

# ENGLISH-SPEAKING ISSUES TOWARDS INDONESIA

## SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Azmi Randu Farhani 1<sup>\*</sup>, Yuditha Natalia Binsasi 2<sup>\*</sup>, Armitha Handayani 3<sup>\*</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>Department of English Language Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Esa Unggul University, Jakarta, Indonesia.

<sup>2</sup>Department of English Language Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Esa Unggul University, Jakarta, Indonesia.

<sup>3</sup>Department of English Language Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Esa Unggul University, Jakarta, Indonesia.

Email Corresponding Author : [swaggyazmi@gmail.com](mailto:swaggyazmi@gmail.com)

### *Abstract*

*This research was carried out to invent the problems of the English-speaking anxiety of senior high school students in Indonesia. Several studies have reported that senior high school students show that they lack speaking skills in the EFL region, particularly in Indonesia. To decompose data, we use the Meta-Analysis Process. The findings showed that there are five major barriers to the English-speaking anxiety of senior high school students in Indonesia, made up of (1) lack of knowledge of vocabulary, (2) grammar as a stumbling block, (3) fear of others' negative reactions, (4) low bravery when speaking publicly in English, (5) anxiety when speaking English. Suggestions and effects are discussed as well, that the teacher should be more aware of student's anxiety in order to arouse students' motivation to speak up confidently and fluently in English speaking in Indonesia.*

*Keywords: Students, speaking, anxiety.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

This research drew on a larger study to identify and understand the sources of senior high school students' English language speaking anxiety in Indonesia. The aim of this paper was to report findings from meta-analysis data on the sources of the English-speaking anxiety of senior high school students in Indonesia.

As an EFL country, teaching and learning English language in Indonesia has been challenging. Moreover, the study revealed that high achievers tend to use approximation methods, to get help and turn to a mother tongue. In the area of communication strategies, Dewi (2007) investigated the strategies deployed by Indonesian senior high school students in overcoming speaking problems. Even though Indonesia as an EFL country, English's position as a medium of international communication is unavoidable. By considering the importance of English, the government put the English as a mandatory subject at school, started from junior high school to college. However, in reality many students still cannot speak English although they have been studying English for many years. Many students feeling anxiety when speaking English, even some of them don't know how to speak English properly. This fact is in line with what Young

(1990) claimed, "Speaking in the ign language is often cited by students as their most anxiety-producing experience" (p. 539) and speaking in a foreign language has been in general acknowledged as the most anxiety-provoking skill (Price, 1991; Palacios, 1998). There are a few possibilities from this point. Firstly, the time to learn English subject at school is limited. Secondly, at some schools, teaching English through Indonesian is carried out. Thirdly, English subject is not used as a teaching medium for other subjects. Another important reason is students in Indonesia never use their English language to each other. That's why the English language degree is not so frequently in the field of education.

Speaking is the most important skills for English language learners need to be developed (Tinjaca & Contreras, 2008) because it is the ability to communicate with others and requires a wide variety of skills (Hadfield & Hadfield, 2012). Harmer (2007) notes that effective communication is not only know the characteristics of language, but also the ability to process knowledge. Nonetheless, not all students are able to learn the language orally, given the need for both language features and social processing.

The challenges of speaking English for students in EFL country have been the subject

of many previous studies. Mukminin, Masbirorotni, Noprival, Sutarno, Arif, Maimunah (2015); Noprival, (2016); Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope, (1896); Young, (1991); Tinjaca and Contreras (2008). Even language anxiety and foreign language speaking anxiety have been explored by several studies, however, not much studies examine precisely the origins of the anxiety of senior high school students to speak English in Indonesia.

This study is taken to fill the gap of Indonesian senior high school students speaking anxiety in English language. This paper aimed to report some findings on the origins of the anxiety of senior high school students to speak English, particularly on what causes students to be silent in the classroom. The main question that influenced this study was: What are the causes or factors of anxiety among senior high school students speaking English?

## METHOD

The aims of this paper was to report on some results of the qualitative previous studies about the senior high school students' anxiety among English language in Indonesia. In this research, we used a qualitative study as the research approach to identify the sources of senior high school students' speaking difficulties.

We conducted current research at one senior high school in Jambi province, Indonesia and several public senior high school in East Java, Indonesia. A purposeful sampling with a convenience case plan was used in this analysis. According to Merriam (1998), purposive sampling emphasizes on a criterion-based selection of information rich cases from which a researcher can discover, understand, and gain more insight on crucial issues for the study.

In this research, the data were collected through meta-analysis methods for reviewing from several studies among Indonesian senior high school students' speaking English anxiety.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The aim of this qualitative study was to analyze the English speaking problems faced by senior high school students in Indonesia. I coordinated review and discussion from several article that has the same discussion as this article theme. An analysis data found that five main topics were linked to the problems of students speaking English, including (1) lack of

knowledge of vocabulary, (2) grammar as a stumbling block, (3) fear of others' negative reactions, (4) low bravery when speaking publicly in English, (5) anxiety when speaking English.

**Table 1. Themes of the English speaking issues faced by Indonesian students**

No.	Themes
1	Lack of knowledge of vocabulary
2	Grammar as a stumbling block
3	Fear of others' negative reactions
4	Low bravery when speaking publicly in English
5	Anxiety when speaking English

### 1. Lack of knowledge of vocabulary

Learning a new language cannot be separated from the vocabulary. Vocabulary can be defined in many ways. Knowing vocabulary in English is also very important in the process of learning English because if we comprehend the vocabulary, we can easily use the words we want to convey. Experts have proposed several terms about vocabulary. According to Richards and Renandya (2002: 255), vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how learners speak, listen, read, and write. In distinction of several articles, it comes up that senior high school students in Indonesia had a low speaking ability. Even, the students admitted that vocabulary was a major problem.

The problems occur when students who lack of vocabulary need to talk and does not know how to combine the words into a good sentence. Khan (2005) once again states that the numbers of students who learn English as a foreign language have difficulties using words and expressions to speak. Students clearly know what they are going to say in the source of language, but when they have to switch the language itself into the target language such as English, they often get confused how to combine and use the proper vocabularies.

### 2. Grammar as a stumbling block

Language learners and language teachers, the pedagogical central role of language teachers is to teach grammar and correct the mistakes of learners. While teaching using a communicative approach, grammar as the use of language represents the foundation for communication.

However, what I have found from several articles is senior high school students in Indonesia is lack grammar knowledge, even some of them really don't know what grammar is. Before speaking, grammar seemed to make the students too cautious. In other terms, too much stress in speaking on the use of proper grammar makes students inactive in speaking English.

Assistant Director of Study for IALF Surabaya, Widiastuti, admitted that she often received complaints from teachers about the difficulty of students understanding English grammar. "We emphasize how to let students be able to use their knowledge of grammar in direct practice. For example, when learning the present simple tense, don't just give them practice questions, but invite them to chat with friends or use them in their daily life during English lessons," she explained.

### **3. Fear of other's negative reactions**

Watson & Friend (1969) defines fear of negative evaluation as 'concern about evaluating others', avoiding evaluative situations, and the expectation that others will evaluate themselves negatively '(as quoted in Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1991: 31) . Because each other's evaluations are so common in second language classes, students feel uncomfortable when they think that they are being watched by teachers and other students (Price, 1991; Zhao Na, 2007). The feeling of being watched by others makes them feel more insecure and unable to perform well in class. Even in small groups, students feel more anxious because they are afraid of negative evaluations from their peers, which makes them more quiet and reserved (Ohata, 2005).

That's all in line with the results that comes up from several articles, which is senior high school students in Indonesia reported that when they make a mistake when speaking English in front of their friends, their friends would be teased and mocked them. However, that is the reason why many students in Indonesia are afraid to speaking English because if their mistake was noticed, the others would tease and mock them.

### **4. Low bravery when speaking publicly in English**

The difficulty usually faced by senior high school students is the courage to speak in public in English. There are several factors that

influence why most students have low courage when speaking English in public, that is lack of vocabulary or grammar, lack of information about English (language style, use of words, etc.), which is not used to practicing correct patterns. This happens because they have get used to speak mother tongue and English has not. Sometimes, they have to get used to the differences between English and Indonesian cultures.

That statement is aligned with data that I found which is students in Indonesia were in the form of being dazed, shy, and afraid of speaking in English because they thought that speaking English with those with better English skills was inferior. Those kinds of explanations prevented the students from speaking in English.

### **5. Anxiety when speaking English**

Given the position of English as a foreign language in Indonesia, not many students use it in daily communication. This phenomenon can shape the development of students' speaking skills. Padmadewi (1998) explains that students who take speaking classes often feel anxious because of the pressure of a speaking assignment that requires them to be present individually and spontaneously in a limited time. This statements matched with the data from several studies which is Indonesian students convey that they are improperly pronouncing English words, feeling inferior to those who are considered to have better English proficiency, and hesitating to speak English with teachers.

However, language anxiety is one of the problems in foreign language learning. According to Krashen's (1982) hypothesis about affective filters, studying language in an improper affective state will have a mental filter, or barrier, and this will prevent them from fully exploiting the input for further linguistic mastery. That is, anxiety causes affective filters, which will prevent students from receiving input, and then their language acquisition will fail to make progress.

## **CONCLUSION**

As a result of this study, the factors that affect students' speaking difficulties are: linguistic factors and non-linguistic factors, students do not try to speak English in their

daily activities and also cause their environmental background from the students. However, students have minimal exposure to the target language and lack of interaction with native speakers.

It confirmed that Indonesian students also faced a number of speaking difficulties in a non-English-speaking school. It could help to discuss potential solutions as an assessment of the program by noticing some sort of key problem. The five main themes I found in my study related to the English-speaking problems of Indonesian senior high school students have a range of consequences for students or English teachers.

However, learning to speak a foreign language requires more than just knowing the rules of grammar and semantics. Students must acquire knowledge of how native speakers use language in the context of a structured interpersonal exchange. It keeps students motivated in language learning and a major factor affecting student performance in speaking English fluently. They are afraid to make mistakes when speaking. They also cannot express themselves well or sufficiently because they do not have adequate and precise vocabulary.

Another factor that makes students hesitate to speak English is that they are shy and nervous. They feel afraid to speak English in front of others because they lack confidence in their competence in English. So, it is important to help students deal with their anxiety, nervousness, and fear with encouraging words.

## SUGGESTION

Learning English towards senior high school in Indonesia still have difficulties in speaking English which is already discussed above. The teachers should give students any activities of speaking in the class or in the front of the friends or others. So, the teachers could try to help the students to recognize the new vocabulary from learning through speaking. From any activities given by teachers the student would be building a new vocab, building a good grammar and having confidence. It seems that the teachers have an important part of this section because they know the best ways to make their student have the ability in speaking fluently, having confidence and become a good speaker. The teachers keep encouraging and giving motivation for the students to speak English in public. So, the

students will make a good performance in the future.

## REFERENCES

Mukminin, A., Sutarno, Arif, N., Noprival, & Maimunah. 2015. EFL Speaking Anxiety among Senior High School Students and Policy Recommendations. *Journal of Education and Learning*. 9 (3): 217-225.

Noprival. 2016. Students' voice: EFL Speaking Problems on English Day Program at One Senior High School in Indonesia. *Ilmiah Universitas Batanghari Jambi Journal*. 16 (1): 77-81.

Harmer, J. 2007. *How to teach writing*. Atenton, A. Safron, W. Essex. England.

Tinjaca, R.A.B. young & Contreras, R.A. 2008. Overcoming Fear of Speaking in English through Meaningful Activities: A Study with Teenagers. *PROFILE*. 9 (1): 23-46.

Merriam, S.B. 1998. *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. CA: JosseyBass. San Francisco.

Young, D.J. 1990. An investigation of students' perspectives on anxiety and speaking. *Foreign Language Annals*. 23: 539-53.

Young, D.J. 1991. Creating a low-anxiety classroom environment: What does language anxiety research suggest?. *The Modern Language Journal*. 75 (4): 426-439.

Mistar, J., Zuhairi, A., & Umamah, A. 2014. Strategies of Learning Speaking Skill by Senior High School EFL Learners in Indonesia. *Asian EFL Journal*. 80: 65-74.

Renandya, W.A., & Richards, J.C. 2002. *Methodology in Language Teaching*. New York : Cambridge University Press.

Ohata, K. 2005. Potential Sources of Anxiety for Japanese Learners of English: Preliminary Case Interviews with Five Japanese College Students in the U.S. *Teaching English as a Second Language and Foreign Language*. 9 (3): 1-21.

Krashen S.D. 1982. *Principles and Practice in Second Language Learning*. New York;Pegamon

- Padmadewi. 1998. Anxiety in Second Language Learning causes and solutions. *Journal of Education and Research*. 1.
- Dewi, E.K. 2007. Students' strategies in overcoming speaking problems at SMA Unggulan Haf-sa Zainul Hasan-BPPT Genggong. *Unpublished thesis*. Islamic University of Malang, Indonesia.
- Indrianty, S. 2016. *Students' Anxiety In Speaking English (A Case Study In One Hotel And Tourism College In Bandung)*. Bandung: Stiepar Yapari-Aktripa. 4(1).
- Seifert, D. 2016. *Top 5 Reasons Why Vocabulary Matters*. <https://infercabulary.com/top-5-reasons-why-vocabulary-matters/>. Accessed at 23 November 2020
- Thornbury, S. and Slade, D. 2006. *Conversation: From Description to Pedagogy*. Cambridge University Press.
- Thornbury, S. 2005. *How to Teach Speaking*. Longman.
- Worde, R.V. 2003. *Students' Perception on Foreign Language Anxiety*. Virginia Community College System