STUDENTS’ ANXIETY WHILE READING ALOUD DURING ENGLISH LEARNING AT THE TKJ ELEVENTH GRADE OF SMK NURUL YAQIN TLAGAH

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Abstract:

The objective of this study is to find out the factors causing students’ anxiety while reading aloud during English learning at the TKJ eleventh grade of SMK Nurul Yaqin Tlagah and to find out the teacher’s strategies to overcome the problems of students’ anxiety while reading aloud during English learning at the TKJ eleventh grade of SMK Nurul Yaqin Tlagah. This study uses a qualitative method. The subjects in this study were class 11 TKJ of SMK Nurul Yaqin Tlagah. Data was collected using interviews and observation to determine the factors causing students’ anxiety. The observation results showed that fear of making mistakes was the biggest factor causing students’ anxiety. Based on interviews, various factors of causing students’ anxiety while reading aloud during English learning. There are at least five factors found in this study: they feel that reading aloud in English learning is difficult, shyness and lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes, fear of being laughed at or mocked by their friends or classmates, and lack of vocabulary. In order to reduce the students’ anxiety, there are some strategies the teacher can apply while reading aloud during English learning. They are good preparation, positive thinking, building a good atmosphere while learning, peer groups, and using game methods while learning.

Keywords: Students’ Anxiety, Read Aloud, Teacher’s strategies

INTRODUCTION

English is a universal language used in almost all countries and is a foreign language used as the language of instruction for international communication. In the current era of development, mastery of many foreign languages, especially English, has become a crucial aspect. Therefore, education in Indonesia has included English language learning in the curriculum as one of the subjects from elementary school until university. However, in recent times, the world has been experiencing a pandemic, which has resulted in several aspects, especially education, and of course, in learning English at schools facing obstacles. Students usually learn at school but are temporarily required to study at home. This condition resulted in the learning process and ability development of students...
having certain difficulties, affecting most students’ emotional condition. Students become anxious when applying their English skills, such as reading aloud.

Anxiety is a mental health condition characterized by intense sensations of worry, fear, or dread that can interfere with daily tasks. Mental health is associated with a person’s emotional, psychological, and psychological states. In this research, anxiety is about the anxiety experienced by students in learning English at school. According to Seligman, Walker, and Rosenhan (2001), anxiety is an unpleasant sense of fear and worry characterized by physical, emotional, cognitive, and behavioural components. In other words, students’ anxiety disorders greatly affect their cognition and behaviour, which causes students to be afraid to do and voice what they learn in learning English, especially in reading.

According to Nunan (2003), reading is a fluent activity in which readers combine text information with their prior knowledge to construct meaning. Some types of reading were proposed by Jain and Patel (2008), and one of them was reading aloud. Reading aloud is a technique teachers, students, or readers use in collaboration with other individuals or listeners to capture and understand an author’s knowledge, thoughts, and feelings. According to Huang (2010), reading aloud involves various processes in the teaching of English and is a crucial component of education for the development of all abilities. Ismail (2008) added that reading a text aloud can assist focus attention cognitively, creating questions, and designing debates. This strategy has the effect of focusing attention and creating a cohesive group. So, focusing on reading, paying attention to vocabulary, voice, and intonation will increase students’ focus so that feelings of anxiety in learning are slightly reduced.

According to those phenomena, the researcher chose and was interested in conducting this research at SMK Nurul Yaqin Tlagah. During observation before the real research, the researcher noticed that many SMK Nurul Yaqin Tlagah students, especially in the TKJ 11th grade, were still afraid, anxious, and embarrassed to practice reading aloud in English learning. Therefore, the researcher wants to study further the factors that cause TKJ 11th-grade students who are afraid to read aloud. Then, after finding the factors that cause students’ anxiety while reading aloud, the researcher will try to find any problem-solving that will be given to students by the teacher.

The purposes of the study are to find out the factors causing students’ anxiety while reading aloud during English learning at the TKJ 11th grade of SMK Nurul Yaqin Tlagah and to find out the teacher’s strategies to overcome the problems of students’ anxiety
while reading aloud during English learning at the TKJ 11th grade of SMK Nurul Yaqin Tlagah.

RESEARCH METHOD

The researcher examines and analyzes the data using qualitative research. According to Creswell (2012), qualitative research is a study that analyzes social issues and is written down with a full account of the research. The basis of qualitative research in social science disciplines such as psychology, sociology, and anthropology. As a result, qualitative research methods allow for deeper and more in-depth examinations and questions based on respondents’ responses, in which the interviewer or researcher also attempts to understand their motivations and feelings. Understanding how the target audience makes decisions might assist the researcher in concluding market research.

There are several sources that the researcher input in this research, which are from data primary and secondary data. The researcher took the primary data from 26 students of TKJ 11th grade and one English teacher of SMK Nurul Yaqin Tlagah. The secondary data used by the researcher in this research consists of documents that include: the year of establishment of SMK Nurul Yaqin Tlagah, the profile of SMK Nurul Yaqin Tlagah, the state of teachers of SMK Nurul Yaqin Tlagah, the state of students of SMK Nurul Yaqin Tlagah, and the state of means and facilities. The researcher obtained the data using interviews, observation, and documentation. The analysis of sequence data in this research used three concurrent flows: data reduction, data display, and conclusion (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Result of interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Result</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>How do you feel when learning English in the class?</td>
<td>17 out of 26 samples still feel nervous and afraid when learning English in class. The other nine samples feel happy when learning English in class.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(Bagaimana perasaanmu saat belajar bahasa inggris di kelas?)*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Do you think English is a difficult subject to learn? Why?</td>
<td>Twenty-one samples think English is a difficult subject. Four samples consider neutral between the level of difficulty and ease of learning English. 1 sample considers English an easy lesson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Do you know about reading aloud? Have you ever done it in class?</td>
<td>All samples do not know what reading aloud means. Most of them only know reading without knowing the types of reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>How do you feel when reading aloud in front of the class?</td>
<td>20 of the 26 samples felt unconfident when reading aloud in front of the class, and six others feared making mistakes when reading aloud in front of the class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Do you think reading aloud is difficult to do?</td>
<td>After practicing in front of the class, 18 samples said that reading aloud was difficult to do, three samples said it was not difficult, and five other samples said it was neutral between the difficulty level and ease of doing it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>If you feel anxious, what factors make you anxious when reading aloud during English learning?</td>
<td>Fourteen samples said they were afraid of making mistakes when reading aloud, nine samples said they were afraid of being laughed at by classmates, and 3 others said they lacked confidence in reading aloud.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>How do you deal with your anxiety when you are about to read aloud during English learning?</td>
<td>Fourteen samples said that practicing reading English texts was a way to deal with anxiety when reading aloud, and 12 other samples said that by practising self-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The table above shows that 26 students consider English a difficult subject. As seen in the table, all students did not understand what reading aloud meant. In the reading-aloud practice carried out by students, 20 students felt insecure while reading aloud in front of the class, and six others were afraid of making mistakes when reading. After practice, 18 students said reading aloud was difficult, and three said it was not difficult after trying it, and five others said it was neutral on the level of difficulty and ease. From the results of the interview above, the factors that made them feel anxious when reading aloud were 14 students said that they were afraid of making mistakes when reading, nine students said that they were afraid of being laughed at by their classmates, and three others felt less confident to appear in front of the class. In the table above, 14 students share how they deal with anxiety in reading aloud by practising reading English texts. Twelve others say that practising self-confidence can help them deal with anxiety.

After collecting data from in-depth interviews, the researcher assumes that students always think that learning English is difficult, so that thinking always affects students’ results and thoughts on aspects contained in learning English. This causes student anxiety factors to appear during the learning process. As a real example, the results from the data are that students become fearful of making mistakes when reading aloud during English learning. Students also said they feared their classmates would laugh at them if they made a mistake.

From interviews with English teachers, it turns out that some strategies have been implemented and have helped to reduce students’ anxiety when reading aloud during English language learning, namely by using the peer group method. Other strategies that have been thought of but have not been realized that they were strategies are using the game method during learning, helping students to prepare themselves before learning begins, giving them advice or motivation to think positively, and creating a comfortable classroom atmosphere during learning.
### Result of Observation

Table 2. Observation Result

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Anxiety Indicators</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fear of mistake</td>
<td>Trembling</td>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>Gesture</td>
<td>Nervous</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>RISMA TUR ROSANAH</td>
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<tr>
<td>RIZKY MAULANA</td>
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<td>ROIDI</td>
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From the observation data the researcher has done and put in the table above, all students’ voices and articulation are still not loud, like reading aloud in general. Of the 26 students, 22 students have fear when they make mistakes. Followed by other indicators of anxiety, 9 out of 26 students were trembling while reading aloud. With their anxiety, 16 out of 26 students performed many gestures or body movements in front of the class, and 20 out of 26 felt nervous, affecting their appearance. In a state of nervousness, it is not surprising that 7 out of 26 students are sweating because of their anxiety.

From the data above, the researcher analyzed that most students were still fear of making mistakes while reading aloud, so it affected their behaviour and results in the practice of reading aloud in front of the class, for example, in terms of voice and intonation that did not quite meet the criteria for reading aloud. There is also the behaviour of students who show anxiety when appearing in front of the class, from shaking, gesturing, nervousness, and sweating. The researcher assumes that fear of making mistakes is the biggest factor influencing students’ anxiety when reading aloud.

Discussion
Students’ Anxiety Factors

Based on this research, it was found that several factors make students anxious while reading aloud during English language learning. Most students reasoned that reading aloud is difficult, where 18 of 26 students stated this. The second biggest reason is that students felt that learning English was difficult. The next biggest reason was that they are afraid of making mistakes in reading aloud. Followed by lack of confidence and the influence of classmates are the reasons students experience anxiety when reading aloud.
In the conditions that the researcher observed, the type of anxiety that occurred in students when reading aloud was included in the situation-specific anxiety. Situation-specific anxiety is a form of trait anxiety that is limited to a particular setting, as stated by MacIntyre and Gardner (1991). This viewpoint looks at how anxiety manifests itself in “well-defined scenarios” as speaking in front of an audience, taking a test, working out a math problem, or learning a new language. In other words, situational anxiety is a trait of anxiety that manifests itself repeatedly in a certain setting. The specific conditions and mechanisms that cause anxiety are not well understood, but there is evidence that students anxious about reading aloud have high levels of generalized anxiety exacerbated during learning. Factors causing “situation-specific anxiety” in this study consisted of several things, which are:

a. The feeling that reading aloud in English learning is difficult.

Based on the data found through the interview, as many as 18 students said that reading aloud in English is difficult, and 21 students said that English is a difficult subject. The interviewed students felt fear and anxiety when reading aloud during this difficult English lesson. This factor was also mentioned several times by some students, one of which was a statement from the interviewee whom the researcher called The 17th Student. He said “Iya sulit, karena kurang tau cara membaca tulisan bahasa inggris, jadi takut salah bacanya” (It is difficult, because I do not know how to read English, so I am afraid to read it wrong.). Students often mention this factor after they read aloud during English learning. This factor was also influenced by their thoughts and opinions that English subject is difficult. English is a difficult subject which was also mentioned by most of the students in the interview, one of which was a statement from the interviewee, whom the researcher called the third student. He mentioned “Sangat sulit, karena tidak bisa mengartikan bahasanya dengan benar.” (It is difficult because I cannot interpret the language correctly.)

Based on data to take English lessons, most of them had to face feelings of anxiety, especially coupled with having to do or practice reading aloud in learning English, so
students felt challenged and depressed with feelings of anxiety. Therefore reading aloud was difficult and became the biggest factor causing students’ anxiety in reading aloud during English learning.

b. Shyness and Lack of Confidence

Students who were shy and lacked self-confidence were often afraid to do or practice reading aloud in front of the class. It seems this is an influential factor as a cause of students’ anxiety in reading aloud. This factor was also mentioned several times by some students, one of which was a statement from the interviewee whom the researcher called the fifth student “saya merasa malu karena tidak percaya diri ketika banyak didengar oleh orang lain” (I feel shy because I am not confident when many people hear me). Moreover, the other students share the same feeling. A statement from the interviewee whom the researcher called 17th student mentioned that he was “Grogi, malu juga dilihat oleh teman, dan takut untuk membaca dengan keras.” (Nervous, embarrassed to be seen by friends, and afraid to read aloud.) In this regard, one way to overcome students’ shyness is to provide opportunities for students to practice reading English texts a lot. This method will improve their reading skill. This condition will certainly make them accustomed to trying to read aloud when learning English.

c. Fear of making mistakes

The researcher found additional data during interviews. It was found that most students felt anxious when reading aloud for fear of making mistakes. As mentioned by the interviewee, the researcher called 17th Student mentioned that he was “Takut salah membaca dan saya memiliki suara yang kecil jadi sulit untuk membaca dengan keras.” (Afraid to misread, and I have a small voice, it is hard to read aloud.) According to the students’ reactions, making mistakes, whether in front of the teacher, students, or classmates, was frowned upon. Students feared making mistakes because they feared their friends would laugh at them and give them bad feedback if they made mistakes while reading aloud while learning English.

d. Fear of being laughed at or mocked by their classmates or friends.

Based on the results of interviews with students, most students considered
factors from friends to cause them to feel anxious when reading aloud in front of the class. Students fear that when they make mistakes in reading aloud, they will be laughed at or mocked by their classmates. One was a statement from the interviewee, whom the researcher called the 17th student. He said, “takut diteriakkan kalau salah membaca.” (afraid of being laughed at if I read it wrong.) This is an additional task for a teacher to teach teaching behaviour in respecting others.

e. Lack of Vocabulary

The data obtained by the researcher through interviews showed that most of the students were still lacking in vocabulary mastery. Not knowing the meaning of words or sentences made students anxious to read. With a limited vocabulary, students found it difficult to convey what they wanted to read because they were confused about how to read the word or sentence. One was a statement from the interviewee, whom the researcher called the fifth student. He said, “Bahasanya sulit dipahami, banyak sekali kata atau vocabulary yang sama tetapi artinya berbeda” (the language is difficult to understand, there are so many words or vocabulary that are the same but have different meanings). This condition caused the students’ anxiety, resulting in their reluctance to read aloud. To build students’ confidence to read aloud, teachers can provide regular opportunities to practice correct pronunciation and intonation and speak freely, so that it will make students experience a greater sense of ability to read aloud. It will also help students enrich their English vocabulary.

The Teacher’s Strategies to Overcome the Problems of Students’ Anxiety

From the data that the researcher got after interviewing the English teacher, the researcher got two strategies that the English teacher had thought of to overcome the problem of students’ anxiety while reading aloud during English learning. One of these strategies was applied in reading aloud during English learning. The English teacher said he had implemented peer groups in learning English, especially for reading aloud. Another strategy that might be developed to solve students’ anxiety problems is to use games to deliver material and practice. One of which was a statement from the English teacher “...sehingga dengan menerapkan peer group ini mampu mengatasi kecemasan
…by applying this peer group, they can overcome students’ anxiety,...)

Other strategies that have been thought of but have not been realized are using the method of the game during learning or also with simple strategies such as helping students prepare themselves before learning begins, giving advice or motivation to students to think positively, and as a teacher must be able to create comfortable classroom atmosphere during learning. Therefore, from the data obtained, the researcher concluded and found that the teacher’s strategy was to overcome the problems of students’ anxiety in reading aloud in several ways.

**Preparation**

The first strategy is preparation, which students usually do to try to reduce the effect of anxiety, especially by improving their learning strategies during class and independent study outside class individually or in groups. This could include giving more time and energy to review material at home and try to practice reading aloud. Regarding reading aloud class, preparation can be in the form of practising and practising reading in front of a mirror, or it can also practice reading aloud a conversation with peers using a preparatory strategy. In this case, students are expected to be more confident that they have mastered the text and will read it aloud in front of their friends and teachers. This subjective self-perception is believed to be able to reduce anxiety in reading-aloud activities. One of which was a statement from the interviewee called 17th student “Saya harus lebih banyak berlatih membaca teks bahasa inggris” (I have to practice more reading English texts.). This strategy aims to minimize or reduce nervousness and fear when dealing with students’ English class situations. By being relaxed, students can use their cognition, and thus performance will be more manageable and arranged so that the anxiety experienced by students will be resolved. With this preparatory strategy, the teacher can give time and get students used to practising reading before beginning the lesson. So that when the teacher explains the material and tests the students’ reading-aloud skills, students feel ready without struggling with their anxiety.

**Thinking Positively**

Reading aloud during English learning and thinking positively are very likely to
happen when students have made good preparation which is nice and relaxing. These two facts support the perception that everything will go well and smoothly. Therefore, when students believe reading aloud will do well, they will refer back to what they have done before and realize there is no need to panic. In this way, they think positively, which will improve their taste and believe in themselves. Finally, they will gain more control over emotional and cognitive abilities, and thus students’ anxiety while reading aloud during English learning will be resolved. One of which was a statement from the interviewee called 20th student. He told the researcher “...dengan berpikiran positif bisa membuat saya lebih tenang dan percaya diri tampil membaca nyaring.” (...positive thinking can make me more calm and confident to appear reading aloud.)

The teacher provides strategies for students to think positively, which means a teacher must be able to convince students that they can do something as long as they are willing to learn and prepare in advance. A teacher must have good communication skills with the students. In addition to being a good listener, a teacher must be able to set an example to stay positive and give advice to students without offending the students’ anxious feelings.

**Building A Comfortable Atmosphere While Learning.**

The third strategy proposed is that a teacher should create a comfortable and friendly atmosphere to prevent or at least reduce the students’ anxiety. So that a teacher can create a friendly and supportive learning environment, and this strategy can include forming relationships such as friends (good relationships) between the teacher and the students. The teacher must not position himself as a know-it-all or the smartest person in the class. Instead, the teacher should be a learning partner to share, understand, and help the students. There will be no social distance between teachers and students. The students will feel free to interact with their teacher and take risks when performing a task or activity. As a result, students will feel comfortable dealing with their learning problems, and anxiety is less likely to occur in this situation.
Peer Group

As already stated by the English teacher, peer groups have been applied to overcome the problem of students’ anxiety while reading aloud. According to Santosa (2004) peer groups are “children or teenagers of the same age or level of maturity who engage with peers of the same age and have a particular function in the culture or customs.” So it can be concluded that a peer group is a group of people who interact and have some similarities, both in age and gender, as well as in mindset so that it appears to have the feeling of always wanting to be together. Generally, peer groups in teenagers have the same age or are not at the same level but have a maturity level or relatively the same maturity.

The existence of peer groups can help students dare to appear under the influence of their friends’ environment. The positive influence of the peer group is considered to be able to overcome students’ anxiety problems while reading aloud during English language learning. Peer groups become strategies and tools to attract students’ courage in their activities during learning. Each individual in their group can enhance personality development. Because there is a reciprocal relationship in groups, then student learning outcomes can also be improved.

Games while learning.

From the data obtained, it can be concluded that students prefer to play and like a relaxed classroom atmosphere. In this research, the teacher sometimes used games as a strategy. By using games during learning, students are expected to be able to follow the learning process happily and comfortably. Making games and creating a fun atmosphere is a challenge for a teacher. In this problem, games can be used to read aloud. For example, students make posters with various positive sentences in English, and then the teacher gives lottery numbers to the students. The numbers that come out when drawn must read aloud the posters they have made. This method may sound more difficult for students and make them more anxious, but that is not the result that will be obtained from this game. With these games, students will be better prepared if their turn comes at any time. Students must also practice reading the posters they have made.
more often, even though they are only short sentences. However, it helps students become fluent when reading aloud and will increase vocabulary and correct grammatical errors.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

Researchers found several factors causing students’ anxiety while reading aloud during English learning based on observations and interviews. Based on observations, the biggest factor that causes students’ anxiety in reading aloud is fear of making mistakes. From in-depth interviews, the researcher assumes that students always think learning English is difficult, so that thinking always affects students’ results and thoughts on learning English. This causes the students’ anxiety factors to appear during the learning process.

Teachers’ strategies that can be applied when learning English, especially reading aloud, are preparation, positive thinking, building a comfortable atmosphere, peer groups, and games while learning English. The strategies obtained are expected to be applied by English teachers in dealing with students’ anxiety problems while reading aloud during English learning. A teacher is also expected to be able to increase creativity in understanding students’ anxiety in learning English according to the needs of students.

Suggestion

Based on the conclusion above and the research done, some suggestions exist for students, teachers, and the next researchers. According to the findings, each student has a unique component contributing to their anxiety when reading aloud. Students with a high level of anxiety while reading aloud should strive to relax when reading in front of each other. Students should also avoid mocking or laughing at each other when their friends make mistakes because this will make them feel highly uneasy when reading aloud in front of the class. Students may also try to be supportive and motivational to anxious friends when reading aloud. Students must understand that making mistakes in English class is a natural occurrence that will improve their learning in the future. At the same time, English teachers are expected to be able to apply tactics or methods for overcoming students’ fears when reading aloud after learning them.

The researcher assumed that future researchers would conduct a greater study on students’ anxiety while reading aloud during English learning and that the research
would be expanded to include other skills such as speaking, writing, and listening.

REFERENCES


