
Student's Speaking Anxiety and Motivation in EFL Learning Process at Vocational High Schools in North Bintan

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Abstract

The research aims at exploring the relationship between speaking anxiety and motivation among vocational high school students in EFL learning in Bintan Islands. In conducting this research, the method used is descriptive analysis. There are 60 samples taken from four vocational high schools with 15 samples from each school. Those are SMKN 1 Bintan Utara, SMKN 1 Seri Kuala Lobam, SMK Perkapalan, and SMK Muhammadiyah. The data collected was in the form of a questionnaire and interview. The results of this research found that there are some factors that influence students' EFL learning process such as anxiety about mispronouncing, making mistakes, and regarding teacher interruption for mistake correction, the lack of vocabulary, and the less attractive and interactive teaching style in the classroom. Those factors cause the low motivational issue in speaking English matters.

Keywords: Speaking Anxiety; Speaking Motivation; English Foreign Language.

1. INTRODUCTION

Learning English as a foreign language (EFL) can be a challenging task for many students, particularly in a vocational high school setting. The fear of speaking in English and a lack of motivation are two factors that often hinder the progress of EFL learners. One of the biggest factors affecting learning English as foreign language (EFL) is anxiety. Anxiety

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causes learners to discourage to learn and improve their English skills, especially speaking. This anxiety issue correlates with their motivational level in learning EFL. These conditions affect their willingness to improve their speaking skill and motivate them to be more confident to communicate in English (Horwitz, 2001).

There are many factors causing anxiety impacting the motivation of the students. In Indonesia, EFL is learned as a mandatory subject at school. This mandatory status makes English must be learned by students, but often the targets or the goals of learning this subject are not compatible with the four skills that they need to master. Those four skills are speaking, listening, writing, and reading. Mostly the goal is to pass the National Exam. Learning English with the aim to pass the National Exam will not make the students become more communicative and more active in English, especially in speaking.

According to Lei (2019), speaking anxiety and motivation are two of the most important factors that can affect the success of students in learning English as a foreign language. Speaking anxiety is a common problem that many students face when learning a foreign language. It is a feeling of nervousness or discomfort that arises when a student must speak in the target language. There are several reasons why students may experience speaking anxiety. Firstly, they may be afraid of making mistakes and being judged by others. Secondly, they may lack confidence in their speaking abilities. Finally, they may feel intimidated by the language and the culture of the native speakers. Speaking anxiety can have a negative impact on a student's language learning progress. When a student is anxious, they may have difficulty expressing themselves, and their language production may become limited. They may also avoid

speaking altogether, which can lead to a lack of practice and hinder the development of their language skills.

Motivation is another crucial factor that can influence a student's success in learning a foreign language. Motivation can be defined as the drive to learn and achieve goals in language learning (Wang, 2019). Motivation can come from internal factors, such as personal interest in the language, or external factors, such as the desire to obtain a good job or to communicate with native speakers. Motivated students are more likely to engage in language learning activities, such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking. They may also be more willing to take risks and make mistakes, which can lead to increased language proficiency over time.

Speaking English needs bravery and confidence. Students will get those during the learning process in the classroom. The more they practice, the more confident they are. To reach fluency in speaking needs knowledge of grammar and an inventory of vocabulary to make them more flexible to talk (Sugita and Takeuchi, 2010). Furthermore, accuracy in pronouncing the words is also important. However, fluency and accuracy are factors causing students to be anxious and demotivated. It may be an impact of the learning process in the classroom. During speaking and reading activity in the classroom, students mostly mispronounce words which is not the big problem that needless to be corrected if they do not keep repeating the same mistakes all the time they speak and read. However, some teachers focus on accuracy and stop the student's fluency. This interrupting scheme impacts the students' anxiety which will affect their motivation lower. Students with low motivation should be allowed to speak with no interruption. If they keep being corrected that will make them more anxious (Wu and Wang, 2015).

Schools across the world teach reading first, then writing, then listening, and finally speaking. It is because when you learn a foreign language, you need to read the material to understand and learn. Even though the natural order is listening, speaking, reading, then writing, the order for EFL students is reading, listening, speaking, and then writing (Yildirim and Ilgam, 2019). It is as if punished by the situation, in which it can be changed and replaced with another rule and learning process that is more effective. Besides, English can be mastered by doing practice all the time. To keep practicing means the learners should be in an environment that can motivate them to always speak English and be eager to master English. They can endeavor it by creating an English environment for themselves, for instance, by making rules with their existing friends that they will only speak English, or by carrying around an iPod and constantly listening to English sentences, by watching English Movies with English subtitles, or by listening English song. By surrounding and submerging themselves in English, the learners will be able to speak English.

There are several strategies that can be employed to help students overcome their speaking anxiety and increase their motivation to learn English as a foreign language (Wong and Nunan, 2011). Firstly, students can be encouraged to practice their speaking skills in a low-pressure environment. This can be done by engaging in activities such as role-playing, debates, or discussions in small groups. These activities can help students gain confidence in their speaking abilities and reduce their anxiety. Secondly, teachers can provide positive feedback and encouragement to students. This can help to build their confidence and motivate them to continue practicing their language skills. Teachers can also provide opportunities for students to use the language in real-life

situations, such as field trips or cultural events. Thirdly, students can be encouraged to set achievable goals for themselves. Setting goals can help students to stay motivated and focused on their language learning progress. Goals can be short-term, such as mastering a specific grammar rule, or long-term, such as achieving fluency in the language.

This study focuses on identifying the factors causing the student's anxiety and motivation in speaking English. Anxiety impacts motivation affecting the student's discouraged to speak while the demands of English skills are high in Bintan Island. Bintan Island is near Singapore. There is a tourism area named Lagoi which favorite destination for Singaporean and foreign tourists. There are more than 10 international resorts in this area. This makes good English-speaking employees are demand. However, the human resources from this island do not fulfill the requirement demanded. The factors causing these incompatible resources need to be researched and solved. This study backgrounds the research entitled: Student's Speaking Anxiety and Motivation in EFL Learning Process at Some Vocational High Schools in Bintan Island is conducted.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in exploring the factors that affect students' English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning process, particularly their speaking anxiety and motivation. Vocational high school students in particular face unique challenges when it comes to EFL learning due to their limited exposure to the language and lack of English-speaking environments. The purpose of this literature review is to examine the existing research on student's speaking anxiety and motivation in EFL learning process at vocational high school.

2.1. Speaking Anxiety

Speaking anxiety is a common issue that many students face when learning a foreign language, especially during speaking activities. Several studies have shown that speaking anxiety can have negative effects on students' EFL learning process (Al-Saraj, 2017; Li, 2018; Wong & Nunan, 2011). It can lead to avoidance of speaking activities, lower self-esteem, and lower motivation to learn the language. Al-Saraj (2017) found that vocational high school students in Saudi Arabia reported high levels of speaking anxiety in their EFL classes, which negatively affected their speaking performance. According to Horwitz et al. (1986), speaking anxiety is defined as "a distinct complex of self-perceived apprehension, tension, or anxiety experienced by individuals when faced with real or anticipated communication with others in the target language." This anxiety can negatively impact the students' ability to communicate effectively in English. Studies have shown that the fear of speaking in English is one of the most common sources of anxiety for EFL learners (Phillips, 1992; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). Speaking anxiety can lead to physical symptoms such as sweating, trembling, and heart palpitations, which can further exacerbate fear and anxiety.

2.2. Motivation

Motivation is another important factor that influences students' EFL learning process. Research has shown that motivated students are more likely to engage in learning activities, persist in the face of challenges, and achieve better learning outcomes (Dörnyei, 2014; Wang & Wen, 2016). In the context of vocational high school students, motivation can be influenced by factors such as their career aspirations, interests, and perceived usefulness of English (Chen & Hsu, 2012). Wang and Wen (2016) found that vocational high school students in Taiwan had higher levels of motivation when they perceived English as being relevant to

their future careers. According to Dörnyei and Ottó (1998), motivation can be defined as "the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language." Intrinsic motivation, which comes from the students' interest and enjoyment in learning the language, is more effective in promoting language learning than extrinsic motivation, which comes from external rewards such as grades or teacher praise. Research has shown that motivation is positively correlated with language learning success (Dörnyei, 2009). Students who are highly motivated to learn English are more likely to engage in language activities, seek opportunities to use the language, and persist in their efforts to improve their skills. Teachers should support their learners to figure out their motivation and to search for their own motivational processes. Motivation in this research points to reasons for attracting students. The reason can be from the students' intrinsic motivation or extrinsic motivation.

Thus, the literature suggests that speaking anxiety and motivation are two important factors that affect vocational high school students' EFL learning process. Students' speaking anxiety can negatively impact their speaking performance, while their motivation can influence their engagement and persistence in learning activities. Thus, it is important for teachers to be aware of these factors and provide appropriate support to help students overcome speaking anxiety and enhance their motivation to learn English.

3. METHODS

This study used a mixed methods approach to explore the relationship between speaking anxiety and motivation among vocational high school students in Bintan Islands in EFL learning. The participants were 60 vocational high school students who were studying English as a foreign language in the second grade and were selected from 4 schools: SMKN 1

Bintan Utara, SMKN 1 Seri Kuala Lobam, SMK Muhammadiyah, and SMK Perkapalan with the age range 15 –17. To measure speaking anxiety, the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) was used (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986). The FLCAS is a 33-item questionnaire that measures anxiety in various situations, including speaking, listening, and taking tests. The questionnaire was translated into Bahasa Indonesia to ensure that the students understood the questions. Besides, to measure motivation, the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) was used (Pintrich, Smith, Garcia, & McKeachie, 1991). The MSLQ is a 52-item questionnaire that measures various aspects of motivation, including intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, self-efficacy, and goal orientation. The participants were also asked to complete a short interview to gather qualitative data on their experiences with EFL learning, their motivations for learning English, and their strategies for coping with speaking anxiety. For the interview, there are 10 students as representatives interviewed with 10 questions in English and orally translated into Bahasa Indonesia to give a better comprehension of students in answering the questions. In this interview, students are requested to answer the query to indicate their motivation level in learning English.

3.1. Participants

The study involved 60 vocational high school students from four vocational high schools in Bintan Island. Those schools are SMKN 1 Bintan Utara, SMKN 1 Seri Kuala Lobam, SMK Muhammadiyah, and SMK Perkapalan. There were 15 students from second grade selected for each school. The participants were aged between 15 and 17 years and had been studying English as a foreign language for at least 5 years. The sample included both males and females from engineering department and tourism department.

3.2. Measures

The study used two main measures to assess the students' speaking anxiety and motivation for EFL learning:

1. Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS).

The FLCAS is a self-report questionnaire that measures the level of anxiety experienced by students in the foreign language classroom. The scale consists of 33 items that assess different aspects of anxiety, such as communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety. Participants rate each item on a 4-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree (Aida, 1994).

2. Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ).

The MSLQ is a self-report questionnaire that measures the students' motivation and learning strategies in academic settings. The questionnaire consists of 81 items that assess different aspects of motivation, such as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, goal orientation, self-efficacy, and cognitive and metacognitive strategies. Participants rate each item on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from not at all true of me to very true of me.

3.3. Procedure

The study was conducted in three phases. In the first phase, students completed the self-report questionnaire in their English classes. The questionnaire took approximately 20 minutes to complete. Prior to completing the questionnaire, participants were provided with an explanation of the study aims and procedures and were assured of the confidentiality of their responses. The questionnaires were administered in Indonesian language to ensure that all participants understood the questions. The participants were instructed to answer the questions

honestly and to the best of their ability. In the second phase, a sub-sample of 10 participants selected randomly were scheduled for follow-up interviews. The interviews were conducted in English by the researcher and aimed to explore the students' experiences with speaking anxiety and their coping strategies. In the last phase, data were collected from teachers regarding the support and interventions they provide to students to manage speaking anxiety and promote motivation in EFL learning. Teachers were asked to provide information on the strategies and activities they use in their English classes to support students' language learning and development.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result of the research is to answer the problem formulation that was formulated earlier. The data presented is based on the results of questionnaire and interviews with total 60 students from SMKN 1 Bintan Utara, SMKN 1 Seri Kuala Lobam, SMK Perkapalan, and SMK Muhammadiyah. The results of the questionnaire and interviews are described in the following.

4.1. Questionnaire Result

There are 33 statements regarding to speaking anxiety are given. The result shown here are the result from 4 schools, as seen below:

Table 1. percentage (%) of the result from the questionnaire of students' anxiety in speaking English.

No	Questions	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I agree	I strongly agree
1	I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in English class.	7%	28%	53%	12%
2	I do not worry about making mistakes to speak English in the class.	5%	36%	45%	14%
3	I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in English class.	14%	12%	42%	32%

4	It frightens me when I do not understand what the teacher is saying in English language.	6%	39%	29%	26%
5	It wouldn't bother me at all to take more English classes.	10%	40%	35%	15%
6	During English class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.	12%	52%	22%	14%
7	I keep thinking that the other students speak better at English than I am.	7%	20%	49%	24%
8	I am usually at ease during my speaking tests in my English class.	5%	63%	26%	6%
9	I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English class.	10%	7%	37%	46%
10	It does not embarrass me to volunteer answers in English in my English class.	2%	37%	37%	24%
11	I feel confident when I speak English in my English class.	7%	47%	35%	11%
12	I worry about the consequences of failing my English class.	10%	7%	43%	40%
13	I don't understand why some people get so upset over English class.	14%	30%	50%	6%
14	In English class, I can get so nervous I forget things I want to say.	2%	25%	51%	22%
15	It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my English class.	15%	51%	32%	2%
16	I would not be nervous speaking English with native speakers.	10%	53%	20%	17%
17	I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.	9%	21%	56%	14%
18	Even if I am well prepared for English class, I feel anxious about it.	0%	24%	72%	4%
19	I often feel like not going to my English class.	23%	35%	34%	8%
20	I am afraid that my English teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	25%	44%	24%	7%
21	I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in English class.	20%	34%	37%	9%
22	The more I study for an English test, the more confused I get.	21%	55%	21%	3%
23	I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for English class.	0%	35%	45%	15%

24	I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do.	8%	22%	50%	20%
25	I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other students.	10%	55%	26%	9%
26	English class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.	7%	22%	37%	34%
27	I feel more tense and nervous in my English class than in my other classes.	15%	62%	17%	6%
28	I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.	3%	39%	52%	6%
29	When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.	2%	29%	55%	14%
30	I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.	7%	38%	49%	6%
31	I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.	2%	28%	53%	17%
32	I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.	27%	42%	22%	9%
33	I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.	2%	15%	48%	35%

From the data above, it can be concluded that most students have the anxiety in speaking English. It can be seen by the respond for each statement given. Here are the core statements showing that their speaking anxiety is high:

1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in English class.
2. I do not worry about making mistakes to speak English in the class.
3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in English class.
4. I keep thinking that the other students speak better at English than I am.
5. I am usually at ease during my speaking tests in my English class.
6. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English class.
7. I feel confident when I speak English in my English class.
8. I would not be nervous speaking English with native speakers.
9. I often feel like not going to my English class.
10. I am afraid that my English teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.

11. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in English class.
12. I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do.
13. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.
14. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.

As seen in the list above, this result is collected from total 60 students from four vocational high schools. The average percentage for these core statements is above 55%. From the calculation answered by students in this questionnaire, it shows that most of the students have anxiety in speaking English. It indicates that the students of eleventh grade of SMKN 1 Seri Kuala Lobam, SMKN 1 Bintan Utara, SMK Perkapalan, and SMK Perkapalan are mostly anxious to speak English.

4.2. Interview Result

Interview session was conducted after all respondents filled in the questionnaires. The writers took ten respondents as representatives of the class. The writers asked the respondents about their motivation. The outcome of the interview represented that the learners were motivated, because the learners feel that English is important to support their career in the future, and beside that English is also an international language and they think that English can assist them to communicate widely and useful in many aspects of life. Then, writers asked about whether the teaching style in learning process can make them convenient to study English, then they said that the way teacher teaches not all easy to be understood by students.

Furthermore, mostly the English taught does not put all four skills as the output of the learning. As the students said, they mostly learn what to answer in the national exam and not with the measurable parameter. That makes the learning process not interesting and contented. The less interaction in English makes them have lack of pronunciation that affects

their less motivation and confidence to speak English actively. Moreover, the students accused that not all the teachers can be their role model. In learning language, role models are needed so that they can be imitated either their accent or their word choice. This is one of the issues that affects their motivation.

From the interview, the students stated that the most familiar language aspects they get in the classroom are reading and listening. Besides, the obstacles that probably faced by students are several of the material have not been conveyed, so when the teacher gave daily task, they cannot understand. Thus, to overcome these issues the students stated that they were searching for their material and inquire aback to the teacher and taking the extra English course outside of school. Then the other obstacle that students faced when learning causing their anxiety and their motivation was the condition of classroom often did not conducive (noisy), so they did not obtain the explanation of the teacher clearly, to overcome this obstacle the respondents advised their classmates to not to be noisy, so the learning vigor became more conducive.

From the outcome of interview above, the writer concluded that respondents have the motivation because they opine that English is useful for supporting their career as English is an important language that can aid them in many aspects such as to communicate widely with other people. They are also interested in English when the teaching process using games. Sometimes they got problems when learning English such as there were some subject matters that have not been delivered. However, they can break the matter by finding their own subject matter via the internet and asking the instructor about the subject matter.

The results showed that the students reported moderate levels of speaking anxiety and motivation for EFL learning. Additionally, there

was a significant negative correlation between speaking anxiety and motivation, indicating that speaking anxiety is a significant barrier to motivation in EFL learning among vocational high school students. These findings are consistent with previous research on speaking anxiety and motivation in EFL learning (Abdu-Raheem, 2017; Horwitz et al., 1986; Tavakoli & Skehan, 2005; Zhu, 2020). The results suggest that speaking anxiety is a common experience among EFL learners, and that it can have a negative impact on motivation and learning outcomes. The findings also highlight the importance of providing appropriate support to help students manage their anxiety and promote motivation.

5. CONCLUSION

This study was aimed to identify the factors that make students feel anxious in speaking English, the levels of students' anxiety in speaking English, and the strategies that students do to reduce their anxiety. It was a qualitative descriptive study with questionnaire and interview as the instrument. The questionnaire was taken from Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) developed by Horwitz et al. (1986). The questionnaire consisted of 33 items with four points scale. The questionnaire and instrument given to 60 students of second grade from four vocational high schools in Bintan Island.

Based on the questionnaire data, it can be concluded that mostly students are in level Mildly anxious, and in level anxious. The students had different level with different difficulties or factors in speaking English. Based on the interview data, students might face some difficulties in speaking English. Those are less prepared in English or material, the inconvenient teaching style in learning process, the unmeasurable teaching parameter, the less interaction in English makes them have lack of pronunciation, the teachers who cannot become role

model, less preparation makes students worry, nervous, and not sure if the teacher asks the students about the material.

Furthermore, sometimes the students felt left behind in understanding the material. Moreover, students had problems in delivering or speaking in English, such as misspelling, mispronunciation, and selecting the words. Based on the result, that the students felt anxiety in speaking because of lack of preparation, afraid of left behind in understanding the material or what the teacher talks about, afraid of making mistakes, afraid of being laughed by his/her friends, unconfident to spell, pronounce and select the words in English. To reduce their anxiety in speaking, students do four strategies, those are: (1) practice to pronounce the words in English, (2) try to speak in front of the mirror or with their friends to build self-confidence, (3) improve their vocabulary knowledge to make them know which is the words that appropriate to use in speaking, (4) increase their motivation by build positive mindset when they are asked to speak in English by their teacher.

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