

## **CROSSCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING STRATEGY IN SPEAKING LESSON TO OVERCOME SPEAKING ANXIETY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Many students are still difficult to communicate in English because of fear or nervousness despite they expected to communicate well.. This is called "speaking anxiety". The students are generally inseparable from liking popular culture to become a fan and finally become their identity. In addition to favoring Western culture, there have also been other great cultures lately, for example Japanese, Korea, Thailand and so on. This study aims to examine whether with cross cultural knowledge students are expected to be more confident in speaking and reducing talking anxiety. This research method is descriptive qualitative research method. The data in this study were obtained from interviews and questionnaires adapted from Horwitz's "Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)" and Oregon University's "Value Rubric Intercultural Knowledge". It was found that the cause of speaking anxiety was 79% internal factor, 85% lack of knowledge and 30% faculty and friend factor. The result of the research found that the correlation between cultural understanding is closely related to the decreasing of students' anxiety level in speaking english. It can be concluded that CCU does help in overcoming students speaking anxiety.

**Keywords :** *anxiety, cross cultural understanding, speaking*

### **Sari**

Banyak siswa masih mengalami kesulitan saat berkomunikasi dalam berbahasa Inggris karena merasa takut atau gugup meskipun diharapkan mereka mampu berkomunikasi dengan baik. Ini dinamakan "kecemasan berbicara". Para siswa secara umum menyukai budaya populer dan menjadi penggemar seperti kebudayaan Barat dan akhir-akhir ini mereka menyukai budaya lain seperti budaya Jepang, Korea, Thailand dan lainnya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meneliti apakah pengetahuan lintas budaya mampu membantu siswa dalam mengatasi kecemasan berbicara. Hasil penelitian ini menggunakan interview dan questionnaire yang diadaptasi dari Horwitz "Language classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) dan Oregon University "Value Rubic Intercultural Knowledge". Ditemukan bahwa penyebab kecemasan berbicara sebanyak 79% penyebab internal, 85% kurangnya pengetahuan dan 30% adalah penyebab lain. Hasil

penelitian menyimpulkan bahwa pengetahuan lintas budaya erat kaitannya dengan mengurangi kecemasan siswa dalam berbicara Bahasa Inggris. Dan bahwa pembelajaran pengetahuan lintas budaya bisa mengatasi kecemasan tersebut

**Keywords:** *berbicara, kecemasan, pengetahuan berbudaya*

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### **Introduction**

Globalization has had a considerable impact on the changing times. In addition to making the standard of English language proficiency into conversation, but also make the Internet as one of the most widely used media to obtain information. English is taught in the country of Indonesia from elementary to college level. As a foreign language that is quite widely used in Indonesia, those who have a good ability to speak English can have the potential to be superior in getting a job or getting a scholarship. There are 4 English language skills , they are speaking, reading, listening and writing will be good if mastered by students. Especially, speaking ability.

Students of English Education IKIP Siliwangi must use English in their daily academic life. Using books in English, doing English-language tasks and even communicating and presenting in English. However, many of them are still difficult to communicate in English. Generally they feel nervous and anxious when having to communicate in English. For various reasons include anxiety, fear, embarrassment and so forth. This is called "speaking anxiety".

*“Anxiety is the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system. Anxiety has been found to interfere with many types of learning and it is only logical that this would also apply to second language learning “ (Horwitz, 2001)*

Horwitz argues that this anxiety is a tense, nervous, anxious and worried feeling that is related to the nervous system and can disrupt learners trying to learn a foreign language.

Foreign Language Teaching (L2) related to the issue of standards (ACTFL / American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) taken from <http://www.actfl.org>. Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the form of 5 C namely: communication

(which is communication), cultures (which is knowledge and culture understanding), connections (which is the linkage between cultures and language learned), comparisons (which is comparing our own cultures with foreign cultures) and communities (elements of communication, culture, connections and communities which make someone have broad understanding and perspective on culture and language).

From these past years, foreign culture has a lot of influence in Indonesia. Generally starting from tv shows, movies, music and more from there they are spreading and become wideknown. Generally the Z generation loves popular culture so they become a fan until it becomes their identity. Terms such as *otaku* (Japanese anime culture buff), *k-popper* (fan of South Korean cultural music), Thai drama lovers and so forth.

This also affects the communication ability of IKIP Siliwangi students. Living in a very global world with diverse cultures, language learners need to develop their language skills but also their interdependent ability to interact with others from different cultural backgrounds. It is called intercultural communication or cross cultural understanding. Therefore knowledge related to intercultural communication science should be taught to the learners, as well as the culture. With a better understanding of the culture, it is hoped that the students' communication skills will also be better.

Culture can be seen as a behavior, values, attitude of life, and way of life to make adjustments to the environment, and at the same time to look at the problem and solve it. Culture is also defined as the whole system of ideas, actions and the work of human beings in the framework of the life of society which is made human self by way of learning (Koentjaraningrat, 2003).

Horwitz and Cope (1986) argued that foreign language anxiety (FLA) is a normal anxiety that is similar to public speaking anxiety or public speaking anxiety. Many people experience anxiety in some situations. One is anxiety when speaking in public using a foreign language (not the original language).

The factors that cause it are self perception and cultural differences. People with low self-esteem tend to worry about what others will say about themselves. Cultural differences also sometimes make us feel limited, because it makes us do things differently and may even make us feel uncomfortable if we are not familiar with the differences.

Although anxiety is a big barrier for students, but Oxford (1994) says that speaking and presentation in front of the classroom are the activities that produce the most anxiety. But it turns out that writing, reading, listening also creates fear depending on the students. The following is a sign of the language anxiety (Oxford, 1994):

1. General avoidance, for example, "forgetting" answers, showing carelessness, cutting classes, coming drawing, coming without preparation, resulting in low verbal production, less participation in the classroom, showing inability to answer despite the very question simple.
2. Physical actions, such as wiggling, restlessness, playing hair or clothes, touching objects anxiously, stuttering, showing nervous behavior, unable to produce sound or intonation of the target language, although repeated many times, time.
3. Physical symptoms, complaining of headaches, aches, unexplained pain or tension.

Therefore, the influence of anxiety on the learning process becomes one of the success indicators or not someone can learn the language.

*Cross cultural understanding has been defined by Finney & Orr as the interpersonal understanding of the culture and experiences between people of different cultures (1995). Crosscultural understanding, in turn, can be separated into three major components: critical understanding, empathetic understanding, and conceptual understanding of another (Louie, 2006). Cross-cultural understanding, then, can be seen as a complex process involving several higher-order thinking skills.*

According to Finney and Orr, cross cultural understanding is an understanding and experience of sharing cultures between those with different cultures. Consists of 3 components namely: critical understanding, understanding empathy and understanding of the concept of cross-culture itself. The combination of these three illustrates the complexity of the cross-cultural understanding.

The purpose of this research is to obtain empirical data about the relationship between cross-cultural understanding as a way to overcome speaking anxiety. So hopefully, this study aims to get a picture of the relationship between cross cultural competence with speaking anxiety at the students of semester IKIP Siliwangi English Department of Language Faculty.

### **Method**

This research method is descriptive qualitative research method. This qualitative research focuses on research on student behavior and behavior, which in this study focuses on why students experience speech anxiety as well as see the effect of cross-cultural understanding application to overcome it (Nunan, 1992).

A qualitative approach is expected to produce in-depth descriptions of the words, writings, and / or behavior that can be observed from a particular individual, group, society and or organization in a specific context setting studied from a comprehensive, comprehensive, and holistic perspective. This research is a correlation research that will see the relationship between two variables that is cross-cultural understanding and speaking anxiety.

The measuring instrument or instrument in this study was a 30 questions questionnaire adapted from "Value Rubric Intercultural Knowledge" and "Foreign Language Class Anxiety" with SST scale (Strongly Agree), S (Agree), N (Neutral), TS (Disagree ) and STS (Strongly Disagree). Population in this research were students of class of 2016 English Department of Education total of 164 students. While the sample in this study were 9 students to be interviewed as well as 3 English course teachers.

### **Research Findings**

From the questionnaire, data it can be seen that 79% of students feel that the cause of anxiety comes from himself who feels no strong foundation in speaking in English. Anxiety is characterized by the emergence of a sense of nervousness, embarrassment, fear of ridicule, confused, unable to speak, sweat cold and not concentrated. The frequency of students who answered that these things happen to him is 75%. Most

respondents (85%) responded to this anxiety due to lack of basic knowledge gained from previous school bench related to English. Especially the habit of speaking rarely gets a chance to speak while in high school.

30% of the respondents said that their anxiety in speaking was due to the strict lecturers factor, and to see friends who were more capable of themselves than to make themselves feel insecure when speaking despite the desire to speak highly. Most respondents tried to overcome the anxiety in various ways, 51% practiced with friends, 53% forced to speak, 34% took English courses outside.

Therefore, from the exposure, it is clear that the biggest factor causing speech anxiety is the lack of knowledge in speaking in English followed by internal factors. While the main option to overcome the anxiety of talking is to practice with friends because it is considered as the easiest option and can be shared as to reduce the anxiety.

In addition to distributing questionnaires, in this study also conducted in-depth interviews (indepth interview) with 9 respondents. Interview results corroborated the results of the questionnaire obtained. Respondents explained that their English skills are not too good because of the lack of basic English skills, then the dislike of the English language because the rules are felt much different from their mother tongue is the Indonesian language. And the third is the compulsion to learn English because ordered by parents or siblings to study at English Language Department.

From the interviews, the researchers found that the anxiety in the most dominant felt when students must express opinions because they feel very less knowledge related to grammar and vocabulary. Respondents do not understand the relationship of learning English with the benefits to be gained in real life. They also pointed out that English speaking activities are hardest to follow, compared to reading, listening or writing in English. This is because in speaking, they are required to respond directly, appropriately and gratefully, while their ability to choose the right vocabulary and use the correct grammar is lacking. In general, they still do not see the advantages of learning English in textual and its usage in real life which causing them lazier to study the language.

Another factor is that students are more dominant in using their local and Indonesian languages. As a result of this lack of English, students are poorly trained to pronounce English vocabulary, outside of grammar use. In addition, anxiety arises when a person has to speak or interact with others. The anxiety arises before, during and after the process of speaking. This then affects their fluency of speech, so they tend to talk in circles and unclear directions. It is this feeling of anxiety that then causes a sense of distress that makes them doubt they will succeed in getting their point across clearly. This causes students with the ability to speak low English is increasingly anxious and depressed because they feel always left behind and less able to follow the lecture.

The nine respondents interviewed also revealed that they have since had a habit of watching movies and listening to English songs. But this habit is limited to listening to the rhythm of interesting songs and interesting movie stories only. Without understanding the meaning and meaning of what he heard and watched. Six respondents said that anxiety in speaking English was reduced after they learned and understood western customs and culture learned during the lecture. They say it is similar to what they feel with their habits and interest in Korean and Japanese. Understanding and preference for Korean and Japanese culture makes them have more confidence when they speak the language. It is now felt in English. Understanding of western kebudayaan make students feel closer and understand the pattern of thinking and western speaking style.

For learning strategy of speaking and cross cultural understanding application, researcher try to apply it in the following stages:

No	Stages	Definition	Act
1	<i>Cross Cultural Awareness</i>	Growing from cross-cultural knowledge when learners understand and internally appreciate a culture	Watching English movies without any subtitle text
2	<i>Cross Cultural Sensitivity</i>	refers to the ability to read situations, contexts, and behaviors that are culturally rooted and can react to them appropriately	Translating some poems to English which has cultural values in it
3	<i>Cross Cultural Competence</i>	Crosscultural competence goes beyond knowledge, awareness and sensitivity because it is the digestion, the unity and transformation of all the skills and	Listening to English songs and then translate it

		information sought, applied to create cultural synergies in the workplace	
4	<i>Cross cultural understanding</i>	refers to the introduction of the surface level with cultural characteristics, values, beliefs, and behaviors.	Discussing many unique habits in English culture

It can be concluded that from the results of questionnaires and interviews that the biggest factor talking anxiety (speaking anxiety) is an internal factor. The situation where students become nervous, anxious, embarrassed and afraid to start communicating and using English because of fear and still low ability to speak. For cross cultural understanding (cross cultural understanding) they generally like Western, Japanese and Korean culture but still in terms of film and song only. In terms of cultural understanding, the pattern of life and mindset is still not very well understood but enough to give effect so they feel more confident and try to communicate in foreign languages and especially in English.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the results of data analysis and discussion above, it can be concluded that there is influence of the contribution between self-anxiety experienced by students with the ability to speak English. From the results of the questionnaire, it can be seen that this is a strong influence. The factors that affect the level of anxiety themselves in speaking English is anxiety themselves in communicating the English language and fear of negative judgments from others. Factors can be neutralized by providing an understanding of western culture and even Japanese and Korean culture favored by students so as to create a sense of comfort to students when following the lecture process From the description above it is seen that the linkage between cultural understanding is closely related to the decreasing level of anxiety students in speaking the language english and the need for cross cultural understanding strategies to improve cultural understanding so that it can help reduce anxiety in speaking.

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### **Biography**

Anita and Cynantia are both lecturers in English Department of Institut Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan (IKIP) Siliwangi. Anita's teaching subject is speaking while Cynantia's teaching subject

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