# ANXIETY IN SPEAKING ENGLISH; STUDENT'S ATTITUDE AND THE ROLE OF GENDER

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### **INFO ARTIKEL**

#### Riwayat Artikel:

Diterima: 30-12-2022 Disetujui: 20-01-2023

#### Kata Kunci:

Anxiety; Gender; Speaking English

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui sikap kecemasan siswa dalam belajar berbicara bahasa Inggris ditinjau dari tiga aspek yaitu aspek perilaku, aspek kognitif dan aspek efektif. Selain itu, penelitian ini juga menyelidiki pengaruh perbedaan sikap terhadap kecemasan siswa antara siswa laki-laki dan perempuan dalam pembelajaran berbicara bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian kuantitatif dengan format statistik deskriptif. Partisipan dalam penelitian ini berjumlah 30 peserta yang terdiri dari mahasiswa semester 4 dan 6 Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Universitas Muhammadiyah Sorong. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan memberikan kuesioner sebagai alat ukur. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nilai rata-rata siswa laki-laki pada aspek perilaku adalah 53,6 sedangkan siswa perempuan mendapat 55,7, sedangkan pada aspek kognitif siswa laki-laki mendapat 56 dan siswa perempuan mendapat 55,8. Selanjutnya pada aspek efektif nilai siswa lakilaki sebesar 20,3 dan siswa perempuan sebesar 20,6. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian diketahui bahwa dari ketiga aspek siswa laki-laki dan perempuan memiliki sikap positif di dalam kelas, kecemasan berkontribusi terlalu besar terhadap sikap siswa laki-laki. Ini menunjukkan siswa laki-laki lebih cemas daripada perempuan di kelas berbahasa Inggris.

ABSTRAK

**Abstract:** This research was written to investigate students' attitudes of anxiety in learning to speak English in terms of three aspects namely behavioral, cognitive and effective aspects. Moreover, this research also investigates whether or not there's a significant difference in attitudes toward students' anxiety between male and female students in learning to speak English. This research used a quantitative method with descriptive statistics. The researcher took only 30 participants which consists of 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> semester students of the English Education Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Sorong. The data were collected by giving the questionnaire as the measuring instrument. Research findings showed that the mean score of male students in the behavioral aspect was 53.6 while females got 55.7 meanwhile, in the cognitive aspect male got 56 and females got 55.8. Furthermore, in the effective aspect male students' score was 20.3, and female students' score was 20.6. Based on the result of this research revealed that regarding the three aspects male and female students had positive attitudes in the class, anxious contribute too much to the male students' attitudes. It indicates male students are more anxious than females in English-speaking class.

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# A. INTRODUCTION

Speaking is the activity of expressing ideas orally to the audience. Speaking English should be mastered by students as the language learner. It is supported by Uluelang stated that, "to be an English teacher, we must have a strong command of the English language (Uluelang, 2018). Along with expanding English's role as a language for international communication, speaking skills instruction in the context of English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL) is becoming more and more important. Students can give opinions, suggestions, share their ideas and thought to someone through speaking verbally. Furthermore, despite coming from the English department, university students may lack the confidence to speak English inside or outside of the classroom" (Wael et al., 2018). Richard claims, "there are three common problems in speaking include lack of vocabulary needed to talk, poor in grammar and poor in pronunciation" (Richards, 2008). Meanwhile In addition, Sayuri noted that "additional concerns demonstrated by personal student information such as lack of self-confidence, worry of making mistakes, reluctance toward others, unease, inadequacy in speaking English, never practicing, and having nothing to say" (Sayuri, 2016). Thus, if the students have a good vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and confident it means that they are able to expressing their desire in particular situation e.g., speaking in public without feel nervous and etc.

The previous studies (Abidin Dr. et al., 2012), (Nurhaeni, 2019), (Hashwani, 2008), (KARAGÖL & BAŞBAY, 2018) and (Akkakoson, 2016) they investigated on how students feel about study English in behavioral, cognitive, and emotional perspective. They also examined whether or not there were any obvious differences between the students' opinions depending on their demographic characteristics, such as gender, discipline, and year of study, and the last research was Öztürk & Gürbüz (2013) at the university level, they investigated on how gender affected learner motivation and anxiety when speaking a foreign language. Based on three previous research, attitude was taken as reflection phenomena by the researcher to conduct this research, which researcher combine it with anxious feeling.

Anxiety is one of the most psychological phenomena which perceived by the learner naturally. Anxiety appears from human body as the reaction in particular situation. In general, anxiety can be identified as the feeling of tension, worry, apprehension and so on. Anxiety is worry feeling which is accompanied by the particular psychological reactions, such as an accelerated heart rate, sweaty palms, and a feeling of tightness in the stomach" (Carlson et al., 2009). Moreover, Ormrod et al., (2016), argued "anxiety is the feeling of uneasiness and apprehension regarding in a situation with uncertain outcomes". It means someone will feel anxious when they feel uncomfortable and fear on something in the particular situation.

Browne argued that "anxiety is an emotion associated with feelings of tension, concerned thoughts, and physiological changes like high blood pressure" (Dillon Browne, 2020). Anxiety feeling could make the students be passive which is it will be lead to their competence and performance in the classroom. Stoller said there are two factors that influence student's anxiety in learning English, namely internal factors and external factors. Internal factors consist of lack of preparation, limited vocabulary, friends/classmates, and embarrassment. Meanwhile, on external factors consists of lack of selfconfidence, shyness, motivation and fear of make mistakes (Davis et al., 2006).

Student's attitude has important impact when they learn a language especially in speaking English. Students who have positive beliefs in language learning will increase more positive attitudes in the

classroom. Otherwise, students who have negative beliefs will have anxiety, low ability and negative attitude in the class, this is related to what was stated by the previous researcher. Shams said that, "in the context of learning a foreign language, there are various factors that influence the students in learning process, including: motivation, attitude, perception, anxiety, learning achievement, aptitudes, intelligence, age and personality" (Hashwani, 2008). Learning a foreign language can provide us with a depth of knowledge; as a result, those who are sincerely dedicated to learning a foreign language can learn a lot from it.

Fakeye said, "The learner's attitude is acknowledged as one of the most crucial factors impacting language learning". Three aspects in attitude: behavioral, cognitive and affective of each student (Fakeye, 2010). Gender is a crucial factor that could affect student's language learning in the class, "Foreign language learning and learning motivates are significantly influenced by gender" (Rehman et al., 2022) cited in (Davis et al., 2006). In addition, "gender be used in connection to the behavior and cultural practices of men and women. It means that gender related with behavior of women and men in their society. So, sometime, we can see that there are some differences between women and men in their life. The way they think and decide something. Include how their process in learning and the result" (Davis et al., 2006).

Lizawati (2019) She was mentioned that attitude is one of the affective aspects that contribute to learning achievement, especially learning English. Generally, attitude refers to student's positive or negative response to the target language that they learn. For example, the students enjoy the teachinglearning process, it will affect their understanding and they receive a good score. As a result, the student will demonstrate their desire to learn, which it will enable them to succeed.

Wenden mentioned attitude into three essential aspects namely behavioral, cognitive and affective aspect (Wenden, 1991) cited in (Ibnian, 2017). Behavioral components, one of the predispositions to act towards the object is a behavior component. "Students' degrees of participation in their learning, including involvement in educational activities, are referred to as behavioral engagement. The behavioral part of attitude can be noticed in how learners react to native speaker's ways of speaking English in the context of English teaching and learning. Learners' enthusiasm to imitate native speaker's ways of speaking English, as well as their desire to learn or not learn more about the culture of English-speaking countries, are examples of behavioral aspects of attitude (Lei et al., 2018). Meanwhile, Cognitive

components are linked with the knowledge, opinions, or thoughts based on the information which connected with the object of the attitude. The last one is affective components, the emotional dimension of attitudes is referred to as the affective component, and emotions are related with the object. The object is considered as pleasant or unpleasant in this case.

Researchers have found that men and women have different language learning (Baxter, 1999) (Wahyuningsih, 2018). Male students are generally better at learning languages than females (Yeo et al., 2017 cited in Wong, 2009) in English classes, female students typically demonstrate higher anxiety than male students did. In this case, men and women experience and process emotions is totally different because "men and women have slightly different patterns of lateralization and men dominate the left hemisphere more than women" (Cohen & Banich, 2003).

Cohen said there are four factors affecting students' attitude in learning English. First is, Learner Personality Context which is consist of (selfconfidence, risk taking, and anxiety). In risk taking if students have a positive belief and attitude toward a language task, they could be able to become language risk-takers, attempting to produce and perceive the language. Meanwhile in anxiety is negative feelings or attitudes, and these affective factors can affect the learning event as well as how much language a learner can comprehend and learn in a particular time.

Second factor is Educational Context which is consist of (learning situation, English teacher and teaching material). Educational context refers to the learning situation how language is learned by the students. In addition, student who have a better communication with their teacher may create a positive attitude towards learning English than students who have less communication. In the class, teacher should prepare teaching-materials before begin the class such as textbooks, workbooks, writing paper, tape recorders, and others.

Third factor is Social Context which is consist of (learner's parents, learner's peer group and community). Learner will adopt their parents' attitude towards learn English and throughout this essence has an impact on the learner's language learning achievements in the class. Furthermore, their peer group also has a significant influence on their attitude in learning process such as ways in interaction, perception oneself, others and cultures, and the context establishes the social condition of the language learning situation (formal and informal) being the opportunities for the learner to learn.

The last factor is consisting of (learner's sex and age). Several studies indicate that females are more

enthusiastic about learning a second or foreign language than males. Sex differences in attitudes toward language learning have been discovered. Females tend to have significantly more positive attitudes than males. Young speakers are vulnerable to peer pressure, Chambers and Trudgill attempt to explain this tendency. However, the middle-aged speakers are more influenced by society's values and have less integrated social networks (Chambers & Trudgill, 1998; cited in Ellis, 2015) (Conteh-Morgan, 2002)

Considering those factors above researcher aims to examine the concept of attitude, which is being one of the major emotional success factors of foreign language learning. In particular, it examines the English learning speaking attitudes at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> semester students of English Education Department. By considering three aspects: behavioral, cognitive, and affective attitudes. Moreover, this study also aims to investigate whether there's a significant differences attitude between male and female students of anxiety in learning speaking English or not.

# **B. RESEARCH METHOD**

Quantitative descriptive statistic was used to analyse the data had been obtained, and present the result of this research descriptively. "Quantitative research involves obtaining data to classify information and using statistical analysis to confirm or deny "alternative knowledge statements" (Creswell, 2003)

# Settings and Participants

This research was conducted in the fourth and sixth semester students of English Education Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Sorong (UNAMIN). This research was held in June 2022. The total number of participants were 30 students which consist of 15 students from the fourth semester and 15 students from sixth semester.

### **Research Instrument**

In this research, researcher use questionnaire by (Boonrangsri et al., 2004), and other items were derived from (Gardner, 1985) Attitude and Motivation Test Battery (AMTB), were used as the instrument to obtain the data from the participants. The total of questionnaire were 35 items that concerned with language attitudes in terms of behavioral, cognitive, and affective factors. Each alternative in questionnaire has score which range from 5 to 1 based on Likert Scale. The options are defined into SA = Strongly Agree, A =Agree, N =Neutral, D = Disagree, and SD = Strongly Disagree.

### **Data Collection**

Here's some step in the data collection to obtain the data. First, the researcher prepares the questionnaire before distributing it to the participants. Second, the researcher gives the instruction to the participant on how to complete/answer the questionnaire. Third, the researcher distributes the questionnaire to the fourth and sixth semester student in English Education Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Sorong (UNAMIN). Then last activity the participants immediately collected the questionnaire after completing it and turned it to the researcher.

#### **Data Analysis**

The data from students' answer were collected and analyzed quantitatively by using two procedures. First, the researcher made some tables that included 3 aspects of behavioral, cognitive and affective aspect, and then combined all the data from student's questionnaire's answer into one in the form of table. Secondly, researcher used SPSS 28.0.0 to count and get students mean score from their questionnaire's answer. The data from questionnaire were put forward systematically and accordingly to gain the comprehensive result of this research.

### C. FINDINGS AND DISSCUSSION

In this section, researcher classified the result of student's attitude in speaking English in terms of three aspects behavioral, cognitive and affective aspect. After analyzing the data, researcher found students attitude score as follows:

Tuble 1. Student 5 Score								
Aspect	Male					Female		
	N	Min	Max	Mean	N	Min	Max	Mean
Behavioral	15	44	61	53,6	15	47	66	55,7
Cognitive	15	47	69	56	15	46	63	55,8
Affective	15	17	25	20,3	15	15	25	20,6

Table 1. Student's Score

The data from table 1 were classified into three aspects; (1) behavioral, (2) cognitive and (3) affective. The result of behavioral aspect can be interpreted clearly based on the results obtained by the researcher. Behavioral aspect was on the second highest score. The mean score from male students were 53.6 meanwhile female students got score 55.7. Based on the score, it can be concluded that male and female students had the good attitude in the class. Furthermore, few of male students had negative attitude which it make their score were lower than female. According to male participant's answer, they get the low score than female students because they feel worried when they speak English in the class it caused by their anxiety feeling, it make they feel embarrassed to speak English in front of the other students, and don not feel enthusiastic to come to the English class. It's totally different with female's answer. This result in line with Browne article that American Psychological Association (APA) was highlighted "anxiety is an emotion associated with feelings of tension, worry feeling, and physiological changes like high blood pressure" (Dillon Browne, 2020).

Moreover, embarrassment is one of four external factors that cause students anxiety in language learning. (Utomo, 2018) mention that learning a second language has the possibility to be embarrassment. Furthermore, Teimouri (2018) argued that, "shame strongly affects learner's motivation and language achievement negatively". In other words, embarrassment plays important role to make students feel worried in the class. Furthermore, when male students missed the class, they never ask about the homework given by their lecturer to them.

According to female participant's answer, they feel relaxed when they speaking English, and also they don't feel embarrassed to speak English in front of other students. This result is opposite to (Yih et al., 2018) on their findings that male students are frequently found to be better at learning languages than female students, and female's anxiety were higher than male in the class.

Cognitive aspect is on the first highest score. Moreover, the score from male student were 56 meanwhile, female's score were 55.8, based on the score the researcher can concluded there's no significant differences between male and female student's score. It indicates, both male and female students have a good attitude in the aspect of cognitive. Besides, male students are more anxious than the female students in the class. According to male participant's answer, the reason they were more anxious is because they just study English to pass the exam, mostly they did not satisfied with their performance in English class and learn English is complicated and difficult. The result supported by some factors that influence students anxiety such as internal and external facors. Findings from Rajitha & Alamelu (2020) mentions several factors that couses speaking anxiety are language factor, grammar factor, pronunciation factor, peer factor, lack of confidence, shyness facoter, and stage fear.

Affective aspect is the essential part for the students to expressing their feeling naturally such as like or dislike the subject that they learn and affective aspect had the lower score. It means, this aspect is on the third high score. The score from male students were 20.3 meanwhile, female's score were 20.6. Based on the score, the researcher can concluded

there was no significant differences between male and female students in this aspect. Male and female students had good attitude on affective aspect. According to male's answer, mostly they are still anxious when they answer an English question in the class. Meanwhile, only few of female students get anxious when they answer an English question in the class. The result in line to the research form Sadighi & Dastpak (2017) that defines anxiety as a state of tension, whereas apprehension is a normal reaction to a perceived threat.

Based on what have been stated by Sadighi, it means someone will feel anxious of something naturally when they feel threatened. That is a normal reaction when they feel fear of the threat they faced in particular situation. In this case anxious feeling make student's fear of making mistake "answer English questions", they are afraid if their answer were wrong, or get negative evaluation from their English teacher. It's supported by Aftat. (Dalem, 2017) stated that, "fear is linked toward the issue of correction and negative evaluation". In addition, "fear of negative evaluation is defined as "concern about other people's evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectation that other people will evaluate oneself negatively" (Watson & Friend, 1969).

Based on the data above, it can be concluded that male students were more anxious than female in the class. Furthemore, anxiety dominantly affect male's attitude in the aspect of behavioral and cognitive aspect. This result was opposite from the theory by (Yih et al., 2018) male students are frequently found to be better at learning languages than female students, and female's anxiety were higher than male in the class (Ozer & Altay, 2021).

### **D.** CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the description in the findings, the results were reflected from three aspects: behavioral, cognitive and affective aspect. On behavioral aspect male students get score, 53.6, on cognitive aspect they get 56 and on affective aspect they get 20.3. Meanwhile, on behavioral aspect female students get 55.7, on cognitive aspect they get 55.8 and on affective aspect they get 20.6. Constructed on the result of three aspect above, cognitive aspect had the higher level. However, male students are more anxious than female in the English speaking class than male students still had positive attitude like female students in terms of three aspects. Thus, it is mean anxiety dominantly effects male student's attitude in the aspect of behavioral and cognitive than emotional aspect, and anxiety didn't affect female's attitude in the class.

Finally, due to the limitations of this study, further investigation is necessary to explore more whether or

not anxiety affect student's behaviour in English learning. Future similar studies with larger population will be useful to give better understanding of the issue of anxiety that affect student's attitude. This research only use questionnaire to obtain the data. However, this issue isn't specifically presented in this research. Therefore, further research about certain approaches or methods that can find out the causes of student anxiety that affect their attitudes in learning speaking English deeply and intensively.

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