Exploring Students' Speaking Anxiety in Story Completion Technique In EFL Classroom

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Abstract
Speaking is a form of speech act in the form of sounds produced by the speech apparatus accompanied by body movements and facial expression. Unfortunately, many students find it difficult to practice this because of excessive anxiety. One example of anxiety that we often encounter is public speaking anxiety. Anxiety is a tendency where a person is reluctant to his abilities. In this research, the researcher will use case study design. The type of this research was descriptive qualitative. This research focused in investigated speaking anxiety with story completion technique in EFL Classroom. This research was conducted at a high school in West Bandung Regency. Researchers chose this school because researchers are alumni of this school.The results of the analysis, In short, we can consider that speaking is one of the instruments to talk to each of them others in everyday life, because human life speaks very important because we can provide insights, data, news, thoughts. However, speaking in English for students is difficult because students need to communicate in other dialects with high self-confidence.However, students must be active in the classroom because speaking skills can improve with practice. They must also pay attention and respect each other not laugh at anyone when he makes a mistake in speaking. Students must be aware that making mistakes means the teaching and learning process is ongoing.

INTRODUCTION

In the context of international communication among individuals with different native languages, English serves as a lingua franca. Presently, English functions as a common medium of communication for people from diverse countries, enhancing their multilingual skills (Sihite et al., 2021). It is utilized for various purposes, enabling speakers to successfully communicate. Acquiring proficiency in a foreign language, especially speaking skills, is often one of the most demanding abilities developed by language learners (Virdyna, 2015). In this theoretical framework, humans are viewed as proactive agents responsible for and engaged in their own developmental processes.

Speaking, or the ability to converse in English, is considered a fundamental competency, particularly in the current era (Setyowati, 2020). Proficiency in spoken English entails productive skills related to mastering a topic through listening. Speaking is a form of speech act involving sounds produced by speech organs, accompanied by body movements and facial expressions. Various

definitions have been proposed to elucidate the concept of speaking. Functionally, speaking serves as a medium for human communication. According to Ladouse (1991), speaking is described as the ability to express oneself in a situation, report actions or situations accurately, or articulate a series of ideas fluently with appropriate words.

Unfortunately, many students struggle with practicing speaking skills due to excessive anxiety. Anxiety is a common phenomenon experienced in various settings and can affect anyone. One common example of anxiety is the fear of public speaking. Anxiety represents a tendency where an individual feels reluctant about their abilities. It can be described as having low self-confidence, leading to suboptimal performance in specific tasks. Different experts have varying perspectives on anxiety. Anxiety involves self-awareness, the desire to speak perfectly, and fear of making mistakes (Horwitz, 2010). Previous research conducted by Mustachim (2013) indicated that students' anxiety during English communication in class significantly hampers their performance, especially in learning to communicate in English. Because anxiety can significantly impact English speaking, it is crucial to understand students' anxiety levels. Previous researchers like Al Nakhalah (2016), Ali (2017), and (Hadi et al., 2020) have analyzed English language anxiety issues among students. Most research findings indicate that students face challenges when they have an extensive vocabulary but find it difficult to articulate words. Additionally, some students lack confidence or experience nervousness, worry, and anxiety.

Based on these explanations, the researcher conducted a descriptive study to provide detailed descriptions of various problems and potential solutions to significantly reduce English speaking anxiety among foreign language learners. Therefore, the researcher aims to identify the factors perceived by students that contribute to this anxiety and gain a deeper understanding of English language anxiety issues in high school second-year classrooms. It is essential to determine ways for students to overcome their speaking anxiety, enabling them to speak English more successfully (Winstanley et al., 2018).

There are various methods that can be employed to explore students' speaking anxiety, and one effective technique is the use of Story Completion Technique. In this study, the researcher aims to explore students' speaking anxiety using the Story Completion Technique. According to Kayi (2006), the story completion method is a highly enjoyable technique where students are divided into groups and sit in a circle. While many studies have explored the Story Completion Technique, its application in investigating students' speaking anxiety remains relatively rare.

Clarke et al. (2019) conducted a study utilizing the Story Completion Technique in qualitative research. The results indicated that story completion is one of the few qualitative data collection methods suitable for comparative study designs because participants are given the same stimulus (possibly with some changing elements), and the focus of comparison lies in the story details, all generated as responses to one or more stimuli. Similar research by Hidayati et al. (2019) demonstrated that the Story Completion Technique was appropriate for teaching speaking skills, as students displayed interest in speaking, evident from their enthusiasm during the learning process. These studies suggest that the application of the Story Completion Technique can be an appropriate method for teaching speaking skills, capturing students' interest and engagement in speaking activities. Research conducted by Ashdaq (2017) and Tanjung & Fitri (2020) also supported the effectiveness of the Story Completion Technique in enhancing students' speaking abilities.

Furthermore, according to Ghiabi (2014), the Story Completion Technique is a valuable tool for improving students' speaking skills. Based on these theories, the completion of stories is a suitable technique for enhancing students' speaking skills, fostering their interest in speaking, and motivating

them by providing a classroom environment where they can freely express their ideas. Story Completion is a completion task in which participants are given the beginning of a story and are invited to fill in the gaps in the story using their own words or phrases, allowing for a wide range of answers (Gambaro, 2018; Mesías & Escribano, 2018). This methodology can be adapted for various research purposes and offers an alternative approach to conventional reporting techniques such as focus groups, interviews, and diaries (Clarke et al., 2019). According to Coultas, Campbell et al. (2020), the story completion task enables participants to externalize their anxieties, concerns, and actions through imaginative responses without apprehension, unlike face-to-face methods.

Building upon previous research conducted by Daud and Ahmad (2020), which identified two gaps between prior studies and the current research – research design and research objectives – the researcher's curiosity is piqued regarding the results of exploring students' speaking anxiety using the Story Completion Technique. Based on the aforementioned problem statements, the research questions can be formulated as follows:

1. How does the Story Completion Technique explore and address students' speaking anxiety in the EFL classroom?
2. What are the students' perceptions of the Story Completion Technique in addressing speaking anxiety?

METHODS

In this study, the researcher will employ a case study research design, specifically focusing on descriptive qualitative research methodology. The study will investigate speaking anxiety using the Story Completion Technique in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom.

A case study is a type of research methodology, and its selection warrants careful consideration in both planning and execution. Case studies are often viewed as useful tools for initial exploration in research endeavors, serving as a basis for developing more formal instruments required in surveys and experiments. According to Eisenhardt (1989), case studies are particularly well-suited for new research areas when existing theories seem insufficient. The development of additional theories through this kind of complementary research is valuable, especially when exploring something new or conducting preliminary studies on a subject. Case studies involve existing cases in regular scientific research that require a fresh perspective, aligning with the hypotheses proposed above.

This research adopts a descriptive qualitative approach. Descriptive qualitative research, as stated by Thomas (2003), utilizes various methodologies and adopts an interpretative and naturalistic approach to its subjects. Qualitative researchers delve into issues occurring in natural environments, aiming to understand or interpret events as they unfold in human contexts.

The study will be conducted in one of the high schools in West Bandung Regency. The selection of this school is based on the researcher's status as an alumni of the institution. The research subjects will be students who will be observed and interviewed. Several steps are involved in data analysis, which will be carried out using qualitative analysis methods. Following observations, interviews, and documentation through photos and notes, the collected data must be analyzed to extract meaningful information. Observation, as described by Sanjaya (2015, p. 270), is a data collection technique involving direct or indirect observation of observed phenomena and recording them on observation forms.

Interviews will be conducted to understand the factors contributing to students' anxiety and how story completion can alleviate speaking anxiety. Six selected students will be interviewed with eight questions posed by the researcher:

1. What difficulties do you face in learning to speak?
2. Have you ever been assigned tasks in class such as speeches or oral presentations?
3. If yes, did you feel nervous, anxious, or anything else?
4. Can you explain the reasons for your anxiety based on your experiences?
5. After learning about the Story Completion Technique, do you feel more confident in your English speaking performance using this technique?
6. How do you cope with anxiety using the Story Completion Technique?
7. Does the Story Completion Technique motivate you to overcome anxiety when speaking in English?
8. Do you believe that learning the Story Completion Technique can help reduce your speaking anxiety?

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

The researcher presents the findings collected through classroom observations, student interviews, and field notes. These findings are related to how the Story Completion Technique addresses students' speaking anxiety in the EFL classroom and the students' perspectives on this technique. The research findings are presented below:

Exploration of Observational Results of the Story Completion Technique

Data collection was conducted through classroom observations during EFL learning sessions, leading to several key observations regarding the students in the classroom.

1. Students are confident in constructing well-formed sentences: During the application of the Story Completion Technique in class, students exhibited increased confidence in using proper sentence structures. Through interviews with various sources, it was revealed that this technique encouraged them to attempt speaking in English. Although they occasionally paused and mixed Indonesian words into their sentences, the students displayed willingness to speak English and appeared relatively relaxed.
2. Students can express their ideas or opinions: In the observations, students became more willing to voice their ideas and imagination. The Story Completion Technique, having no specific limitations on influencing students' thoughts and imagination, allowed them to express their opinions freely. As long as the story's continuity was maintained between sentences, students found it helpful in overcoming their speaking anxiety.
3. Improved collaboration among students: During the technique's implementation, the researcher divided students into several groups. When one group was telling a story, cooperation emerged when a student faced difficulty continuing their sentence. Other group members assisted, enabling the hesitant student to continue the story with more confidence. This collaborative atmosphere boosted their confidence due to the support provided by their group.

Students' Perceptions of the Story Completion Technique in Overcoming Speaking Anxiety

Interviews were conducted with three 16-year-old students from the 11th grade, named P1, P2, and P3. From the interviews, P1 shared feeling anxious about speaking English in class as it wasn't a language used in their daily lives. They feared making mistakes and being judged by others. P1 found that completing stories helped them overcome this anxiety by enhancing their memory and improving their speaking skills.

P2 revealed that speaking was challenging for them, as they feared making mistakes and lacked confidence in their vocabulary. Speaking English made them anxious, as they were afraid of being ridiculed by classmates. Although initially lacking confidence while completing stories, they felt that this technique encouraged them to learn to speak better.

P3 mentioned difficulty in pronunciation due to the infrequent use of English in daily communication. This indicated their anxiety when required to speak in English in class. During the Story Completion Technique, P3 also experienced anxiety because many students were observing them. To cope, P3 tried to stay more relaxed.

These findings underscore the positive impact of the Story Completion Technique in enhancing students' confidence and encouraging them to overcome their speaking anxiety in the EFL classroom.

Discussion

The study demonstrates that the use of the Story Completion Technique successfully enhances students' confidence in using English. This finding aligns with previous research conducted by Hidayati et al. (2019), Ashdaq (2017), Sari et al. (2021), and Tanjung & Fitri (2020), which also proved the effectiveness of the Story Completion Technique in improving students' speaking abilities. Completion tasks are a group of projective techniques that requests the consumers to complete an incomplete situation for which a stimulus has been provided such as sentences, arguments, stories, or images in a free form, using the intuitive sense and with no value judgment (da Silva et al., 2021; Sales et al., 2020; Sass et al., 2018).

The Story Completion Technique is a completion task where participants receive the beginning of a story and are invited to fill in the gaps using their own words or phrases (Gambaro, 2018; Mesías & Escribano, 2018). This methodology allows diverse responses and can be adapted for various research purposes (Elghannam et al., 2018). It provides an alternative approach to traditional reporting methods such as focus groups, interviews, and diaries (Clarke et al., 2019). According to Coultas, Campbell et al. (2020), the Story Completion Technique enables participants to externalize their anxieties, concerns, and actions through imaginative responses without fear, unlike face-to-face methods.

Story completion offers a unique approach to data collection compared to traditional self-report techniques like interviews, focus groups, and diaries. Self-report methods offer access to first-person accounts of personal experiences or perspectives (Clarke et al., 2019). Through the Story Completion Technique, students become more confident in constructing well-formed sentences and expressing their ideas and imagination. This approach grants them the freedom to think creatively and overcome the fear of speaking (Hukom, 2019). SCT creates a structured and supportive environment where students can practice speaking without the fear of judgment or ridicule from classmates. They can practice speaking comfortably because the environment is more structured and supportive. When students feel capable of completing stories smoothly, they gain a sense of achievement and confidence. This helps reduce their anxiety and gives them the belief that they can speak the target language proficiently (Wijaya et al., 2014).

Findings from student interviews indicate that speaking anxiety in English is a common issue faced by students. However, the Story Completion Technique provides them with an opportunity to practice speaking without excessive pressure (Wulan, 2021). Although initially anxious, students feel that this technique helps them overcome their anxiety through positive learning experiences. They are given the freedom to complete the story according to their own imagination (Hukom, 2019). This stimulates their creativity and imagination, making them more comfortable speaking about topics they choose and construct. In creating the story endings, students have to use appropriate vocabulary and

sentence structures. This exercise helps strengthen their speaking skills and expand their vocabulary without feeling burdened.

Dividing students into small groups fosters positive cooperation. Students help each other, building confidence and providing social support. This creates a supportive environment to overcome difficulties and anxiety in speaking English. SCT provides students with the experience of speaking in a controlled and structured context. They can feel safe to make mistakes and learn from them without fear of negative judgment.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis results, it can be concluded that speaking is a fundamental skill in everyday life, as it allows individuals to convey insights, data, news, and thoughts. However, for students, speaking in English is often perceived as challenging because they need to communicate in a different dialect with a high level of confidence. Speaking fluently indicates that they have acquired the ability to learn a foreign dialect. Typically, students feel worried, uncertain, and uncomfortable. This specific anxiety is referred to as an unknown dialect of anxiety. Anxiety is one of the worrisome feelings that can hinder students' enthusiasm for learning English. The sensation of anxiety can occur when someone speaks in front of others, displaying signs such as trembling, paleness, excessive sweating, and restlessness. Students who have experienced tension may choose to remain silent rather than face the challenge. They fear that their classmates will ridicule them, ultimately undermining their self-confidence.

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