The other reason of this research is the fact that in some maritime academies the pressure of having decent speaking skill is higher than other non maritime academies, for example in AKPELNI Semarang. At ship, many accidents are found to be due mainly to operational issues of proper procedure, maintenance and design, rather than to proper implementation of regulations but effectiveness of bridge resource management and particularly ineffective relationships between masters, crew and pilot are recurrent themes. Communication difficulties often occur in these areas due in part to cultural differences but also due to language 'barriers'. Some examples from recent analyses illustrate the problems. A 36,000 gt Panama flag bulk carrier was leaving port under pilotage when it ran aground. The pilot was conning the vessel and giving instructions to the helmsman but his attention was distracted and he failed to properly monitor the actions of the helmsman. The result was that he failed to hear the helmsman's replies and the ship swung out of the channel and aground. The accident was caused because of the poor communications between the helmsman and pilot. Specially, a seafarer who would like to work in International Shipping Company, English is the main requirement.

There must be some factors behind why cadets were anxious when saying something or lack of confidence. These factors need to be found in orders to solve

the old-yet-still exist problem. From this research, I hope the factors that affect students' speaking performance especially in terms of language anxiety can be explained clearly so that at least English teachers or lecturers can understand and make it into a consideration whenever they want to teach spoken English to their students. If 'careless talk' does cost lives, then the responsibility on those who teach English to seafarers is a major one. The task of the teacher is to create sufficient opportunities for learning to take place. Communicative language teaching makes use of real-life situations that necessitate communication and the SMCP provides a very useful tool for developing those situations. Unlike the more traditional audiolingual method of language teaching, which relies on repetition and drills, the communicative approach can vary according to the student's reactions and responses. The real-life simulations can be change from day to day and be made topical. Lecturers can set up a situation that students are likely to encounter in real life and the students' motivation and understanding can be enhanced through communication on meaningful topics. The good Lecturer therefore needs to be constantly exploring new ideas and be imaginative in developing new situations.

The questionnaire used is by Horwitz (1986) entitled Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). After the questionnaire handed in, the writer calculates the score for each student using Mayangta (2013) Calculation formula in order to find out their anxiety level. Also, conduct the interview with the students about how they feel during speaking activity on English class. The interview itself is an in-depth interview, which make the recipients their free to answer the interview question guided with provided clue. The students' answer then will be combined with their anxiety level and speaking score to know the correlation between both anxiety level and speaking score. Then, gain score from students' speaking performance. To gathered the speaking score form students based on the reliable source, the writer use Brown's speaking assessment (2004) which in this case is added with some adaption to fit the students' level of speaking in English as a foreign language better. In calculating the questionnaire, the writer depend on Horwitz theory about language anxiety. From that, the students' anxiety level could be obtained. Also the calculated data would be used to find out the correlation between students' speaking performance and their anxiety level.

Findings and Discussion
1. Findings
The object of this research is 60cadets of 4th semester of 51 Batch in AKPELNI Semarang. After the questionnaire taken, the interview held, and the speaking score gained, it was found that the majority of the students felt anxious about their speaking in English as a foreign language. Most of them have mild anxiety during the English speaking class, the rest have anxiety and high anxiety, and only a few have mildly relax feeling towards English speaking class. The number of students in each level of anxiety is listed below:

Table 1. Number of Students' Anxiety Level

Level of Anxiety	Number of Students
Very Relaxed	0
Relaxed	6
Mildly Anxious	17
Anxious	28
Very Anxious	13

Then, the calculation of the questionnaire other than to find students' anxiety level is also to know what factors causing their anxiety the most. The result shows that there are five most reasons that are being choose by the students. The five factors causing students' anxiety are listed below:

Table 2. Students' Anxiety Factors

Rank	Statements	Mean
I	I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.	4,06
II	I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.	4,05
III	I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I have not prepared in advance.	3,92
IV	I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.	3,8
V	I do not feel preassure to preapare very well for language class.	3,72

2. Discussion

The factors of the students' anxiety are based on various reasons. The highest factor based on the questionnaire calculation "I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class". Based from the observation done in the both class, the students whose the teacher choose to speak in the front of the class at the first day of the assessment was hand in, mainly refuse to do it. Furthermore, from the interview activities, the students happen to said that if they hesitance if they have to speak in foreign language which in this case is English, they feel scared if they make any mistakes as they speak in English without guideline. This factor is in the same line with Tsui (1996) opinion in factors of students' anxiety to speak up, which is students' feat of mistakes and division. From the second class, due to the habit of the teacher during the speaking activity, which often asks students to not only answering the teacher's question but also speak up their opinion in full paragraph in front of the class. Because of that, the students stated that they afraid of making mistakes during that moment. Based on Aida (1994) people experience anxiety when they have to expressing themselves in a foreign language in which they do not have a full competence.

The second highest mean appear on the statement "I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am". According to Munjayanah (2004) from her opinion about four main problems in speaking, one of them is low or uneven participation. Low or uneven participation means there are only certain students that play an active role in English speaking class. From the observation done in the classroom, the writer found that only certain students happen to be brave enough to speak up their mind. Others only play a passive role during the speaking class. This condition leads to most of students' perspective about their language ability especially in speaking field and makes it into the first factor of their language anxiety. From the interview done in class, most of the students stated that they feel like some of the students in their class having higher level of understanding in English classes. While in the other class, the interviewed students mostly said that they better remain in silence because they feel like other students are better in acquiring and performing the foreign language especially in speaking form.

The third factor, which in this case, might be the most common factor that causing anxiety on students is "I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advanced." The students' representative who joins the interview stated that their teacher often asks sudden question and required the students to answered using foreign language. That habit itself already became a huge trigger of anxiety on students. Tsui (1996) stated that teachers' intolerance of silence leads students to their own worry and end up with feeling anxious. In this class, based on the writer observation, the teacher did not tolerate with any silent, every time he asks a question, there should be one or more students answered in complete foreign language and if they answered wrong or out of the context or even they mispronounced

some word the teacher would be easily speak in higher voice and made all class silent still and the situation is tense. The question mainly stated orally, meanwhile Horwitz (1991) stated that anxious learners have difficulty in understanding the oral instructions, which is in this case oral questions.

The fourth factor based from this research calculation is "I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do". This statement goes hand in hand with the first statement, as the writer conclude from the observation that those with higher levels of understanding the English language as a foreign language play more active role in speaking during the class. It is simply said that after feel that other students are better in English then actually seeing those with better understanding speak better, increase their anxiety during the class. Daly (1997) stated that anxious students tend to have more negative self perception and tend to underestimate their quality of speaking ability. The anxiety feeling appear based on their self-worry about their ability, Young (1999) confirms that anxiety appear may be associated to self-thoughts of failure and negative self perception about their own second language capacity. Active and passive role in English speaking class leads the students into competitive situation. Bailey (1983) investigates that competitiveness playing an important role to trigger students' speaking anxiety.

The last factor is "I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class." Morris (1960) stated that students' perception of foreign language may influence students' attitudes toward that language. Simply said, based from the interview, most of the students said that whether or not they master the material during speaking activity, their teacher would always found the mistakes on their performance and they will still feel anxious during performance. In addition to that, they feel no longer need to improve their skill since the scoring will always based on their teacher self perception rather than the students ability.

Those who feel relaxed based on the analysis done by the writer have positive attitude toward English speaking class. All of the students inside the group of relaxed level have no worries during the class and doing their duty in performing their assignment. One of their ways to cope with their anxiety based on Kondo (2004) is preparation, which means students attempt to control their own self by improving learning and study strategies. All of the students in this category answer the second question of interview with several answers which summarize in one thing. They study before the time they have to perform. By using this strategy, it would be expected that students will have a high score, which in this case happened. The students under this category had high score compare with other students, relatively. Other than that, some of students choose to have a positive mindset to cope with their anxiety, based on Kondo (2004) this strategy are intended to divert attention from the tense situation to a more positive vibe.

The group contain with students with mild anxiety have different answer about how they cope with their anxiety. Their way to cope with their anxiety was somehow divided into two different ways. The first one is those who cope with theirs with preparation as stated by Kondo (2004) which clearly affected their score. The students who choose to prepare to cope with their anxiety got higher score rather than those who did not. Their score still categorized as a high score which above the class' average. Meanwhile, the other students under this category choose different ways. This called resignation or students' unwillingness to do anything to decrease their language anxiety (Kondo, 1997). This strategy, however, did not affect their score or ability in English speaking. The other strategy the students tend to choose is avoiding eye-contact with the audience, so they did not feel judge. Those who choose the last two strategies mostly got just average or even below class'

average score. This happens because they choose strategy that did not improving their understanding or ability in English speaking.

The last group filled with those who feel anxious or very anxious towards English especially in speaking. Those in this group have negative attitude towards English as foreign language. They felt either scared or nervous or both during the class. Fear of making a mistakes, teacher pressure to get good grades, and lack of confidence in learn English (Rofiatulumah, 2013) became the most source of anxiety that the students feel under this category.

Conclusions

First, there are five factors that causing anxiety on students in language learning class especially speaking skill. The first factor and the most reason of students' anxiety is lack of preparation during language class. Followed by the peer-pressure in language as a general as the second factor. The third factor is sudden-activity in class. The next factor is peer-pressure in English speaking. The last factor is the students' unwillingness to prepare before the class.

Second, the students under relaxed level of anxiety tend to have a positive attitude toward English language especially in speaking. They cope with their anxiety with preparing before the class or before they have to perform in front of the class which affects their score in class. Meanwhile, in category mildly anxious, the students start to have negative attitude toward English speaking class. Their strategy to cope with the anxiety was divided into two. The half one choose to prepare and improve, the other half choose to resign and avoiding eye-contact just to reduce the tense they have but not to improve their English speaking ability. The last category is students who have anxious and very anxious feeling toward English speaking activity. There are also several strategies to reduce the students' anxiety. The first one is preparation, those who choose this, improve and got better

score. The other strategy is resignation and relaxation which only reduce the amount of anxiety the students' feel yet not making the students improving their ability.

Suggestions

In teaching-learning process especially in speaking performance, the anxiety might appear to the students because they have to speak in different language which is English in front of other. From the findings that explained earlier, here are some suggestions that can be taken as a consideration in teaching and learning process.

The teacher or lecturer should understand that anxiety is one of the reasons why students having difficulties in the language acquisition process especially in speaking. The teacher should acknowledge that the anxiety occurs. The teacher could make the class become a friendly situation with relax atmosphere to the students.

Motivation from teacher or lecturer are also needed to make students more interest in learning new language and make them bravely speak up their mind.

For the future research, anxiety occurs not only in speaking skill but also in other skill in English language, which is reading, writing, and listening. The writer hopes that the next researcher can investigate the students' anxiety in other skills in language acquisition process.

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