

Chapter Four

Findings and Discussion

In this chapter, the researcher presents the various findings of the research. The researcher classifies and categorizes the research questions and the answer in their appropriate categories. The researcher groups the interview data according to the responses gathered during the interview.

The Causes of Speaking Anxiety in English Classroom Faced by Senior High School Students

The data to answer this question was collected by using an in-depth interview, where the researcher interviewed six students of a private senior high school in Yogyakarta. The researcher asked the participants regarding their causes of anxiety in speaking English in the classroom and their reason for having said perceptions. The findings related to the causes of speaking anxiety are presented below:

Communication apprehension. When learner experience the feeling of worry and shy if they make a mistake or give misleading information to speak with others in English it is called by communication apprehension. The students were asked about their reason why they experienced anxiety in speaking English, six respondents claimed that they tend to feel shy and worry when they need to use verbal language as way to communicate with the other. Within this theme, one participant under the pseudonym Isyana stated, “I rarely speak in English language, so I am afraid if I made mistake”. Another participant under the pseudonym Dian also said, “I am afraid if I say the wrong thing and give the

wrong information". The students feel afraid if they deliver the wrong information and make mistake when they communicate with other in English.

Besides Nia mentioned, "I am afraid if I say the wrong thing, and when I cannot respond in English, because I do not know how to express what I want in English which makes me feel anxious". Another participant with pseudonym Andre stated that "I prefers to not speak in English rather than made a mistake". Also, Kule added, "I am afraid when I speak in English and deliver it incorrectly. I am afraid if the people that I talk to do not understand what I am talking about, so it can give misleading information".

However, struggle to speak in public, listening, or learning oral language is a sign of communication apprehension. (Mahmoodzadeh, 2012). In other words, when learners experience difficulties or struggle to state their ideas in English, it arise their anxious feeling. Besides that, the feeling of terror about their speaking ability makes them difficult to construct oral communication that leads to anxious feeling. Lack of confidence also hinders student to speak more because of feeling of fear that others will not understand what they are saying.

Giudice (2015) mentioned that self-confidence is trusting your-self as well as ability fully, because of a failure is a process in order to success in learning a language. If the students feel apprehensive of making mistake to improve themselves, it will reduce them to practice their speaking. Furthermore, many students mentioned that they were worried to communicate with others in English due to their lack of English knowledge. Kayaoglu and Saglamel (2013) mentioned that lack of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation are factors that make many

learners arise anxiety sensations. The apprehensive feeling if they made mistake when they communicate in English highly influences learners' confidence and their willingness to practice their English communication skill.

Test anxiety. The result of the data collection found that all the participants were afraid that their low ability to speak English contributed to their score degradation, bad score, and failing the test. The participants Isyana, Dian, Nia, Andre and Kule mentioned that they are afraid if their speaking performance will make them get bad score and make them fail. However, test anxiety plays important roles for the participants due to the English teacher in this school assess learner speaking skill through practice session or speaking test as final test. The assessment of speaking test in the final test can be in the form of oral presentation, story-telling, and role play. While in the practice session the teacher assesses learner participation in speaking activity.

Andre said, "The teacher assesses students' speaking skill in practice session, so if I get a bad score it will reduce my score in English course". Kule also said, "I am also afraid if I get a C score in speaking assessment, it is very low". Sefti added that she was nervous if she did mistake while speaking in English and got a bad score. She also added, "I am afraid if I speak English incorrectly and make my score worse". While at school, being evaluated, such as taking a test, or perform in front of public often cause learner's anxiety sensation (Soriano, 2017). However, when learners feel anxious and not confident about their speaking performance in doing test it will reduce their performance.

Besides, Isyana also compared her performance and always had perception that the others do better than her and it made her less confident. She said, "I ever have experienced when I practice my speaking and my friends can speak fluently and I did not, it makes me not confident". According to Horwitz et al., (1986), the anxious students usually give unrealistic demand that they put on themselves when they doing test and always think that whatever they do is not quite close to perfect, and just a failure. Therefore, the anxious students tend to feel nervous and lost their confidence due to the negative thought if they make mistake and fail the test which contribute to their anxiety in speaking session. This statement is also supported by Kayaoglu and Saglamel (2013) who stated that, learner constantly compare their speaking performance to those who are superior to them, it makes learner lost their interest, gave up and avoid the task.

Fear of negative evaluations. Fear of negative evaluation is learners anxious feeling about other people's negative judgment about their speaking performance. According to the data gathering result, it shows that all participants are nervous about what the other think about their speaking and it arises anxiety. Of these fear negative evaluations, most participants revealed that they are concern about what their friends thought about their speaking performance. Dian mentioned, "If I did mistake while speaking English, I am afraid if my friends who are smarter will judge me". She also added, "I rarely speak English in class, because I do not know how to speak in English and I am afraid if my friends will talk bad about me". Dian also stated, "I am feeling embarrassed and not confident if I speak to my friends who are better at speaking than me, I am afraid they will

think negatively about me”, and “ I feel embarrassed if I speak English inccorectly with my friends”.

The findings also derive the result that their unwillingness is happened due to the negative thought that their speaking is not good and wrong. One of the participants was afraid if they made failure in communication and get negtive judgment. Kule said, “Iam afraid if I said something wrong in English, I am afraid of my friends negative judgment about me”. Those anxious students tend to think negatively about their ability to handle stressful academic situations (Soriano, 2017). Moreover, Fitriah et al. (2019) also stated that negative attitudes in foreign language activities can affect learner anxiety. However, they are afraid that their speaking performance will cause their friends to think less about them.

The feeling of fear if they make mistake when they speak English and get negative judgment may trigger negative outcome. Honbury (2005) also argued that the low knowledge in vocabulary, grammar, and fear of mistake can cause the high chance to speak incorrectly that lead to acute anxiety. Moreover, Nunan (2003) stated that speaking is the hardest skill to be mastered because of two reasons that is speaking happened in real time and the speaker cannot revise their statement because it happened in real time. The fear of not being able to revise what they have said, makes students more anxious to communicate in English due to the worry if they get humiliated by their peers. If learners are afraid to practice their communication skill with their friends, it will reduce their chance to get better connection.

The Strategies Used by Senior High School Students to Cope with Speaking Anxiety in English Classroom

For the second research question, the researcher asked the participants regarding the strategies that they use to cope with their anxiety in speaking English. The participants revealed several different strategies that they use to handle their anxiety. The strategies to deal with speaking anxiety are explained as follows:

Preparation. When it comes to test anxiety such as afraid of making mistake or having bad grades, this strategy can be used to resolve that cause. Learners can prepare themselves before taking tests to avoid anxiety by increasing their preparation. According to these anxious participants, having a good preparation is a good way to reduce their anxiety. Some of the participants mentioned that by doing lot of practice and study more make them feel confident to speak in English. Participant one said, “I make sure I have good preparation by practicing a lot, so that I will be able to speak more fluently and not embarrassed”. Participant five also said, “I will prepare it by practicing it a lot beforehand, then before I go to sleep I like listening to my speaking recording so that I can memorize my topic faster”. Learners tend to practice their speaking and memorize their topic, so they know the topic better and speak more fluently.

Participant one mentioned, “I join in language training center to deepen my speaking and vocabulary. Also, I memorize the vocabulary learn how to pronounce the word so that I will not be nervous if I make wrong pronunciation”. During the interview session, the third participant mentioned, “I will listen to

English song a lot, and learn how to pronounce the correct word through Google". She also added, "I will read my topic a lot, if there is something that I do not know I will translate, so read lot of topic so that when I need to do speaking I will have more preparation".

Other participant also mentioned, "I will study harder and record my speaking and listen to it afterward through headset, so that I can improve my English pronunciation and be more confident". By having good preparation, it can help learner to reduce inferiority feeling and make them learn harder more than the confident students (Mahmud & Suryana , 2015). Thus, having good preparation can avoid possible threat that causes them anxious in speaking.

Relaxation. Relaxation is learner effort to calm down, therefore the relaxation strategy can be a very useful strategy to overcome test anxiety and communication apprehension. According to the data gathering result, when the learner experience the feeling of nervous and anxious, they will look for a technique to release their anxiety and make themselves calmer. Five out of six participants claimed that they relax themselves by drinking water, taking a deep breath, and listening to music after or before they do presentation, or practicing their speaking. Participant one said, "I will take a deep breath and then drink water so I will not feel anxious". In addition, participant two mentioned, "I listen to music and take a rest so that I can relax myself". Participant three stated, "I drink water so I be more relax". Participant five explained, "After speaking, I will constantly drink water to relax myself". Participant four mentioned that she

listened to music to increase her mood. During the interview session, she said, “I will increase my mood by listening to the music so that I can relax myself”.

Asih (2012) found that learners tend to use affective strategies to calm themselves to reduce their anxious sensation. Affective factors are dealing with the emotions or feelings involvement of the learner as well as emotional relationship between language and culture (Brown, 2001). Affective factors are very important for learner because they can influence their motivation and determine their success in learning languages. If a learner has good positive motivation, it will affect their success in learning languages and mastering skills and vice versa.

Positive thinking. Positive thinking is a strategy to think positively in any situation. Therefore, positive thinking will be a useful strategy to resolve communication apprehension as well as negative evaluation problem. According to the finding, three participants mentioned that they try to think positively such as avoiding negative thought and having a good self-image about them to avoid anxiety. Participant one said, “I always try to avoid any negative thought when I speak”. Participant six added, “Keep thinking something good and be more positive”. One participant also claimed that failure is a process of learning and improvement. He said, “I feel embarrassed when I made mistake, but I use this as motivation to improve myself, keep thinking positively if I try harder I can do it”. Mahmud and Suryana (2015) stated that anxious learners have the same level of cognition as confident students, the problem of psychological factor such as mental block, fear of mistake, too shy to communicate are the factor that reduce

their confidence. Therefore, by having a positive thought about their speaking performance can help learners to reduce their anxiety and improve their learning.

Resignation. The anxious learner may think about to give up, accept whatever situation that they will get, avoid, and do not make any effort to improve their speaking as a solution to avoid stress and anxiety. However, the findings show that three of the participants tend to accept whatever reality that they get to avoid anxious feeling. Participant five said, “I feel embarrassed if I need to speak in front of my friends but after that, that is it, I do not really care about my performance”. Participant six stated, “I will try my best, but afterward I do not really care about it rather than keep thinking about it and end up feeling anxious”. During the interview session, the fifth participant also mentioned, “It makes me think negatively and make me want to finish my speaking as soon as possible”.

It indicates that learners tend to accept the fact and avoid to try rather than to keep practicing which can cause more stress. One participant also mentioned, “I will try my best to speak in English, but I will cover up my face with a book so I will not feel nervous”. In addition, participant five said, “When I am in the class and someone asks me in English language, I will try to hide, and avoid it or I will feel nervous”.

However, in speaking not only language knowledge that needed, but performance skill, confident, pronunciation, vocabulary mastery and the ability to express their idea becoming one of the challenges that make speaking is harder than any other skill. It strengthened by Tanveer (2008) that speaking is becoming one of the hardest problem faced by foreign language learner and many learner

admit their inability and lack of success in speaking a foreign language.

Therefore, anxious learners tend to avoid practice and improve their speaking because of their inability to cope with the problem rather than being stressed and anxious.

Peer support. According to the finding, the assistance from their friends to motivate those anxious learners is very important. Four participants revealed that they asked their friends to teach them speaking, and as a place for sharing the problem. Participant two said, “I asked my friends to teach me speaking so that I can improve”. The third participant mentioned, “My friends help me to improve so it can boost my motivation to practice”. The other participant also claimed that he used to do sharing section with the peer that encounter the same problem, so they can share and find solution to cope with the problem. Kule said, “Sometime I look for my friends dealing with the same problem and we can share our opinion and motivate each other to improve”. This strategy is very good because learners can share the problem with their learning partner so that they can build better relationship with their peers. Supported by Asih (2012) who found in her research that learners tend to share about how is their feeling in English learning to reduce anxious feeling.

Humphries (2011) found that by building friendship with their peers, it helps learners boost their confidence and reduce their anxiety sensation without teacher assistance. The help of their friends is very crucial to motivate learners to practice and decrease the anxiety sensation. Highlighted by Nunan (2003), in

order to speak well in another language, learner should know the people that they initiate to talk to.

When learner feel comfortable and have good relationship with their peers, the students will feel safe to communicate in English with each other. Therefore, having a good relationship and getting help from their friends is very crucial strategy to overcome the fear of negative evaluation problems in speaking English. When learners understand their friends' struggle and try to motivate each other, it makes them closer.

Teacher support. The support they get from their teacher is very important in learning languages. However, teacher positive support, can also be used as strategy to reduce and overcome the fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety problem. According to the finding, two participants mentioned that the good relation between teacher and students can reduce their anxiety feeling. Participant four stated, "I will interact with the teacher, for example if I forget the pronunciation I will ask her". Another participant also claimed, "I will directly look at my teacher, because my teacher is funny so it makes me less nervous".

Although Horwitz et al (1986) stated that the learners look at the correction as failure. Direct correction in speaking will increase their fear of making mistake, because of the thought that the teacher will correct them as a way to show that they are fail. When the students feel safe and close to the teacher, they will constantly ask the teacher to correct them, and they will not feel anxious of making an error and being corrected.

Furthermore, Khusnia (2017) found in her research that the teacher's personality plays an important role in reducing students' anxiety. Students tend to feel less anxious when teacher make learning fun, classes more lively, and teacher who are creative to make interesting situations. Khusnia (2017), further stated that by creating supportive, understanding classroom environment, non-threatening teaching methods, and creative in using interesting topics can increase foreign language experiences.