STRATEGIES FOR COPING WITH LANGUAGE ANXIETY IN ORAL PRESENTATION

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Abstract : This study aims to find out and describe the strategies students used for coping with language anxiety in oral presentation and to find out the most dominant strategy used by students for coping with language anxiety in oral presentation. This research used a descriptive qualitative research method. The subject of this research were 6th semester students of English Study Program of Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu. 22 English students who had do presentation in the class. Researcher used observation sheet, questionnaire and interview guide to data collection technique. The result of this study showed that; 1) students used 5 strategies for coping their language anxiety were preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, peer seeking and resignation; 2) the dominant strategy used by students were preparation and relaxation. The conclusion of this study are students used 5 strategies for coping their language anxiety and students used dominant strategy for coping their language anxiety with preparation..

Keywords : *Learning Strategies, Language Anxiety, Oral Presentation*

INTRODUCTION

In presentations, students as speakers are required to be able to convey material properly and correctly and the message conveyed can be understood by the audience. But in reality, the most students experienced anxiety when required the material in front of the class. If the students cannot control their anxiety, it can prevent them from developing their presentation. They feel cannot perform their presentation at their best. It also made them did feel not confident when they did presentation and made mistakes about that. According to Nakhalah cited in (Gumartifa & Syahri, 2021) there are psychological factors they are afraid to make mistakes; shyness, lack of confidence, and lack of motivation. This is supported by Spielberger cited in (Oteir & Al-otaibi, 2019) who stated that psychologist has three perspectives towards anxiety namely: a) trait anxiety; b) state anxiety; and c) situation-specific anxiety.

Students' anxiety to speak English in front of audience is a problem commonly found in teaching speaking. Consequently, the students cannot improve their speaking ability. As speaking, anxiety experienced by students is very important to be solved. The given research conducted on speaking anxiety revealed that students have extremely negative experiences with speaking activities in a foreign language class. Many students fell anxious and cannot control their anxiety. They felt nervous when they did oral presentation and in front of the class. Language anxiety is disorder, a natural feeling which is characterized by feelings of fear or worry that are deep and continuous, not experiencing interference in assessing reality, personality is still intact. Behavior can be disrupted but still within normal limits (Akhdan & Aminatun, 2022) **.** According the researcher, anxiety is negative indications that arise in a person when doing learning performances. These erratic feelings are generally unpleasant, which in turn cause physiological changes, shaking and sweating. Increased heart rate physiological: panic, tense, confused, unable to concentrate, uneasy, and stutters in communication.

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Based on informal observation as a student at Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu, the researcher found there were many students experienced anxiety when they did oral presentation. They felt cannot control their anxiety in their presentation and afraid cannot convey the material and answer question from their classmates. Their anxiety can make things tense and did not work out the way they wanted. Therefore, they need a way to overcome with this anxiety. So, that the anxiety experienced can be overcome and also students become calm when conveying or answering questions about the presentation material. Based on the reason above, the researcher are interested to know how the students coping their language anxiety.

RESEARCH METOD

This research used descriptive qualitative research method. It was designed to identify and to describe the strategies used by students for cope their language anxiety in oral presentation. This method was chosen because its design is suitable for understanding and interpreting observations in research. To gets a clear picture of the relationship between the components in this study. The subject of this research is the 6th semester students of English Study Program, Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu. This research has applied the purposive sampling technique in getting data. In purposive sampling technique, the subject size determined by information consideration. Based on purposive sampling, the researcher chose 6th semester students consist of 22 students as the subject. This is because the research time is corresponding with the time when presentation use English in the 6th semester.

Instruments that were employed in this research are Observation sheet, Questionnaire and Interview Guide to gather information from groups of individuals. The observations were carried out by taking video presentation by students, and questionnaires were distributed after the learning process was complete. The interviews were conducted the next day using voice recordings. The interview guidelines were some questions for interview that related to this research. The questionnaire and interview guidelines were some questions related to the strategies used by students for cope their anxiety and dominant strategy used by students for cope their anxiety in oral presentation (based on 5 strategies to reduce anxiety from Kondo and Ying-Ling).

There were five steps to collect the data: (1) The researcher used video recorder as supporting instrument and field notes to collect observation data; (2) the researcher gave questionnaire to the students; (3) the researcher conducted face – to – face interview with the 6th semester English Department to get some information that is needed for this research. Technique of analyzing data in the questionnaire was descriptive percentage. The students response to the students language anxiety in oral presentations questionnaire were scored on five – point Likert Like-Scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) by Horwitz and Cope cited in (Almesaar, 2022). In analysis observation and interview data, the researcher applied Miles and Huberman (2004) theory. Miles and Hubberman (2004) suggest that the interview data analyzed consist of three procedures; a) data display; b) data reduction; and c) conclusion drawing/ verification.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this research, the researcher analyzed the students' strategies for coping language anxiety in oral presentation. The types of strategies used as a reference in this study were taken from Kondo and Ying-Ling (2004). The strategies were (a) preparation, (b) relaxation, (c) positive thinking, (d) peer seeking, and (e) resignation. The researcher obtained the data of strategies by using open ended questionnaire.

Preparation

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First strategy is preparation. Preparation refers to attempts at controlling the impending threat by improving learning and study strategies. The use of these strategies would be expected to increase students' subjectively estimated mastery of the subject matter, and hence reduce the anxiety associated with the language class. There were four items of preparation strategy. Mostly (20 of 22 students) answered agree for item 1, it was because the students usually prepared the material before they presented orally in the classroom. Then, there were 18 of 22 students who answered agree for item 2, they agreed related to the using of English often in daily activities to coping their anxiety while oral presentation. Moreover, the students (20 of 22) also agreed related to the way of coping language anxiety by reading the material carefully before doing the oral presentation. It might help them to be confidence while speaking. For item 4, "I will check the dictionary to find out the unfamiliar vocabulary and the pronunciation", there were 19 of 22 students who answered agree related to this item. They ensured that by finding out unfamiliar word in the dictionary can help them to reduce the anxiety and prepared nore for oral presentation. Therefore, it can be concluded that, almost all of students (19 of 22) agreed with the use of preparation strategy in coping the anxiety while presentation.

Relaxation

Relaxation is involves tactics that aim at reducing somatic anxiety symptoms. There are several typical items such as : take a deep breath, try to relax, try to calm down, close eyes, pretend to be calm, shake body, touch hair, play with hands, look at watch, write "people" on palm and swallow it. There were also four items of relaxation strategy. For item 5, "when I feel anxious, I try to calm down", there were 19 of 22 students answered agree that trying to calm down can help them to cope the anxiety while oral presentation. All of the students (22 of 22) answered agree for item 6 that

they take a deep breath when they feel anxious to start an oral presentation. For item 7, there were 20 of 22 students answered agree about coping the anxious by trying to be relax while they were speaking in front of the class. For the last item of relaxation, there were 16 of 22 students agreed that they shaked their body to reduce tension in the presentation while they were speaking in English. It was only 16 students who did this way to cope the anxiety while oral presentation. To conclude, the mean score of relaxation indicator showed that there were four items of relaxation strategy for reduce the anxiety. The mean score showed that there were 19 of 22 students agreed with the use of relaxation strategy in coping the anxiety while presentation.

Positive Thinking

Positive Thinking is characterized by its palliative function of suppressing problematic cognitive processes that underlie students' anxiety. The items of positive thinking are; try to be confident, tell our self that English is not so important, try to think positively, tell our self that we will be ok, try not to think of people around, believe in our self, try to enjoy the tension, think of favorite song, cheer up, imagine our self - giving a great performance, tell our self that we can do it, tell our self that we be better than the others. These strategies are intended to divert attention from the stressful situation to positive and pleasant cues, and bring relief to the anxious student. There were also four items of relaxation strategy. For item 9, "When I feel anxious, I always think positively that I can do an oral presentation", there were 19 of 22 students answered agree that thinking positively while doing oral presentation can help them to cope the anxiety while oral presentation. 20 of 22 students answered agree for item 10 that when they nervous and confused to speak in oral presentation, they tried to be confident. For item 11, there were 17 of 22 students answered agree about to coping language anxiety, they imagined themself can give a great performance when they

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were speaking in oral presentation. For the last item of positive thinking, there were 13 of 22 students agreed that they think that they were better than others when they were doing oral presentation. It was only 13 students who did this way to cope the anxiety while oral presentation. To sum, the mean score of positive thinking indicator showed that there were four items of positive thinking strategy in coped the anxiety. The mean score showed that there were 16 of 22 students who agreed with the use of positive thinking strategy in coping the anxiety while presentation.

Peer Seeking

Peer seeking is distinguished by students' willingness to look for other students who seem to have trouble understanding the class and/or controlling their anxiety. For the anxious student, the realization that others are having the same problem may serve as a source of emotional regulation by social comparison. The typical items of peer seeking are: tell our self that difficult problems for us are also difficult for the others, make a small group to study, tell our self that the others must also be anxious, look for others who are having difficulty understanding the class, look for other people controlling their anxiety, ask students around us if they understand the class, talk with friends around us, look around and deliberately perform poorly. There were also four items of relaxation strategy. For item 13, **"When I feel anxious, I tell my friends to make a group for study and practice the oral presentation"**, there were 13 of 22 students answered agree that telling friends in group while doing oral presentation can help them to cope the anxiety while oral presentation. 14 of 22 students answered agree for item 14 that they told their friends to discuss about material in presentation if something goes wrong their friend can correction the material. For item 15, there were 14 of 22 students answered agree about when they did an oral presentation using English and they felt anxious, they tried to think that

others are having the same problem. For the last item of peer seeking, there were 14 of 22 students agreed that when they felt anxious, they saw the way other people control their anxiety during oral presentation. It was only 14 students who did this way to cope the anxiety while oral presentation. Thus, the mean score of peer seeking showed that there 14 of 22 students agreed with the use of peer seeking strategy in coping the anxiety while presentation.

Resignation

This category is characterized by students' reluctance to do anything to alleviate their language anxiety. Students reporting examples of resignation seem intent on minimizing the impact of anxiety by refusing to face the problem. The typical items of resignation are: give up, I thought of something unrelated to matter, don't make useless resistance, taking a time before answer the question, accept the situations, playing social media, try to put up with the situation, sleep in class and stop paying attention. For item 17, **"When lecturer explain the material, I thought of something unrelated to matter"**, there were 5 of 22 students answered agreed this item. 16 of 22 students answered agree for item 18 that when the lecturer asked them about the material in presentation, they took a time before answer the question. For item 19, there were 6 of 22 students answered agree about "to coping language anxiety, I choose playing social media before I am doing the oral presentation ". For the last item of resignation, there were 9 of 22 students agreed "I worry about the consequence of failing my speaking for presentation class, I try accept the situation" item. To conclude, the mean score of resignation indicator showed that there were four items in reduce the anxiety. The means core showed that there were 9 of 22 students answered agree with the use of resignation strategy in coping the anxiety while presentation. The conclusion of each item of students' strategies was showed in the table below.

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Table 1 Summary of Questionnaire Result

No.	Strategies	Positive	Neutral	Negative
		Strongly Agree+Agree		Disagree+Strongly Disagree
1	Preparation	88%	13%	0%
2	Relaxation	88%	10%	2%
3	Positive Thinking	80%	18%	2%
4	Peer Seeking	63%	32%	6%
5	Resignation	41%	35%	24%

The percentages in positive and negative column are found from the amount of percentages strongly agree and agree for positive column disagree and strongly disagree for negative column. The percentages were based on previous tables of each sources. The summary of the questionnaire result revealed that there were 88% of students confirmed positively the preparation strategy to cope the anxiety, 88% of students for relaxation, 80% of students for positive thinking, 63% for peer seeking strategy, and 41% of positive response for resignation strategy. Thus, based on the questionnaire result it can be concluded that the most dominant strategy used by students for coping with language anxiety in oral presentation by 6th semester students was preparation and relaxation with percentage of positive response 88%.

Observation

Beside the use of questionnaire, the researcher also used observation checklist. The observation of this research was done in only one meeting since the limitation of time. The observation was used to confirm the questionnaire result. Regarding to the observation result, the students applied all of the strategies in coping the anxiety while oral presentation in the classroom. In preparation strategy, there were 17 indicators to be observed. Based on observations, there were three indicators carried out by students in this strategy. The three indicators were; concentrate on the class, listen carefully to what classmates say in class, and try to read carefully.

In relaxation strategy there were 10 indicators to be observed. Regarding to the observation result, there were five indicators carried out by students in this strategy. The five indicators were; take a deep breath, close eyes, shake body, touch hair, and play with hands. In positive thinking strategy there were 12 indicators. Based on observation, there were two indicators carried out by students in this strategy. The two indicators were; try to be confident and cheer up. In peer seeking, there were 8 indicators. Based on observation, there were two indicators carried out by students in this strategy. The two indicators were; ask students around us if they understand the class and talk with friends around us. The last for resignation, there were 8 indicators. Based on observation, there was only one indicator carried out by students in this strategy. The indicator was taking time before answer the question. Therefore, it can be concluded that based on the observation result the most dominant strategy applied by the students was relaxation with five indicators; take a deep breath, close eyes, shake body, touch hair, and play with hands.

Interview

The researcher did interview to 22 students as the respondents of this research. There were five questions asked to the students related to the strategies in coping anxiety while doing oral presentation. The

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interview result revealed that all of the respondents or 22 of 22 students admitted that they did preparation firstly before doing oral preparation. In preparation strategy, the students prepare the material needed to oral presentation. As student 2 answered that mastering the material or studying the material so that later the presentation run smoothly without any obstacles. Moreover, student 5 also answered that firstly she prepared the material, then after that she read it over and over again so that she mastered the material and didn't get nervous in front of the class while doing oral presentation.

Another finding showed that all of the respondents admitted that they did relaxation when they got anxiety while presentation. Most of students did relaxation by taking breath and keeping quiet. As student 6 answered that The relaxation was like trying to be more confident in front of the class to convey a material to the audience and the audience understood what they were conveying. Moreover, all of the respondents or students admitted that positive thinking can keep the students from feeling anxious during oral presentations. As student 13 answered that thinking positively during the presentation was very influential for her because if she thinks that this presentation was successful, usually what we think was what happens and in her opinion this was very helpful.

Furthermore, 18 of 22 students admitted that they did something with a friend to deal with their anxiety, such as; discussing and making small group discussion. They admitted that they usually made a small group for study to discuss the things that was presented. And the last, mostly the respondents or 20 of 22 students admitted that they usually did something to reduce the anxiety such as repeating material and then ask friends for opinions if this presentation is correct or not. To conclude, based on the interview result, all of the students applied all the strategies in coping the anxiety while oral presentation. The

interview result confirmed the questionnaire and observation result.

Discussion

This research aimed to describe the students' strategies for coping with language anxiety in oral presentation by 6th semester students at English Study Program of Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu. Based on the observation, questionnaire, and interview result, the findings showed that (1) the strategies used by the students for coping with language anxiety in oral presentation by 6th semester students at English study Program of Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu were preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, peer seeking, and resignation; (2) the most dominant strategy used by the students for coping with language anxiety in oral presentation by 6th semester students at English study Program of Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu was preparation.

Preparation strategy becomes the dominant strategy used by English students to coping the anxiety. It was confirmed theory by (Kondo & Ying-Ling, 2004) who said that it is interesting to note here that preparation was the most frequently used strategy. There are many ways to prepare including reading the materials before class, taking second language courses provided in or out of school, asking help from friends and teachers, focusing on specific areas which cause anxiety. Here some reasons why the students chose preparation as their strategy based on interview. One of student answered "with careful preparation will certainly reduce a little anxiety in us. Because with the preparation, it means that we are ready for what we are going to convey, thus we can smoothen the course of our presentation". Then another student answered "Preparation is very important to make it easier for us to do presentation, both preparing material or mentally preparing for the presentation".

The relaxation also becomes another dominant strategy applied by the students. The second category which is relaxation

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deals with the methods to reduce the symptoms of anxiety. The students have to speak in front of their other friends or public or when they are being appointed by the teacher to answer the question. One of many strategies to relieve this fear is relaxation. Grasha cited in (Deni et al., 2021)suggests that breathing deeply in and out for three to five minutes is an effective way to reduce tension. If one is well prepared and stillis struggling with the feeling of anxiety and fear, relaxation, which involves tactics that aim at reducing anxiety symptoms, is offered.

Peer seeking category is the effort to consult other learners who are also anxious in learning the foreign language. As (Akhdan & Aminatun, 2022) mentioned that some anxious students cope with their language anxiety by comparing themselves with others who have the same problems. These students may find a suitable learning partner to talk to or build a small-scale support group with others who experience the same thing. This strategy is a good solution, especially if the students can share their experiences and strategies with their learning partner. The last category is the resignation category which refers to the unwillingness of the learners to lessen their anxiety by avoiding the learning process. The anxious learners may resign themselves by giving up, stopping paying attention, accepting the situation, stopping making any effort, even going to sleep in class. They do not want to try and re-try after failing because they are afraid of more stress. This explanation is also supported by Ely cited in (Sinaga et al., 2020). She notes that one characteristic of anxious learners is reluctant to take risks. Resignation seems to be one possible strategy.

The findings also confirmed some previous studies related to this research. The first study conducted by (Aeni, 2020)who found that that the students preferred to relaxation strategy to overcome their anxiety in speaking English. It was in line with this research finding which found that

relaxation as the most dominant strategy beside preparation used by the students to coping the anxiety while oral presentation. The second study conducted by (Novianti, 2021)who found that there were some strategies in reducing speaking anxiety based on Kondo and Ying Ling theory; preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, peer seeking, and resignation. Most students chose preparation as their strategy. It was similar to this present research finding which also found that preparation was the most preference startegy used by the students to coping their language enxiety.

However, the result of the study from (Tian & Mahmud, 2018) was different from the finding of this present research. As the result of their study showed that the three major sources of anxiety related to content of presentation, oral proficiency, and delivery skill. Moreover, a significant difference was found in the use of Social Affective strategies between English majors and non-English major. The result found that social affective strategies were the startegies used by English and non-English major while this present study found that preparation and relaxation startregies were prefered used by the students to coping the anxiety whiile doing oral presentation in the calssroom. To conclude the findings of this present study were in line with the result from (Aeni, 2020) and (Novianti, 2021) who found that the strategies used by the students for coping with language anxiety in oral presentation were preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, peer seeking, and resignation. And the most dominat strategies were preaparation and relaxation

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, there are two conclusions of this research; (1) the strategies used by the students for coping with language anxiety in oral presentation by 6th semester students at English study Program of Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu were preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, peer seeking, and resignation; (2) the most dominant strategy

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used by the students for coping with language anxiety in oral presentation by 6th semester students at English study Program of Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu was preparation. It can be suggested for the students to apply all of the strategies in coping with anxiety in oral presentation to ensure that all of the strategies are useful to help them to improve their speaking performance. For the lecturers, it will be better if the lecturer always help the students to reduce their anxiety while doing oral presentation in the classroom by sharing the strategies from this study in learning and teaching process. Moreover, for other researcher it was suggested to conduct similar field of research related to the strategies for coping with anxiety in oral presentation with the bigger size of sample.

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