



STUDENTS' COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION IN SPEAKING ACTIVITY OF SECOND GRADE STUDENTS AT SMAN 1 2 X 11 KAYUTANAM

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Abstract: This study aims to describe students' speaking anxiety during Speaking activities in the eleventh grade at SMAN 1 2 x 11 Enam Lingkungan. The research sample consists of 25 students from class XI IPS1, selected through purposive sampling. The sample was measured using a questionnaire to describe the factors causing students' speaking anxiety. The research data were processed and analyzed to identify the factors causing speaking anxiety using a Likert scale. The data will be processed and analyzed to calculate percentages using Riduwan's formula, $P = f / n$. The results of the study show that all students experience various factors causing speaking anxiety: lack of vocabulary, low English proficiency, lack of preparation, lack of practice, fear of making mistakes and being laughed at, fear of losing face, fear of being the focus of attention, fear of being unable to follow and understand others, inability to express ideas, and memory dissociation. Data processing results indicate that low English proficiency has the highest percentage, with 61.55% of respondents. The factor with the lowest percentage is fear of losing face, at 21.42%.

Keywords:

*Communication Apprehension, Speaking Activity,
SMAN 1 2 X 11 KAYUTANAM*

A. INTRODUCTION

Learning English in Indonesia has been part of the government's policy and is included in the national curriculum, including the teaching of English for senior high school students. The Indonesian government has set the goal of teaching English in senior high schools to help students achieve a functional level of communication in English. At this level, all senior high school students are expected to be able to process and communicate information in English. To achieve this, the English curriculum for senior high schools covers both language skills and language elements.

Unfortunately, speaking can be a challenging task for many students because it requires interaction. It can be stressful when they are expected to speak in a second or foreign language before achieving fluency. Consequently, many students may experience what is known as communication apprehension. This phenomenon contributes to their anxiety during academic and social activities that require interaction with others, especially in speaking activities.

Speaking activity refers to any exercise or task designed to develop and enhance an individual's speaking skills, particularly in a language learning context. These activities are typically structured to promote verbal communication, allowing learners to practice and improve their fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, and overall confidence in speaking. Speaking activities often involve interaction with peers, teachers, or in some cases, technology, to simulate real-life communication. Speaking activities are essential in language learning as they provide opportunities for learners to practice and refine their communication skills in a supportive environment.

Communication apprehension is the fear or anxiety associated with real or anticipated communication with another person or persons. Although some people desire to communicate with others and understand the importance of doing so, they may be hindered by their fear or anxiety. People who lack appropriate communication skills, such as having insufficient vocabulary, tend to develop communication apprehension. However, most people who experience communication apprehension are neither generally lacking in skills nor different from others in the general culture. Typically, they are normal individuals who are simply afraid to communicate for fear of being negatively perceived by others.

Communication apprehension refers to the anxiety or fear individuals experience when engaging in communication, whether it's public speaking, interpersonal conversations, or group discussions. This apprehension can stem from various factors, such as fear of judgment, low self-confidence, unfamiliarity with the language or topic, or previous negative experiences in communication. Communication apprehension often leads to avoidance of communication situations, reduced participation, or diminished performance, especially in settings where effective communication is crucial. It can manifest physically (e.g., sweating,

trembling), cognitively (e.g., negative thoughts, self-doubt), and behaviorally (e.g., stammering, avoiding eye contact). Addressing communication apprehension typically involves building confidence, improving communication skills, and creating supportive environments that encourage open and stress-free interaction.

In line with the issue of communication apprehension or anxiety, Thornbury (2005: 28) states that a lack of vocabulary, improper grammar, and fear of making mistakes are some factors that can contribute to speaking failure and cause an acute sense of anxiety when it comes to speaking. Moreover, the problem of language anxiety occurs not only among beginners but also among university students who regularly deal with English.

Based on the researcher's experience during teaching practice at SMAN 1 2X11 Kayutanam, the researcher observed that many students appeared to experience apprehension or anxiety when speaking in front of the class. During speaking activities, many of them looked nervous and shy when the teacher asked them to practice their English in front of their classmates and teacher. They were worried about making mistakes, being criticized by the teacher, or being mocked or laughed at by their friends. Consequently, they preferred to remain quiet and passive rather than participate actively in classroom activities, especially in English class.

Since communication apprehension or anxiety has significant effects on students' English learning, it is important to explore and study students' apprehension in learning English. Therefore, the researcher is interested in investigating communication apprehension during speaking activities in English learning. Consequently, the researcher will conduct a study entitled "An Analysis of Communication Apprehension in Speaking Activities in the English Learning Process at SMA 1 2x11 Kayutanam".

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This research employed descriptive research to describe students' motivation in learning English. Fraenkel and Wallen (1993:380) state that in descriptive research, qualitative data are collected in the form of words or pictures rather than numbers. Descriptive research is a type of research that aims to describe characteristics or phenomena as they exist in their natural state. It focuses on providing an accurate portrayal or account of the subject, often involving the collection of data to answer questions about the "what," "where," "when," and "how" of a given topic.

Arikunto (2005:234) defines descriptive research as research aimed at collecting information and describing variables or phenomena. The researcher conducted this study to gather data. According to Gay (2000:189), descriptive research involves collecting data to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study. In this research, the researcher analyzed communication

apprehension in speaking activities among the 2nd-grade students of SMAN 1 2x11 Kayutanam.

1) Population and Sample

According to Gay (2009:124), "Population can be of any size and cover almost any geographical area." He also stated that the population refers to the entire group of interest to the researcher, which is rarely fully accessible. Therefore, the population for this study was drawn from all IPS classes of the second grade at SMA N 1 2x11 Kayutanam, consisting of 73 students.

The participants of this research were focused on class XI IPS 1, selected using purposive sampling. The sample was chosen based on the advice of the English teacher at SMAN 1 2x11 Kayutanam. Class XI IPS 1 was considered to be cooperative for this research. The total number of participants was 25 students from class XI IPS 1. Thus, the sample for this research consisted of 25 students, chosen through purposive sampling.

2) Technique of Data Collection

The data collection procedures for this research involved several steps. The first step was constructing a questionnaire to measure students' communication apprehension in speaking activities. The questionnaire was designed to assess students' levels of communication apprehension in speaking activities. It consisted of 30 items. To determine students' scores, the researcher used a closed questionnaire, where respondents selected their answers by ticking the responses provided by the researcher.

As explained earlier, the questionnaire was considered valid because it aligned with the theoretical framework provided by Rebecca Oxford (1990). After ensuring the test was both valid and reliable, the researcher conducted the actual test. The final step involved obtaining the scores from the reading test and the results of the questionnaire, followed by computing the data.

3) Technique of Data Analysis

After collecting the data, the researcher analyzed it based on the instruments provided. According to Gay and Airasian (2000:239), there are four steps in data analysis: reading, describing, classifying, and interpreting. In the reading step, the researcher becomes familiar with the data and identifies the main themes. During this stage, the researcher reads the results from the questionnaire to become thoroughly acquainted with the data. In the describing step, the researcher examines the data in depth to provide a detailed description of the setting, participants, and activities. The researcher describes the data obtained from the questionnaire. In the classifying step, the researcher categorizes and codes pieces of data, grouping them into themes. During this stage, the researcher classifies the data

from the questionnaire to identify the strategies used. In the interpreting step, the researcher organizes and synthesizes the data into general conclusions or understandings. At this stage, the researcher interprets and synthesizes the findings to understand the class activities and the students' communication apprehension during speaking activities.

C. FINDING

Based on the data description, the researcher concluded that all students exhibited factors of communication apprehension in speaking activities, as outlined in Liu's (2007) theory. It was further concluded that all factors of communication apprehension could influence students' performance in speaking activities during English learning, affecting their ability to comprehend or produce the target language.

The percentage of students experiencing communication apprehension in speaking activities revealed the following: 50% of students lacked vocabulary, 61.55% had low English proficiency, 46.15% lacked preparation, 57.69% lacked practice, 50% feared making mistakes and being laughed at, 21.42% feared losing face, 53.84% feared being the focus of attention, 46.15% feared being unable to follow and understand others, 42.30% had difficulty expressing ideas, and 50% experienced memory disassociation.

The results of the questionnaire indicated that low English proficiency was the most frequent cause of students' communication apprehension in speaking activities, with a percentage of 61.55%. According to Liu (2007), low English proficiency is a significant anxiety trigger for students during the learning process. When students have poor oral English skills, they tend to feel nervous and somewhat afraid to speak, leading to anxiety about speaking in English. This issue was frequently mentioned in students' reflective journals.

On the other hand, the questionnaire results showed that fear of losing face had the lowest percentage of communication apprehension in speaking activities. According to Liu (2007), fear of losing face also contributes to student anxiety when speaking English in class. For instance, one student stated, "I'm a little afraid of losing face, I'm shy. When I speak English in front of others, I feel nervous and can't say any words. Oh God, I have forgotten all the words I learned."

The findings also revealed that most students experienced anxiety in the classroom, particularly due to low English proficiency. Many students feared participating in the learning process, especially in speaking activities, and were reluctant to engage in any form of speaking. Moreover, anxiety can also hinder language learning. Consequently, teachers should pay greater attention to this anxiety. Effective teaching strategies that address these affective factors could help increase students' motivation to learn.

Communication apprehension in speaking activities refers to the fear or anxiety individuals experience when engaging in verbal communication, particularly in situations where they are expected to speak, such as public speaking, group discussions, or language learning contexts. This apprehension can significantly impact a person's ability to communicate effectively and confidently.

This can be caused by several factors; worry about being judged or criticized by others, lack of confidence in one's speaking abilities or knowledge, limited vocabulary, poor grammar, or difficulty with pronunciation in a second language, previous failures or embarrassing moments in speaking situations and differences in communication norms or expectations that may increase anxiety.

Furthermore, Liu (2007) explains that students' communication apprehension is anxiety associated with their perception of how others—teachers, classmates, or other onlookers—might negatively view their language abilities. Students are particularly concerned about their social relationships, and classmates' opinions can have a significant negative impact on their self-esteem and participation.

Finally, the general findings of the research regarding sources of student anxiety revealed that most students tend to feel nervous during speaking activities. In short, communication apprehension affects one of the productive skills in English learning, leading to self-defeating effects on students' motivation and level of participation.

D. CONCLUSION

Based on the data analysis and findings above, it can be summarized that all second-grade students experienced various factors of communication apprehension during speaking activities. The communication apprehension in speaking activities at SMA N 1 2 X 11 Kayu Tanam was categorized as high, with a mean score of 4.79. All factors of communication apprehension in speaking activities were based on Liu's (2007) theory.

From the results of the questionnaire, it was found that low English proficiency had the highest percentage, with 61.55% of students experiencing communication apprehension in speaking activities. In contrast, the lowest percentage, 21.42%, was attributed to the fear of losing face. The findings showed that students' communication apprehension in speaking activities at SMA N 1 2 X 11 Kayu Tanam was at a high level, with a mean score of 4.79. Based on this conclusion, the researcher suggests that students need to be more motivated through engaging speaking activities. Furthermore, teachers should adopt various approaches to help reduce students' communication apprehension in speaking activities.

Moreover, the researcher would like to offer some suggestions. For teachers, this study may broaden their perspective on various strategies, approaches, models, and techniques in teaching and learning English as a foreign language. For students,

this study can encourage them to be more creative in identifying the most appropriate strategies to improve their learning outcomes.

For readers, this study may help improve their knowledge about English teaching and learning. For other researchers, this study may encourage further, more in-depth, critical, and comprehensive investigations closely related to this topic, aiming to reveal various aspects of enhancing teaching and learning quality.

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