

## FLCAS analysis of students speaking anxiety in EFL classroom

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### Abstract

*This research aims at identifying the factors of students' speaking anxiety and explaining the students' strategies in overcoming their anxiety of speaking English in the classroom. Universitas Muhammadiyah Cirebon is chosen as the site for this research. There were 28 students who participated in this research. The data were collected using Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (designed by Horwitz et al., 1986) and interview. The research found that there are 56% of the students experienced the test anxiety, 58% of the students feel anxious in communicative apprehension, and 59% of the students were getting anxious in fear of negative evaluation. The factors of students' anxiety in speaking English is categorized into three type three major type of anxiety, namely test anxiety, communicative apprehension and fear of negative evaluation. This research also identifies three strategies used by the students to overcome their anxiety in speaking: Preparation, relaxation and expressive reaction.*

**Keywords:** *Speaking Anxiety; Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS).*

### INTRODUCTION

In English foreign language learning process, speaking is one of the most important skills in language learning. It helps students to be able to communicate with people around the world. In reality speaking is an anxious triggering activity that makes students when they are in classroom, many learners are highly anxious because of participating in speaking activities (Keramida, 2009). In fact, it is often suggested that speaking in the most anxiety-provoking language skill in foreign language learning situation (Subasi, 2010; Oxford, 1992). They even become more anxious when given questions or asked to perform in front of the class (Liu, 2007).

Anxiety has been a matter of considerable interest in language education setting for educators since it is a major obstacle to foreign language learning that the learners need to overcome (Wu, 2010; Zheng, 2008 cited in Eladi. 2016). Suleimenova (2013:1860) States that anxiety is defined as distress or uneasiness of the mind caused by fear of danger or misfortune. General anxiety is the excessive and exaggerated

worry about everyday things. It is an unrealistic, or out of proportion constant worry that dominates and interferes with daily functions like work, school, relationships, and social activities.

In English classroom interaction is very important to experience real communicative situations in which they will learn how to express their own views and opinions, and to develop their oral fluency and accuracy which are very essential for the success of EFL communication (Pourhossein, 2014). But in fact, they lack of speaking ability because they feel nervousness, feelings of stress, unprepared, or unwilling to express themselves. This kind of problem could cause a lot of disadvantages to EFL students. They will lose their opportunities in using English in classroom context to enhance their speaking ability. Since anxiety can have main effects in English foreign language, it is important to know the students' anxiety. Therefore, the writer to investigate what the factors felt by students', may contribute to the anxiety in trying to understand the problems of anxiety in English Foreign Language more deeply.

### **Speaking Anxiety**

Speech therapist Margaretha Lanerfeldt (1992: 53-54) describes speaking anxiety as something that has a great impact on one's self-confidence since it often makes one experience failure when not being able to speak out and show what one knows. Irregular heartbeat, perspiration, stumbling and an inability to act are a few symptoms that block ones capacity to act and speak. Lanerfeldt explains that this issue often turns into a vicious circle because one bad experience from speaking often becomes a reminder when the next opportunity arises. If a student with speaking anxiety experience failure he or she will rather remain quiet than take the risk of failing again. This situation drags them into a silence that becomes more and more difficult to break since it contributes to a role as "the quiet one" in class. Speaking anxiety creates a low self-confidence which makes students remain quiet in all situations, even if they have the capacity to express themselves and knowledge that is worth hearing.

### **FLCAS (Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale)**

Foreign Language Classroom Scale is a questionnaire made by its pioneers. The questionnaire consist of 33 questionnaire with scale started from 1-5. The FLCAS also

investigates other anxieties such as communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation.

## **METHOD**

This research used descriptive qualitative method in order to answer the questions proposed. The qualitative descriptive method is coherent with the objectives of the research.

### **Instrument**

#### ***Questionnaire***

The questionnaire administered to the students was based on the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) to investigate the specific factors of foreign language anxiety developed by Horwitz. The FLCAS consist of 33 statements with significant part-whole correlations with the total scale, aiming to assess communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation associated *with language anxiety*.

#### ***Interview***

Based on the questionnaire analysis, semi-structured interviews were administrated to thirteen selected students in different level speaking of anxiety. The questions in interview were related to the strategies of students for coping anxiety. Interview *session lasted 10 minutes for each participant*.

#### ***Observation Checklist***

Observation checklist it is able to give some information about the appearance or absence of behavior observed by giving check mark (✓). This list may have been prepared by the writer to observed students' participation during the learning process. Observation checklist administrated to thirteen students to validate data from interview.

### **Data Analysis**

#### ***The Factors Affect Students' Anxiety***

The data were analyzed and put into percentages. The 33 items in the FLCAS were analyzed and presented in the percentage. The percentages were rounded to the nearest whole number. For the purpose of this analysis, the responses to "Strongly

agree” (SA) and “Agree” (A) were combined to create an overall score of agreement with the questions, and the sum of response to “Disagree” (D) and “Strongly disagree” (SD) were similarly calculated to gain a measure of disagreement. The data was analyzed by categorizing students’ respond toward every statement of questionnaire into a graphic. It meant that the writer calculated the number of students who gave the response “strongly agree”, “agree”, “neither agree nor disagree”, “disagree”, and “strongly disagree” toward every statement. Then, the number of students who gave the response was changed into a percent. The data was interpreted based on the frequency of the students’ answer.

Where:

P = Question percentage

F = Frequency

n = Number of respondent

### ***Students’ Strategies for Coping Anxiety***

The next research question was answered by asking the students a question in the second questionnaire the following: (What strategies do you use to overcome your speaking anxiety?). Besides, the students’ strategies for coping with anxiety would be gained from the interview which given to the students.

### **Trustworthiness of the Data**

In this research, the writer used triangulation technique. Triangulation may be defined as the use of two or more methods of data collection in the research. The purpose of triangulation is to increase the credibility and validity of the findings. Besides, the writer collects the data by using questionnaire based on the FLCAS, using interview which is supported by questionnaire and the writer also use observation which can give evidence if the participants are that is proper to be used as subject of research.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **The Factors Affect Students’ Anxiety**

Based on the data that had been analyzed, the writer finally could answer the factors that contribute the students to feel anxiety. The percentage of students’ response toward factors every type of anxiety in the following diagram.

For the anxiety of test, the statement of test anxiety copes with 58%. The type of this test includes number 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 12, 16, 19, 20, 21, and 22. It implies that most of the students in the class experience the anxiety in language test. In this case, the students feel worry if they will fail in language test. In addition, they are worry if they are well prepared.

Related with anxiety of communication apprehension, it was found average of percentage of the whole statement. The statement of communicative apprehension includes number 1, 4, 14, 15, 18, 24, 27, 29, 30 and 32. There are 58% of the students who have problem in communicative apprehension. In this case, they are getting worry for misunderstanding when communication with others/ their teacher and they will get difficulty to understand what they purpose to say.

The last is fear of negative evaluation. The statement of fear negative evaluation includes number 5, 6, 7, 13, 17, 23, 25, 26, 28, 31, and 33. There are 59% of the students who get anxiety which is caused by fear of negative evaluation. Due to factor fear of negative evaluation, the students get anxiety because they are not ready to accept other's people evaluation when they are practicing speaking in the classroom.

### **Students' Strategies for Coping Anxiety**

This section discusses some strategies of students for coping anxiety.

#### ***Preparation***

All the interviews felt the same thing about their anxious feeling when lack of preparation. From the thirteen interviews, 6 of them use this strategy to overcome anxiety. They feel worried if they do not preparation before and they are afraid of their teacher reaction regarding their performance.

#### ***Relaxation***

This tactics was intended to reduce anxiety symptoms in the students. 3 of them use this strategy for coping anxiety.

#### ***Expressive Reactions***

The other strategies of students speaking anxiety is expressive reactions. Based on the results observation checklist, the writer found some of the visible symptoms that

appear from each student when they speak in the classroom. Are follows: 38,64% of the students who get symptoms trembling, 30,76% of them who have symptoms avoiding eye contact with the teacher, 15,38% of the students who get visible symptoms reading from the script while giving presentation, 30,76% of them who experience symptoms stammering, 53,84% of them symptoms nervously touching objects, 15,38% of the students who get symptoms rubbing, 23% of the students who get symptoms getting sweaty, 7,69% of them symptoms squirming and blushing and 15,38% of the students symptoms too fast speed of speech. And most of the students use the strategy to cope with anxiety is Preparation, Stretching the muscles of the hands, feet and back, Smiling, and Taking a deep breath.

## CONCLUSION

Firstly, According to the result of the questionnaire was consisted of statement of students' speaking anxiety. After analyzing the data, the result showed that most of the students admitted that they were getting anxious in speaking English. The percentage of students' response was also categorized into three type of anxiety. 56% of the students experienced the test anxiety. 58% of the students feel anxious in communicative apprehension, and 59% of the students were getting anxious in fear of negative evaluation. Based on the data analysis, we can see the factors of the students' speaking anxiety. It was seen from the percentage of students' response in every statement in the questionnaire. The factors of the anxiety influence their achievement in speaking skill.

Secondly, according to the data obtained from interview and observation. The writer found that there were three strategies used by the students to overcome their anxiety in speaking: *Preparation, relaxation, expressive reaction*. It can be concluded that in this research anxiety in speaking is provoked by personal and interpersonal anxieties including self-confidence and competitiveness. Anxiety is prevalent among students in the language classrooms, even when they have themselves prepared.

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