IDENTIFYING THE MAIN FACTOR OF STUDENTS’ ANXIETY IN LIMITED FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING ENGLISH SPEAKING DURING COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

One of the obstacles, particularly speaking anxiety, has a significant impact on someone’s ability to speak a foreign language. In fact, because to the Covid-19 pandemic, researchers discovered that students were anxious of speaking English in class in limited face-to-face learning. In light of this context, the purpose of this study was to look at the primary causes and sources of students’ anxiety when learning to speak English in limited face-to-face learning due to pandemic Covid-19. A qualitative methodology and descriptive method were used to conduct the research. Six eighth-grade students from a public junior high school in Karawang took part in the study. Two low-level students, two middle-level students, and two high-level students were separated into three groups. Researchers used observation, interview, and documentation to gather data. The result showed that the primary causes of students’ concern in learning English speaking, according to this research, were poor pronunciation and a lack of vocabulary. Meanwhile, students’ anxiety in learning English speaking came from lack of confidence and nervousness. It implies that it is essential for teachers to be able to fulfill their roles as facilitators in order to minimize students' speaking anxiety in a foreign language classroom.

Keywords: Learning English, Speaking Skill, Students’ Anxiety.
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INTRODUCTION

Starting in early March 2020, education in Indonesia had seen a transformation in different learning activities due to the Covid-19 epidemic. In order to break the chain of progressively vast spread in the country affected by the Covid-19 epidemic, distance learning proved to be the most effective solution. Roles and suggestions relating to attempts to overcome and break the chain of greater spread are needed. One of them is to implement distance learning, which allows students to conduct their learning activities from the comfort of their own homes. Aswat (2021) stated that, distance learning is an alternative for the government, so students are required to study from home with parental guidance under teacher coordination. Basar (2021) explained that distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic has led to various responses and changes to the learning
system that can affect the learning process and the level of development of students in responding to the material presented.

According to Dewi (2020), not all students will be successful in online learning. This is due to the factors of the learning environment and the characteristics of students. Other problems also arise during the implementation of distance learning, so that the quality of education in Indonesia is considered to have decreased during the COVID-19 pandemic. The government has begun to develop ways to facilitate face-to-face learning. As a result, a new policy was established for the adoption of limited face-to-face learning, which began in July 2021, provided that all education staff had been vaccinated and that learning was conducted by limited meeting hours and according to tight health regulations. Students are separated into study groups or scheduled based on shifts in this with the goal of minimizing the number of students in a single room.

Limited face-to-face learning is a limitation on the number of students in one class, so it is necessary to regulate the number with a rotation system and a capacity of 50% of the normal number of students, parental approval, implementation of strict health protocols, education personnel have carried out vaccinations, as well as facilities and equipment. Infrastructure supporting the implementation of the health protocol is available. Limited face-to-face learning lasts two hours of lessons for one shift, and combines with online learning, so that limited face-to-face learning was carried out two times in a week.

Learning English that is lacking in involving students to be active will cause students not to be able to use their English skills optimally in this case, namely the ability to speak English. This limited learning is very contrary to the function of speaking English itself. As mentioned in the 2013 curriculum, one of English’s purposes is to communicate ideas throughout Indonesia and to comprehend concepts from other countries, as explained by Ahmad (2014). Preparing teachers to handle the 2013 curriculum is one of the measures to support it. Implementation of teacher training on the 2013 curriculum in Indonesia is one method to put it into action. The fundamental competency of curriculum (curriculum before KTSP) is similarly comparable in the 2013 curriculum, which seeks to strengthen competent and competitive students. English has four main skills that have to be mastered. Nunan (2003) explained that the most useful aural/oral ability is speaking. It involves making a series of organized verbal utterances in order to communicate meaning. According to Brown (2004), speaking is a productive ability that can be immediately and scientifically examined. Based on the experts mentioned above, speaking is an activity that allows people to express feelings, learn new words, and react. Speaking refers to the act of expressing an idea for a certain goal. As we often use for the daily communication, speaking skill is often considered as a measure of someone’s English proficiency.

Putri (2020) stated that, speaking skill chosen as the most difficult skill to learn by the students. In speaking a language, words must grow into sentences, the language must have structure, and the information given by the speaker must be accepted and understood by the listener. Therefore, learning English speaking for EFL students needs a lot of effort. Puspitasari, Nargis, & Zakky (2020) found that there are several issues that contribute to their low speaking performance, including the students' unwillingness to speak English in front of the class, a lack
of strong confidence, and anxiety while speaking English. Relying to the factors that have been mentioned, anxiety has the strongest impact on their speaking performance. Suparlan (2021) stated that students experience difficulties when it comes to developing their English language skills in the community. That they can only practicing their English in the classroom.

This research is inspired by the previous research on the same topic which was conducted by Suparlan (2021), entitled “Factors Contributing Students’ Speaking Anxiety”. The result of this research showed that there are ten factors which contribute in student’s anxiety in speaking English such as being afraid to speak in English, being afraid of teacher’s consequence, lack of self-confidence, fear of being less competent than others students, embarrassment, insufficient preparation, ear of making mistakes, limited vocabulary, habit in using the English language, and language test. The second previous research conducted by Siagian & Adam (2017), with a title “An Analysis of Students’ Anxiety in Speaking”. In this research, we can see that students were anxiety to speak English in class because of lack of familiarity of task, fear of making mistakes, low motivation, incomprehensible inputs, lack of confidence and then low English proficiency. Thirdly, a research conducted by Palupi (2021) with a title “Students’ Speaking Anxiety: Ready or Not”. It concluded that speaking anxiety prevents students from speaking, causing their oral abilities to suffer.

Compared to previous studies which were conducted in a normal learning situation, this study was arranged in a pandemic situation where face-to-face learning is limited. The researchers aimed to find out whether 1) Main factors for students' anxiety in speaking English, and 2) Sources for students' anxiety in speaking English in this new situation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Speaking

Some experts have provided numerous definitions of speaking. According to Wahidah (2016), speaking is one of the key talents of language. Speaking recognized as a major language ability that students should enhance. It is a key to communication and the most crucial language skill that students must develop since speaking should be used in everyday conversation. Furthermore, according to Irawati (2016), speaking proficiency includes four communicative competences: grammatical, strategic, sociolinguistic, and discourse competence. Those who aspire to be proficient speakers must learn four communicative competencies in order to talk or communicate orally in a natural way. Furthermore, Sayuri (2016) stated that speaking is used to communicate, transfer information, and build relationships among people all over the globe, among other things, because it is one of the capacities to carry out discussion. Speaking English is difficult because the speaker must be proficient in multiple areas, including pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and understanding.

Speaking is an interactive process of generating meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing information, according to all of the descriptions above. In order to communicate with others, English learners should be able to speak English.
Anxiety in Learning Speaking

The problems that are commonly observed in the language classroom are related to individual learners’ personalities and attitudes toward the learning process in general, and learning speaking in particular, such as fear of making a mistake, shyness, anxiety, lack of confidence, lack of motivation, and the like (Juhana, 2012).

Handayani & Rahmawati (2017) said that one of the reasons why learners in Indonesia wish to speak English effectively is because they have a key objective of being able to communicate to friends and even outsiders and comprehend their spoken language without any missed perception. Those EFL students have made some attempts to improve their speaking skills. Speaking in a foreign language, according to Handayani & Rahmawati, is extremely difficult and takes a long time to master. It cannot be denied that speaking English fluently and properly takes a long time and requires a significant amount of effort to maintain and develop.

According to Putri (2020), anxiety is a sensation of fear that causes someone to constantly worry about how horrible a future event will be and to be terrified of making mistakes when speaking English incorrectly. In this case, students become more anxious when they want to ask and also answer something in English. They are afraid of making mistakes and feel embarrassed in front of the teacher and also their friends. Therefore, they are less likely to use English in learning activities.

RESEARCH METHOD

The qualitative research method was applied in this research. According to Haregu (2012), in qualitative method, the data cannot be simply converted to statistics, such as concepts, views, ideas, and actions of individuals in a social environment.

A phenomenological design was used in this qualitative study. A phenomenological research, according to Creswell (2012), focuses on individuals and their lived experiences. Eddles-Hirsch (2015) described a phenomenological study as one that focuses on detailed information about what participants experienced. Those phenomenological study criteria were matched in this present study, which attempted to explore the reasons of students' anxiety in learning English speaking in the situation of limited face-to-face learning due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Subjects in a research are needed to gather the necessary data. In qualitative research, the researchers chose their subjects depending on the respondents' ability to answer the question. Lodico (2006) explained, "Depending on the sorts of questions asked, the researcher will need to choose the participants, so that they would be able to supply the vital information required for the study". The researchers conducted this study by observing and interviewing. One English teacher and six eighth-grade students were the subjects of the researchers' observation and interview. The study’s focus was on the learning strategies employed by high, middle, and low achiever students to improve their speaking abilities.

Instruments are tools that are used to gather data. Research instruments, according to EBSCO (2019), are measuring equipment meant to acquire data on a
topic of interest from research subjects. Interview guideline was the main instrument used in this research. According to Ary (2010), interviews are used to acquire data from people regarding their thoughts, beliefs, and feelings about circumstances in their own words. Structured interviews, unstructured interviews, and semistructured interviews are the three types of interviews. The purpose of a structured interview is to obtain particular information from the subject. It indicates that the interviewer will prepare a list of questions to ask the interviewee. The researchers employed a semi-structured interview in this research because the researchers used a list of questions and was able to ask extra questions to round out the topic. To obtain accurate data, the researchers must employ specific data collection strategies.

The strategy for gathering data is an important phase in research since the goal of the research is to get data. Data may be collected in a variety of contexts, from a variety of sources, and in a variety of methods. In this study, the researchers employed a data collection approach. The instrument used by the researchers was interview. Interviewing is the process of asking questions of an informant in order to collect facts or information. ‘Qualitative interviews are a type of conversation or speech event used by researchers to learn more about the experiences and interpretations of informants’ (Hatch, 2002). The researchers aimed to uncover and gather information on the elements that impact students’ anxiety and the causes of students’ anxiety in learning speaking through the interview.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION
Finding
The information related to students’ anxiety in learning speaking has been obtained through classroom observation, interview, and documentation. For the first stage, the researchers observed the English teacher in the classroom and took notes on all of the activities.

The outcome of research data conducted by researchers was described in this result. The information was used to answer questions and meet the research objectives which are the main factors that affected the students’ anxiety in learning speaking and the sources of students’ anxiety in learning English speaking.

The Main Factors that Affected the Students’ Anxiety in Learning Speaking

The researchers would like to discuss and respond to the first research question, "What are the main factors affecting students' anxiety when learning speaking?" at this phase. The researchers focused on the elements that influenced students’ anxiousness when learning to speak at SMPN 2 Cikampek in this study. In addition to the data from classroom observation, the information was gathered through interviews with the English teacher and students. Here is the documentation during the interview with English teacher.

Based on the data that has been collected, there were two main factors of students’ anxiety in speaking English, including weak pronunciation and lack of vocabulary.

a. Weak Pronunciation
In interviews with six students, the majority of the students stated
that their greatest challenge was their inability to express their ideas in English.

R3: “It is the way we pronounce the words”
R4: “It is hard to pronounce”
R6: “Hard to read”
R7: “I can’t really say something in English”

Weak English pronunciation as a factor in the emergence of anxiety to speak English was expressed by one student with high proficiency level, one student with middle proficiency level, and two students with low proficiency level.

Seeing the answers from students, the researchers concluded that they had anxiety in speaking English because they have difficulty reading words in English.

b. Lack of Vocabulary

Two other students said that the factor that made them find it difficult to speak English was not knowing the meaning of some words in English. This was also correlated with the results of interviews with English teachers who said that the factor that affects students’ anxiety in speaking English is the lack of vocabulary that students have.

R1: “They have a limited vocabulary and are unsure what they want to say if they dare to speak. When they want to say, "I live in Cikampek," they don't dare to say it since they don't know the word "live."

From the teacher's answer above, it shows that the students' lack of vocabulary makes them not dare to speak in English so they choose not to speak.

In addition, the teacher also mentioned that the abolition of English lessons at the elementary school level made students lack of provision in English vocabulary. The majority of students at SMPN 2 Cikampek do not acquire English in elementary school, so learning English when entering junior high school is still in the basic stage.

R1: “This could be because they don't speak English in elementary school, so when they enter junior high school, English is their new world. It's different from previous years, where they already have the stock of English vocabulary that they get in elementary school. So that in junior high school we are ready to ask them to make sentences, meaning that they are no longer basic. Now, their vocabulary is still groping. So they have difficulty speaking English because of the lack of vocabulary they have.”

The Sources of Students’ Anxiety in Learning English Speaking

According to the researchers’ observations and interviews, there were two sources of students' anxiety in speaking: lack of confidence and nervousness.

R1: “Some students experience anxiety when I ask them to speak in English. The first background is maybe they are not confident.”
R2: “Feel nervous and can't speak English very well.”

The two statements above were expressed by students and teachers. It showed that students felt nervous when speaking English and the teacher is aware of it.

Discussion

In this section, the researchers elaborate on their findings based on the data presented in the previous section.
The Main Factors Affected on The Students’ Anxiety in Learning Speaking

Based on the data, the outcomes of this study were explained to the main factors influencing students’ anxiety in learning to speak, and the researchers employed an interview with students and an observation sheet. The data was collected using an interview guideline as the instrument. The question concerned the primary elements that influenced students' anxiety when learning to speak in eighth grade. It was inferred from the interview and observation results that certain VIII students at SMPN 2 Cikampek were anxious about learning to speak. Most students remain anxious in speaking classes due to low vocabulary skills and not enough pronunciation knowledge and the accuracy of pronunciation of English words. These findings confirmed what MacIntyre and Grader (2007); and MacIntyre and Legatto (2010) found in their study. This is also in line with the results of previous research conducted by Subagiah (2017) which stated that the main factors of students’ anxiety in speaking English are because they lack vocabulary, difficult for them to pronounce words, afraid of making a mistake, and afraid of receiving a poor review. Students' weak pronunciation was one of the main factors affecting their anxiously when learning to speak. In other words, they were all afraid of making a mistake and pronouncing the words incorrectly. Incorrect pronunciation made students anxious to speak in front of many people because they are afraid of being ridiculed by their friends. It merely made them hesitant to speak something in the English terms. The second factor was the lack of vocabulary. Students found it difficult to compose sentences in English because they do not know one of the words in English. Having vocabulary problem made students felt anxious to speak. With a limited vocabulary, students struggle to convey what they want to say. This condition can result in students becoming anxious and reluctant to speak (Gebhard, 2000). Brown (2001) stated that students felt they could not speak English because they felt that they lack English language skills and lack of knowledge of the language. Of course, this feeling prevented them from speaking English. They believe that in order to speak English fluently, you need to understand every word. As mostly of the interviewee made statement that it is difficult, then it has a relation to their self-concept. Self-concept is one of the elements that contribute to students' anxiety during speaking English. Self-concept, according to Laine (1987), is the sum of an individual's thoughts, perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and values with regard to himself as an object. When students speak and learn English, they face difficulties. The idea of speaking English is usually bad in the mind. Their perception is that speaking English is extremely tough, and this outcome is based on their responses to the interview. Students find English as a second and foreign language challenging. To put it another way, if students do not find learning and speaking English challenging, they must be devoid of anxiety. Therefore, Backer and Maclyntre (2003) note that those with higher anxiety and lower perceived abilities tend to be reluctant to communicate and avoid communication and when they avoid this behavior, they shy away from opportunities to improve their skills and experience. Without an increase in skills, it is less likely that the person will experience a decrease in anxiety or an increase in perceived ability (Imura, 2004). This has been experienced by students of class VIII SMPN 2 Cikampek, Karawang. Symptoms of moderate anxiety and its effect
on students are similar to those described by experts such as; Students will never volunteer and avoid speaking in class to minimize embarrassment of being called to speak.

The Sources of Students’ Anxiety in Speaking

The researchers discovered that students' lack of confidence and nervousness are the sources of their anxiety in expressing thoughts in this study. This is in accordance with a study done by Sundari, Perdana, & Hengki (2020), who discovered that nervousness, and lack of self-confidence are among the causes of students' anxiousness to speak in English. They are less active in the classroom because they feel anxious speaking in front of a large number of people. They prefer to listen only to the teacher and follow the teacher. According to Juhana (2012), problems in the language classroom are related to individual students' personalities and attitudes toward the learning process in general, and learning speaking in particular, such as fear of making a mistake, nervousness, anxiety, lack of confidence, lack of motivation, and other factors that prevent them from practicing their speaking in English class. As a result, it is reasonable to conclude that the primary causes of student anxiety are related to the students themselves.

According to Nation and Newton (2009 cited in Putri, 2021), performance situations can have an impact on their speaking ability. When students speak out in front of the class, they experience anxiety. According to the data gathered from interviews, the factors that cause students anxiety include their nervousness and anxiety when speaking in front of their teachers and classmates. Price (1991) discovered that speaking in front of their peers is a very anxiety-inducing activity for foreign language learners because they are afraid of making mistakes in pronunciation and being laughed at. It immediately distracted them and felt embarrassed. They also found that it identified why they felt nervous when speaking in front of the class. According to interviews, some students had similar feelings regarding their worry when they committed mistakes because they can’t speak English very well. They were terrified of making a mistake when speaking up. The fear of making mistakes in speaking English in class also leads to the fear of students getting negative assessment. Fear of negative assessment, according to Liu (2007), is the anxiety connected with a learner's perspective of how other listeners, such as teachers, classmates, or others, may negatively evaluate their language competence. Students in this class, on the other hand, are more concerned about their social relationships. The opinions of peers have a significant serious effect on students' self-esteem and motivation.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

According to the findings and discussions, the results reached by the researchers were guided by the research questions regarding:

The Main Factors Affected on The Students’ Anxiety in Learning Speaking

The lack of practice in acquiring speaking skills was the source of the students' anxiety. The students' lack of vocabulary and poor pronunciation were the issues that arise from themselves. The teacher tried to employ an approach that can alleviate the student's fear based on the situation. This was due to the fact that not all students repeat lessons learned at school at home. As a result, learning at
school must be optimized in order to assist students' develop their English speaking abilities and lessen their anxiety of expressing themselves in English.

**The Sources of Students’ Anxiety in Speaking**

The students' anxiety in speaking English was caused by two main sources; the feeling of lack of confidence and nervousness. Both of them were found caused by the main factors that have been mentioned in the previous part. Weak pronunciation and lack of vocabulary made them felt unsure to express what they wanted to say in English. It turned out that they keep it by themselves instead of trying to say it ignoring if they do mistakes or not.

The anxieties that arise are diverse, and each student has their own strategy for dealing with anxiety when speaking English and presenting their work. Furthermore, they must learn to manage their anxiety so that it does not interfere with their learning and performance in class during the limited face-to-face learning time due to Covid-19 pandemic. It implies that teachers, as the facilitator in class, must be able to minimize students' anxiety about speaking English by implementing the preventative measures outlined in the findings.

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