THE EFFECTS OF ANXIETY
ON STUDENTS’ SPEAKING LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT

A SARJANA PENDIDIKAN FINAL PAPER

Presented as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
to Obtain the Sarjana Pendidikan Degree
in English Language Education

By
Danar Thamika Jati
Student Number: 111214170

ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM
DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE AND ARTS EDUCATION
FACULTY OF TEACHERS TRAINING AND EDUCATION
SANATA DHARMA UNIVERSITY
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Dean,

Rohandi, Ph.D.
DEDICATION PAGE

So do not fear, for I am with you;
do not be dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you and help you;
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

(Isaiah 41:10)

The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise,
as some understand slowness.
Instead he is patient with you,
not wanting anyone to perish,
but everyone to come to repentance.

(2 Peter 3:9)

Genius is eternal patience.

(Michelangelo)

I dedicate this final paper to:

My wonderful parents: Wibowo and Amriyati

Big family of Imam Badjoeri and Soeswoto
STATEMENT OF WORK'S ORIGINALITY

I honestly declare that this final paper, which I have written, does not contain the work or parts of the work of other people, except those cited in the quotations and the references, as a scientific paper should.

Yogyakarta, 24 January 2016

The Writer

Danar Thamika Jati

111214170
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Danar Thamika Jati

People tend to think that speaking is the hardest skill which should be mastered. This is not a good sign in learning English—especially in school—because the students cannot express their ideas, opinions, and thoughts in the classroom. As a result, many students suffer from anxiety when they are forced to speak English as second or foreign language.

Anxiety is a natural human reaction and it works as important as the psychological function that is felt by people despite of their age. In other words, anxiety could happen to anybody at any time. The characteristics of people with severe anxiety can be seen from their behavior that always wants to be free, very anxious, agitated, confused, poor eye contact, withdrawal, denial, the need for increased space, shaking, and so on. As a result, the students with high level of anxiety tend to waste too much energy to digest the information and processing the events. Therefore, it makes them too busy to manage their anxious feelings than understanding the lesson given by the teachers.

This qualitative study will be focused on anxiety as a speaking problem. Furthermore, this paper endeavors to seek the effects of anxiety on students’ speaking learning achievement. This paper uses library study to collect the informations.

There are two things that the writer found in this research. First, anxiety is a common phenomenon in learning English as second or foreign language. Second, high level of anxiety affects students’ speaking learning achievement. Hopefully, through this research, the teachers could identify the students’ problems caused by the level of anxiety in learning English as second or foreign language. The reason is because the writer hopes that the teachers could find the way to overcome it.

Keywords: anxiety, speaking anxiety, students’ learning achievement
ABSTRAK


Orang cenderung berpikir bahwa berbicara adalah keterampilan yang paling sulit untuk dikuasai. Tentu saja ini bukan pertanda baik dalam belajar bahasa Inggris di sekolah karena siswa tidak dapat mengekspresikan ide, pendapat, dan pengalaman mereka di dalam kelas. Akibatnya, banyak siswa yang menderita kecemasan ketika mereka dipaksa untuk berbicara bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa kedua atau bahasa asing.

Kecemasan adalah reaksi alami manusia dan hal ini bekerja sama pentingnya dengan fungsi psikologis yang dirasakan oleh orang-orang berapapun usia mereka. Dengan kata lain, kecemasan bisa terjadi pada setiap orang dan setiap saat. Adapun karakteristik orang dengan kecemasan tingkat tinggi adalah ingin bebas, sangat cemas, gelisah, bingung, kontak mata yang minim, penolakan, kebutuhan untuk berpindah ke ruang yang lebih luas, gemetar, dan lain sebagainya. Akibatnya, siswa dengan tingkat kecemasan tingkat tinggi cenderung membuang terlalu banyak energi untuk mencerna informasi dan memproses peristiwa. Oleh karena itu, hal ini membuat mereka terlalu sibuk untuk mengelola perasaan cemas yang mereka miliki daripada memahami pelajaran yang diberikan oleh guru.


Kata kunci: anxiety, speaking anxiety, students’ learning achievement
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I am very grateful to be one of Class C 2011 students. They are totally funny yet smart people alive. Although I am the unseen person in this class, I always feel enjoy to spend this four and a half years learning process with them. Wish them a shine bright like a diamond life ahead.

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Love,
Danar Thamika Jati
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Chapter I presents the introduction to the chosen topic, covering the background and approach of the study. This chapter also states the focus or objective of the paper.

A. Background

Learning English is very important in this globalization era. Therefore, everyone tries to improve their English by learning it in school. They learn four language skills in school, which are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Bygate (1986) makes it clear that speaking is the most basic skill that people should master. It is because oral language is the foundation of all language development and therefore the foundation of all learning. It is the basis for the other language strands like listening, reading, and writing. However, although the speaking plays a huge role for those who are learning English, people likely to think that speaking is the hardest skill which should be mastered. It is also applied to the students who are in the first semester of English Language Education Study Program of Sanata Dharma University.

In English Language Education Study Program of Sanata Dharma University, the students should speak in English since they are in the first semester. The first subject of speaking skill which the students learn in English Language Education Study Program of Sanata Dharma University is Speaking I Class. In Speaking I Class, students are formed to speak in front of the class.
Therefore, they can learn how to act as a professional speaker and how to pronounce every single word correctly. It is unfortunate that there are many problems that affect the students’ speaking ability which cannot be solved quickly. In addition to that, we have to admit that their speaking ability is not yet satisfactory. It happens to the higher students which is not a good sign in learning English. It is because the students cannot express their ideas, opinions, and thoughts in the classroom. As a result, the students tend not to speak or volunteer themselves in oral classroom activities.

Furthermore, many students are suffering from anxiety when they are forced to speak in English as second or foreign language. Therefore, students are likely to respond differently to anxiety which depends on their level of anxiety itself. Heimberg et al (1993) find out that people who are dealing with high level of anxiety were less successful gaining the information and less effective in processing events because they have wasted their energy and attention to manage the anxiety itself and it will surely impact their learning process. Nelson and Harwood (2011) add that people with anxiety will face the difficulties in storing and retrieving information. That is why the teachers also have the responsibility to understand or knowing the characteristics of the students whom having various level of anxiety, especially in speaking. In addition, the teachers should try to understand the signs of anxiety of their students in order to help the students to cope with the speaking anxiety easily.

Ur (1996) states that there are many speaking problems that influence students’ speaking ability. Some of the problems that can be mentioned as an
example are inhibition, lack of topical knowledge, low or uneven participation and the use of mother tongue. In other words, there are so many problems which may cause anxiety in learning English as second or foreign language. However, this research will be focused on anxiety as a speaking problem. Furthermore, this paper endeavors to seek the effects of anxiety on students’ speaking learning achievement. Based on the main purpose of this paper, the problem is formulated into: What are the effects of anxiety on students’ speaking learning achievement?

B. Approach of The Study

Since this paper is aimed to gain the ideas or concepts about the selected topic, the writer uses qualitative research method and library research as the approach of the study. Hiatt (1986) says qualitative method is a method which focus on discovering and understanding the experiences, perspectives, and thoughts of the participants. Qualitative research also explores meaning, purpose, or reality. Nevertheless, George (2008) states, library research is involve identifying and locating sources that provide factual information or personal or expert opinion on a research question; necessary component of every other research method at some point. It means that this approach of the study requires the writer to identify and locate the resources which provide valid information about the topic chosen.

Moreover, the writer should not forget to put or cite the experts’ opinion that support and have a relation to the research question that the writer formulated. In addition, the procedure of making this paper was conducted in five steps. The
writer will follow these procedures to ensure that this paper has been done scientifically. The steps can be seen below:

1. **Select and Identify the Topic**

   In this step, the writer selects the topic that the writer wants to write. After that, the writer narrowing the topic to something manageable. In this step, background reading helps the writer to choose and scope the topic chosen.

2. **Find Background Information**

   After selecting and identifying the topic, the writer look for the background information in general encyclopedia, subject encyclopedia, textbook, etc. The writer look for the definition of the topic and start to think whether the writer’s term is accurate. The writer realizes that finding background information at the beginning is really important. The reason is because it helps the writer to be more understand about the topic chosen.

3. **Find Printed or Internet Resources**

   In this step, the writer look for the information or things which have relation to the topic in printed book or internet. The writer realizes that doing this step will help the writer to find valid information.

4. **Consider What the Writer Get**

   The writer considers the authority and quality of the materials that the writer had found. The writer also starts to consider the publisher, author, and date even page of each resource that the writer found. After that, the writer tries to think whether or not is relevant to the topic chosen.
5. Cite Using Standard Format

The writer is selecting the style manually in how to write the final paper. The writer has the responsibility to correct the format of the citations for both printed and electronic resources. The writer decided to use the APA (American Psychological Association) format to cite the resources and compile an informative bibliography.
CHAPTER II

DISCUSSION

Chapter II presents the theories that the writer uses and the interpretation of what the writer had found toward anxiety on students’ speaking learning achievement.

A. Anxiety

1. Definition

Anxiety is a natural human reaction toward something and it works as important as the psychological function that is felt by people despite of their age. In other words, anxiety can happen to anybody at anytime. Chastain (1988) argues that anxiety as a state of uneasiness and apprehension or fear caused by the anticipant of something threatening. Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) state that “anxiety is the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system” (p. 125).

Another theory from MacIntyre (1995) argues that anxiety is “the transient emotional state of feeling nervous that can fluctuate over time and vary in intensity” (p. 28). Anxiety is also known as a psychological response which cannot be solved quickly but can be helped to overcome it. In addition, Sieber (1977) defines anxiety also influences the cognitive aspects of people and it lessen their concentration and memory to form the concept and solve the problem. In other words, if the students are anxious, they have the
possibility to get bad marks. As a result, they cannot fully concentrate well and remember the subject given by the teachers. Tobias (1983) also adds that in learning context anxiety can affect the ability of receiving information, its processing, and retrieving it when it is necessary.

However, from the sociological aspect, Bandura (1977) who is considered as the principal founder of SLT (Social Learning Theory) says that people with anxiety disorders may have learned to be anxious through prior contact with other people. The reason is because some people are afraid to be judged by others’ opinion. As a result, some people are less likely to be anxious when they are doing some activities.

2. Types of Anxiety

There are two types of anxiety according to the psychological aspect. They are trait anxiety and state anxiety.

a. Trait Anxiety

Spielberger (1983) says that trait anxiety refers to a general tendency to become nervous in a wide range of situations. In other words, trait anxiety is a permanent situation of anxious feeling and it becomes a person’s character and it is very hard to release that habit. Pappamihiel (2002) supports the theory by saying that trait anxiety is the tendency of a person to be nervous or feel anxious irrespective of the situation he or she is exposed to. People with high level of trait anxiety also experience more intense state anxiety feelings toward specific situations than most people do.
b. State Anxiety

MacIntyre and Gardner (1898) define state (stational) anxiety as a feeling of nervousness or tension at a particular moment in response to some outside stimulus. Spielberger (1983) also states anxiety is the feeling of worry or stress that takes place at a particular moment under a particular circumstance. It means that state anxiety is not a permanent anxiety feeling. It usually comes with some physical signs, for instance, perspiration, sweaty palms, dry mouth, muscle contractions and tension, and increased heart rate. This type of anxiety is not as harmful as trait anxiety because people with state anxiety will be afraid or nervous at first, and after several attempts, they will be comfortable doing the activities.

3. Levels of Anxiety

There are many tests which are able to be used in order to decide which level of foreign language anxiety that one has, for instance Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety (PRPSA) test. It was developed by Professor James McCroskey at West Virginia University and it has been used around the country as a measurement tool to help people who are working on their public speaking skills. In this test, there are thirty four questions to be answered and from that questions, one will have the points for every number. There are also three levels of speaking anxiety. They are high anxiety, moderate anxiety, and low anxiety. High anxiety is indicated if the scores are above 131 points. Moderate anxiety is indicated if the scores between 98-131. The last, low anxiety is indicated if the scores below 98.
The other measurement test of anxiety is Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) which was developed by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986). It consists of thirty three items. Those thirty three items ask the participants to respond some situations reflecting three components. They are communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. FLCAS is now widely used by researchers in order to explore learners’ foreign language anxiety.

From psychological aspect, anxiety is differentiated into three levels, they are mild anxiety, moderate anxiety, and severe anxiety.

a. Mild Anxiety

Mild anxiety is a feeling that something is different and people with mild anxiety requires special attention. Mild anxiety is associated with the tension of everyday life events. The characteristics of people with mild anxiety are unable to sit still, a little impatient, tend to be alone, wrinkled face, lips tremble, pulse and blood pressure increased, etc.

b. Moderate Anxiety

Moderate anxiety is disturbing feeling caused by something different which makes people with moderate anxiety become nervous or agitated. The characteristics of people with moderate anxiety are the feelings of being uncomfortable, sensitive, unconsciousness, sound changes, sweating, headaches, back pain, etc.
c. Severe Anxiety

This is the highest level of anxiety. Severe anxiety is the feeling caused by the believes that something is different which makes them feel that they are being threaten by their surroundings. This usually comes from the response of fear and distress. The characteristics of people with severe anxiety can be seen from their behavior or feeling that always wants to be free, very anxious, agitated, confused, poor eye contact, withdrawal, denial, the need for increased space, shaking, etc.

B. Speaking

1. Definition

Speaking is a symbol to express feeling from one to another. Brown (2007) states that social contact in interactive language functions is an important key and what one says is not what counts but how one says that is what he conveys with the body language, gestures, eye contact, physical distance and other nonverbal messages. In addition, Cameron (2001) says that speaking is the active use of language to express meanings so that other people could make sense of them.

2. Types of Speaking Activities

In addition, Richards (2008) adds that there are three major speech types. They are interaction, transaction, and the last one is performance.

a. Interaction

Interaction activity requires two-way participation to create social interaction or to maintain the relationship within them. In this speaking
activity, the language which the speaker used may be casual or formal. Interaction activity usually happens in small talk, for instance greetings, compliments, or sharing the speakers’ experiences.

b. Transaction

Transaction is a speaking activity which is aimed to give or to get the information. It is aimed to make one understands completely about certain information given. In this speaking activity, grammatical accuracy may not be the priority. The most important thing in this speaking activity is that the speaker focuses on the message and spread the message successfully. Transactional speaking is usually used in problem solving activities, for instance, classroom discussions, asking the direction to someone, or ordering food in cafetaria, etc.

c. Performance

In this speaking activity, it requires audiences and the speaker to create ‘product’ for instance a speech. The speaker usually speaks in one way communication or monologue way rather than in dialogue way. The language which the speaker used is more likely in formal language. Performance speaking usually happens in lecture, welcoming speech, business presentation, class presentation, etc.

C. Learning Achievement

There are many reasons why the students do not have good learning achievement in speaking. Nation and Newton (2009) state that performance conditions can affect the speaking performance. Different with them, Doff (1998)
states that speaking skills cannot be developed unless we develop listening skills. Doff also adds that it is very useful if someone speaking and others later on commenting through listening first. Another reason why students do not have good learning achievement is affective factors. Oxford (1990) states, one of the most important influences on language learning success or failure is probably the affective side of the learner itself. Topical knowledge also plays a big role why students are not having good learning achievement in speaking. Bachman and Palmer (1996) argue that topical knowledge is defined as knowledge structures in long-term memory. It means that topical knowledge is the speakers’ knowledge of relevant students’ topical information. The last problem is the teachers are less likely to give comments or any feedback during speaking activities. Baker and Westrup (2003) recommend that the teachers should give the feedback to their students as well as should correct the students’ mistake positively and encourage them to be better in speaking.

D. Anxiety on Students’ Speaking Learning Achievement

Learning English as second or foreign language is not easy. Horwitz (2001) says that researchers have found that one-third of foreign language learners experience at least a moderate level of foreign language anxiety. It means that most of the learners are trying very hard to learn English as second or foreign language. However, the teachers are expected to use good teaching methods to teach the students. Otherwise, the students will be more complicated. Therefore, the level of anxiety will be increasing also.
Scott (1981) states that there are three steps of teaching—especially teaching speaking—which the teachers could follow. The first step is informing objectives. In this step, the teachers should inform the students about what the students going to learn. When the teachers are informing the objectives, the instructions will be done communicatively. The teachers are informing what the students going to learn. As a result, the students will be ready to participate in the learning process.

The second step is presentation. In this step, the whole language operation that will be given by the teacher to the student are presented in context. Therefore, it is very important to make the language clear enough to understand by the student. In order to make the student understand, the teacher can use texts, pictures, or videos in the form of transaction of native speaker, etc.

The third step is practicing and conveying. In this step, the student will practice after the teacher presents the contents. The aim is to check whether the students understand about what is being learnt. The teacher should provide a variation of expressions in different accent to help the students for being more familiar with various expressions and the accent. The teacher should also encourages the student to learn freely to the similiar real situations.

However, although there are many steps that can help the students to have better learning achievement, there still many factors which may hinder the student to get better learning achievement in school. According to Klausmeier (1961), the factors are learner characteristics, teacher characteristics, learner and teacher behaviors, group characteristics, physical characteristics of the behavioral setting,
and outside forces. It is true that anxiety is not directly stated as one of the factors that might hinder the students to get good speaking learning achievement. However, there are many second or foreign language researchers that show a great awareness of anxiety as the cause on second or foreign language learning. Bailey, Onwuegbuzie, and Daley (1999), in their theory state that the students with low expectations of their second or foreign language ability tend to have low levels of second or foreign language achievement which may reflect on an accurate perception of their learning.

Supporting the previous theory, Horwitz (2001) says that anxiety is a complicated problem and can make people’s normal performance particularly stressful when they are in a foreign language classroom. It is because when the students are feeling anxious in learning English, their speaking ability is decreased and it makes them unable to learn English successfully. It makes the students even more stressful when they are pointed by their family members, friends, and lecturers for not being able to speak in good English. The students find the hardship when people expect them to always be the best at school. Levine (2008) adds that the students may be overwhelmed by the expectation of people around and the fear of failure and failing behind can make a school become an anxiety-provoking environment itself.

Steinberg (1982) adds that there is a relationship between anxiety and effective language learning. The damaging of anxiety can be seen clearly in students’ speaking performances and writing activities in the classroom. In speaking performance, the student tend to be less active in the discussions or in
presentations. The reason is because they feel anxious and afraid that everything they have done will cause problems. In writing activity, students are less creative to produce a good writing. They are usually afraid of being judged and as a result, they will be uncomfortable in expressing themselves.

English is not Indonesian students’ mother-tongue is another problem that the students need to face. They are not accustomed to speak English all the time and it will be hard for them to learn English as a second or foreign language. It can cause them to be more anxious. Therefore, this is also the proof that anxiety can affect the students’ learning achievement, especially in their speaking performance. Finally, when all or a number of students share the same mother-tongue, they tend to use it constantly because it is easier for them. Another reason is that the use of mother-tongue is a natural thing to do. Moreover, using the first language or mother-tongue to explain something to another when there is no encouragement from the teachers. If the teachers frequently use the students’ language, the students will feel comfortable to do it. As a result, the student will be more repeatedly using mother-tongue and the teachers often allow or ignore their mistakes in the class. Littlewood (2007) asserts that a foreign language classroom can create inhibition and anxiety easily. That is the reason why anxiety plays a huge role in influencing students’ learning achievement.

In addition, Vanin (2008) states that students with anxiety often experience high and uncontrollably worry about events which recognized in the past or may happen in the future. They experience extreme worry about performing completely well. They are very self-conscious and often misinterpret the
importance of the condition. As a result, the writer is able to sum up that students with high level of anxiety are worrying their performance in front of the class. They have difficulties in controlling their anxious feeling and they are worrying about what will happen on their speaking performance.

It can be stated that anxiety will give the students’ learning achievement negative impact. The student are likely to be absent, sitting at the back of the class because they do not enjoy the learning process, rarely participating in classroom discussion, and etc. In accordance to that, MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) cover several measures of proficiency, in several different samples, and even in different conceptual frameworks. Their work been shown that negative anxiety affects performance in the second language. In some cases, anxiety provides some of the highest simple correlations of attitudes with achievement.

Tanveer (2007) investigates the factors that cause language anxiety for twenty language learners in learning speaking skills and the influence of anxiety on communication in the target language and his result is similar to what Park & Lee (2005) figure out. The finding suggested that the students’ feeling of stress, anxiety or nervousness may hinder their language learning and performance abilities. He cites that the higher the anxiety one has, the lower the performance will be. In other words, high level of anxiety is really affect the students’ learning achievement, especially in their speaking performance.

However, the teachers should feel relieved because there are some ways to reduce their students’ anxiety in learning English as second or foreign language. Richards and Rodgers (2001) recommend that “the decoration, furniture, and
arrangement of the classroom, the use of music, and the authoritative behavior of the teacher” (pg. 100) could reduce the students’ anxiety in learning second or foreign language. In other words, the teachers can change the formal method into the informal one, use the interesting media, or change the teachers’ behaviors in order to make the students more comfortable in learning English and reduce the students’ anxious feeling. Woodrow (2006) adds that learning English outside the class will reduce the feeling of being assessed by the teachers. The students will be more freely to speak or express their ideas, opinions, and thoughts while they are studying English outside the class. They also can go to the library to find the English literature books in order to learn and enrich their vocabulary.
CHAPTER III

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter III presents the final result which is observed and discovered by the writer. The result is the answer to the objective of this paper which is the effects of anxiety on students’ speaking learning achievement.

A. Conclusion

Anxiety really affects the students’ speaking learning achievement. It is because the students with anxiety are dealing with the feeling of uneasiness and sometimes they feel that some threats are around them. As a result, the students with anxiety tend to waste too much energy to digest the information and process the events. Therefore, it makes them too busy to manage their anxious feeling rather than understand the lesson given by the teachers. If it is associated with speaking ability, students with high level anxiety will not be able to speak freely in front of the class compared to the students whom having low level of anxiety. The reason is because high level anxiety is associated with more permanent feeling of anxiety that the students’ have. It becomes their characters and it comes from within. It needs many efforts to reduce them. It is different with low level anxiety that is more stational or temporary. Students with low level anxiety may feel anxious at first but after many attempts to try, they will be better at controlling their feeling of anxiety.
B. Recommendations

1. The Readers

Anxiety in learning English as second or foreign language is a common phenomenon. The reason is because English is not a language that used by the Indonesian in their daily conversation. It needs efforts to make Indonesian could speak English seamlessly. Therefore, the intensive practice to speak English is highly recommended to master English as a second or foreign language.

2. The Future Writers

It will be better to make the research in quantitative method research which really investigate the percentage of the students with high level of anxiety in learning English as a second or foreign language. It will make the paper more valid and as a result, the future writers not only find the effects of anxiety on students’ speaking learning achievements, but also help the students’ to overcome the anxiety itself. The writer hope that this paper could become the inspiration for future writers who work in the same topic.

3. Teachers of English

It is crucial for the teachers to understand the effects of anxiety on their students’ learning process and their students’ memory. Therefore, to be more precise, after reading this paper, the teachers will have better understanding that anxiety will influences their students’ learning achievement—especially their students’ speaking performance. Hopefully, the teachers could identify the level of anxiety that the students have in
learning English as second or foreign language. As a result, the teachers could find the solutions in order to make the students have better speaking learning achievement.
REFERENCES


