



The Psychological Factors Impacts on the Students' Speaking Skill

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Abstract

English speaking skill can be difficult for students in any educational levels and environments to acquire. The challenge is also encountered by the students of the Islamic-based schools. This is caused by several factors, one of which is psychology. With the aforementioned problem, the researchers intended to find out how the psychological factors could affect students' speaking ability. The investigation of this study focused on exploring the impact of anxiety, self-confidence, motivation and shyness on Islamic boarding school EFL learners' speaking abilities. The research design is qualitative with observations, questionnaires, and interviews employed as the research instruments. Based on the analysis, state anxiety appeared to be the main problem for the students. Shy pupils avoid speaking, offer brief responses to queries in the target language, and prefer to remain alone. They have modest communication challenges, are sluggish to express their emotions, and often do not respond when others express their emotions. Self-confidence has an influence on pupils' speaking abilities. In other words, students with high self-confidence are more likely to speak English better than those of with low self-confidence. Another psychological factor - motivation could be influenced by two aspects: internal and external forces. The study's description is likely to be utilized as a consideration for other researchers conducting more research on psychological aspects influencing students' speaking ability in the English classroom.

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INTRODUCTION

In this era of globalization, knowledge of a foreign language serves students well in the interconnected world, it opens the door to job opportunities in the global economy and makes more media accessible, enriching public discussion of current issues. At present, the language that dominates internationally is certainly English (Astuti & Lammers, 2017). In Indonesia, English is considered as the primary foreign language which is considered more important than other foreign languages (Toubot et al., 2018). One of the productive skills of English teaching and learning is speaking. Speaking is so intertwined with daily interactions that it is not easy to give a unique and concise definition to it (Haidara, 2014). Krisna and Syafii (2020) stated that in language use situations when people speak, it is not the case that they simply open their mouths and speak the words and sentences. When people speak, they are doing so in a cultural context, speaking to another person, and doing some interactions that the people need (Martínez & García, 2017). Many students in Indonesia learn English for various purposes such to become tourist guides, being able to speak at an international level, getting better jobs, and so on. So, English has become part of students' everyday activities in Indonesia. Most of them feel very proud once they are able to speak the language well. Unfortunately, most of those students always show increased levels of anxiety when it comes to using the target language for oral communicative purposes (Krismanti & Siregar, 2017). Those levels can appear due to the factors such as being called by the teacher to present something in front of the class or to respond orally to some questions.

Nowadays, one of the big problems that affect EFL learners speaking practices is without any doubt the psychological barrier (Ariyanti, 2016). Why does the researchers focus on psychology? Because they believe that psychology is the number one key to success for most EFL students in their English speaking performance (Nijat et al., 2019). Most of the EFL students who learned English for many years,

most of them have difficulties using the language to speak, whereas when we analyze, we come to know that most of them have a good level of vocabulary or grammar (Alaraj, 2017). Therefore, it is not only the lack of grammar or vocabulary, but it is also a question of psychology, your belief, your confidence, and your strong feelings about yourself (Irfani et al., 2018). Most of those EFL students have weak motivation; they never develop confidence in themselves. They are always afraid of making mistakes, some are shy just because they feel insecure while using the target language to communicate. To overcome those fears, those anxieties, they need to stop thinking a lot about mistakes; they need to stop underestimating themselves (Bourezzane, 2015).

A number of studies have been exposing psychological factor faced by students in mastering English speaking. Ainy & Pratama (2020) investigated the correlation between teacher social competence, student learning motivation, and learning outcomes in English subject. Andas (2020) found out the students' speaking problems at the fourth semester of English Study Program in Sembilanbelas November University and factors affecting them. Oflaz (2019) investigated the relationship between foreign language anxiety, shyness, language learning strategies, speaking scores and academic achievement of university preparatory students learning German. Pratiwi (2021) explored the factors inhibiting the students in speaking English and knowing teacher's perception toward the factors inhibiting the students in speaking English as a foreign language. Rumiyati & Seftika (2018) investigated the classification level of speaking anxiety, the factors of student's anxiety in speaking class and the impacts of anxiety in students speaking performance.

The course provided in Islamic boarding school Al Ulya Kedungsuren is categorized as formal education in learning the language. It is located in Kendal regency, Central Java, Indonesia. In order to support learning English, speaking, in Al Ulya Kedungsuren provides dormitories which are divided in two kinds,

namely a dormitory provided for female learners and the other one is provided for male learners.

One of the reasons why members of the dormitory do not use English in communication is that they are afraid of making mistakes and being laughed (Sutarsyah, 2017). In other words, it can be said that the members were lack of self-confidence in using English. Therefore, conducting research that investigates the strategies used by teachers in motivating the students to speak English and enhancing their self-confidence is needed (Hadijah, 2015). Syahrial (2020) valuated the principles of learning and teaching speaking skills; the different activities and tasks associated to enhance the communication skill and finally, how to teach pronunciation to the learners of communication. Therefore, to fill the gap, this present study attempts to help teachers identify problems and investigate the factors faced by Islamic boarding-based students in speaking English in their daily activities.

To find out the weaknesses of students in speaking English, they can analyze what weaknesses they have, so that they can use them to improve in the process of learning English (Aouatef, 2015). So, being aware of the factors that hamper learners to raise their levels of speaking competencies is the key to achieving the goal of being good speakers of English. In other words, it is to give more explanations about the emotional barriers that hinder learners from expressing their ideas and thoughts in the oral form and to look for some effective strategies in which students can advance their levels of speaking capacities.

How do the main psychological factors affect EFL learners' speaking skills in their classroom?

(1) How is the impact of anxiety on EFL learners' speaking skills in their classroom?

(2) How is the impact of motivation on EFL learners' speaking skills in their classroom?

(3) How is the impact of self-confidence on EFL learners' speaking skills in their classroom?

(4) How is the impact of shyness on EFL learners' speaking skills in their classroom?

METHODS

The present research employed a qualitative case study design. The research data were taken from questionnaires, observations, and teacher interviews. The data collection procedures of this study were started by giving the questionnaires, asking the participants to fill in the questionnaire, and finally, the researchers compiled the questionnaire that will be answered. After the data were collected, they were analyzed and recognized. The researchers observed students' activity in the teaching and learning process, in observation the researchers only noticed those students who have the low ability in speaking. Interviews with teachers were conducted after giving the questionnaires in the classroom.

The subjects of this study were students and English teachers at the Islamic boarding school Al Ulya Kedungsuren given pseudonyms as Mr. Xy and Mrs. Yz. The students were in the first grade of junior high school. One of the reasons why members of the dormitory especially first-grade junior high school students do not use English in communication was that they were afraid of making mistakes and being laughed. In other words, it can be said that the members were lack of self-confidence in using English. Therefore, conducting research that investigated the strategies used by teachers in motivating the students to speak English and enhancing their self-confidence is needed.

The researchers noticed that the period when data collecting began was still in the middle of a worldwide Covid 19 epidemic with a high rate of contagiousness spread among humans. Recognizing the potential danger to everyone, the researchers and the school committee worked hard to optimize the effort of pandemic prevention with tight regulations before the research could be conducted at school. According to the mutual agreement of the researchers and the school committee, the regulations that must be followed before accessing the school as the

study site are as follows: First, people with access to the site must have received at least the second dose or batch of any type of Covid 19 vaccination. Second, the Covid 19 health protocol, such as the use of medical masks, thermal scanning before approaching the site, and social distancing, should be implemented. Third, students needed a written letter of permission from a respectable guardian in order to attend school

Due to the aforementioned norms and regulations, the only impediment uncovered by the researchers was the absence of a minor number of students who were not permitted to attend school by their parents. The reasons vary; for example, one of the students has yet to be vaccinated, and other parents were hesitant to allow their children to attend school. Overall, the majority of the research subjects were eager to come to school, therefore the data was effectively acquired owing to the cooperation of all elements.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The impact of anxiety on students speaking performance

Based on observation and interviews with the study's subjects, the students' anxiety in speaking English at Islamic boarding school Al Ulya Kendal is categorized into state anxiety, trait anxiety, and situation-specific anxiety.

State Anxiety

State anxiety is nervousness or tension in response to some outside stimulus at a particular moment. This type of anxiety arises in certain situations or stressful events and is therefore not permanent. In other words, it is the feeling of situational anxiety that goes away when the threatening situation goes away. As Interviewee#1 said in the interview :

“Students feel anxious when asked to come forward in front of the class because in that condition there are many students in the class where they know each other, besides that some students in the class disturb them when coming forward to practice speaking English” (Interview with Ms Yuyun January 5th, 2022).

The reasons behind the latter saying are: mispronunciation, do not feel confident, lack of motivation, anxiety, and face-to-face speaking, which cause shyness for some students. Speaking skills are essential to learning because they can provide information to others well, but according to the survey, it is said that speaking English skills are challenging to understand; this is due to the anxiety experienced by students at the Islamic boarding school Al Ulya Kendal. The writers found that the students felt panic when they wanted to speak English. It is identical to Rayani (2016) who found that lack of vocabulary and preparation have also contributed to students

Trait Anxiety

Trait anxiety, is the tendency of a person to be nervous or feel anxious irrespective of the situation they are exposed to. This also happens to the students from the first grade Islamic Boarding School of Al Ulya Kendal. Some anxiety traits appear even though it is not in a situation that threatens them, for example, when they perform group performance. The previous study from Fitriah (2019) revealed that students at IAIN Lhokseumawe were more anxious than students at Al Muslim University. Generally, students are highly anxious when attending English classes. Based on the students' responses, the significant anxiety factors in this study were identified.

Situation-Specific Anxiety

It refers to the persistent and multi-faceted nature of some anxieties. It is aroused by a specific situation or event such as public speaking, examinations, or class participation. Specific-situation concern, where the students should examine speaking. In addition, some factors causing students' anxiety were lack of mental readiness, knowledge of vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and prior knowledge of the classroom activities, including the pressure to take the Anxiety Test. In this research, these students felt anxious when they were in certain situations or events; this finding was also by the expert opinion about students at the Islamic boarding school Al Ulya Kedungsuren that under certain conditions, students felt blank or lost their memory when speaking in English, even not only

English in doing other things, if in an atmosphere that students rarely experience, they will feel anxiety.

The teacher here indicates that anxiety is indeed one of the causes of anxiety experienced by students so that students become disturbed in specific situations. So, the conclusion is that when in certain conditions, students still feel anxiety caused by external factors such as the surrounding environment, who they are with, and the atmosphere in the class. The anxious student tends to be less concentrated, forgetful, heart beating, and sweating, which may lead to negative behaviour such as avoiding the type or procrastinating their homework.

The impacts of shyness on students' English speaking skills

Anxiety and shyness both have physiological impacts. Cold chills and shivering, rapid heart rate, parched mouth, stomach discomfort, and dizziness or fainting are only a few of the physiological symptoms. An important issue to take into account in the learning process is how stress impacts learning and memory processes.

Shy pupils avoid speaking, offer brief responses to queries in the target language, and prefer to remain alone. Shy pupils have modest communication challenges, are sluggish to express their emotions, and often do not respond when others express their emotions. Furthermore, these pupils struggle with brief talks, do not want to participate in school activities, and frequently avoid crowded surroundings. Although the pupils' speaking abilities are advanced, they may be unable to demonstrate them in class due to shyness. Shyness might act as a hindrance in the language learning process. Shy people frequently dislike being in a crowd and have trouble meeting new people. Some research demonstrate that shyness has a negative impact on language instruction. Yousaf (2018), and Namaghi (2015) discovered that shyness is both strongly and adversely related to English speaking scores and academic success. Most students (62.5%) feel shy when speaking in front of the class, and the rest (37.5%), with a

smaller percentage, do not feel nervous when speaking in front of the course. Anxiety has a damaging impact on language learning. Many investigations have determined that anxiety level is an important predictor of foreign language achievement. As previously stated, various research have documented the negative impacts of shyness.

To summarize, one of the most prevalent phobias that students have is public speaking, and the sense of shyness causes their thoughts to go blank or they forget what to say. According to the study, the instructor plays an important role in inspiring pupils and encouraging them to feel more secure in this circumstance. Allowing timid kids to participate in classroom activities will thereby alleviate their shyness. Furthermore, altering course material to provide a low-risk learning atmosphere for shy students might be advantageous. It is rather common for pupils to be hesitant and make blunders when speaking a foreign language. It should be noted that making errors is the best method to learn.

The Impact of Self-confidence

People with low self-esteem are more troubled by failure, and they tend to exaggerate events as being negative. This statement is the same as what Interview#2 said about the impact of self-confidence.

"Yes, most students do not feel self-conscious when asked to speak English. If there are embarrassed students, usually they will not dare to speak, and vice versa. If students' self-confidence is high, they will speak up more. Self-confidence in students affects various aspects, one of which is that when there are students who feel confident, they will be more daring to speak up. It can be said that self-confidence can make students dare to take risks." (Interview with Mr. Badawi January 3rd, 2022).

The majority of students (60%) occasionally engage without being prompted by the instructor, whereas those who reported experiencing autonomy are (10%). Furthermore, no student (0%) frequently participates unless asked. This is an example of self-directed learning. On the other side, 30% of students are

seldom engaged, and the remaining 0% of that sample does not commit unless requested by the teacher. It is similar to some research that shown that psychological characteristics such as shyness, fear of making a mistake, anxiety, lack of confidence, and lack of enthusiasm impede students' ability to talk in the classroom.

One of the most powerful elements influencing learning is self-confidence. It is one of the primary drives in humans and can have an impact on a person's life. In other words, a person with strong self-confidence has a realistic opinion of themselves and their abilities, which drives them to persevere in their efforts. Interview#1 said that : "The most important factors which build self-confidence are: (1) Personal experiences; successful experiences increase the development of high self-confidence, while the experiences of failure have the opposite effect. (2) Social messages received from others. (3) Community, home, school, and peers are important for self-confidence growth. Sending positive messages for others is thought to be detrimental to developing high self-confidence" (Interview with Ms. Yuyun, January 5th, 2022). It can be concluded that according to English teachers and experts who have conducted interviews, they say that if students do not have a high level of confidence, the speaking performance of students at Islamic boarding school Al Ulya Kedungsuren will decrease.

The Significant Role of Motivation for Students in Speaking English

Motivational factors are intrinsic factors that enhance performance and originate from someone (e.g., demanding work, recognition, responsibility), and they provide good gratification. At the same time, hygiene elements are extrinsic variables that originate from outside and influence someone's attitude (e.g., healthy) that do not motivate if present but result in demotivation if lacking. According to the foregoing description, Herberg's theory is a hypothesis of two variables, intrinsic and extrinsic drive. Intrinsic motivation comes from within a person, and extrinsic motivation, or motivation, comes from outside sources.

One of the students' speaking abilities in English at Islamic boarding school Al Ulya is influenced by motivational factors, such as the theory that has been explained. There are two influencing factors, namely internal factors and external factors. Based on interviews that the researcher has done with the second English teacher, Interview#2, he has motivated students to practice speaking English by providing knowledge that they can visit famous places if they can speak English fluently. "Maybe like other English teachers. I give motivation by introducing the names of world-famous places frequently visited. So they will be motivated to learn English." (Interview with Mr. Badawi January 5th, 2022).

If students continue to remain unmotivated, it might be argued that external forces cannot encourage students at this institution. Of course, the reason serves a purpose in learning and generalization. Based on a survey distributed to students, the teacher's explanation gives them more enthusiasm to learn English. The statics show that (75%) of students consider that a motivational factor in participating more. In comparison, the remaining (25%) of students do not feel motivated by the lessons given by the teacher in class. We deduce that learning styles can affect students' motivation to a certain degree.

A diagram depicts the study findings of extrinsic motivation to learn in the Islamic boarding school Al Ulya Kedungsuren's speaking class. Praise, advise (teachers, parents, surroundings), reward, punishment, and emulating something are factors or signs that form extrinsic motivation or external encouragement. Among these factors, the guidance given to the individual by parents/teachers/friends is the most powerful. They will study hard and speak English actively if they continue to be urged to learn by those closest to them. As a result, if they do not provide effective guidance, they are less inclined to actively speak English. If they are not counseled, this causes children to lose interest in studying English. According to a previous study by Alaraj (2017), in a speaking context, students usually be

more confident if they get some motivational speeches from their friends. Hence, giving the students motivational letters can impact students speaking English.

CONCLUSIONS

The impact experienced by boarding school students is not much different from students who are not in boarding school as with what was found in previous studies; they are afraid to speak in front of the class, blank when asked to talk directly, and some feel doubts about speaking English. Students feel blank or lose their memory when speaking in English when they will feel anxiety. Shy students avoid speaking, offer brief responses to queries in the target language, and prefer to remain alone. If kids have both self-confidence and language mastery, their speaking abilities will be extremely smooth and substantial. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are the two types of motivation.

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