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Dare to say or not? : Psychological Factors on Students' Speaking Skill Problems at Junior High School

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Abstract

There are several psychological factors that can affect the development of students' speaking skills in English. This study was conducted with the aim of finding out what psychological factors affect the development of students' speaking skills in English when learning speaking in class. This research uses descriptive qualitative method, where data collection was carried out through observation and interview with some private junior high school students in grade 7 with ICO (International Class Orientation) class program. The results of this study show that there are four factors that can hinder students in developing and also mastering speaking skills, namely anxiety or shyness, lack of confidence, lack of motivation, and fear of making mistakes. These four psychological factors have a negative impact on students during the speaking learning process. Therefore, the findings of this study imply that parents and teachers should help students understand that making mistakes is a necessary part of learning and that they can take advantage of these opportunities to grow as communicators. In order to give students the chance to practice speaking English without worrying about making mistakes, the teacher must also foster a supportive environment in the classroom.

Keywords: English learning, speaking skill, psychological factors

Abstrak

Ada beberapa faktor psikologis yang dapat mempengaruhi pengembangan kemampuan berbicara siswa dalam bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan tujuan untuk mengetahui apa saja faktor psikologis yang mempengaruhi pengembangan kemampuan berbicara siswa dalam bahasa Inggris saat pembelajaran speaking di kelas. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif, dimana pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan cara observasi dan wawancara dengan beberapa siswa SMP swasta kelas 7 dengan program kelas ICO (International Class Orientation). Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa ada empat faktor yang dapat menghambat siswa dalam mengembangkan dan juga menguasai keterampilan berbicara, yaitu rasa cemas atau malu, kurang percaya diri, kurangnya motivasi, dan takut melakukan kesalahan. Keempat faktor psikologis tersebut memberikan dampak negatif pada siswa selama proses pembelajaran speaking. Oleh karena itu, temuan penelitian ini menyiratkan bahwa orang tua dan guru harus membantu siswa memahami bahwa melakukan kesalahan adalah bagian penting dari pembelajaran dan bahwa mereka dapat memanfaatkan kesempatan ini untuk tumbuh sebagai komunikator. Untuk memberikan kesempatan kepada siswa untuk berlatih berbicara bahasa Inggris tanpa khawatir melakukan kesalahan, guru juga harus membina lingkungan yang mendukung di dalam kelas.

Kata Kunci: *Pembelajaran bahasa Inggris, kemampuan berbicara, faktor psikologis*

I. INTRODUCTION

In this world consists of various countries that certainly have different languages, so this will make it difficult for each country to stay connected with each other. Seeing that, then comes English which is an international language that can connect one country with another [1]. The term related to English that is often found is 'English as an International Language' which is a term to mark that English is the second major language in the world and is often used for communication, international business, travel, and so on. According Zuparova et al, English is the language most often used when people from different countries come together and also English plays another important role in our lives [2]. Therefore it is very important to know and learn English in our lives. One of the goals of learning English is so that future generations can follow the knowledge of various countries in the world [3].

In English language learning, we will find four skills that must be mastered by language learners. According to Ur, the four skills are reading, writing, listening and speaking [4]. Of the four skills the most important skill and also the main goal of students in learning English is speaking skill. The mastery of speaking skills in English is a top priority in learning a language and of course students will periodically improve their speaking skills as a form of their learning effectiveness [5]. In addition, according to Nunan that a person's ability to learn a foreign language will be seen from how his ability to speak, whether he can speak using the language he learns or not [6]. The success of speaking ability can be seen from how a person can convey something that is easily understood by the person being spoken to. The most important part of successfully mastering speaking skills is that we can easily interact with people from all over the world, easily receive new knowledge, and be able to keep up with technological developments in the future [7].

On the other hand, speaking is a skill that is quite difficult for students to master [8]. According to Bueno et al, many students complain about their speaking ability, even though they have studied English for many years but still have difficulty in speaking [9]. In addition, many language learners say that they find speaking skills in new language more difficult than reading, writing or listening. This is because speaking is a skill that happens in real time and the person we are speaking to will be waiting for what we are going to say. In addition according Nunan, when speaking of course we cannot change or correct what we want to say, just like when we write we can correct it first [6]. As we know that English in Indonesia is a foreign language, so the use of English is very limited. In daily life, the language used to communicate is Indonesian which is the first language, so from here the use of English in Indonesia is very limited and makes foreign language learners difficult to apply it. According to Nunan, learning and mastering speaking skills in a foreign language is a challenge for students because they have few opportunities to speak. In addition, obstacles or barriers in achieving success in speaking skills are not only from the students themselves, but these obstacles can also come from the teacher [10].

It can be seen that currently the main problem faced by students related to speaking skills is not only due to a lack of vocabulary or grammar in the sentences they say. However, currently the problems faced by students in speaking skills that need attention are related to problems caused by psychological factors [11]. According to Leong & Ahmadi, psychological factors are factors which are caused by how a person thinks and behaves which will affect the person's self-decision [12]. These psychological factors can interfere with students to achieve success in mastering speaking skills. The obstacles caused by these psychological factors are what cause the students' learning outcomes to be less than optimal. According Quoc Thao & Thuy Duong said that problems with speaking skills are generally caused by psychological factors, which include anxiety about receiving criticism or negative feedback from others when speaking,

feeling laughed at when accidentally making mistakes, or being embarrassed to speak in class [13]. In addition, according to Thornbury, explains that the psychological factors that interfere with students in mastering speaking skills are anxiety or shyness, lack of confidence, lack of motivation, and fear of making mistakes [14].

According to Badran, cited in Ardhea, anxiety is a strong emotion from feeling of apprehension which predicts something bad will happen [15]. Thinking about bad things that are not necessarily going to happen makes English learners feel anxious when speaking. They are anxious about the bad things that will happen when they speak English. The next factor is a lack of confidence. According to Bandura, cited in Kansil et al, the term self-confidence is a form of belief in oneself that this self can successfully do anything [16]. Similarly, when students feel less confident when speaking English, it means that they are not sure of their abilities. Furthermore, lack of motivation, according to Zua, cited in Juhana, says that motivation is a form of energy that comes from within and can help increase self-interest in anything [17]. In learning English, students who lack motivation to speak have no interest or desire to speak. The last factor is the fear of making mistakes. The fear that exists in students will certainly prevent them from developing their speaking skills.

Several previous studies have conducted research related to psychological factors in students' English speaking ability. The first research conducted by Juhana entitled "Psychological Factors That Hinder Students From Speaking in English Class (A Case Study in a Senior High School in South Tangerang, Banten, Indonesia)" shows that psychological factors consist of fear of mistakes, shyness, and anxiety [17]. The second research conducted by Souisa entitled " Study on Speaking Problems and Psychological Factors Encountered by Students in Developing Their Speaking Skill At SMA Kristen Dobo , Aru District" shows that psychological factors that affect students' speaking problems are low motivation, feeling afraid of making mistakes, feeling tense and nervous, unsure in delivering presentations, and feeling confused about their thoughts [18].

Based on pre observations, the researchers found that the factors mentioned above were also present in one of the private junior high schools in Sidoarjo, especially in the ICO (International Class Orientation) class. Researchers found several indications of psychological factors in students during learning to speak in class. Indications of psychological factors in speaking skills such as feeling shy when speaking in front of the class, fear of making mistakes, and lack of confidence when speaking for fear of being laughed at by friends. Therefore, for further research, researchers want to know more clearly some of the psychological factors that exist in the class. Therefore, the researchers formulated the research questions as follows:

1. What are the psychological factors that hinder students in learning English, especially speaking skills at SMP Muhammadiyah 6 Krian?
2. What is the impact of psychological factors on student learning in speaking skill?

II. METHODOLOGY

1) Research Design

This research uses descriptive qualitative research methods, in which researchers analyze, describe, and summarize events based on information that has been collected through observations and interviews [19].

2) Research Setting

This research was conducted at one of the private junior high schools in Sidoarjo, namely Muhammadiyah 6 Krian Junior High School. This school is located at Jl. Raya Kemasan Mojosantren No.26, Mojosanten, Kemasan, Krian district, Sidoarjo regency. In this study, researchers have conducted research on seventh grade students with the ICO (International Class Orientation) program. The research was conducted from February to March and during speaking lessons. Researchers conducted research on all ICO class students which consisted of 15 students. The researchers observed all students and made further observations on some students who showed indications of psychological factors.

3) Data and Source of the Data

In this study, the researchers used primary data where the source of the data was obtained through observation activities of the research subjects related to psychological factors in speaking English. In addition, researchers also obtained data sources based on the results of interviews conducted with several students and also some information from the teacher concerned.

4) Data Collection Technique

During the research, the researchers used data collection techniques through observation to answer the first research question. The type of observation used during the data collection process is overt observation, where the research subjects know that they are being observed. In this study, researchers used observation sheets as the main instrument. Observation activities were carried out during two speaking course meetings. Observations were carried out by adjusting the schedule of the school and coordinating with the teacher concerned. The data collection process was carried out on February 14 to February 16, 2023. The researchers made observations by entering the classroom when the teacher was teaching. The researchers observed from the corner of the classroom where there was a chair that the teacher used to receive guests in class. During the learning process, the researchers made observations of students and also made observations based on the observation sheet that had been prepared previously. The researchers observed how the students were during the speaking learning process and also the conditions and situations during the learning process. Researchers examined psychological factors based on Thonbury's theory which explains that there are four psychological factors, so researchers observed whether the four psychological factors were also experienced by 7th grade students with the ICO (International Class Orientation) program. The class teacher helped by providing a list of names and student numbers and researchers made ID cards using student numbers to help in the observation process.

As for the second research question, researchers conducted interviews with several students who were seen from the observation results. Researchers conducted interviews to double-check the results of the observation sheet. The interviews conducted by researchers were unstructured interviews. The results of the observations that have been made as a basis for conducting interviews. Researchers use unstructured interviews because the interviews conducted aim to confirm the results of observations or it can be said that this interview is a support for the observation sheet that has been done.

5) Data Analysis

The research results were processed by the researchers in several stages. First, the researchers transcribed all recorded data using dictation. The second is classifying the data that has been obtained so that it is easy to understand and process into research. The third is data reduction. Data is selected and filtered properly.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this section the researchers present the results of the data collected through observation and interviews with research subjects. The findings are presented below:

A. Psychological Factors That Hinder Students in Learning English

Psychological Factors on Speaking Skill	Number of Students	
	Meeting 1	Meeting 2
Anxiety or shyness	1, 4, 9, 12, 13, 14	9, 12, 13, 14
Lack of Confidence	4, 9, 12, 13, 14	12, 13, 14
Lack of Motivation	2, 9, 12, 13, 14	9, 12, 13, 14
Fear of Making Mistake	1, 9, 12, 13, 14	9, 12, 13, 14

Tabel 1. Psychological Factors

The table 1 above shows the results of observations that have been made by researchers during two meetings of the learning process. It can be seen that the first and second observation results have different results. In the first meeting, six students showed indications of anxiety or shyness, a lack of confidence in as many as five students, a lack of motivation in as many as five students, and a fear of making mistakes in as many as five students. Different results were shown in the second meeting observation. In the first meeting, four students showed indications of anxiety or shyness, a lack of confidence in as many as three students, a lack of motivation in as many as four students, and a fear of making mistakes in as many as four students.

In the anxiety or shyness factor, students who are indicated show behavior such as they blush when speaking in front of their friends and teachers. They look embarrassed when they are noticed by their friends when speaking. In addition, they did not dare to look at their friends or the teacher when speaking, and even looked like they did not dare to make eye contact with anyone who paid attention to them. Another behavior is that students look difficult in conveying what they want to talk about, they look difficult in thinking about something they want to say.

In the lack of confidence factor, students who are indicated show behavior that is almost the same as anxiety or shyness. Students look like they don't want to speak in front of the class when the teacher asks them to express their opinions. The students were too comfortable with what they were doing, such as just staying in their place and only paying attention to their friends who spoke in front. In addition, even though the teacher gave praise to the student to speak in front of the class, the student resisted or rejected the praise. Another thing is because they feel that their English skills are lacking, so they do not dare to take risks such as saying the wrong words.

In the lack of motivation factor, students who indicated this factor were very easy to find, such as students who seemed not interested in participating in speaking lessons. The student looks bored during the lesson, even the student does not pay attention to the teacher when explaining. When the teacher asks for something, the student easily says they can't and don't want to try, or in other words, they give up easily. Students who lack motivation also usually look inactive when

participating in learning, students will tend to be more silent during learning.

In the fear of making mistakes factor, students when speaking in front of their friends their voices sound very quiet. When saying something is not heard clearly, like whispering. As with the anxiety factor or lack of confidence, students who experience these factors tend to choose to avoid when given the opportunity to speak. Even when students receive the opportunity, the voice that is heard is not clear.

B. The Impact of Psychological Factors on Students Learning in Speaking

In this section, researchers present the results of interviews that have been conducted with several research subjects. This interview aims to clarify or recheck the observation results. The following are the results of the interviews:

a. Anxiety or Shyness

The use of very low opportunities in speaking English and the absence of interactive conversations cause a lack of confidence and acute anxiety when speaking.

"*Aku tidak mau bicara ke depan karena takut ditertawakan, soalnya aku tidak bisa berbicara pakai bahasa Inggris*" (I don't want to speak in front for fear of being laughed at, because I can't speak English)

"*Aku malu bicara di depan karena tidak bisa bahasa Inggris*" I am shy to speak in front of my friends because I can't speak English."

"*Aku malu, takut ditertawakan sama teman-teman*" (I am shy, afraid of being laughed at by my friends)

In the examples of transcript excerpts above, the three students indicated experiencing psychological factors when speaking, namely anxiety or shyness. They did not take advantage of the opportunity given by the teacher and even preferred to remain silent for fear of being laughed at by their friends.

b. Lack of confidence

Similar to anxiety or shyness. The impact of other factors also has an impact on the lack of confidence factor. A student who is shy when speaking English will also feel less confidence.

"*Saya tidak percaya diri kalau berbicara di depan, karena tidak bisa bahasa Inggris*" (I am not confidence when speaking in front of the class because I don't speak English)

"*Tidak percaya diri, malu ...*" (Not confidence, shy...)

In the examples of transcript excerpts above show that they lack confidence because they feel shy about their English skills.

c. Lack of Motivation

The student's lack of motivation in learning English and, specifically, in speaking English can be seen from how she follows the learning. The student felt lazy during the learning process. As the following transcript excerpt shows:

"*Aku malas berbicara.*" (Lazy to speak)

In the transcript excerpt above show that the student has no motivation to learn English. Laziness dominates the student. It can be seen that the student has no motivation to learn.

Another statement during the interview also proved that indeed the student lacked motivation to speak English: "I like English, but I am lazy to speak".

d. Fear of Making Mistakes

The fear of making mistakes can also affect the learning process of students in the classroom. Students who do not want to speak English because they are afraid of making mistakes. The student was afraid of being wrong in speaking because he or she could not speak English.

"*Saya takut salah karena tidak bisa bahasa Inggris*" (I'm afraid of being wrong because I can't speak English)

DISCUSSION

A. Psychological Factors that Prevent Students from Learning to Speak Fluently

One of the skills that can be said to be difficult to master by students in Indonesia is related to speaking skills. There are many things that can affect their delay and cause difficulties in mastering their speaking skills. Such is the case at SMP Muhammadiyah 6 Krian, which is one of the private junior high schools in Sidoarjo district. More precisely, it can be seen at the 7th grade level with the ICO (International Class Orientation) program, where in the class program students are more emphasized and focused on their English language skills. Actually, if you look closely, the ICO class subjects and other regular classes are almost the same, the difference is in English subjects. The amount of learning time in the ICO class is more, and they have a separate schedule for each ability in English, such as speaking classes, reading classes, listening classes, and also writing classes.

Seeing that they have more opportunities to learn each skill than other regular classes, it cannot make them easily master English as well and quickly as other regular classes. As happened to the ICO class students, they showed that some of the ICO class students experienced obstacles in speaking class because of psychological factors. Some psychological factors were found to be present in some of these students. During the learning process, they showed indications of these psychological factors, such as anxiety or shyness, a lack of confidence, a lack of motivation, and a fear of making mistakes when speaking. These four factors become their obstacles during the speaking learning process in class.

Anxiety is the first factor in learning to speak. Students who experience anxiety during the learning process look like they are afraid when they are given the opportunity to speak or are appointed by the teacher to simply express their opinions. This is the same as the opinion of the American Psychological Association cited in Januariza and Hendriani, which says that anxiety an emotion is marked by a feeling of tension, worried thoughts, and physical changes [20]. When speaking in front of the class, they look shy and also uncomfortable when delivering something. According to Tobias, cited in Ansari, anxiety is a complex concept that depends not only on one's confidence, but also on the opportunities and risks accociated with a particular situation [21]. The feeling of anxiety is a feeling that cannot be explained in words. This is because the feeling is only in the mind. The perception of each individual who thinks about something that is not necessarily happening can also be said to be anxiety. Some of the things they fear include being laughed at by their friends when they speak in front of the class. This is the cause of their inhibitions in developing their speaking skills. Based on the results of interviews, researchers found that students often feel anxious or embarrassed when appearing to speak in front of the class because they cannot

speak English. Because they cannot speak English and are afraid of being laughed at by their friends, this kind of thinking is the cause of anxiety and embarrassment.

The second psychological factor shown by students is their lack of self-confidence. This lack of confidence is still influenced by the anxiety they experience. According Nunan cited in Ahsan, M., Asgher, T., & Hussain, Z, students who feel lack confidence in speaking English will experience communication anxiety [22]. Students who feel less confident will look more passive. This is based on observations that show that students who lack confidence are more passive during the learning process and only look down. They seemed not to want to be involved in the learning process. They feel less confidence because they feel intimidated by the gaze of their friends, so students who lack confidence will always look down or look at the floor the class when speaking in front of the class. In addition, students feel less confidence because their English skills are not good enough, so when speaking English, they lack confidence and are less confidence in their abilities. The same results are also shown by previous research conducted by Juhana, which shows that students who lack confidence in speaking due to limited knowledge of English also do not have the ability to speak English [17].

The third factor is lack of motivation. Motivation relates to students' interest or desire to learn something new. Motivation is one of the most important factors in successful foreign language learning [8]. For example, learning and mastering English speaking skills. Students who lack motivation towards English speaking will show unpleasant behavior during the teaching and learning process in speaking class. They don't seem to care about the teacher or the speaking lesson. Even when the teacher is explaining the material, they don't seem to care. Students who lack motivation in learning speaking skills tend to be inactive during the lesson. They are not interested in what the teacher is explaining and prefer to be silent but not pay attention to the lesson.

The last factor is the fear of making mistakes. The mistake referred to here is that they are afraid that when speaking English they will make mistakes, whether it is mistakes in pronunciation of words, sentence structure, grammar, and so on. As stated by Middleton cited in Nakhalah , some students are afraid of making mistakes when speaking English, they don't want to look stupid in front of their friends, and also they worry about how to say vocabulary in English, whether it sounds good or bad [23]. Actually, mistakes that happen to us when we learn something or when we learn English are normal, and there is no need to be afraid when we make mistakes. Mistakes are something we don't want to make, because they are unintentional.

B. The Impact of Psychological Factors in The Process of Learning Speaking in Class

Based on the four psychological factors found in students' speaking ability, of course these factors have an impact on the mastery and development of students' speaking ability in English. The impact of these factors can hinder students in mastering their speaking skills in English. Students who experience these psychological factors cannot speak well. Their speaking ability tends to be lacking. In the speaking learning process, students tend to be more silent and do not participate during learning. Students who experience these factors choose to be silent because they are not confident in their English language skills. Based on the results of interviews, students admitted that they were not confident in their English skills and they said they could not speak English. In addition, they feel worried if when speaking in front of their friends, they will be laughed at because of their poor speaking skills. This makes it difficult for students to develop and learn English speaking skills. The same result was shown by research conducted by N. Nijat, H.

Atifnigar, K. Chandran et al. The results of the study show that psychological factors have an impact on students' speaking skill, or in other words that psychological factors can prevent students from speaking English [24]

In addition, students are also unable to speak in English well because they are more focused on the opinions of their friends which are not necessarily the case. Students tend to lack concentration when speaking in English. The students immediately seemed to lose ideas or words that they would say, and it happened because they were in a position where they immediately felt anxious, embarrassed, and afraid at the same time. Students feel afraid and anxious if when speaking they make mistakes, for example, wrong pronunciation of words, grammar, or the form of sentences they say. The existence of psychological factors like this is what makes students unable to speak English well, students have difficulty mastering speaking skills well. The same results were also found by Bakhtiar and Suwandi, who in their research showed several impacts of psychological factors on speaking, and one of them was that students who experienced anxiety had difficulty memorizing information or speaking in English [25].

Therefore, the psychological factors that students experience in their English speaking skills have a negative impact. Something that should be easy for them to master speaking skills is currently a difficult thing for students. The adverse impact caused by these psychological factors greatly disrupts the process of developing and mastering students' English speaking skills.

IV. CONLUSION

Based on research that has been conducted by researchers who aim to find out what psychological factors in speaking can hinder students in learning English speaking skills and also the impact of these factors on student learning, the results show that there are four psychological factors in speaking that affect ICO (International Class Orientation) class students in learning English speaking skills. The four factors are anxiety or shyness, lack of confidence, lack of motivation, and fear of making mistakes. These factors have an impact on students in the process of developing students' speaking skills. The adverse impact caused by these psychological factors is that students can speak English well and also students have difficulty in learning and developing their English speaking skills.

Seeing the impact of these factors, the researchers suggests parents and teachers to provide understanding to students that in developing speaking skills there is no need to be afraid of making mistakes. In addition, in developing speaking skills, the role of parents and teachers is needed in helping students. Therefore, the researchers suggests to future researchers who want to study the same topic to further examine how the teacher's role in overcoming psychological factors in developing students' English speaking skills.

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