



The University Students' Anxiety in Learning English Grammar

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Abstract This study had purposes to find out students' anxiety types, the reason why they got the anxiety and their suggestions for the lecturer who teaches English grammar to release their students' anxiety. To reach the purposes, a qualitative method was used. Twenty anxious of first year students at university were chosen to be participants of the research. Those students were interviewed by fifteen questions. Most students said that lack knowledge of English Grammar made them anxious in learning the subject. The students suggest the lecturer identified students' anxiety before the lesson started; creating fun, communicative and less formal class; and overcoming students' problems in learning Grammar. It is concluded that every students faced anxiety in learning grammar but the lecturer could minimize it.
Keywords: *Anxiety; English Grammar; University Students; Interview; Lecturer.*

Abstrak Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk menemukan jenis kecemasan yang dirasakan mahasiswa, alasan mereka merasakan kecemasan dan bagaimana seharusnya dosen tata bahasa bahasa Inggris mengajar agar mahasiswa dapat mengurangi kecemasan mereka. Metode kualitatif dipilih untuk mencapai ke tiga tujuan tersebut. Sebanyak 20 orang mahasiswa dipilih sebagai sumber data. Terdapat lima belas pertanyaan yang akan diajukan. Berdasarkan jawaban-jawaban mahasiswa, kecemasan yang mereka rasakan lebih banyak berasal dari dalam diri mereka sendiri. Menurut mahasiswa, dosen dapat mengaplikasikan *communicative approach*. Kesimpulan dari penelitian ini adalah bahwa mahasiswa selalu merasakan kecemasan ketika belajar tata bahasa Inggris akan tetapi dosen dapat mengurangi kecemasan mahasiswa dengan mengubah cara mengajar para dosen.
Kata Kunci : *Kecemasan, Grammar Bahasa Inggris, Siswa Universitas; Wawancara: Dosen.*

INTRODUCTION

English is one of foreign language in Indonesia, but nowadays, English becomes a popular language. Most of Indonesia citizen learn English to be internationalize. Therefore, many schools and courses arose based on international standard which means using English as communicative language. There is one problem that learning English one of nightmare to Indonesian that is English grammar.

English becomes one of foreign language that must be taught in class since junior high school until senior high school. In 80s until 20s before 13 curriculum applied, English must be learnt since primary school. The reason to teach English since primary is to face global market because most people in the world used English as their language to communicate. In fact, this propaganda success, it was proven by many people learning English through schools or courses. Though it was applied, but the fact, English still becomes a haunted thing for EFL students in University level, especially the English department students.

Anxiety is human being total response of danger or threat, each person has their own thought and alarm to remind them about their anxious (Moss, 2002). English as one of foreign language to learn by EFL students in State Islamic University of North Sumatra becomes threatening for the students. Besides the language itself, one of the subjects in studying the language is grammar also becomes dangerous subject for the students. The students should not be have anxiety in their mind if they had realized that English grammar was one important subject to study earlier (Tran Thi Thu Trang, Karen Moni and Richard B. Baldauf, 2012).

English grammar as one of subject that students must be mastered becomes threatening subject for them. If it is happened, it might be concluded that the students will get stress in learning grammar and they will not enjoy anymore in learning English, especially grammar subject (Naser Oteir & Nijr Al-Otaibi, 2019). The role of grammar is very important to establish communication task in four skills subjects (Rachmawaty et al., 2019).

In English Education Department State Islamic University of North Sumatra Medan (UIN SU Medan), the students obligate to learn all aspects about English, one of them is English grammar. In this subject, students will learn English grammar which is different with Indonesian grammar. English and Indonesia have many differences in grammar, this is can be one of the points for the students to say No in learning English grammar. The biggest difference is the tense.

In Indonesian, tenses are not applied in speaking or writing a sentence, but in English, all aspects in language relate to tenses. The four aspects in language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing use tenses as their formula. To comprehend English, the students must understand the tenses. Therefore, the students need to study grammar especially tenses, though they have their own anxiety in learning foreign language that has different formula with their own language.

Many articles discussed about the students' anxiety, especially anxiety in learning foreign language. It was found out that the students' anxiety in learning in the level of anxious. Their research was quantitative by spread a questionnaire to seventy four students. Based on their finding, it is proven that the students always have anxiety in learning (Siregar & Perwana, 2020).

If Siregar and Perwana (2020) discussed about students' learning anxiety, in another research, Septiana and Agustina (2020) found that in learning English, students also got anxiety. The study was qualitative, therefore dominant factors of anxiety were found. According to their data, there were some dominant factors of students' anxiety in speaking English, such as speaking in front of the classroom, being laughed at by their friends, etc.

This article discusses students' anxiety in learning grammar. Firstly, the writer discussed what kind of anxiety that students' own. Then, continued to find the reason why they have those kinds of anxiety. Besides, the writer also shared students' opinion on how the lecturer should teach this subject to the students, therefore the students would reduce their anxiety in learning grammar.

METHOD

This study was qualitative research. The researcher raised a question to the students to find out whether they had anxiety or not. Then, students' answers categorized into two groups. Twenty anxious students on English Education Department in State Islamic University of North Sumatra, as participants, would get further questions to find out their reasons why they had anxiety and also their opinion for the lecturer so they could decrease their anxiety. Fifteen questions were asked to the participants to classify them into the types of anxiety, the students' anxiety reasons and their suggestions for the lecturer to decrease their anxiety.

The instrument of this study was the structured interview. The questions were asked about their anxiety in learning grammar, reason and their suggestion for the lecturer in English grammar classroom.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the twenty anxious students' answer, fifteen of them categorized to self-related anxiety in learning grammar and the other five had social factor.

1. The Types of Self-Related Anxiety

This type of anxiety categorized based on the students' answer on their reasons why they have anxiety in learning English grammar. Those five reasons are: a) Lack knowledge of English grammar; b) Less motivated in learning English grammar; c) Limited English vocabularies; d) Students' perspective about the lecturer; and e. Less of self confidence in learning English grammar.

The students' reason on their anxiety will be explained below:

a. Lack Knowledge of English Grammar

Since Indonesian Independence Day, Indonesian government decided to put English in education curriculum. English becomes compulsory subject in the junior and senior high school. Even though English learnt by the students since they were in the junior high school, but the students still did not understand some of subjects in English, especially grammar. Five students raised the answer that they had lack knowledge of English grammar.

Based on their answer, the students realized that they have lack knowledge of English grammar eventhough they have learnt it since junior high school. On their opinion, learning grammar related to memorize many formulas which has not found in Indonesian language. Besides formula, the different structure of English and Indonesian also made the students got confused in learning grammar.

b. Less Motivation in Learning Grammar

Only one student answered that he had less motivation in learning grammar. This happened because the student chose English Department as their

major. According to the student, he did not want to study in English Department. He chosen this department because his parents' suggestion.

Besides, since junior high school, he never interested in learning grammar. This is the major factor why the student has less motivation in learning grammar. Then, the result of this factor, the student did not do his assignment in grammar class.

c. Limited English Vocabularies

Most of the students' background at English Department comes from rural area. This is one of their reasons why they have limited English vocabularies so they got anxiety in learning grammar. In their mind, vocabularies are related to learn English grammar. There were three students arouse this opinion that they had anxiety in learning grammar because they had limited vocabularies in English.

Limitation in English vocabularies influenced their confidence in learning grammar. They did not want to answer the questions asked by that lecturer while in the teaching learning process. They were worried that their answer was wrong because of using wrong vocabularies in answering lecturer's question.

d. The Students' Perspective about the Lecturer

At English Department, there were three lecturers who taught grammar subject. There were two students answered that their perspective about the lecturer affected on their anxiousness. The two students answered that the lecturers did not give teaching variations in teaching grammar; therefore, sometime the students get bored in learning grammar. The lecturer had only asked the students to memorize the rules or pattern then made sentences based on it.

Memorizing and applying the pattern made the students have perspective that the lecturers did not creative in teaching grammar. The creativity of the lecturers can build the students' self confidence in learning grammar. The other reason that students arouse was the lecturers dictated them that grammar is the most difficult subject in learning English.

e. Less of Self Confidence in Learning English Grammar

There were four students said that they had less self-confidence in learning English Grammar. This happened because many things that they have considered such as their local dialect influenced their bravery in expressing their idea. The four students had different answers why they had less confidence in learning English grammar.

Besides their local dialect, they were also afraid to speak because of their friends will mocking them. The other said that their bad experience in the past also made them lost their self confidence in learning grammar. This happened when he was in junior and senior high school. At that time, he got bullied from his friends because he said wrong answer. This experience gave him a traumatic experience.

2. The Types of Social Factor Anxiety

To those five students who had social factor, the reasons had anxiety because learning English grammar would erase their knowledge about Indonesian language as their first language. Actually, this reason seemed ridiculous but not for English Education Department in State Islamic University of North Sumatra. Based on their answer, English Education Department was not their main department that they chose. This department was the last choice for them.

Besides the type and reason why the students had anxiety in learning grammar, there were some suggestions from the students for the lecturer to decrease their anxiety in learning grammar, such as: first, lecturer must identify the students' anxiety; then, the lecturer creates fun, communicative, and less formal class; and the last, overcome students' problems in learning grammar.

1. Identifying Students' Anxiety

Most of the students' suggestion for English Grammar lecturers to decrease the students' anxiety was identifying their anxiety before the lesson began. This process can be started by asking them some questions about the

students' opinion on English grammar lesson, what the students' thinking about the subject, and why the students had anxiety in learning English grammar.

2. Creating Fun, Communicative and Less Formal Class

Lecturer had their own lesson plan while they wanted to teach the lesson. In their lesson, the students suggested for the lecturers to create fun activities in studying the pattern or rules while the students learnt the English grammar. Based on the students' opinion, fun activities could be decreased their anxiety in the lesson.

Besides fun activities, the lecturers must be communicative in delivering the subject. Most of them said that the lecturers taught the subject one way communication. The lecturer only asked questions when he wanted to know the level of the students' knowledge about English grammar. The students were needed two ways of communication while the lecturer taught the subject.

The last, based on their opinion, all of English grammar lecturers were very strict. They were rarely to keep smile to the students. It was rarely for the lecturers to make a joke in teaching grammar. The students viewed that this subject was a serious subject, and it was not fun. This point of view made them easy to get bored in English grammar class.

3. Overcoming Students' Problems in Learning Grammar

Based on the students' opinion, most of the English grammar lecturers focused on themselves. They did not recognized while the students got some problems in learning the subject. It could be said that the lecturer ignored that their students had problems. The lecturers only delivered the subject without analyzing the students' comprehension.

The students suggested that the lecturers had to recognize students' problem and then found the solution for the students. It should be solved soon because the students did not get anything in learning grammar. Besides, the lecturers could share strategies for the students therefore they could solve their problems in learning grammar.

Based on result description above, there were two type anxieties that the students got, namely: self-related anxiety and social factor anxiety. This result was as same as Agustina (2020), but she had different term. The terms that she used were internal contribution and external contribution factors. From this description, it was concluded that, there were two types of anxieties that comes from out of the students or internal students. Most of them had internal factors of anxiety.

In the other hand, Tupang exposed his research finding that students' anxiety had different term that was cognitive anxiety. This type of anxiety include in self-related anxiety on this research finding (Tupang, 2014). Meanwhile, Indriaty categorized students' anxiety into two types, namely trait anxiety and state/situational anxiety (Indrianty, 2016).

There were five reasons of students' anxiety, namely: a) Lack knowledge of English grammar; b) Less motivated in learning English grammar; c) Limited English vocabularies; d) Students' perspective about the lecturer; and e) Less of self confidence in learning English grammar. One of the reason why the students got anxiety in learning English also similar with the finding in Hidayati (2018), she found that the area of the students' living caused them had limited knowledge.

Besides Hidayati, there were six factors of students' anxiety in learning English, namely: speaking in front of the class, being laughed at by others, incomprehensible input, teacher's personality and attitude, students' beliefs, lack of preparation. The dominant factor in influence the anxiety is speaking in front of the class (Septiana and Agustina, 2020). One of these six factors also found in the students' anxiety in learning grammar, such as students' perspective about the lecturer.

In addition, the other researchers also found the same anxiety even though in different subjects. They found that students feared of teacher's comment on their writing production (Wahyuni and Umam, 2017). This statement supported the finding that students' perspective on teachers

influenced students' anxiety. In the other hand, Lucas, et. all (2011) proved that there were four types of anxiety, they were: communication anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, test anxiety, and anxiety in the classroom. Based on these findings compared to the researcher findings, three factors on Lucas' finding could be included on less self-confidence on learning grammar.

The third finding was about the students' suggestion to reduce their anxiety in learning grammar also supported by some researchers. Based on the research finding, there were three suggestions for the lecturer to reduce students' anxiety, namely: first, the lecturer identified students' anxiety before the lesson started; second, creating fun, communicative and less formal class; and the third, overcoming students' problems in learning Grammar. They said that in learning English, the teacher must be used various strategies. This was similar to the second suggestion that the lecturer creating fun, communicative and less formal class in learning grammar. In addition, Ganap and Neman also suggested the same suggestion that the teacher ought to make the class more creative and interesting (Neman and Ganap, 2018).

According to Hajan and Gatcho, they offered four aspects to reduce students'/anxiety, such as: first, the teacher should recognized students' anxiety and stress then applied quick and effective strategies to solve their destructive feeling; second, a truly communicative approach in language teaching needs to be adopted to provide those language learners who have limited exposure to English language with more chances to fully practice their speaking skills; third, it is important that teachers create a friendly, informal and learning-supportive environment for language learning by friendly, helpful and cooperative behavior, making students feel comfortable when speaking in the class; fourth, teachers should encourage those learners who are afraid of making mistakes to feel free to make mistakes in order to acquire communication skills (Hajan & Gatcho, 2018). Hajan and Gatcho recommendation was almost similar to the researcher finding about the students' suggestion for the lecturer who taught English grammar class.

CONCLUSION

Based on the finding and description above, it is concluded that the students' anxiety is usually found in every learning subject, especially learning grammar. The students' anxiety consisted of two types, namely: self-related anxiety and social factor anxiety. Most of the factors of the anxiety were also similar. In this research, there were five factors of students' anxiety and the most anxiety that students' own was lack knowledge of English Grammar. In addition, the students suggested for the lecturer also same with the suggestion that was found by another researcher, such as using numerous fun, active and creative teaching strategies.

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