

AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' SPEAKING ANXIETY FACTORS IN DRAMA PERFORMANCE (A Case Study in the Fifth Semester in the English Education Department)

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Abstract

Speaking anxiety is one of the fundamental problems that EFL students experience during English learning, especially when they must perform in front of many people. This study found that there are several factors that contribute to students' speaking anxiety, including the strategies they use to overcome it. This qualitative case study research enrolled 12 students of the fifth semester in the English Education Department of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. The research result showed that there are two factors of speaking anxiety that students experienced during the drama performance. Those are internal factors (fear of mistakes, lack of confidence) and external factors (embarrassment, friends/classmates, and lack of preparation). After implementing the interview, the result showed that students have some strategies to overcome their speaking anxiety, such as a preparation strategy, a relaxation strategy, a positive thinking strategy, and a peer seeking strategy. This research recommends that there are some strategies that students can implement when experiencing speaking anxiety.

Keywords: speaking, anxiety, drama performance

INTRODUCTION

This study aims to investigate the anxiety factors of students and the strategies to overcome their speaking anxiety in drama performance in the fifth semester of the English Education Department at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung.

Language is widely acknowledged as one of the key tools for facilitating human interaction and fostering relationships. People can communicate with one another using the language of today, especially to express thoughts or emotions. People will experience interpersonal interaction as simpler. We can see that speaking is one of the language skills needed for students learning to speak. It will help students to get habits and fluency, so that they can improve their speaking skills, because getting used to speaking will contribute greatly to improving students' ability to speak English.

Besides a component improving students' ability to speak English, speaking is also important for communicating with others. For students, speaking is a challenging ability, requiring careful attention to grammar, vocabulary, and comprehension. Celce-Murcia (2001) identified speaking as the most challenging skill to master. Roud (2016) suggested that mastering speech production needs abilities such as vocabulary retrieval, grammatical pattern selection, and sociocultural competency. Moreover, many students struggle to speak in front of large groups, making oral performance problematic. Students will get terrified, apprehensive, or panic, may talk haltingly or refuse to speak in English, preferring silence instead. These indicators suggest that students suffer from linguistic anxiety. Wu and Wang (2010) found that anxiety is a common barrier for students learning a new language. It can impact student learning outcomes, particularly their speaking abilities. Wu and Wang (2010)

also argued that worry is a significant barrier to foreign language learning that learners must overcome.

Brown and Lee (2015) described activation of the autonomic nervous system as causing trepidation, anxiousness, and worry. Negative sentiments can occur in response to unfavourable conditions, such as feeling threatened, despondent, or lacking self-confidence. Anxiety is a negative reaction that arises when a person accepts a perceived threat or fear. Anxiety can stem from unfavourable events, such as stress or psychological trauma. They know something about what they want to talk about, but they can't say it easily because of anxiety.

Anxiety is a subjective sensation of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry brought on by an autonomic nervous system activation. Feelings of insecurity, depression, and threat are examples of uncomfortable and undesired circumstances that give rise to these negative emotions. This sensation frequently arises when students are under pressure, like when they are speaking in the language they are learning. The anxiety associated with learning a foreign language can also be detrimental to the process of language acquisition.

On the other hand, the lack of motivation around them to improve their skills, especially in speaking, makes their self-confidence decrease. Therefore, some teachers use drama performances as a method to hone students' skills in speaking English.

Drama performance was helpful in increasing the participants' motivation and confidence levels, as well as helping them feel more inclined to communicate in English and less nervous while speaking in front of an audience. Students will feel more creative, in control, and engaged in the learning process using a communicative approach. Dramatic tactics foster an environment where students may learn contextually, use their imaginations, and respond involuntarily. According to Nawi (2010), dramatic actions are useful in boosting their communicative confidence. This requires that during theatre class, students will communicate with their friends to forge alliances, carry out negotiations, or share information. Or in other words, drama is an activity in which students act as other characters in a story. Nawi (2010) found that theatrical exercises boost students' communicative confidence. Drama exercises increased participants' confidence and motivation, making them more comfortable communicating in English and speaking in front of an audience. There are still many students who support and oppose the use of drama performance as a measuring tool to overcome students' anxiety in learning to speak English, even though there are claims from experts that it has a beneficial effect. This is because everyone has a different perspective.

METHOD

A particular technique known as a study design entails data collection, analysis, and writing reports (Creswell, 2012). This research design uses a qualitative methodology with a case study that adopts a thorough approach incorporating discovery.

Qualitative research is characterized by a rigorous, verifiable, and significant inquiry (Shank, 2002). Being systematic means having a clear goal, being well-organized, and adhering to the rules that the study participants have selected. As a result, one may argue that the research is based mostly on real-world experiences and incidents. Additionally, qualitative research is more appropriate for resolving research problems where variables need to be investigated since you do not understand them (Creswell, 2012).

In order to cope with research concerns, case studies are also utilized in a variety of sectors, including education (Harrison, Birks, & Franklin, 2017).

Furthermore, a case study is excellent for qualitative researchers to investigate areas of inquiry that have never been thoroughly investigated about students' views of speaking anxiety in drama performance. In general, case studies can respond to research inquiries concerning the causes of students' speech anxiety as well as the steps taken by the students to lessen it.

When case studies are used, detailed and thorough insights can be obtained, leading to a variety of replies.

This study was conducted during the fifth semester of the English language education department at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. The selection of research sites is based on places that can provide the finest and most in-depth understanding of the phenomena of difficulties in relation to the research objectives (Creswell, 2012). The location of the study is chosen based on preliminary observations, accessibility, and familiarity. The method of sampling used is random sampling. Participants were recruited from a group of people who had certain characteristics (Creswell, 2012). This study was conducted at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung's English Education Department during the fifth semester.

To address the research questions, researchers analyzed data collected through observations, questionnaires, and interviews using qualitative approaches. Qualitative approaches are used to get detailed information from data collection. In this study, a participant observer is utilized to conduct observations.

The research was carried out in three stages: witnessing drama activities, asking students to complete questionnaires, and conducting interviews. To address the research questions, researchers analyzed data collected through observations, questionnaires, and interviews using qualitative approaches. Qualitative approaches are used to get detailed information from data collection. In this study, a participant observer is utilized to conduct observations.

This study collected data using three instruments. First, observing the drama helped to better grasp the process of gathering data from real-world phenomena. Second, a questionnaire for students was given to assess their level of anxiety. Finally, an interview was held to supplement the data from the observation and questionnaire. Following data collection, the researcher proceeded to the next stage of data analysis.

A qualitative interview is conducted when a researcher asks one or more general, open-ended questions and records the responses. The researcher also conducts an interview using an audio recorder and takes notes from the respondent to keep track of the data acquired during the interview. This research will ask students questions regarding their speaking fear during drama performances. The outcome of this interview will provide feedback from students in the study.

Data analysis is used in order to have a deeper understanding of some data, which is carried out in a few steps. According to Creswell (2012), there are six interrelated steps involved in qualitative data analysis and interpretation

FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this research were generated from questionnaires filled out by 12 fifth-semester students majoring in English Education at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia. In addition, to answer the first question, the researcher used a questionnaire, and the second question was answered from the interview. The findings are presented below.

Students' Speaking Anxiety Factor in Drama Performance

The questionnaire was given to find out the factors contributing to students' anxiety about speaking in drama performance in the fifth semester of the English Education Department.

Data from the Questionnaire

The data from the questionnaire shows that there are two factors that influence students' anxiety: internal and external factors. The Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Scale is measured using a 4-point Likert Scale with options of strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. The goal is to investigate students' opinions on the causes of their speaking anxiety in drama performances. The questionnaire contains 15 items that address three

components of speaking anxiety: communication apprehension, fear of unfavourable evaluation, and test anxiety (Horwitz, 1986).

For more details, statements 1, 7, 9, 10, 13, and 15 are included in the communication apprehension. While the test anxiety is contained in statements 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8. Furthermore, statements 2, 12, and 14 refer to the fear of negative evaluation. However, this questionnaire contains five factors of speaking anxiety: internal factor (lack of confident) statements no 1,5 and 7, (fear of making mistakes) statement no 2 and 6, and external factor (embarrassment) statement no 3 and 12, (friends/classmate) statement no 4,8,11 and 14, (lack of preparation) statement no 9,10,13 and 15.

Students' Strategies to Overcome Their Speaking Anxiety in Drama Performances

To answer the second research question, the interview is used to collect the data.

This section describes the findings obtained through interviews. This interview consists of seven questions that discuss students' strategies to overcome speaking anxiety.

1. First Question Analysis

The data above shows that the students' strategies to prepare for their performance are diverse. As student 1 said, she prepared by memorizing her own dialogue; this statement was also expressed by students 2,3,5,6, and 7. They also did preparation by memorizing their own dialogue, which makes them more confident in their performance. Therefore, student 4 said she prepared for getting into her role. She thought that this preparation would make her performance more natural. Besides, students 8,9, and 12 have same perception about their preparation that is praying, relaxing and focusing. With that preparation, they are well prepared and more confident in their performance. So, the performance will be successful. Besides, student 10 is not worried about that performance because she has a lot of experience before. The last strategy, as said, Student 11 did practice a lot and always attended the meeting; he also built teamwork and collaborated with the team to get everything going as planned.

2. Second Question Analysis

The data shows that the students' strategies for not getting afraid and worrying in drama performances are different. As students 1,2,3,4,6, and 8 said they have the same strategies to overcome their fear and worry, which include relaxing and being positive thinkers. Relaxing makes them calmer and relieves the situation that makes them afraid and worried. Besides, being positive thinkers helps reduce student anxiety and increases students' ability to manage stress, so they are able to connect their thoughts, feelings, and behavior. Besides, students 5 and 7 have asked the expert to get feedback and motivation so that they can gain more knowledge to achieve better performance. Therefore, students 9 and 10 use preparation strategies that focus on practicing a lot and praying. This kind of strategy makes them calmer to do the performance. Last, students 11 and 12 used a peer seeking strategy in which students looked for their friends' support to find comfort in thinking that they are not the only ones who have difficulty understanding drama performance.

3. Third Question Analysis

The data above shows that the students have several strategies to overcome their nervousness when doing a drama performance. As students 1,3,5,6, and 12 stated, the strategy they used is positive thinking, in which some students make their own thinking to think that they are better than others, and some students think that the process makes them braver to perform. Besides, students 2,4,7, and 11 used a relaxing strategy in which several students did

not see the audience to make them more confident and not panic in their drama performance. Meanwhile, students 8 and 10 did a preparation strategy in which the students practiced a lot, and got into their roles so they didn't feel nervous. Last, students 9 use a peer seeking strategy in which they look for friends' support that makes them more relaxed and at ease with talking with their friends and joking about fun things, so that their nervousness can be distracted.

4. Fourth Question Analysis

The data above shows the fact that the students have several strategies to overcome their fear of negative evaluation in drama performance. As students 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, and 12 stated, the strategy they used is positive thinking, in which some students think that the negative evaluation from others or the audience motivates them to do better. Besides, students 2, 5, and 9 used a preparation strategy in which they prepared a lot for this performance, such as memorizing their own script, always attending the practice meeting, so the more they practiced, the more they became confident in their performance.

5. Fifth Question Analysis

The data shows that students have several strategies to overcome their low self-confidence in drama performances. As students 1, 8, and 12 stated, the strategy they used was preparation, where some students thought that with preparation, they would be more confident when performing in drama performances. Apart from that, students 3, 4, 7, and 11 used positive thinking strategies, where some students opposed negative thoughts and focused on positive things that can be achieved. Meanwhile, students 2, 5, 6, and 9 used the peer seeking strategy, in which friends' support makes them more confident and helps them improve their drama performance. Last, students 10 used a relaxation strategy in which when she was afraid her performance did not match with the audience's expectations, she would stay away from the crowd first to stay calm and keep her confidence.

6. Sixth Question Analysis

The analysis shows the fact that students have several strategies to overcome their speaking anxiety when preparing drama performances. As students 1, 5, and 6 stated, the strategy they used was preparation, in which the students thought that frequent practice would reduce their anxiety level. In addition, students 2, 9, and 10 used peer-seeking strategies because friends' support could make them more confident and reduce their speaking anxiety in drama performances. Meanwhile, students 3 and 11 used positive thinking strategies, which can also improve students' ability to manage stress. Last, students 4, 8, and 12 used relaxation strategies by taking deep breaths and trying to believe that this can help them calm down, so this speaking anxiety would be reduced.

7. Seventh Question Analysis

The analysis shows that students have several strategies to overcome their speaking anxiety when performing drama performances. As expressed by students 1, 3, and 12, the strategy they used is preparation, where there are students who think that practicing a lot would make everything run smoothly, and they would get a positive response from the audience. Therefore, students 2, 6, 7, and 10 used relaxation strategies by staying away from crowds first, drinking mineral water, and taking deep breaths, so they could be more relaxed and their anxiety level would be reduced. Last, students 4, 5, 8, 9, and 11 used positive thinking strategies, which can help students overcome their speaking anxiety by focusing on the

underlying problems of the student's speaking anxiety, and could also improve the student's ability to manage stress.

Discussion

Based on both questionnaire and interview findings, the questionnaire consists of fifteen statements. These factors are categorized into 2 parts, namely internal and external. These two factors are divided into several parts: internal factors, fear of mistakes, and lack of confidence. External factors include: embarrassment, friends/classmates, and lack of preparation.

According to the data from research findings, most of the students, while facing drama performance, experienced these anxiety factors. The students experience anxiety about making mistakes, which is caused by students' negative feelings towards something they make mistakes when practicing a drama performance.

The second factor of speaking anxiety is an external factor that consists of embarrassment, friends/classmates, and lack of preparation. The questionnaire statement relating to the external factor (embarrassment) included numbers 3 and 12. According to the results, there are some students who have problems speaking in front of others. Several students thought their concentration was disturbed when they performed in front of others, so they could not produce the correct language. However, they should be able to communicate fluently in any situation because the performance is one of the tests they should pass (Kessler, 2010).

The last external factor is a lack of preparation. The questionnaire statements included numbers 9, 10, 13, and 15. According to the results, most of the students did a lot of preparation for this drama performance, such as memorizing their own script, always practicing with their team, and building the team chemistry. When the students were not practicing a lot, they would feel anxious to speak in front of the audience because they would forget the script that they had memorized (Liu, 2007). The more they practice, the more confident they become to perform in front of the audience.

In conclusion, there are five factors that students face during a drama performance. Those are a lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes, embarrassment, friends/classmates, and lack of preparation. Most students experienced one of the speaking anxiety factors, which is the fear of making mistakes. This factor makes them feel anxious during a drama performance. On the other hand, the friends/classmates factor also occurs during drama performance because they feel their friends are better at drama performance.

The findings from the interview, adapted from Horwitz (1986), show that the students' strategies to overcome their speaking anxiety are diverse. The most common strategy that the students used was preparation. The preparation helps students to overcome anxiety by increasing learning, for example, by re-reading the script that will be performed, memorizing a lot of vocabulary, and practicing grammar. Students also try to improve their pronunciation by practicing speaking with friends (Rajitha & Alamelu, 2023). In addition, students also practice more, make preparations, and try to use English in everyday life (Rafieyan, 2016). It proves that students feel at ease when doing a lot of preparation for a drama performance. When they lack preparation, they are more nervous and not ready to perform in front of the audience.

Meanwhile, the relaxation strategy relaxation techniques can be done by taking a deep breath, stretching the muscles, meditating, and listening to music (Yamazaki, 2021). Most of the students experienced heart pounding and nervousness when preparing this drama performance. The students' strategy to overcome this situation is to pray, drink mineral water, take a deep breath, eat sweet food, and move from the crowd for a while. This strategy makes the students calmer, relaxed, and ready to perform again.

Therefore, the next strategy is positive thinking. This strategy can improve students' ability to manage stress. Positive thinking helps reduce student anxiety, so they are able to connect their thoughts, feelings, and behaviour (Shokrpour et al., 2021). Apart from that, students can also try self-efficacy, which is a belief in one's own ability to successfully carry

out, manage, and complete tasks; this can be a good motivation for students. Several students thought that they should have positive energy, such as thinking that the other students are not better than him/her. Other students keep thinking that if they can do better, I can do better than them.

The last strategy that occurred in the interview data was peer seeking. This strategy can help people who have the same anxiety as themselves, which can be a source of emotional regulation by social comparison for students who experience speaking anxiety (Ling, 2004). Several students thought the friends' support influenced their confidence. With the friends' support, they felt more confident and got motivated. Meanwhile, another student used a strategy by joking with friends, and some students asked an expert for feedback and motivation.

In conclusion, the findings from the interview show the fourth strategy to overcome students' speaking anxiety in drama performance. Those are the preparation strategy, the relaxation strategy, the positive thinking strategy, and the peer seeking strategy. The most common strategy that students used is the preparation strategy. The more students prepare, the more they get ready to perform.

CONCLUSION

There are two research findings that can be inferred. The first is the factor of students' speaking anxiety in drama performance involving internal and external factors. First, from internal factors, there are a) fear of making mistakes, in which students felt negative feelings, and they lost their enthusiasm for performing in front of an audience. b) lack of confidence, these factors occurred when students felt anxious to speak in a drama performance. Second, from external factors, a) embarrassment, it happens when students are about to perform in front of an audience, they feel uncomfortable, and it disturbs the students' concentration, so that the drama performance does not run smoothly. b) friends/classmates, it happens when students perform in front of the audience, they feel nervous when stared at by other students. Last, c) lack of preparation, it happens when students are about to appear in a drama performance, and they feel anxious and afraid of forgetting their own script/dialogue that they would like to perform.

The second finding is the students' strategies to overcome their speaking anxiety in drama performance. Meanwhile, strategies students can use to overcome speaking anxiety are the preparation strategy, the relaxation strategy, the positive thinking strategy, and the peer seeking strategy. Preparation strategy means giving students enough time to prepare for practice in front of the mirror or talk to the co-star. Besides, relaxation is to create a calm atmosphere and make students feel safe. Furthermore, positive thinking helps reduce student anxiety and increases students' ability to manage their stress, so they are able to connect their thoughts, feelings, and behavior. Last, peer seeking strategy means letting students exchange, share ideas, or exchange thoughts with friends so their drama performance could feel lighter.

There are several aspects of CT skills explored in the students' answers to the questions related to the article. These aspects are sensitivity, egocentrism, wishful thinking, relative thinking, and other impediments. The students successfully presented the aspects of their answers. Further, most of the students could present those aspects of CT skills.

In conclusion, the findings show that reading about moral issues in the reading class could foster the students' CT skills and get positive responses from the students. The CT skill could be implemented in the teaching reading process by providing the students the CT practices in classroom activities. The conclusion section is between 500-1000 words. Write succinctly and clearly the result of the research.

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