THE CORRELATION BETWEEN THE THIRD YEAR STUDENTS' ANXIETY IN SPEAKING PERFORMANCE AND THEIR SPEAKING ABILITY AT THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT OF BUNG HATTA UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to determine the correlation between third-year students' anxiety in speaking performance and their speaking ability in the English Department at Bung Hatta University. Using a correlational design, data were collected through a questionnaire and speaking tests, with reliability indices of 0.71 and 0.57, respectively. The analysis revealed a calculated r-value of 0.455, exceeding the r-table value of 0.3809 at a 0.05 significance level. This indicates a significant positive correlation, suggesting that higher anxiety is associated with higher speaking ability, while lower anxiety corresponds to lower speaking ability.
Keywords: correlation, anxiety, speaking ability

INTRODUCTION

Learning a foreign language primarily aims to enhance communication skills, with speaking being one of the most crucial and challenging aspects. Students learning English need to master four fundamental language skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. Among these, speaking is particularly complex as it involves not only the ability to articulate words but also the understanding of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Effective communication in a foreign language relies heavily on these elements [1].

However, many students find speaking in English difficult, especially those learning it as a second language [2]. This challenge is often exacerbated by anxiety, a significant non-linguistic factor that can negatively impact speaking performance. Anxiety in language learning can manifest as fear of making mistakes, lack of confidence, and concern about being judged by peers or teachers. Such anxiety can create a barrier, preventing students from expressing themselves fluently and effectively [3].

Research suggests that anxiety can significantly hinder students' ability to communicate, particularly in speaking. Studies have shown that students who experience high levels of anxiety may struggle with fluency, feeling too nervous to speak up, whether in class, in front of an audience, or even in casual conversations with friends. This anxiety can stem from various fears, such as the fear of mispronouncing words, receiving negative feedback, or not meeting academic expectations.

Given the importance of speaking skills in language learning and the impact of anxiety on students' ability to speak, this study seeks to explore the correlation between third-year students' anxiety in speaking performance and their actual speaking ability at the English Department of Bung Hatta University. By examining this relationship, the research aims to provide insights that could help educators better support students who struggle with speaking anxiety, ultimately enhancing their overall language proficiency. In conclusion, the issue of speaking anxiety is not just a matter of language proficiency but also involves emotional and psychological factors. Understanding and addressing these factors are crucial in helping students overcome their fears and become more confident and effective communicators in English. In this research the researcher proposed the following hypothesis:

1. **Ha:** There is a significant correlation between students' anxiety in speaking performance and their speaking ability.
2. **H0:** There is no significant correlation between students' anxiety in speaking performance and their speaking ability.

METHOD

The type of this research was correlational research. In this research, the researcher to find the correlation between thethird year students' speaking anxiety in speaking performance and their speaking ability. In other word, this research was to find out the relationship between two variables (speaking ability and anxiety level). A statistical test was used to identify the propensity or pattern for two (or more) variables or two sets of data to change regularly is the correlational research approach. The instruments used in this research were questionnaire and speaking test. The researcher used questionnaire because she wanted to know the third-year students' anxiety in speaking performance, and it was adopted from FLCAS (Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale) elaborated by Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope (1986) [4]. She also used speaking test to know the students' ability in speaking English. Based on the result of data analysis, it was found that the reliability index of the questionnaire and speaking test were 0.71 and 0.57 respectively. To analyze data, she used Pearson Product Moment formula as the following:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{n\Sigma xy - (\Sigma x)(\Sigma y)}{\sqrt{\{(n\Sigma x^2) - (\Sigma x)^2\}\{(n\Sigma y^2) - (\Sigma y)^2\}}}$$

Where:

r_{xy} : The coefficient of correlation between x and y variable

x : The score of students' anxiety

y : The score of students' speaking test

n : The number of students

Σx : The total of x

Σy : The total of y

Σxy : Total cross product of xy

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

a. Findings

Based on the result of data analysis, the researcher found that the value of the coefficient correlation between students' anxiety in speaking performance and their speaking abilityis 0.036 (see appendix 8). It means that there is a correlation between students' anxiety in speaking performance and their speaking ability third-year students of the English Department of Bung Hatta University. As already discussed previously, the finding of this study is that the coefficient correlation between students'

anxiety in speaking performance and their speaking ability is 0.71. To see whether such correlation is significant or not, it was compared with the value of r_{table}at significant level α 0.05 and df = n-2 (27). As a matter of fact, the value of $r_{table}$is 0.3809. It means that $r_{counted}$is higher than r_{table} (0.445> 0.3809). It can be stated that there is significant correlation between the third-year students' anxiety in speaking performance and their speaking ability (see appendix 8). Therefore, the statistical or null hypothesis (Ho) that states "there is no significant correlation between the third-year students' anxiety in speaking performance and their speaking ability at the English department of Bung Hatta University" is rejected.

b. Discussions

The result of the data analysis showed that there is a positive significant correlation between students' anxiety in speaking performance and their speaking ability. Its index coefficient correlation is 0.71. Since the correlation between the third-year students' anxiety in speaking performance and their speaking ability at the English Department of Bung Hatta University is a positive, it can be interpreted that students' anxiety in speaking performance has correlation with their speaking ability. Based on classification of correlation elaborated by Arikunto (2006: 75), the correlation of two variables (anxiety in speaking performance and speaking ability) could be classified as very high correlation [5].

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings of this study as already discussed above, the researcher concluded that there is a significant correlation between the third-year students' anxiety in speaking performance and their speaking ability in the English Department at Bung Hatta University. Related to the study, the writer would like to give suggestion to the English lecturers to conduct and guide their students to practice their speaking ability in enjoyable, relax atmosphere in order to minimize their anxiety.

REFFERENCES

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