

Psychological factors affecting English speaking skills

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ABSTRACT

Speaking is one of hard skill that should be mastered by students in English. But not all students can master it. There are several factors that influence students in the process of learning speaking, one of which is psychological factors. This study aims to find psychological factors that affect students' English-speaking skills. The method used in this study is through a literature study in which the researcher collects the data in the form of books, articles, journals to develop this study. The results of this study indicate psychological factors can affect students' speaking in English, including anxiety, fear of mistakes, lack of confidence, lack of motivation, and shyness. In conclusion, the teacher has an important role in helping students, such as the teacher should be aware of students' psychological speaking problems to develop their speaking skills and motivating them to build their confidence and making the comfortable speaking class to improve their speaking skill.

Keywords: *English Language, Psychological Factors, Speaking Skill*

I. INTRODUCTION

The introduction shows what is already known from the previous studies, defines the importance of the study, literature review, and the research objectives. In order to understand what is already known from the previous studies, the introduction must consist of discussions of relevant journal articles (with citations) and a summary of the current understanding of the problem to show novelty of the research. People certainly require skills to understand the information and be able to communicate with others in English. In learning English there are 4 skills that must be mastered by students, such as listening, writing, reading, and speaking. Speaking is one of the most important skills to be developed and enhanced as means of effective communication (Leong & Ahmadi, 2019). However, Ur (1996) as cited in Al Nakhalah (2016) who stated that considered speaking as the most important skill among four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) because people who know a language are referred to as speakers of that language. This indicates that using a language is more important than just knowing about it. Through speaking students can express their emotions, ideas, feeling, thoughts, opinion, to give information and message to others, and show the various functions of language (Souisa & Gaite (2020); Dalem, 2019).

Considering the importance of being able to speak English, students are required to be able to master it. But in fact, not all students are able to master English speaking. Mastering English is not as easy as the first language for students in Indonesia because English is a foreign language for them. Speaking fluent English is a common problem among the nonnative. Speaking is one of the most difficult skills language learners faces in language learning. It is believed that

speaking is the most important of the four language skills (Dalem, 2019) Although English is one of the compulsory subjects taught in Indonesia from elementary school to university level, but in fact there are many students who cannot speaking English. This shows that Indonesian students have problem in speaking English even though they have studied for many years. Based on this phenomenon, it is very interesting for researcher to examine the case of why Indonesian students still have difficulty speaking English even though they have studied it for a long time.

Thus, as an example of research conducted by Nijat et al., (2019) has conducted a research on Psychological Factors that Affect English Speaking Performance among Malaysian Primary School Pupils. As the result, the researchers found that the majority of students exhibit general psychological factors such as fear in class, shyness and anxiety. Most of the students are not confident to speak because they are afraid to speak English and some others feel shy and anxious when speaking class. Correlating this, the aim of the study is to explain the research questions: what are the psychological factors that affect the students in practicing their speaking in English class and the causes of the problems as well.

The Nature of Psychological Factors

According to Khapsoh (2020), psychology is scientific of mind, mental, emotional and behaviour. Psychological factors can prevent students from communicating using English. According to Souisa & Gaite (2020) one of the big problems that affect students' speaking ability not only about the general problems such as lack of vocabularies and grammar points but also it is related to psychological factors. In line with this issue, Burns and Joyce in Nunan (1999; Schwartz (2005); Juhana, 2012: 100; Khapsoh, 2020) argue that psychological factors such as anxiety or shyness, lack of confidence, lack of motivation, and fear of mistakes are the factors commonly that hinder students from speaking. Based on those statements, the students' problems in speaking English are based on psychological factors which hinder students in speaking; some of them are anxiety, fear of mistake, lack of confidence, lack of motivation and shyness. Psychological factors faced by students are as follows:

Anxiety

Howritz et al, as cited in Nascente (2001; Khapsoh, 2020) stated that anxiety is a feeling of tension, apprehension and nervousness associated with the situation of learning a foreign language. Anxiety influences students in learning the language. According to Sutarsyah (2017) There are several variables that can affect the speaking performance of students. Among these variables, language anxiety is a very common problem that affects students' speaking performance. Language anxiety, a complex psychological construct is considered an affective variable in language learning, this is what makes students do not develop their speaking skills and when students feel anxious, they will have difficulty in speaking.

Cause of Anxiety

In this case, Howritz and Cope (1986) as cited in (Juhana, 2012: 102; Khapsoh, 2020), based on the findings of their study, found out three main causes of students. Anxiety i. e communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation.

In addition, Hashemi and Abbasi (2013) as cited in Khapsoh (2020) who stated that language learning anxiety may be experienced due to linguistic difficulties foreign language learners face

in learning and using the target language. Based on they said, anxiety is caused by test anxiety, fear of communication, linguistic difficulties, fear of negative evaluation.

Fear of Mistake

Students try to communicate using English with their limited abilities. This limitation is one of the factors that students are afraid of making mistakes because they are often afraid of being laughed at by their friends or criticized by the teacher. According to Basri (2019), students are afraid of being evaluated negatively by teachers and their friends who reveal their shortcomings. This makes students chooses silence instead of practicing their English.

Cause of Fear of Mistake

According to Kurtus (2001) cited in Juhana (2012: 101), the primary reason of fear of mistake is that students are afraid of looking foolish in front of other people and they are concerned about how other will see them. Moreover, Hieu (2011) and Zang (2006) cited in Juhana (2012: 101) explain that students feel afraid of the idea of making mistakes as they are worried that their friends will laugh at them and receive negative evaluations from their peers if they make mistake in speaking English. In some other cases, they also worry about how they will sound, and are scared of sounding silly and so on.

Lack of Confidence

Students often lack confidence when their conversation partner doesn't understand them or they do not understand other speakers. this makes them choose to be silent and insecure. Lack of confidence is the key psychological factor which is frequently assumed the students' lack of confidence that characteristically happens when they think that their communicative equals have not comprehended their message. In this state of affairs, they would remain silent while others carry on their conversation by indicating that the students lack their confidence to communicate (Ahsan, Asgher, & Hussain, 2020).

Cause of Lack of Confidence

According to He and Chen (2010) cited in Khapsoh (2020), the main cause of students' confidence is their low ability in speaking English. In addition, Khapsoh (2020) stated that many students think that their English is bad and feel that they cannot speak English well. In addition, Brown (2001) in Juhana (2012: 102) mentioned that the other cause of students. Lack of confidence also deals with the lack of encouragement from the teacher. It means that the main factors causing students. Lacks of confidence are that they have low ability in speaking or they think that their speaking skill is bad, and their teachers are lack of reinforcement them.

Lack of Motivation

Motivation has a vital role in leading learners' achievement. It also has a formidable task for language learners. Motivation can make students have the desire to do something. When students do not have enough motivation in speaking English, this can also hinder them from being able to speak and communicate using English. Nunan (1999) in (Juhana, 2012: 103) stressed that motivation is important to notice in that it can affect students' reluctance to speak in English.

Cause of Lack of Motivation

Some of the reasons for lack of motivation can be listed as the absence of sufficient grounds to overcome the difficulties students face, not have a purpose, and difficulty determining priorities (Akif, 2013: 1370) in Khapson (2020). In addition, Garden in Nunan (1999) and Babu (2010) as cited in Juhana (2012: 106) stressing that motivation is a product of good teaching, not its prerequisite, students are unmotivated and unwilling to speak English in the classroom among others are because uninspiring teaching and lack of appropriate feedback.

Shyness

According to Januariza and Hendriani (2016: 470) revealed that shyness is an emotional condition that many students suffer from at some time when they are required to speak in English class. Shyness is also one of the problems that are often faced by students in speaking English. Researchers such as Haka, Asib, Supriyadi (2021) explored speaking skill problem encountered by vocational school freshmen and seniors viewed from their own perspectives, and stated that most of students are shy while speaking English and made them not able to deliver their ideas well in speaking English. This shows that shyness has an important role for students in speaking English.

Cause of Shyness

Zimbardo (1977) as cited in (Crozier, 2001; Cowden, 2005: 66; Khapsoh, 2020) stated that one factor on which worry and shyness may vary is embarrassment. Shy individuals report embarrassment as a commonly experienced problem. In this case, the students are not very confident and tend to be shy because most of them find it very intimidating when speaking English in front of their friends and teacher. (Khapsoh, 2020). In addition, Saurik (2011) in Al Nakhalah (2016) identifies that most of English students feel shy when they speak the language because they think they will make mistakes when they talk. They are also afraid of being laughed at by their peers. In this sense, they are afraid of being laughed at by their friends due to their low ability in speaking English.

II. METHODS

Type of research used in this study is library research type, in which the researcher collects the data in the form of books, articles, journals to develop a certain study. Library research type or commonly referred to as literature research or literature study can also be interpreted as an activity to collect literature data through reading, recording, and processing of research materials (Mestika & Zed, 2004:3). In other words, literature research is a study conducted to solve a problem based on a critical and In-depth review of the relevant literature material. The data that has been collected from several literature sources will be analyzed qualitatively. Library research is used as a method to make the researcher easier in collecting the data without directly goes to the fields. The data will be used as references to support the recent study, which is about psychological factors that affect students in speaking English. The steps taken by the researchers in this study were to find related sources, read the source, classify the supporting points, and analyze the data based on the purpose of the research descriptively.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on previous studies, which discussed psychological factors that influence students' speaking English, it was found that psychological factors have a very important effect on speaking. All previous studies prove that there is a close relationship between psychological factors and fluency in students' speaking English skill. According to Dalem (2017) he showed that students who have higher motivation and lower anxiety can speak easily and effectively. In this case, teachers should understand their students' interests and feelings, improve their learners' self-confidence, and choose the best teaching method to keep their learners involved in the speaking activity. Furthermore, Nijat et al., (2019) found that most students become victims of psychological factors such as fear in class, shyness and anxiety. In their research they mentioned that most of the students were not confident when speaking because they were afraid. While some others feel embarrassed and anxious when speaking in class. In addition, Based on the finding from research conducted by Khapsoh (2020) the factors that hinder students in speaking include: The first, most students revealed that they have psychological speaking problems which fear of mistakes took the first and become the most frequent problem (91%), lack of confidence was the second (76%), continued by anxiety (65%), shyness (47%), and lack of motivation (32%). In this case, the teachers should pay more attention to the problems faced by students and should try to find out the reason why students do not want to speak English and not active in class.

The results of several previous studies, it was found that there are reasons why students have psychological problems in speaking English, including: firstly, the reason why students are afraid of mistakes is because when they speak English in front of the class, they are afraid of being evaluated by the teacher and embarrassed to be laughed if they made a mistake. Secondly, the cause of students' lack of confidence is related to their low ability in speaking English, they think their English is so bad and they do not feel confident to speak in front of the class. Thirdly, anxiety is caused by test anxiety, fear of communication, linguistic difficulties, and fear of negative evaluation. Fourthly, cause of shyness including embarrassment feeling, fear of mistake, afraid of being laughed, perception of their ability, and their nature that is very quiet. Lastly, cause of lack of motivation or unwillingness of students in speaking are because makes them no desire to speak English, uninspired teaching, boredom, lack of perceived relevance of materials, lack of knowledge about the objectives of the education program, method of learning, family background, social situation, physical environment, etc.

All psychological factors that affected students in speaking English are supported by several previous studies. From the results of research conducted by Nijat et al., (2019), the researchers found that the majority of students exhibit general psychological factors such as fear in class, shyness and anxiety. Inline, Souisa and Gaite (2020), found that psychological factors such as low motivation, felt afraid in making mistakes, felt shy, unconfident in speaking, and felt confused with their thoughts can also affect students in speaking. Furthermore, Juhana (2012); Khapsoh (2020), they found that psychological factors could have an impact on students speaking English in class. Students feel afraid to make mistakes, anxiety, shy, and lack confidence when speaking in front of the class. They are also lack motivated to speak in English. From these studies, it can be concluded that psychological factors can really affecting students

and can hinder them in speaking English. Then, the role of the teacher is needed to guide students and encourage them to build their confidence when speaking English.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In summary, psychological factors affecting English speaking skill for students, these psychological factors include anxiety, fear of mistakes, lack of confidence, lack of motivation, and shyness. Based on the problems above, the researcher suggests for the students that when they know the psychological problems they faced, they can find solutions about it and try to practice their speaking skills. While for the teachers, they should be aware of students' psychological speaking problems, and help students in overcoming their problems by motivating them to build their confidence and making the comfortable speaking class to improve their speaking skill and teachers can also use variation methods so that students are interested and encouraged to speak English in class.

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