The Level of Anxiety in Foreign Language Learning Among First Year Students in an English Language Education Department

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Abstract

One obstacle that students possibly have in learning English is anxiety. Anxiety could interfere with students in learning English and it make the uncomfortable feeling for students in learning English language process. This study purposed to investigate the level of anxiety in foreign language learning among first year students in an English Language Education Department. For the further result, it provides the level of anxiety that ELED's students have and about the anxiety level of three domain categories of anxiety, namely communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation in learning English. A descriptive quantitative research design was used as a research method of this study. This research was conducted at one of the private universities in Yogyakarta. The populations were 168 students of this research. The data were gathered using the questionnaire that was adapted from Horwitz et al., (1986), and it contains 33 items and there are three factors of anxiety that have been included in the questionnaire. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics by seeing the total means score of the result. The result showed that the overall of anxiety at first year students in an English Language Education Department was in low level anxiety with the mean score 81.17. Moreover, the result for the three factors of

anxiety revealed that the students were in low level anxiety in communication apprehension with the mean score of 27.42. Then, in test anxiety the students were in low level anxiety with the mean score of 34.78 and for the fear of negative evaluation the students were in high level anxiety with the mean score of 18.63.

Keywords: anxiety in foreign language learning, communication apprehension, test anxiety, fear of negative evaluation

Introduction

In learning the English language usually, people will face problem to learn it. The problem that appears is anxiety. Horwitz (2001) found that anxiety has been one of the highly variable to interfere with people in learning the language. In the learning process anxiety will inhibit people to learn the language. Anxiety makes students get a mental block in learning the English language. This issue makes students feel uncomfortable in the learning process. Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) argued that most of the people get a mental block to learn a foreign language. Also, this has happened to students who learn a foreign language.

Students got anxiety when they want to produce the language, at the same time students anxious to produce their language cause student's unconfident. In line with Boonkit (2010) asserted that the students get anxious just because they are lack of confidence in terms about making errors. And supported by Sadighi and Dastpak (2017) argued that anxiety involves with frightened, uncertainly, disease and worry with the situation where the language is learned.

When the students have high anxiety in learning English language, it will be connected to students' performance. Tseng as cited in Karaman (2016) explained that some studies showed a negative relationship between language

anxiety and achievement, the higher the anxiety, the lower the performance. However, when students have no anxiety in the language learning process, students tend to be more comfortable in the language learning process. Moreover, students with no anxiety in producing language could increase student's confidence and motivated in term learning language. The student will be easier to share their ideas and their feeling when students have no anxiety.

On the other hand, anxiety disturbed the students in the language learning process. Tercan and Dikilitas (2015) defined that anxiety is emotion connected with psychological of someone who has an unexpected feeling. When anxiety comes up to students, its demotivated students in learning a language and this issue also makes the student poor performance in class. As a result, it involves student achievement in class, even student feel worries to ask something to the teacher.

Methodology

The characteristic of the quantitative research is identified the research problem based on trends, (Creswell 2012). According to the aims of this research, the researcher used quantitative research. This research used survey design. According to Creswell (2012) survey design is used for identifying the trend in attitude, opinions, behaviors or characteristics of the population.

This research used a cross-sectional survey design. Creswell (2013) stated that "cross-sectional survey design, the researcher collects the data at one point in times" p.377. With a cross-sectional survey design, the researcher got the information quickly.

This study conducted in an English Language Education Department in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. There are three reasons why the researcher chooses this population. The first reason is the student got the new environment in learning a foreign language. The second reason is most of the first year student are coming from many different majors in high school, and most of them lack of English language knowledge. And for third reason is the researcher will have an easier time for gathering data because of familiarity with the university. The researcher was conducted research data in Mei 2019. After got the data the researcher analyzed the data in July 2019. Moreover, this research completed in July 2019, and this research was conducted in the academic year 2018/2019.

This research used cluster sampling as the sampling technique. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) asserted that cluster sampling is researcher selected the specific number of the schools and test all the students that had been selected. The population of this study were the whole students in ELED of Batch 2018. The researcher selected the number of populations based on the tables at sample sizes by Cohen, et al (2011). The total population of the students is 263 based on Cohen, et al (2011) the tables at simple sizes, if the total populations were 263 students, and the confidence interval was 5%. The target populations of this research included 168 students. Moreover, the population that obtained in this research were 168 students.

This research used a questionnaire for capturing the data. According to Wilson and Mclean (1994), the questionnaire is the most used and useful instrument of collecting survey information, provided structured and numerical data This research used a questionnaire adopted from the Foreign Language

Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) by Horwitz et al (1986). There are 33 questions in this questionnaire. There are three domains categories of this questionnaire. Each number of item categorization in the questionnaire was adopted from Subekti.

The questions used by the researcher of dichotomous questions were name, gender, and the class. Cohen et al,. (2011) stated that the dichotomous question is useful for forcing the respondent to 'come off the fence' toward an issue. Therefore, the researcher used scale for the question in the questionnaire. According to Cohen, K., Manion and Morrison, K (2011) for the researcher scale is a useful device, as they build in a degree of sensitivity and differentiation.

According to Cohen et al,. (2011) test validity is an essential key to effective research. Based on the view that validity was essentially a demonstration that an instrument in fact measures what it purports to measure, or that is intended to describe or explain (Winter, 2000 p.1). The next step was to check the reliability of the data instrument. For checking the reliability of the instrument, the researcher used SPSS. 22.0 and used Cronbach's Alpha in reading the result of the reliability test. The data questionnaire was inputted in SPSS. 22.0, then the researcher checked whether the questions of the questionnaire reliable or not. The valid question items are processed through this test.

For gathering the data, the researcher used online survey to distributed the questionnaire. The researcher was present in the class while the distributing the questionnaire. Cohen et al,. (2011) stated that the presence of the researcher is helpful by enabling any queries or uncertainties to be addressed immediately with

the questionnaire design. Then, the online survey that the researcher used is Google-form with the link:

https://forms.gle/A1usNDHBJ5oK9oLd7

This research is a cross-sectional survey design, which means this research design has to find out a trend/issue from the population. In this case, the researcher only used descriptive statistic to investigate the issue. In the descriptive statistic, the researcher should investigate the missing values, data outlier, dominant, and range by using SPSS 22.0.

The level of anxiety in first year student of learning a foreign language in English Language Education Department.

One of the problems that students possibly have in learning English language is anxiety. According to Horwitz et al., (1986) for many years, scholar have been considering that anxiety is one of the potential problems to inhibit in learning foreign language. The first research question in this study purposed to know about the anxiety level of the first year students. The researcher assumptions based on the observation was the anxiety level of the first year students was in the high level of anxiety, and the reality on the data showed that the anxiety level of the first year students was different with the researcher assumptions. The research data showed that the mean of the anxiety level of the first year students was 81.17.

Communication Apprehension.

Communication apprehension deals with speaking ability of the students. According to Horwitz, et al., (1986) communication apprehension is about fear of or anxiety of communicating with people. Based on the result, the total mean

score of communication apprehension is 27.42. It showed that the first year's students have low level anxiety in communication apprehension.

Test Anxiety.

It connected with students performance in doing the test or assigment. Horwitz, et al., (1986) mentioned that test anxiety is a type of anxiety that fear or failure in doing performance. Based on the result, the total mean score of communication apprehension is 34.78. It represented that the first year's students have low level anxiety in test anxiety.

Fear of Negative Evaluation.

It deals with other evaluation. Horwitz et al., (1986) asserted that fear of negative evaluation is defined an anxiety with other evaluation. Some students are afraid in having negative opinion from other about them. When the student got negative evaluation, it probably makes them uncomfortable with it. In addition, Horwitz et al. (1986) stated that the high level of fear of negative evaluation might be attributed to peer pressure. Moreover, the research data showed that the mean of the fear of negative evaluation of the first year students was 18.53. It represented that the fear of negative evaluation level of the student was high.

Conclusion and Recomendation

The results were gained to answer the two research questions and to give further result to this study. The first research question is about the level of anxiety in first year students of foreign language learning in English Language Education Department students at one of the private universities in Yogyakarta in learning English and the second research question is about the level of each factor anxiety in first year student of learning foreign language learning in English Language

Education Department students at one of the private universities in Yogyakarta in learning English.

To answer the research question, the result showed that the students are having low anxiety in learning a foreign language. The total mean score of the overall anxiety level was 81.17 which indicates as 'low' anxiety. Additionally, for the three domains questionnaire are having a different mean score. Firstly, the total mean score of the communication apprehension was 27.42 which showed as 'low' anxiety. The communication apprehension has indicated as one of the causes that make the students have low anxiety in foreign language learning. Secondly, test anxiety has 34.76 as total mean score and it belongs to the 'low' anxiety. By seeing the total mean score of the test anxiety, the test anxiety was not influencing the first year students to have anxiety in foreign language learning. And for the last is fear of negative evaluation, this category has 18.63 as total mean score and it indicates to 'high' anxiety. It can be concluded that the first year students are anxious with evaluation from others in the class.

From the result above, the first year students are having low anxiety in foreign language learning. It is indicating that the students are not worry about their ability in learning foreign language. Thus, it can be concluded that the first year students of the English Language Education Department at one of the private universities in Yogyakarta are having low anxiety in learning a foreign language. Dewaele (2013) said that distracted, overreacted to self, worried about potential failure and focus with people opinions, these are things are connected with anxiety. In other words, anxiety can interfere with the students to learn a foreign language.

The students. Based on the result, the students have to keep their level of anxiety. The researcher suggestion are the students has to practice more their ability in speaking and do not think too much about other opinions about them. Always use English when chatting with others. And, students have to prepare the thing that students need in the classroom.

The teacher. A teacher has a big role in the classroom. They lead all of the activities in the classroom, as the teachers, they have to provide the exercise that leads the students to improve their confidence and also decrease the student's anxiety. For instance, the teacher can ask the students to present their work in a small group. Giving the students time to talk to each other using their English and make a comfortable situation for them. And let the students express their idea through words or action.

The other researchers. The researcher suggests to the future researchers who are interested in the same topic about the level of anxiety in a foreign language to conduct research on a wider population. Thereby, it is possible for the next researcher to conduct research on a similar study by using different research design and another technique.

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