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An Investigation of Sociocultural Factors That Cause Language Anxiety in Speaking English for the Second Year Students of English Department of Teachers Training Faculty HKBP Nommensen University Pematangsiantar

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Abstract: *This articles deals with the finding of sociocultural factors that can cause language anxiety for the second year students of English department of Teachers training faculty HKBP Nommensen University Pematangsiantar in learning english as foreign language and particularly in speaking English Language. This study adopted a qualitative case study approach. The sampling of participants was done through purposive sampling in order to select information-rich cases. Data collection was done through asking ESL students by giving some questionaires. Fourty students were asked to get their perspectives on the language anxiety phenomenon. In order to understand language anxiety, sociocultural factors were investigated: 1. Social Environment for L2/FL Acquisition, 2. Error in Social Setting, 3. Gender. This project was discovered that the language anxiety experienced by the participants stemmed from the learners themselves, caused by social and cultural influence. At the end this article, the findings will show the dominat sociocultural factors that cause the language anxiety in speaking English for the students and propose five strategies categories used by the participants to cope with language anxiety and involved two ways of lecturer's classroom intervention.*
Keywords: *Speaking, anxiety, sociocultural*

I. INTRODUCTION

This research is the study on the investigation of sociocultural factors that cause language anxiety in speaking English for the second year students of English department of Teachers training faculty HKBP Nommensen University Pematangsiantar.

The Purpose of the current paper is to find out the sociocultural factors that cause language anxiety in speaking English for the second year students of English department of Teachers training faculty HKBP Nommensen University Pematangsiantar. The students came from many places around Pematangsiantar Town and Simalungun Regency even out of North Sumatera Province. They are chosen by the writer because of the students can be the representative of students of English department of Teachers training faculty problem in case of anxiety in speaking English.

There are some reasons why this investigation in necessary to be done. First is the needs of documentation for English department of Teachers training faculty HKBP Nommensen University Pematangsiantar. This documentation can be necessary for the needs practical and scientific uses in the next time. The second is to investigate the sociocultural factors that cause language anxiety in speaking English which faced by the students of English students the teachers training faculty. The findings of preliminary research for the sake of this study shows that sociocultural factors proposed by Horwitz (1986) namely: 1. Social environment for foreign

language acquisition, 2. Error in social setting, and 3. Gender can cause the language anxiety in speaking English by the students.

At the end, based on the core theory of anxiety After that this article also proposed some strategies to solve the problem as Horwitz (1986) proposed in his previous findings.

To analyze the sociocultural factors that cause language anxiety for the second year students of English department of Teachers training faculty HKBP Nommensen University Pematangsiantar in learning English as foreign language and particularly in speaking English Language, the writer would like formulate the research problems by the following questions:

1. What are the socio-cultural factors that cause language anxiety for foreign language learners in learning English as foreign language and particularly in speaking English Language?
2. How is the speaking anxiety manifested in the learners?
3. Which strategies can be used to successfully cope with language anxiety?

To answer the problem above, the writer tries to learn some literature related to the language anxiety that can influence the English speaking of the students

II. THEORETICAL REVIEW

2.1 Definition of Speaking

There are four skills that we need to have in learning a language. Speaking is one of it. In daily interaction, we need the language to communicate and deliver our purpose to our listener. Therefore, speaking is defined as "An interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information" (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997). The other expert (Chaney,1998:13) defines that "speaking is the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts".

By the definition above, we can interfere that speaking is expressing ideas, opinion, feeling, and delivering information to others by using words or sounds to inform, to persuade and to entertain that can be gotten from the teaching and learning process. In the process of the speaking interaction, the speakers sometimes have some problem.

2.2 Problems in Speaking

Someone's speaking is categorized having problem(s) when his speaking can't be understood by his listener. An issue which has been extensively discussed in the literature concerns the level of Indonesian learners EFL speaking proficiency. A number of reports show that Indonesian learners commonly have not attained a good level of oral English proficiency. Beside that the most problem that can be easily seen nameny the anxiety of the student when they speak in English. This anxiety can influance the speaking skill of the students.

2.2.1 Anxiety

In order to understand the specific type of anxiety that learner's experience in a foreign language classroom, it is important to first consider anxiety in general terms. As a psychological construct, anxiety is described as "a state of apprehension, a vague fear that is only indirectly associated with an object"(Tanveer, 2007:3). Wang (2005:13) distinguished anxiety from fear by pointing out that although anxiety and fear are both "unpleasant emotional reactions to the stimulus conditions perceived as threatening," fear is usually derived from a "real, objective

danger in the external environment" while the threatening stimulus of anxiety may not be known. Spielberger as cited in Wilson (2006:41) defined anxiety as "the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system." More specifically, Morris, David and Hutchings (1981) claimed that general anxiety consists of two components: "worry andemotionality." Worry or "cognitive anxiety" refers to "negative expectationsand cognitive concerns about oneself, the situation at hand, and possible consequence". On the other hand, emotionality or "somatic anxiety"concerns "one's perceptions of the physiological-affective elements of the anxiety experience, which are indications of autonomic arousal and unpleasant feeling states, such as nervousness, upset stomach, poundingheart, sweating, and tension" (Morris, David, & Hutchings, 1981).

2.2.2 What Causes Language Anxiety?

What causes language anxiety is a main question of this research study and is of interest to all language lecturer and learners, as well as SLA scholars who are interested in anxiety and learning. Considering anxiety as a highly influential construct in language learning, SLA researchers have tried to investigate the sources or reasons that language anxiety can stem from within both academic and social contexts, and have suggested a variety of strategies to cope with it. The fact that language anxiety is a psychological construct, it most likely stems from the learner's own 'self', i.e., as an intrinsic motivator (Scovel 1991:16), e.g., his or her self perceptions, perceptions about others (peers, teachers, interlocutors, etc.) and target language communication situations, his/her beliefs about L2/FL learning etc. Language anxiety may be a result as well as a cause of insufficient command of the target language (Sparks and Ganschow; cited in Horwitz, 2001: 118). That is to say it may be experienced due to linguistic difficulties L2/FL learners face in learning and using the target language. Within social contexts, language anxiety may be experienced due to extrinsic motivators (Scovel, 1991: 16), such as different social and cultural environments, particularly the environments where L1 and L2/FL learning takes place. Also, the target language is a representation of another cultural community; there is a predisposition among some people to experience such anxiety because of their own concerns about ethnicity, foreignness, and the like (Gardner cited in Horwitz & Young, 1991: viii). Social status of the speaker and the interlocutor, a sense of power relations between them, and gender could also be important factors in causing language anxiety for L2/FL speakers. A further detailed investigation of these factors could potentially assist language teachers to alleviate anxiety in the classroom setting and to make the classroom environment less anxiety-provoking and hence to improve learners' performance in the target language.

2.3 Socio-cultural Factors

According to W. Labov (1966), Sociolinguistics is concerned with language in social and cultural context, especially how people with different social identities (e.g. gender, age, race, ethnicity, class) speak and how their speech changes in different situations. Some of the issues addressed are how features of dialects (ways of pronouncing words, choice of words, patterns of words) cluster together to form personal styles of speech; why people from different communities or cultures can misunderstand what is meant, said and done based on the different ways they use language. Sociolinguistics encompasses a range of methodologies, both quantitative and qualitative. Language anxiety stems primarily from social and communicative aspects of language learning and therefore can be considered as one of the social anxieties. (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989, 1991b: cited in MacIntyre, 1995:91).

In the previous part, it has been viewed that difficulties in leaning foreign language can explain the potential causes of language anxiety at the output stage of language learning within the classroom setting. However, language anxiety may also be an outcome of social and communicative aspects of language learning. This section reviews the literature on language anxiety from a socio-cultural perspective of language learning and its use.

2.4 Social Environment for FL Acquisition

Foreign language can take place in two different kinds of social environments: a) where the target language is not used as L1 in the community, and b) where it is used as first language. The first kind of environment provides foreign language learners only limited and sometimes faulty input. As Krashen (1985: 46) states, for such learners, "the only input is teachers' or classmates' talk - both do not speak foreign language well". Learners in such environments are exposed to the language only in the classroom where they spend less time in contact with the language, covering a smaller discourse type. The limited exposure to the target language and lack of opportunities to practice speaking in such environments do not let the communicative abilities of L2/FL learners fully develop and result into embarrassment or stress for them when they are required to speak both in and out of the class.

In contrast, the second kind of environment provides learners with greater exposure to the target language. However, even in this case, some researchers' view that learners' use of cognitive skills and metalinguistic awareness (world and social knowledge) may interfere with language learning and they may not be able to achieve native like proficiency as is gained by a child (Lightbown and Spada, 2006: 30).

Krashen explains this child-adult difference in ultimate attainment in terms of the strength of 'affective filter'. He believes that 'affective filter' may exist for the child foreign language acquirer but it is rarely high enough to prevent native-like levels of attainment, and for adults, it rarely goes down enough to allow L1-like attainment. Older learners may have increased inhabitations and anxiety and may find themselves afraid to make errors (Richard, 1996: 2).

2.5 Errors in Social Setting

Although it is axiomatic that language learning cannot be without errors, errors can be a source of anxiety in some individuals because they draw attention to the difficulty of making positive social impressions when speaking a new language (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989). Errors in social settings are mostly overlooked if they do not interfere with meaning because people consider it impolite to interrupt and correct somebody who is trying to have a conversation with them. Interlocutors only react to an error if they cannot understand the speech and try to adjust their speech with the speaker in their effort to negotiate for meaning (Lightbown and Spada, 2006: 32). It is only in the classroom environment that feedback on errors is provided frequently; this leads many learners to frustration and embarrassment by making them conscious about their deficiencies.

2.6 Gender

Gender has also been found to cause anxiety in male and female interaction both within and out of the classroom settings. Carrier (1999: 70) states that past research has revealed that gender affects communication between foreign language dyads and native and foreign language speaker dyads (e.g., Pica, Holliday, Lewis, Berducci, & Newman, 1991, cited in 1999:70). He

deems it necessary to consider whether the gender of the L1 speaker interlocutor has an effect on the listening comprehension of the L2/FL speaker interlocutor.

Gobel and Matsuda (2003) asserted that gender-related anxiety research has yielded conflicting results. Spielberger (1983: 19), in her study on state anxiety found, "females are more emotionally stable than males in their reactions to highly stressful and relaxing circumstances". Similarly, in Kitano's study (2001, cited in Gobel and Matsuda, 2003: 23) of Japanese college students, male students have been found to feel more anxiety when they perceived their spoken Japanese less competent than that of others; however, such a relationship was not observed among female students. On the contrary, Machida (2001: cited in 2003: 23) examined FL Japanese language class anxiety based on gender and found that female learners are more anxious than male counterparts.

2.7 Manifestation

The previous second language aquisition researcher and foreign language teachers have decoded a number of symptoms and behaviours manifested in anxious learners. Negative consequences of language anxiety manifest in the form of changed behaviour, such as:

(1) exhibiting avoidance behaviour by missing class, having unrealistic high performance standards (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002: 563);

(2) freezing up in role play activities, participating infrequently (Horwitz et al., 1986: 129);

(3) responding less effectively to language errors (Gregersen, 2003: cited in Gregersen, 2007: 210);

(4) engaging in negative self-talk and ruminating over poor performance, which affects information processing abilities (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994: 285); and

(5) ultimately receiving low course grades (Gardner, 1985: cited in Gregersen, 2007: 210).

In addition, Harrigan et al. (2004: cited in 2007: 210) posited that anxiety can be accurately decoded both through prosodic (stress and intonation pattern), paralinguistic (non verbal) features of vocal communication and through visual non-verbal cues. Gregersen (2005, cited in 2007: 210) in her study on nonverbal behaviour of anxious and non-anxious language learners found that "anxious learners manifested limited facial activity, including brow behaviour and smiling, maintained less eye contact with the teacher, and were more rigid and closed with their posture". The sign students' anxiety can be seen also by behavioral arising from the social axiety like Leary's (cited in Young, 1991: 429) three categories of behaviour arising from social anxiety seem relevant to the discussion on manifestation of language anxiety. These are (1) arousal-mediated responses; (2) disaffiliative behaviour; and (3) image protection behaviour. According to Leary, individuals have a sympathetic nervous system; the arousal-mediated responses are the side-effects of their activation of this system. Individuals manifest anxiety when they "squirm in their seats, fidget, play with their hair, clothes, or other manipulable objects, stutter and stammer as they talk, and generally appear jittery and nervous" (p. 110). Actions that reduce social interactions are characterized by disaffiliative behaviour; these are manifested by a fewer initiations of conversations, less participation in conversations, fewer instances of silence breakers, and shorter speaking periods when in front of an audience. Image protection behaviour is characterized by smiling and nodding frequently, by seldom interrupting others, and by giving frequent communicative feedback such as 'uh-huh'.

This language anxiety is the phenomenon which can influence the speaking skills achievement, it is mostly to the negative effect. The speaking skill achievement is not maximum anymore. There must a solution to overcome this problem, because it really help the students speaking skills positive achievement.

2.8 Alleviation of Foreign Language Anxiety

The first important steps in coping language anxiety are to identify anxiety producing factors for foreign language learner and knows the the learner's manifestation of this anxiety while communicating in the target language are important first steps in coping with language anxiety. An extensive body of research has suggested a variety of strategies to cope with language anxiety in academic settings, which can also offer an understanding of how to deal with it in the broader social contexts.

Young (1990: 1) also offered some suggestions in this regard that can help to this problem of sociocultural factors, such as;
1. For anxieties stemming from classroom procedures, using more pair and group work;
2. Playing language games with an emphasis on problem-solving; and
3. Role-playing with preparatory activities to instill class rapport. Furthermore, he found that the students felt more at ease when the instructors' manner of error correction was not harsh and when they were friendly, patient, and had a good sense of humour. So, it can also be suggested that equal status relationship between teacher and student is an important aspect for anxiety alleviation. Hauck and Hurd (2005)

The writer has explored the literature on socio-cultural aspects of language learning and has discussed social environment for foreign language aquisition, error in social setting and gender as some of the factors linked with language anxiety.

In addition, the literature on how to alleviate the foreign language anxiety also can be done by the students coping strategy and teacher's clasroom intervension.

2.9 Students coping strategy

In general, there are three approaches to the alleviation of anxiety, cognitive, affective, and behavioral approaches (Hembree, 1988, cited in Kondo & Ying-ling, 2004:259). These three intervention approaches provide the basis for the types of strategies students may use to tackle their language anxiety. According to Kondo & Ying-ling (2004: 259), if students think that their cognition (worry, preoccupations, and concerns) creates anxiety, they may attempt to suppress or alter the thought processes related to language learning. Those who believe that somatic arousal (physiological responses to anxiety) is the main concern may find ways to ease bodily reactions and tension. If students assume that anxiety arises because they lack the necessary academic skills, they may study harder. However, if students perceive that their anxiety is too much to cope with, they may not invest effort in reducing the anxiety. In his study which was designed to develop a typology of strategies that Japanese students use to cope with English language learning anxiety, Kondo (2004) identified 70 basic tactics and put them into five strategy categories. Those include:(1) Preparation (e.g. studying hard, trying to obtain good summaries of lecture notes), (2) Relaxation (e.g. taking a deep breath, trying to calm down), (3) Positive thinking (e.g. imagining oneself giving a great performance, trying to enjoy the tension), (4) Peer seeking (e.g. looking for others who are having difficulty controlling their anxiety, asking other

students if they understand the class), and (5)Resignation (e.g. giving up, sleeping in class)
(Kondo, 2004: 258).

2.10 Lecturer's classroom interventions

According to Horwitz (1986: 131-132), in general, educators have two options
when dealing with anxious students:
1) They can help students learn to cope with the existing anxiety-provoking situation; or
2) They can make the learning context less stressful. However, what is the most important is that
the lecturer must first acknowledge the existence of foreign language anxiety in the classroom
before attributing a student's poor language performance to "lack of ability, inadequate
background, or poor motivation" (Horwitz, 1986: 131-132). The author argued that a supportive
lecturer who acknowledges students' feelings and offers concrete suggestions for building up
foreign language confidence can play a key role in alleviating learner anxiety.

From the explanation above we can clearly understand that it suggested both of the
students and lecturer has very important role in alleviating the anxiety, eventhought teacher has
the most important role

III. RESEARCH METHOD

This research used qualitative research method. This allows the researcher to understand
the subjective world of human experience by making an effort to get inside the person and to
understand from within (Cohen et al.2000:22) and finally by this method, it will allows the
researchers to obtain descriptive information on variables not easily assessed through empirical
research and can provide a way to view phenomena from the point of view of the subject (Price,
1991:101). To support this method, the researcher gives questionnaires to the subject of the
research namely 40 second year students of English department of Teachers training faculty
HKBP Nommensen University Pematangsiantar.

The technique of the data analysis meant here is the analysis of the colleded data by using
questionaire on the investigation of sociocultural factors that cause language anxiety for the
second year students of English department of Teachers training faculty HKBP Nommensen
University Pematangsiantar. The technique conducted in this study based on frequency
distribution of responses by using percentage formula (Sudjana, 2001:129)

$$P = \frac{F}{n} \times 100\%$$

P in this formula means the result of percentage, f means the number of responses, and n
means the number of the whole responses. This percentile rank was adapted from Best,
(1981:238) and Arikunto, (1992:208). This is used to describe the distribution of the responses.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. Data Analysis on Socio-Cultural

The researcher in this section had classified 3 factors which could influence students'
anxiety during speaking namely Social Environment for Foreign Language (FL) Acquisition,
Error in Social Setting, and Gender. Hence, twenty questions had been arranged by the reseacher
in order to generate the students' answers where eight questions reffered to Social Environment

for Foreign Language (FL) Acquisition, eight questions reffered to Error in Social Setting, and four questions concerned to gender.

The answer of the students on the given questionnaire related to every single sociocultural factors that cause language anxiety shows the percentage as follows:

1. Social Environment for Foreign Language Acquisition. Agree : 59 %, Not Agree: 41 %

2. Error In Social Setting. Agree : 49 %, Not Agree: 51 %

3. Gender. Agree : 35 %, Not Agree: 69 %

4. Manifestation. Agree : 57 %, Not Agree: 43 %

4.2 Data Analysis on Strategies to cope with Language Anxiety

The writer had designed eight questions which were believed to eliminate students' anxiety in English department of Teachers training faculty HKBP Nommensen University Pematangsiantar in learning english as foreign language and particularly in speaking English Language. These strategies were proposed by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986 cited in Machida: 2011). In these strategies, teachers were asked to help students learn to cope with the existing anxiety provoking situation and made the learning context less stressful (p. 131).

The answer of the students on the given questionnaire related to Problem Solution/ Strategies to cope the language anxiety shows the percentage 91 % Agree and 9% Not Agree.

4.3 Findings

Based from the data analysis, the researcher found several findings which are;

1. The socio-cultural factors that cause language anxiety for the students of the second year students of English department of Teachers training faculty HKBP Nommensen University Pematangsiantar in speaking are social environment for L2/FL acquisition, error in social setting, and gender with the number occurrence 67%. However, the most dominant factors influence speaking in English department of Teachers training faculty HKBP Nommensen University Pematangsiantar are environment for L2/FL acquisition with the number of occurrence 59 % which contrastly different with gender as the lowest factors influences speaking anxiety with the number occurrences 35%.

2. The strategies used to cope with language anxiety at the students of the second year students of English department of Teachers training faculty HKBP Nommensen University Pematangsiantar are those proposed by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) with the number occurrence 91 %.

4.4 Discussions

The researcher found that there are negative relationship between the speaking skills to the anxiety. Sociocultural factors refer to anxiety theories offered by Horwitz do not switch with the researcher's expectation. It's because of the total percentage of factors influenced the anxiety under seventy five percent. This condition is acceptable because the researcher assumed that; First, the theories proposed by Horwitz concerning with anxiety in speaking were applied in western countries not for eastern countries. Hence, the culture, learning environment and the social setting were completely different with eastern countries. Secondly, the researcher assumed that there are many other factors that can cause anxiety beside of sociocultural factors. These

factor maybe take part more than 50% of the whole factors that cause the students anxiety. It can be seen from sociocultural factors percentage above with the accurance 47 %.

In addition, the researcher believes that the language anxiety offered by Horwitz was applied in western countries where status of English was first language. Hence, proficiency was a major issue. Learners were required to speak like a native speaker in order to communicate inside and outside the classroom. This condition was totally different with Indonesia context, since the status of English in Indonesia is perceived as foreign language. Learners are do not concern in making mistake during speaking. This situation is also supported lack skill if English profesional teacher.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1. Conclusions

Based on all discussions, it is concluded that:

1) The Socio-Cultural factors that cause language anxiety for the second year students of English department of Teachers training faculty HKBP Nommensen University Pematangsiantar were Social Environment for Foreign Language Acquisition, Error in Social Setting, and, Gender.

2) The strategies used to eliminate with language anxiety at English department of Teachers training faculty HKBP Nommensen University Pematangsiantar were Lecturer can help students learn to cope with the existing anxiety provoking situation and Lecturer can make the learning context relax and less stressful.

5.2 Suggestions

It is very important for all Englis Lecturer not only knows and realize the the sociocultural factors that can cause the speaking anxiety for the students but they are also espected to assist the students to overcome their strange feelings of unease and discomfort. Based on the findings of this study, the following suggestions can be made.

5.2.1 Teachers/ Candidate Teacher

1) The English teachers should understand that the students has the anxiety in joining his class and he must be be able to take the urgent initiative to reduce it. They should able to identify the student with signs of stress and anxiety and should apply suitable strategies to help them reducing these feelings.

2) Communicative approach is the right teaching approachment to make the students have more chance or time to practice their English speaking. By this, the students will be habitual with the language and aoutomatically reduce students' anxiety level.

3) It should be ensured that students are provided friendly, informal and learning-supportive environments in activating the student's participation in the classroom discussion. The teacher should be friendly, helpful and has co-operative behavior, makes students feel comfortable when speaking in the class. Hopely, this teacher's action will reduce the students anxiety.

4) To make sure the students feel successful in using English, teachers should avoid setting up activities that enhance the chances for them to fail. They should also make sure

whether the students are ready for the given activity and have sufficient ideas and lexis to complete the task successfully.

5) It is very important for the education institution to make some specific teachers training courses on language anxiety in order to help the teachers can overcome this complexes issues. The teacher also can join a workshop, seminar related to the skill of alleviating the students speaking anxiety.

5.2.2 Students

1) To the students speaking anxiety, students must habit himself with speaking practice. By practice, they will know their own strength and weakness. By this practice also will eliminate the problem of the speaking anxiety as the proverb says " a costume make all things be easy".

2) It is very important also for the student to habit himself to interact among his classmate by using English as their language even though not so perfect, it will help them usual with the language.

3) For the students feel usual with the language among the students, the other most important thing is the students also need to be usual to speak with his teacher and this condition will help the students has less anxiety when his teacher ask him to speak or doing something.

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