# STUDENTS' SPEAKING ANXIETY IN BASIC SPOKEN ENGLISH

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**Abstract**
*This study aimed to describe about the factors that caused students' speaking anxiety and the students' strategies to reduce the anxiety in basic spoken English class. The participants of the study were 18 students who took basic spoken English class in the first semester. The method used in this study was descriptive qualitative. The data were obtained from interview and observation. The findings revealed that the students' speaking anxiety in basic spoken English was derived from some factors provoked by both internal and external matters. First factor was type of task. The task became something that causes anxiety if the students' were asked to present the activities in front of the class. The second was fear of making mistakes. All the students felt the same thing about their anxious feeling when they made mistakes. The third was the role of language teachers. It was related to how teachers create classroom atmosphere which was suitable for the teaching and learning process. The fourth factor was self-perception, self-perception in this context is a perception that causes negative effect on students. The last factor was limited exposure to English. Limited exposure to English in their environment impedes the development of their communicative proficiency. The results of this study also found that there were good strategies which they applied to reduce anxiety. The first was preparation before learning English, it helped students to feel better because they had material that they could use for the learning. The second strategy was positive thinking. Positive thinking as a psychological factor was needed to cope the language anxiety and to lose a fear of being anxiety in the classroom. The last strategy that they used was peer seeking. It was often done by the students. The students liked to ask a friend if there was something that they did not understand.*

*Keywords:   speaking anxiety, students' strategies, spoken English,*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

English becomes the most essential language in the world. Almost all the people from many different countries around the world use it to communicate. The area of English has always become a special interest. It is because of the importance of English in any scope of our lives. People as social beings cannot live without

others, they need to interact and cooperate with other people. According to Irsyad & Narius (2013), speaking is verbal communication which is utilized by individuals in their social relations. Through speaking, individuals can express their opinions, thoughts, and emotions to other people. Similary, Clark (1997, as cited in Irsyad & Narius. 2013) claimed that speaking is an instrument act which very basic level communication for people. Irsyad & Narius (2013) also argued that one of the language skills that have to be mastered by students in learning of foreign language is speaking, besides listening, and writing. Nowadays, speaking can be a challenging task for many students because it requires interaction. Other English language skills can be improved by their independently, however for speaking, students cannot speak by their self, and they have to find someone who can speak to them to achieve their speaking skills (Indrianty, 2016). However, many students find difficulties in speaking foreign language. Souriyavongsa, Rany, Abidin, and Leong (2013) added that most of students are powerless in foreign language learning were found in many parts of the world, particularly for the nations that foreign language is not spoken as the first language. One of the factors that contributes in speaking foreign language is fear of making mistakes.

Speaking becomes the major effect of language learners' anxiety on the language skill. Oral communication is two way processes between a listener and speaker (Byrne, 1984:8). Speaking basically involves both productive and receptive skills. As a productive skill, a speaker produces and uses the language by expressing ideas and at the same time he or she tries to get the ideas or the message across, that is, the process of giving message or encoding process. Within the field of research itself, lots have been done in terms all language skills. Speaking might have its own numerous researches. Among the four language skills, much attention of research on anxiety has been given to speaking skill. This case is also based on the fact that speaking skill is likely more complex compared to other skills.

MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) mentioned that speaking in the second language is the most anxiety for the students and half is the use of speaking skills as confidence-building experience. This was also supported by my own experience, some college students admitted that actually, they had gotten the ideas in their mind, however they felt difficult to express them orally. Most of them mentioned that it was caused by being nervous, being confused because of less vocabulary, shyness, or other factors. It could be more stressful when they are expected to speak in the second or foreign language before the fluency is achieved.

Students feel anxious regardless of their preparation of learning that language; like wondering about what other might think of them when they perform their English, the familiarity of the topic used in English learning, how low their achievement could be, etc. Whatever the cause, whatever the level of anxiety, we can be sure of one thing: anxiety will affect students' performance (Saito and Samimy, 1996). This is why learning other language could be hard for them. One is regarded succeed in learning a language if he could perform that language well enough to be understood by other people. It means that skills like speaking and listening become more important than the other skills.

However, learners' language anxiety might not be eliminated or avoided. It is almost impossible for language learner not to have the feeling of anxious. Feeling anxious is an indication that he or she has courage to be successful language learner. In this sense, anxiety can be considered as positive language learning variable. Foreign language students' positive expectations for their own performance are important predictors of their future success (Daley et al., 1999).

As in English Education Department at Sari Mulia University, the students on the first semester who get Basic spoken English which is the first level of speaking skill experienced problems of anxiety. Therefore, this study focused on analyzing students' speaking anxiety in Basic Spoken English class. Based on the problems, the research question can be elaborated as follows:
1. What are the factors that cause students to be anxious in basic spoken English class?
2. What are the strategies of students to reduce their anxiety?

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

According Wortman, Loftus and Weaver (2000) anxiety is sensitive feeling of apprehension or fear. Their opinion is the same with other experts. The point of view of anxiety is as a feeling of apprehension or fear. Then, Badran (2005) describes anxiety is strong emotion that caused from a feeling of apprehension which predict something bad will be happened. Badran still has the same opinion about anxiety. Then, anxiety is a feeling of apprehension that caused somebody always thinks future event always bad.

It is believed that language anxiety can occur if students are exposed to several negative experiences in a foreign language context (Chen and Chang, 2004; Sparks et al., 2000). Moreover, anxiety can make learners get discouraged, lose faith in their abilities, escape from participating in classroom activities, and even give up the effort to learn a language well (Na, 2007). Horwitz et al. (1986) classified foreign language anxiety into three components, that is, 1. Communication apprehension, which arises from learners' inability to adequately express mature thoughts and ideas. 2. Fear of negative social evaluation, which arises from a learner's need to make a positive social impression on others. 3. Test anxiety, an apprehension about academic evaluation.

According to Seligman (2001), anxiety (also called angst or worry) is a psychological and physiological state characterized by somatic, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral components. It is the displeasing feeling of fear and concern. The root meaning of the word anxiety is 'to vex or trouble'; in either presence or absence of psychological stress, anxiety can create feelings of fear, worry, uneasiness, and dread. However, anxiety should not be confused with fear, it is more of a dreaded feeling about something which appears intimidating and can overcome an individual. Anxiety is considered to be a normal reaction to a stressor. It may help an individual to deal with a demanding situation by prompting them to cope with it. However, when anxiety becomes overwhelming, it may fall under the classification of an anxiety disorder.

**Anxiety**

Anxiety is the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system. (Horwitz, Horwitz, Cope, 1986, p.125). In line with this definition, Sari (2017) argued that "anxiety is natural and sometimes experienced by everyone". However, excessive anxiety sometimes makes the sufferer unable to do anything. Identically, were supported with (Abrar, Failasofah, Fajaryani, Masbirorotni, 2016) foreign language anxiety can be considered as complex that is different from one's selfperception, conduct, sense, and assumption related to using a foreign language in a foreign language classroom. In couple with this, anxiety is a common phenomenon felt by students throughout the world that causes poor academic performance (Dawood, Ghadeer, Mitsu, Almutary, and, Alenezit, 2016). Na (2007) claimed that "anxiety has been regarded as one of the most important affective factors that influence second language acquisition". In addition, MarcosLlinás and Garau (2009) showed that anxiety levels varies throughout students language proficiency levels. Anxiety is not an illness; it is just a type of behaviour to anticipate out coming unpredictable situation. (Angelia and Listyani, 2019)

"Anxiety is a psychological construct, commonly described by psychologists as a state of apprehension, a vague fear that is only indirectly associated with an object" (Scovel, 1991: 18). Brown (2000: 151) states that anxiety is associated with feelings of uneasiness, frustration, self -doubt, apprehension, and worry. To put it in another word, anxiety can be generally associated with threats to self-efficacy and appraisals of situations as threatening (Pappamihiel, 2002: 331). In addition, Gregersen (2005) argues that learners who feel anxious in their foreign language learning may find their study less enjoyable. In case of the conducted studies on foreign language anxiety, a review of the literature has shown that foreign language anxiety is negatively related to foreign language learning (MacIntyre, et. al., 1997). In the other words, students who feel anxiety will lose their self-confidence. They will have particular perception that assumes something as a big problem or difficult matter. The condition can lead them into certain level of frustration. Psychologists make a distinction between three categories of anxiety: trait anxiety, state anxiety, and situation-specific anxiety. Trait anxiety is relatively stable personality characteristic, "a more permanent predisposition to be anxious" (Scovel, 1978: cited in Ellis, 1994: 479). It is the general level of stress which is related to personality of the individual and character trait. State anxiety is a transient anxiety, a response to a particular anxiety-provoking stimulus such as an important test (Spielberger, 1983: cited in Horwitz, 2001: 113). It is characterised by a state of increasing emotions that turn up in response to fear or danger of a particular situation. The third category, situation-specific anxiety, refers to the persistent and multi-faceted nature of some anxieties (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991a: cited in 2001: 113). It is aroused by a specific type of situation or event such as public speaking, examinations, or class participation (Ellis, 1994: 480). It is related to personal tendency to become anxious in particular type of situation or context.

**Factors of Anxiety**

According to Horwitz et al. (1986: 127) language anxiety with relation to performance evaluation within academic and social contexts, drew parallels between it and three related performance anxieties: (1) communication apprehension (CA), (2) test anxiety, (3) fear of negative evaluation. (Tanveer. 2007:11). This description will general for the causes of students' anxiety in speaking English (foreign language). providing an insight to comprehend the sources or causes it can originate from. (1). Communication Apprehension (CA) Students" personality traits such as shyness, quietness, and reticence are considered to frequently precipitate CA. These feelings of shyness differential from individual to individual, and from situation to situation. According to McCroskey and Bond (1980, 1984, in Tanveer, 2007:12) "found seven factors that could result in students" quiet. (1) low intellectual skills, (2) low speech skill, (3) voluntary social introversion, (4) social alienation, (5) communication anxiety, (6) low social selfesteem, (7) ethnic/cultural divergence in communication norms. (2) Test Anxiety Test is also relevant to the discussion of foreign language anxiety. Test anxiety, as explained by Horwitz et al. (1986), "refers to a type of performance anxiety stemming from a fear of failure". (Tanveer, 2007: 13). (3) Fear of Negative Evaluation Fear of negative evaluation is an extension of the second component (test anxiety) of second/foreign language anxiety because it is not limited to test taking situations, but, it may occur in any social, evaluative situation, such as interviewing for a job or speaking in second/foreign language class (Horwitz et al., 1986: 127. in Tranveer, 2007:14). It is also broader in the sense that it pertains not only to the teacher's evaluation of the students but also to the perceived reaction of other students as well (Shams, 2006: 10. in Tanveer, 2007:14). Where limited processing mental capacity may cause anxiety, conversely, anxiety may restrict this operational capacity of the mind, and both together may cause impaired performance or altered behaviour. Researchers have found a recursive or cyclical relationship among anxiety, cognition and behaviour (Leary, 1990. Levitt, 1980. in Tanveer, 2007: 21-22).

**Types of Anxiety**

Regarding the classification of foreign language anxiety, the types of anxiety introduced by MacIntyre et al. (1991). There are three various types of anxiety, first is trait anxiety. Trait anxiety can be defined as the possibility of an individual being anxious in any situation, (Spielberger, 1983) Students with high trait anxiety will tend to be anxious in any situation, some situations will trigger individual anxiety. In addition, Eyesenck (cited in MacIntyre et al. 1991) stated that trait anxiety can damage cognitive functions in one's memory, and direct people to avoid dangerous behavior. Second is state anxiety. Based on MacIntyre et al. (1991) state "anxiety is considered temporary anxiety triggered by a particular situation, e.g. certain important tests. In other words, someone would prefer to experience state anxiety if he is afraid of certain difficulties (e.g. fear of mathematics, reading aloud, etc.)". Then, the last type of anxiety regarding to MacIntyre et al. (1991) is situation-specific anxiety. MacIntyre & Gardner (1991) stated that conditionalspecific anxiety is a further perspective of the concept of state anxiety. In particular, this anxiety is debated as a concern of people who consistently increase over time when dealing with certain situations. In this case, the respondent anxiety reaction from MacIntyre

et al. (1991) studied was tested in certain situations (e.g. speaking in public, writing exams, etc.) to determine the effect of respondents' anxiety attitudes towards language learning.

**Factors to contributing foreign language anxiety**

There are four factors that contributing with students' anxiety in self-concept and classroom environment:

a. Self-Perceptions

According to Horwitz et al. (1986: 128), perhaps no other field of study poses as much of a threat to self-concept as language study does. They believe that any performance in L2 is likely to challenge an individual's self-concept as a competent communicator, which may lead to embarrassment.

One of the factors that provoke students' anxiety in speaking English is their own self-concept. Some expert has opinion about the self-perception that make students anxiety. Self-concept is "the totality of an individual's thoughts, perceptions, beliefs, attitudes and values having reference to himself as object" (Laine, 1987: 15). This self-concept forms the basis of the distinction, made by Horwitz et al. (1986: 128), between language anxiety and other forms of academic anxieties. They posited, "the importance of the disparity between the 'true' or 'actual' self as known to the language learner and the more limited self as can be presented at any given moment in the foreign language would seem to distinguish foreign language anxiety from other academic anxieties such as those associated with mathematics or science" (1986: 128).

b. Learners' Beliefs about Language Learning

As language learning poses a threat to learners' self-concept, in response learners may generate some particular beliefs about language learning and its use. Research on 'language anxiety' suggests that certain beliefs about language learning also contribute to the student's tension and frustration in the class (Horwitz et al., 1986: 127). It means teacher have details to teach English as foreign language because in speaking, students have to make sure before saying words in English.

c. Instructors Beliefs about Language Teaching

Just like learners' beliefs about language learning, some instructor's beliefs about language learning and teaching have also been found to be a source of anxiety. Brandl (1987: cited in Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999: 220) asserted that instructors' belief that their role is to correct rather than to facilitate students when they make mistakes exacerbates second/foreign language anxiety in students. Further, he stated that the majority of instructors considered their role to be "less a counselor and friend and objected to a too friendly and in authoritative student-teacher relationship". The researchers also reported that students realize that some error corrections are necessary but they consistently report anxiety over responding incorrectly and looking or sounding 'dumb' or 'inept' (Koch and Terrell, Horwitz, 1986, 1988, and Young, 1990: cited in Young 1991: 429). Young (1991: 429), realizing this phenomenon, stated that the problem for the students is "not necessarily error correction but the manner of error correction – when, how often, and most importantly, how errors are corrected".

d. Classroom Procedure

Different activities in the classroom procedure, particularly ones that demand students to speak in front of the whole class, have been found to be the most anxiety provoking. For instance, Koch and Terrell (1991, cited in Horwitz, 2001: 118) found that more than half of their subjects in their Natural Approach classes – a language teaching method specifically designed to reduce learner's anxiety – expressed that giving a presentation in the class, oral skits and discussion in large groups are the most anxiety-producing activities. They also found that students get more anxious when called upon to respond individually, rather than if they are given choice to respond voluntarily. In addition, students were found to be more relaxed speaking the target language when paired with a classmate or put into small groups of three to six than into larger groups of seven to fifteen students. Similarly, Young (1991: 429) found that more than sixty-eight percent of her subjects reported feeling more comfortable when they did not have to get in front of the class to speak.

**Strategies to Reduce Students' Anxiety**

The strategies used by these learners in coping with their foreign language anxiety will also be examined. The types of strategies used as a reference in this study are taken from Kondo and Ying-Ling (2004). namely, preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, peer seeking and resignation:

a.       Preparation

This is supported by Zaidner (1998, p.66, cited in Kondo and Ying-Ling , 2004, p.263) who states that there is a lot of evidence showing that anxious people experience a relatively high level of task-irrelevant thoughts in evaluation setting. The preparation category refers to the students‟ efforts to overcome their feeling of anxiety by improving their learning strategies. It is interesting to note here that preparation was the most frequently used strategy. This indicates the correlation between language incapability/deficit and language anxiety. Many second language learners find themselves nervous when they had not prepared before class. 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. Preparation seems to be a good solution since it has two strong positive implications. The first is this strategy may enable the anxious learners to know that they are actually at the same level as good learners. This is supported by MacIntyre, Noels and Clement, 1997, cited in Casado 2001) who note that the anxious learners tend to underestimate their own competency than less anxious ones. This may affect their second language acquisition. What they require is just good preparation. This may alleviate their feelings of inferiority and lead them to study even harder than confident learners. The second point is this strategy shows them how to control their anxiety, stress, and insecurity. Good preparation which results in good performance shows them that feeling anxious is quite normal and therefore, they should not be too anxious about their language anxiety. What they should work on is how to turn this anxiety into a learning motivation. This is supported by Argaman and Abu-Rabia (2002, p. 146) who state that the right amount of language anxiety and learners‟ effort to keep their self-esteem may lead to the higher academic achievement. One of those efforts is preparing and practicing task before class. The anxious learners may perform as

good as the non-anxious learners when they have sufficient time to prepare and practice the tasks (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994, cited in Argaman & Abu-Rabi, 2002, p. 152).

Therefore, anxious learners may need more extra time to study. MacIntyre and Gardner''s concept lead me to raise a question of why the anxious learners need some more extra time to study if they are at the same level of cognitive capacity as the non-anxious learners. The more time needed to study in this case may imply that the anxious learners in fact have lower cognitive capacity. This problem involves both cognitive and psychological aspects.

Moreover, highly anxious students are likely to find difficulty in understanding the class instruction or misinterpreting the task. Therefore, they may not be able to make good preparation because of their misinterpretation. These two classes of anxiety may lead the researchers to recommend different avenue to cope with language anxiety. Those who believe more on the personality as the cause of language anxiety may propose learners'' personal solution, such as therapy, engage in language and study counseling, and preparation. Conversely, those who view the situation as more important in influencing language anxiety propose different avenues, such as promoting classroom dynamics and using the community language learning.

b. Relaxation

The second category which is relaxation deals with the methods to reduce the symptoms of anxiety. Many anxious learners may feel "audience fear" when they 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 (1987, cited in Second Language anxiety and coping Strategies) 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 still struggling with the feeling of anxiety and fear, relaxation, which involves tactics that aim at reducing anxiety symptoms, is offered. Some basic tactics are as follows: "take a deep breath, try to be calm and do your best to participate in lecture, be a part of the team", also "you are 5 well-prepared for the class and as smart as your friends, so there is no reason to worry." However, this only offers a quick relaxation technique. It is not sufficiently effective for high anxiety students because it only focuses on relieving anxiety physically and it may not work for longer than just a few minutes. Moreover it may work only on situational anxiety.

c. Positive Thinking

The next category is called positive thinking refers to the efforts to "divert attention from stressful situation to positive and pleasant cues and bring relief to the anxious students. Some anxious learners try to develop a positive self-image. They use various ways, such as trying to be confident, imagining themselves giving a great performance, thinking of something pleasant, or not thinking of the consequences. This strategy tends to focus on learners'' personal emotion. It basically shows that the anxious learners have levels of cognition equal to the confident learners.

What makes them different is the problem of psychological factors, such as mental block, fear of making mistakes which may reduce their self-esteem, too shy to communicate with environment. These factors may disturb their learning process and performance. Horwitz et al. (1986, cited in Argaman and Abu-Rabi, 2002, p. 148) note that language anxiety shared some common mental characteristics, such as fear of being ridiculed in class, too shy to communicate with others, and anxious of under-performing compared with the other learners. To my mind, the fact that basically anxious learners are potential learners in spite of their anxiety as indicated by students who can perform well in everyday class task, yet they get bad mark in their test.

What makes the anxious learners may get worse mark in test is their test anxiety. They tend to be afraid of making mistakes and being worse than their other friends and are more sensitive of what others think about them. Moreover, It may be true that the anxious learners tend to have lower level of resilience, in this case, the inability to accept failure. Conversely, the non-anxious learners tend to have good resilience. This is supported by Wenden and Rubin (1987, cited in Turula) who show that good learners are characterized as having positive attitude and outgoing, while anxious learners tend to feels apprehension and frustrated (Arnold and Brown, 1999, cited in Turula). This strategy implies a different perspective from "preparation". Positive thinking emphasizes the need to control negative emotion because the negative emotion may block the cognitive process whereas preparation focuses on using cognition to control anxiety. This may be based on different perspectives on viewing what blocking good second language performance. Ganschow and Sparks (1996, cited in Argaman and Abu-Rabi, 2002, p. 150) state that the language anxiety is caused by low abilities. On other word, low ability may cause language anxiety.

Therefore, good preparation may increase the learners" ability. The increasing ability may alleviate learners" anxiety. Conversely, Horwitz te. al (cited in Argaman and Abu- Rabi, 2002, p. 147) notes that language anxiety may impede second learners" performance. In this case, learners" low anxiety may be caused by language anxiety. Therefore, approach focused on learners" emotion, including having positive thinking may alleviate learners" language anxiety. In my belief, these two strategies should be applied side by side. Having a positive thinking without enough preparation may lead to bad performance. This bad performance (in reality) may contradict with their positive thinking and wish. This may decrease learners" positive thinking because the reality shows that they are incapable. Conversely, it may be impossible to perform well without enough preparation and sense of self confidence. Therefore, positive thinking should be supported by positive reality.

d.      Peer seeking

Peer seeking category is the effort to consult other learners who are also anxious in learning the foreign language. 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.

However, it may have a drawback in terms of loss of a sense of belonging. Depending on one or two partners may reduce the sense of belonging to the class, create a gap between anxious learners and those who are non-anxious. This gap may create feelings of isolation in the classroom. To eliminate learners" isolated feeling in class, Koba, Ogawa, and Wilkinson (In Using the Community Language Approach to Cope with Language Anxiety) suggest the application of Community Language Learning (CLL). They believe that CLL may provide techniques to reduce anxiety by using conversational circle and fun teaching method. CLL may work on learners whose anxiety roots on uncomfortable classroom atmosphere. It may not be very effective in alleviating anxiety caused by both different level of cognitive capacity and personality.

The peerseeking phenomenon shows that proper classing should also receive more attention and should also be taken into account as one way to reduce anxiety. Therefore, before starting second language program analysis on level of language anxiety should be carried out. Learners should be group based on their level of anxiety rather than based on their age. Thus, in my opinion, CLL may be more effective if the students are classified based on level of their language anxiety.

e.        Resignation

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. It seems that this is an extreme strategy. This may be because "accepting the reality" is one of many ways to reduce stress and tension. They do not want to try and re-try after failing because they are afraid of more stress. They may ask themselves "why should I try to learn if I will fail again and again?". This explanation is also supported by Ely (1986, cited in Turula). She notes that one characteristic of anxious learners is reluctant to take risks. Resignation seems to be one possible strategy.

 However, this only offers a temporary quick solution. Later, those students may face greater problems. They may not be able to acquire proper mastery of the second language and may also fail in examination. 6 Moreover, they may also fail in getting a job which requires good mastery of that language. To my mind, there are a contradiction between learners who cope their language anxiety by preparation and resignation in terms of learning perception. First, those who use the preparation perceive the inability in doing tasks may reduce their self-esteem academically. Therefore, they study harder to get good academic achievement to keep their self-esteem (Argaman & Abu- Rabia, 2002 p.142). However, this may also bring a potential hazard. The anxious learners may study overly. Therefore, they may spend excessive studying hours before tests. They become extremely concerned about their mark in the test. Consequently, making mistakes in the test may stress them, even more severe than before.

Conversely, the learners who use resignation as the solution perceive that any learning efforts may be worthless. The cause of this perceptual difference can be

traced psychologically, since it relates to the defense mechanism concept. Defense mechanism refers to the internal conflict between wish and reality. By using preparation strategy, at first the learners wish that they will get good mark or can master second language well. They may feel that they can control their anxiety if the reality says so.

**The Relationship between Anxiety and Speaking Class**

MacIntyre & Gardner (1991) is showed that students who have anxiety in class are less likely to answers the teacher questions and to participate in speaking classroom activities. Students were afraid when they talked, they thought that everyone will see it. Therefore, they fear if they talked with the wrong grammar and fear of correction. Besides, they probably had less of vocabulary using foreign language. In line with this, Sari (2017) added that "students can feel threatened, unsafe and uncomfortable when they were asked to speak English in front of their peers in the classroom". Moreover, in the result of the study of MacIntyre et al. (1991) presented that speaking in the second language is the most anxiety, and half is the use of speaking skills as confidence-building experience. Anxious students may avoid studying and, in some cases, skip class entirely in an effort to alleviate their anxiety. (Horwitz et al, 1986, p.127).

**3. RESEARCH METHODS**
**3.1 Research Design**

This research applied qualitative researches. Qualitative research is research in which the analysis is interpretative (descriptive). The qualitative method is used in analyzing and describing the data in the form of the speaking anxiety. Types of research are useful for the researcher to get the validation in analyzing the data. Besides, those methods are helpful to interpret the results of the data analyzed. Descriptive research is research that involves a collection of techniques used to specify, delineate or describe the data naturally occurring phenomena without experimental manipulation. The purpose of descriptive qualitative research is to describe the data systematically the facts and characteristics of area of interest factually and accurately (Isaac and Michael, 1981:42).

**3.2 Participants**

Students in Basic Spoken English Class of the English Education Department of sari mulia university participated in this study. They were at 2019 batch and 2020 batch. They took Basic spoken English in the first semester. Each class consists of 9 students. the total number of participants was 18 students.

**3.3 Instruments**

Instrument is an implementation or a piece of apparatus used by the researcher in collecting data (Arikunto, 2006:149). The instruments used to obtain the data from the students. The instrument was interview and observation. Easwaramoorthy & Zarinpoush (2006) argued that interview is a method that used to gain detail information on people's opinions, thoughts, experiences, and feelings.

Interview was conducted to get deeper information which was not available on questionnaire (Alwasilah, 2011). Semi-structured interview was used in this study.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

Before taking the interview, the researcher did observation in each class to know the activities, behavior and activeness of students when the teaching learning process. The data from the interview was recorded through audio recording. It enables the researcher to keep the information safely (Creswell, 2012). To answer the research question, the data were transcribed, categorize, and interpret. The steps in analysis the data as follows:

1. transcribe the data based on audio recording and researcher's note.
2. reduce inappropriate data which were not relevant to the study
3. categorize the data into several themes, they were the factors that cause students to be anxious in basic spoken English class and the strategies of students to reduce their anxiety.
4. relate the data theories and previous research to address the result.

### 4. FINDINGS

Based on observation and interview, the researcher got the answer that most of the students in basic spoken English class experienced anxiety during the class because of some factors. There were some factors provoked by both internal and external matters. First factor was type of task. The task became something that causes anxiety if the students' were asked to present the activities in front of the class. The second was fear of making mistakes. All the students felt the same thing about their anxious feeling when they made mistakes. The third was the role of language teachers. It was related to how teachers create classroom atmosphere which was suitable for the teaching and learning process. The fourth factor was self-perception, self-perception in this context is a perception that causes negative effect on students. The last factor was limited exposure to English. Limited exposure to English in their environment impedes the development of their communicative proficiency.

In addition, after all interviews the researcher found the strategies of students that the students use to reduce their anxiety. The result showed that there were good strategies which they applied to reduce anxiety. The first was preparation before learning English, it helped students to feel better because they had material that they could use for the learning. The second strategy was positive thinking. Positive thinking as a psychological factor was needed to cope the language anxiety and to lose a fear of being anxiety in the classroom. The last strategy that they used was peer seeking. It was often done by the students. The students liked to ask a friend if there was something that they did not understand the sentence, the meaning of the word, or unclear pronunciation. It became a good solution for the students.

### 5. DISCUSSION

This section discussed the factors that cause students to be anxious in basic spoken English class and the strategies of students to reduce their anxiety.

1. The factors that cause students to be anxious in basic spoken English class were type of task, fear of making mistakes, the role of language lectures, self-perception, and limited exposure to English.
   a. Type of task

The task became something that caused anxiety if the students were asked to present the activities in front of the class. For example, the tasks were speech, storytelling, dialogue, role play, presentation etc. When they had to practice speaking in front of their friends, their confidence had certain effect to their performance. From the interview found that the students lost their confidence when they faced towards their friend directly. It was shown in the following data.

R: What are your difficulties when you are speaking English? (*Apakah kesulitan anda ketika berbicara menggunakan bahasa inggris?*)

S1: when I have to speak English in front of my classmate, I often feel very nervous and suddenly forget what I want to talk especially when the speaking activity is roleplay or speech. (*ketika harus berbicara menggunakan bahasa inggris, saya sering merasa gugup dan jadi lupa apa yang akan di sampaikan ketika tampil didepan teman teman di depan kelas apalagi tugas seperti speech dan rolepla*)

S2: When speaking English, I often feel afraid that I will speak the wrong way, so I feel inferior or not confident, especially if the task is not mastered, such as a presentation that requires a lot of explanation in English. Sometimes if a friend asks a question, I can't answer correctly, I'm confused and embarrassed. (*ketika berbicara bahasa inggris saya sering merasa takut salah bicara nya jadi merasa minder atau tidak percaya diri apalagi kalau tugas nya tidak menguasai seperti presentasi yang mengharuskan banyak penjelasan dengan bahasa inggris. Kadang kalau ada teman yang bertanya gak bisa menjawab dengan benar jadi bingung dan malu*)

   b. Fear of Making Mistakes

based on the interview, most of students felt the same thing about their anxious feeling when they made mistakes. They felt afraid of their friends' reaction such us laughing and their comment about the performance. The condition was shown on the following data:

R : what makes you worry when you are speaking English in front of the class/in front of your friends? (*apa yang membuatmu khawatir ketika kamu berbicara bahasa inggris di depan kelas/di depan teman-temanmu?*

S1 : I feel worry if I make mistake when I am speaking English, for example I don't know how to express the sentence or get wrong pronunciation. Other's students will laugh at me or give a bad comment on my performance. *(Saya merasa khawatir jika saya membuat kesalahan ketika saya berbicara bahasa Inggris, misalnya saya tidak tahu bagaimana mengungkapkan kalimat atau salah pengucapan. Siswa lain akan menertawakan saya atau memberikan komentar buruk tentang penampilan saya).*

S2: I feel worry if I make mistake, I feel afraid of getting bad mark from the lecturer. *(Saya merasa khawatir jika saya melakukan kesalahan, saya merasa takut mendapat nilai jelek dari dosen)*

The data above illustrate a condition that the students was afraid of making mistakes when they performed in front of class. The kind of fear of friends' assumption and reaction potentially interferes their performance on speaking English. In addition, for some students. Making mistake could make them afraid of negative judgment from the lecturer. The kind of thought effected the development of their language proficiency. They could not speak freely while speaking English because they were of afraid of bad mark and others' judgment.

c.       The Role of Language Teachers

the role of language teachers also had effects to the existence of anxiety. In this case, the lectures as the language instructor should be able to choose suitable teaching method and approach to achieve successful learning process such as how to create classroom atmosphere, reaction of the feedback, and how to motivate the students.  This following data showed that:

R: what do you think of the role of your lecturer to guide you in teaching learning process? *(Apa pendapat Anda tentang peran dosen Anda untuk membimbing Anda dalam proses belajar mengajar?)*

S: actually, the role of the lecturer has been good but sometimes I feel uncomfortable when the atmosphere is nerve-wracking. It makes me very nervous and forget what I want to speak and I also feel afraid if I get negative evaluation. *( sebenarnya peran dosen sudah baik tapi terkadang saya merasa tidak nyaman saat suasananya menegangkan. Itu membuat saya sangat gugup dan lupa apa yang ingin saya bicarakan dan saya juga merasa takut jika mendapat penilaian negative).*

It described that the atmosphere created by the lecturer should be suitable to the students' condition since it had effect to the students' anxiety when speaking English. It is necessary for the lecturer to consider the way to give feedback for every student's mistake.

d.    self-perception

One of the factors that provoke students' anxiety in speaking performance is their own self-concept. Negative thoughts and being under estimate towards their own ability can provoke anxiety because of the degradation of confidence. The following data illustrate that condition regarding to low self-perceptions.

R: what is your opinion about your ability in speaking English? Would you like to describe it? *(apa pendapat Anda tentang kemampuan Anda dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris? Apakah Anda bisa mendeskripsikan nya?)*

S: I feel that I have many weaknesses in speaking English, I also think that English is difficult. I worry about what my friends think if I make mistake. *(Saya merasa bahwa saya memiliki banyak kelemahan dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris, saya juga berpikir bahwa bahasa Inggris itu sulit. Saya khawatir tentang pendapat teman saya jika saya melakukan kesalahan).*

It could be seen that this condition became a psychological barrier to learn speaking well.  The personal judgment also made the student worry about what the

classmates and lecturer think. Students with this condition concerned with what others might think.

e.      limited exposure to English

Students must practice to speak English regularly in order to get the goal as a fluent English speaker. However, limited exposure to English could affect the development of their communicative proficiency. The data bellow showed the limited exposure:

R: do you often speak English on your daily life? For example, with your friends? *(apakah anda sering berbicara bahasa inggris dalam kehidupan sehari-hari anda? Misalnya dengan teman Anda?)*

N: just sometime, I just speak at the English class, not outside of the class, I realize that actually I need to practice speaking English more, but it's little bit difficult to do that, I need a partner who really have the same goal to practice English. In daily life or outside the class, all the students mostly speak first language or Bahasa. *( hanya kadang-kadang, saya hanya berbicara di kelas bahasa Inggris, bukan di luar kelas, saya menyadari bahwa sebenarnya saya perlu lebih banyak berlatih berbicara bahasa Inggris, tetapi agak sulit untuk melakukan itu, saya membutuhkan pasangan yang benar-benar memiliki tujuan yang sama untuk berlatih bahasa Inggris. Dalam kehidupan sehari-hari atau di luar kelas, semua siswa kebanyakan berbicara bahasa pertama atau Bahasa Indonesia).*

From the data, it could describe that the environment did not support the students to speak English, the students felt difficult to find a partner to practice speaking English. Whereas, the frequency to practice persistently was very important in order to reduce the anxiety.

2.  The strategies of students to reduce their anxiety

The data from the interview and observation showed that there were three strategies that the students do to reduce their anxiety. The strategies were preparation before learning English, positive thinking, and peer seeking.

a.      Preparation before learning English

Most of the students answered that one of the strategies that they could do was preparation before learning English such as reading the topic that will be discussed or learning the pronunciation that they know by using application. Then they practice it in front of the mirror or with their friends. According to Zeidner (1998: 66 cited in Kondo and Ying-Ling 2004: 263), preparation which is obviously task-relevant in nature, was found to be used by students with high anxiety as frequently as by those with low anxiety that mean some students feel better when take a preparation before learning English such as reading or check the practice. Therefore, good preparation might increase the learner's ability. The increasing ability might alleviate learners' anxiety.

b.      Positive thinking

the second strategy that the students usually applied was positive thinking. In this case, the researcher also found it in the interview. The students answered that they should try to think they could speak English fluently, because it was very important to make them more confidence even though they did not master the English language. It could reduce their anxiety. In addition, a positive thinking as a

psychological factor to coping the language anxiety and to losing a fear of being anxiety in the classroom. According to Horwitz (1986, cited in Ravica 2016:5) note that language anxiety shared some common mental characteristics, such as fear of being laugh in class, shy to communicate or speak with others, and anxious of underperforming compare with other language.

      c.      Peer seeking

Peer seeking was the simple strategy done by the students to reduce anxiety. The students sometimes liked to ask a friend if they got problem when they got unknown word or less clear pronunciation. The students might find a suitable learning partner to talk or build a small-scale group with other friends who experienced the same thing. It could be a good solution, especially if the students could share their experiences and strategies with learning partners.

## 6. CONCLUSION

This research was focused on the factors that made the students felt anxiety when speaking or having to speak English in the classroom and the strategies that they used to reduce the anxiety. Based on the research, it was found that the students' anxiety in foreign language class was caused by five factors. The causes come from themselves and their environment. The first was type of task, the second was fear of making mistakes, the third was the role of language teachers, the fourth was self-perception, and the last was limited exposure to English. During the learning process, such as discussion and speaking activities, students tended to become quiet all the time, it might be more than just shyness. This was not only a problem that student had, but also something that needed more attention to understand this common case. In addition, in this study the researcher also found the strategies that the students used to reduce their anxiety. The strategies were preparation before learning English, positive thinking, and peer seeking. Students must be deal with problem of anxiety. If the students knew about what made them feeling anxiety, they might be through this problem. In order to make anxiety lost in theirself. If the students knew what the factor cause anxiety, students in naturally have strategies to reduce the anxiety.

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