



Training On Coping Strategies For English Speech Anxiety For Grade VI Students In Toket 1 Elementary School

^{1*} Samsul Arifin, Mad Sa'l²

^{1,2} Institut Agama Islam Negeri Madura, Indonesia

*Correspondence: ✉ samsulcandi34@gmail.com

Abstract

English speaking anxiety is a common challenge faced by students, especially when it comes to public speaking. Factors such as lack of confidence, limited vocabulary, and fear of making mistakes often become barriers to communication. This study aims to identify and implement effective strategies in overcoming speaking anxiety. The method used in this study is strategy-based training involving questionnaires, vocal exercises, relaxation techniques, role-playing, and direct assistance by tutors. The training was conducted on grade VI students of SDN Toket 1 with a phased approach, starting from the identification of anxiety levels to speaking practice using prepared speech texts. The results showed that relaxation techniques, gradual practice, and motivation from tutors were able to increase students' confidence and reduce anxiety when speaking. With the proper application of the method, students can speak more fluently, confidently, and effectively in English.

Keywords: Speaking anxiety, English, Training strategies

Abstrak

Kecemasan berbicara dalam bahasa Inggris merupakan tantangan umum yang dihadapi oleh siswa, terutama saat berpidato di depan umum. Faktor seperti kurangnya percaya diri, keterbatasan kosakata, dan ketakutan melakukan kesalahan sering kali menjadi hambatan dalam komunikasi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan menerapkan strategi yang efektif dalam mengatasi kecemasan berbicara. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah pelatihan berbasis strategi yang melibatkan kuesioner, latihan vokal, teknik relaksasi, role-playing, dan pendampingan langsung oleh tutor. Pelatihan ini dilakukan pada siswa kelas VI SDN Toket 1 dengan pendekatan bertahap, mulai dari identifikasi tingkat kecemasan hingga praktik berbicara menggunakan teks pidato yang telah disiapkan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa teknik relaksasi, latihan bertahap, serta motivasi dari tutor mampu meningkatkan kepercayaan diri siswa dan mengurangi kecemasan saat berbicara. Dengan penerapan metode yang tepat, siswa dapat berbicara lebih lancar, percaya diri, dan efektif dalam bahasa Inggris.

Kata Kunci: Kecemasan berbicara, Bahasa Inggris, Strategi pelatihan

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INTRODUCTION

Language has a significant role in our daily lives because of its function as a means to express ideas, thoughts, and feelings. Language is also a means of communication that can establish social, cultural, and religious relationships among groups or individuals has a very important function (Asteka, 2023)

In this era of globalization, the role of English is considered very important as the language of international communication around the world. This causes stakeholders in the field of education in Indonesia to integrate English into the curriculum as one of the subjects that must be taught at all levels of education in Indonesia. Language learning is considered effective if learners can use language as a tool to interact and communicate (Mailani et al., 2022)

English is seen as a major foreign language in Indonesia. However, as a non-native language, there are many obstacles faced when speaking in English speech (Semiun et al., 2022). Public speaking anxiety can be experienced by anyone, including elementary school students. Factors such as lack of self-confidence, fear of making mistakes, and pressure from the environment can exacerbate this anxiety. As a result, many students feel nervous, have difficulty concentrating, or even avoid the opportunity to speak in front of the class. If not properly addressed, this anxiety can have a negative impact on students' academic and social development.

In the context of English language learning, speaking anxiety is increasingly becoming a challenge as students not only have to master the speech material, but also have to pay attention to linguistic aspects such as pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary. Many students feel afraid of pronouncing words incorrectly or have difficulty in constructing sentences correctly. This can demotivate them in learning English and hinder the development of speaking skills.

To overcome this problem, effective strategies are needed to help students manage speaking anxiety. One approach that can be implemented is through strategy-based training designed to increase students' confidence in speech. This training can include relaxation techniques, vocal exercises, appropriate use of body language, as well as fun and interactive practice methods.

The implementation of coping strategies training in English speech anxiety aims to provide students with a more positive speaking experience and build their confidence gradually. Through a structured approach, such as breathing exercises, speech simulations, and constructive feedback, students can learn to recognize and manage their fears more effectively.

The training not only focuses on technical aspects such as pronunciation, intonation and articulation, but also on psychological aspects that are often the main obstacles in public speaking. With a supportive atmosphere and continuous practice, students will become more accustomed to facing an audience and begin to form a positive mindset towards their communication skills. This will ultimately foster strong speaking skills, increase participation in academic activities, as well as provide important provisions for them to perform confidently in various life situations, both in educational and professional environments

In this training, a variety of methods are used such as socialization, lectures, exercises, and individual presentations that are designed in an integrated manner so that the learning process feels more lively and less boring. This variety of methods aims to create a dynamic and fun learning atmosphere, so that students are not only passive listeners, but also actively involved in every activity. This varied approach is able to reach various learning styles of students, so that they understand the material more easily and are motivated to continue practicing. Thus, the learning process becomes more effective in helping students overcome anxiety when speaking, especially in the context of English speech in public.

SDN Toket 1 was chosen as the training location because it has students with varying levels of anxiety in speaking English. By providing this training, it is hoped that the students can be better prepared for public speaking tasks and be able to better develop their speaking skills. Teachers can also benefit from this training by gaining insights on how to support their students in overcoming speaking anxiety.

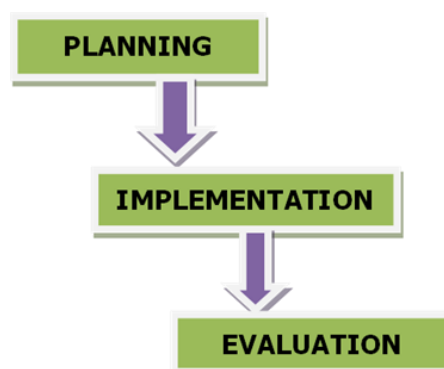
This training not only aims to overcome speaking anxiety, but also to increase students' understanding of the importance of communication skills in everyday life. By having confidence in speaking English, students will be more motivated to participate in various academic and non-academic activities that involve oral communication.

Against the background of the importance of english speaking skills, this study aims to describe the effectiveness of training on strategies to overcome anxiety in English speech for grade VI students at SDN Toket 1. With the training of strategies to overcome anxiety in speaking in English, students of SDN Toket 1 are expected to increase self-confidence and be able to eliminate anxiety when speaking in English, and be able to adapt and contribute to the growing global dynamics.

METHODS

Training on strategies to overcome speaking anxiety in English speech conducted at SDN Toket 1. The participants in this activity were grade VI students of SDN Toket 1, totaling 17 people. Some of the methods used in the implementation of this activity are socialization methods, lectures, practice methods, individual presentations. The socialization method was carried out as an initial step to introduce the importance of public speaking skills and the purpose of the training to the participants. The lecture method was used to deliver basic material on public speaking anxiety, the factors that cause it, as well as strategies that can be applied to overcome it, this method includes systematic and clear explanation activities. The practice method was conducted with the aim of training students to perform speeches with prepared texts. In this session, students need maximum practice to overcome anxiety and deliver speeches, the guidance method is carried out to guide and train students to appear confident in delivering speeches. The test method is used as an evaluation tool to measure the effectiveness of the training that has been given to students about overcoming anxiety when speaking in English.

The implementation of the training on strategies to overcome speaking anxiety in English speeches for grade VI students was carried out after coordination. Coordination is done so that all parties have the same understanding about when the training will be carried out. The training was held during the first lesson hour, with permission from the school to change the lesson hour and fill it with training activities on strategies to overcome speaking anxiety in English. Regarding the coordination of the training implementation, the researcher conducted the training stages as listed below. At this training activity is carried out in 3 stages (Bahtiar et al., 2022) namely: 1) preparation of activities, 2) implementation of activities, 3) evaluation of activities.



Planning Stage

At this stage, the researcher prepares questionnaires, short English speech texts and lesson plans as the first step of learning.

Implementation Stage

This was done by first distributing questionnaires to the students. The questionnaire contained several questions with short yes or no answers. The questions were related to anxiety when speaking English, students' difficulties in speaking English. The students were then guided to overcome the anxiety of speaking in English. Students were asked to come forward to give a speech in English with the text that had been prepared, the researcher while providing guidance in overcoming anxiety in English speech.

Evaluation Stage

The evaluation was conducted to determine the effectiveness of the training in overcoming students' speaking anxiety when giving speeches in English. After the training activities took place, the researcher again distributed a questionnaire similar to the initial questionnaire as a tool to measure changes in students' anxiety levels. The questionnaire contains several questions as follows 1) do you like learning English. 2) Do you often worry about making mistakes when speaking in English and being laughed at by your friends? 3) whether you can read English texts. 4) Does your voice often tremble when you start speaking in English in front of the class. The results of the pre- and post-training questionnaires were then compared to see the difference in the level of success in overcoming anxiety. In addition, evaluation was also conducted through direct observation during the students' speeches, paying attention to facial expressions, speaking fluency, eye contact, and body gestures. The researcher recorded the progress of each student and provided individual feedback. This evaluation is used as the basis for compiling a report on the results of the activity and recommending follow-up learning that is more sustainable in improving students' self-confidence and speaking skills

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

English speaking anxiety is a common phenomenon experienced by students, especially in the context of public speaking activities. This anxiety includes nervousness, fear of making mistakes, and feelings of discomfort when speaking in a foreign language ((Firna et al., 2024). For grade VI students, this is a serious obstacle in expressing ideas and thoughts confidently. Factors such as lack of language mastery, shyness, pressure from the environment, and lack of experience performing in front of the class exacerbate this condition (Inggris, 2024)

In making a speech, one must understand the material to be delivered well. In addition, good English language skills are also a factor that affects the success of a speech. Speeches must be delivered by using the right language both in terms of language structure (grammar), as well as pronunciation, a good way as in terms of fluency, gesture, and also eye contact (Mardiningrum & Wirantaka, 2021).

Activity Preparation

The training activities for students began by asking permission from the grade VI teacher of SDN Toket 1 who teaches English. The English teacher was also involved in the implementation of the training on strategies to overcome anxiety in speaking in English to

supervise. The time of the training was adjusted to the learning schedule so as not to interfere with students' learning activities in class.

The planning of the training activities was carried out by preparing several important components, namely a questionnaire, a short speech text in English, and a training design containing strategies to overcome speaking anxiety. A questionnaire was developed and distributed to students to identify the level of anxiety and problems they face when they have to speak in English, especially in the context of public speaking.

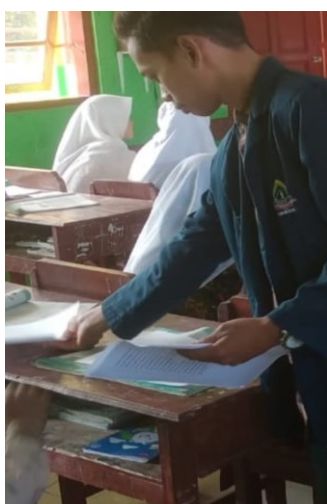


Figure 1. Distribution of Questionnaires

Questionnaires were prepared and distributed to the students as a tool to determine the extent of the anxiety level they experience and the problems they face when they have to speak in English, especially in the context of speech. Based on the identification results, the training methods to be used were determined, such as vocal exercises, role-playing, and relaxation techniques that are in accordance with the character and needs of elementary school students. The training schedule was designed with attention to effective time.

Activity Implementation

The implementation of this activity starts from the planning stage to the evaluation stage. During the whole series of activities, the students were given a questionnaire containing several questions related to anxiety in speaking English. The questionnaire was designed to gather information about the level of anxiety experienced by the students, the factors that cause anxiety when speaking in English, as well as the students' expectations after attending the training on strategies to overcome speaking anxiety. The data obtained from the questionnaire was used as a basis for adjusting the training approach as well as evaluating the effectiveness of the program in improving students' confidence when speaking in public in English. The English tutor briefed the students about the training on strategies to overcome anxiety when speaking in English with the initial plan that had been made.

The first stage started with the English tutor opening the meeting through an introduction session, praying together, and building a warm and relaxed atmosphere. Next, the tutor asked the students some initial questions to explore their experience in speaking in English. These questions were aimed at finding out the level of anxiety they experienced when asked to speak in public.

From the feedback given by the students, it was found that most of them were afraid of making mistakes and worried about being laughed at by their friends. In addition, they also said that they had difficulty in using grammar, and felt that they were not used to speaking in English both at home and at school. This information became an important foundation for the tutors in adjusting the training approach to be more targeted and in line with the students' needs.



Figure 2. Delivery of material on strategies to overcome anxiety in speaking English

In the second stage, the tutor provided material on strategies to overcome anxiety in English and the importance of speaking fluently and without anxiety. Tutors teach students to use relaxation techniques, such as taking deep breaths and exhaling slowly, which is very helpful to calm the mind and reduce nervousness before performing. Vocal exercises aim to train students' articulation, intonation, and courage to speak clearly. In addition, role-playing allows students to practice interactively in a fun and pressure-free atmosphere.



Figure 3. Training activity on coping strategies for English speaking through prepared speech texts

In the third stage, students are asked to come to the front of the class and read the English speech text that has been prepared beforehand. This method allows the tutor or researcher to provide maximum guidance by applying various techniques, such as relaxation, intonation regulation, and effective speaking strategies. With this approach, students can reduce anxiety when speaking in English.

During the training, students are accompanied by tutors who provide direct guidance, so they feel more comfortable and less afraid to perform in front of the class. The tutor's presence also plays a role in guiding students to gradually overcome their anxiety. One of the techniques applied is relaxation before speaking, which helps students reduce tension and increase focus when delivering speeches. In addition, tutors provide intonation and articulation exercises so that students can deliver speeches more clearly and expressively. This approach not only

improves the quality of speaking, but also helps students understand that mistakes in speaking are a natural part of the learning process and should not be feared. Thus, they are more courageous to try without excessive fear of mistakes.

In the training process, motivation is an important factor to build students' confidence. Tutors actively provide positive encouragement and praise for students' efforts, even if they are not perfect, so that they are more courageous in speaking. Students are invited to enjoy the process without pressure, so that they feel comfortable in delivering speeches. Exercises are repeated until students feel more prepared, and each session is closed with feedback in the form of appreciation and constructive suggestions for improvement. In this way, students learn from their mistakes and continue to improve their English speaking skills.

This is in line with what is said by (Rofi'i et al., 2023). that in overcoming anxiety in speaking English must use several methods such as relaxation techniques, so that someone feels calmer and less nervous. Practice repeatedly starting from small things, such as reading exercises to be more fluent when performing. Practice intonation so that the delivery is clearer and more expressive. In line with what is said by (Ahmad & Arkiang, 2021) that in overcoming anxiety in speaking English must have high self-confidence. Practice repeatedly, because practice makes you perfect. Here's an example of an English speech text about confidence:

Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh

Good morning everyone, My name is Samsul Arifin, commonly called samsul and today I want to talk about something very important. yes about confidence!. Being confident means believing in yourself and not being afraid to try. When we are confident, we can do our best in everything - speaking, studying, or even playing games.

Sometimes, we feel nervous or scared. That's normal! But we shouldn't let fear stop us. If we make mistakes, it's okay. Mistakes help us learn and grow. Even the best people in the world make mistakes, they just keep trying and never give up.

Being confident also means speaking clearly and looking at the other person when we speak. We should smile, stand up straight, and speak in a loud voice. When we do that, people will listen to us and respect what we say.

So, let's all try to be more confident every day. Believe in yourself, and don't be afraid to speak up or share your ideas. Remember, you are amazing, and you can do great things! thanks.

Wassalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.

Thus, the training to overcome speaking anxiety in English through the method of reading prepared speech texts, accompanied by relaxation techniques, intonation settings, and direct assistance from tutors, has a real impact on students, where students who were initially afraid and hesitant began to dare to speak in front of the class. With patient guidance and a supportive atmosphere, they can appear more confident and enjoy the process. This proves that the right approach can help students get past their anxiety and start developing their speaking skills slowly but surely.

Activity Evaluation

The training activities on strategies to overcome anxiety when speaking in English went well with the enthusiastic participation of the students as participants. The evaluation of activities regarding the training of strategies to overcome anxiety in speaking English for students through reading speech texts, relaxation techniques when starting to speak,

intonation and providing motivation for students is carried out by directly assessing students' performance when they are asked to come to the front of the class to read English speech texts that have been prepared previously. Through this method, tutors or researchers can provide maximum guidance by applying techniques designed to reduce anxiety. The implementation of the evaluation not only assesses the final result of the speech, but also pays attention to the process of increasing students' confidence during the training.

During the training, tutors provide direct assistance to students who perform, provide direction, support, and build a comfortable and pressure-free atmosphere. Evaluation was conducted based on several indicators, such as reading fluency, clarity of pronunciation, proper use of intonation, courage to perform, and response to corrections and directions from the tutor. One important indicator is the student's ability to continue with the speech despite making small mistakes, as this indicates a decrease in anxiety and an increase in mental resilience.

The exercises were repeated, and each session ended with feedback from the tutor, which included appreciation for the students' efforts and constructive suggestions for improvement. From this exercise, it was evident that most students experienced an increase in confidence and began to show a willingness to perform without excessive fear. The evaluation also showed that the tutor's supportive approach, relaxation techniques and consistent intonation practice helped students overcome their psychological barriers to speaking English. Thus, the training was not only effective in improving speaking skills, but also in shaping students' positive attitudes towards the foreign language learning process.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The conclusion drawn from the training activity on strategies to overcome anxiety in English speaking for students of SDN Toket 1 shows that an approach designed with careful planning and gradual implementation can have a positive impact on increasing students' confidence. By involving subject teachers, developing a questionnaire to identify anxiety levels, and applying various techniques such as relaxation, vocal exercises, and role-playing, the training was effective and in line with the needs of elementary school students. The application of the method of reading speech texts in front of the class, accompanied by tutors who provide direct guidance, has proven to reduce anxiety, build comfort, and motivate students to dare to speak without fear of making mistakes. The training not only provided a fun learning experience, but also helped students realize that speaking in English is a skill that can be improved gradually with practice, support and the right approach.

It is suggested by the training team that those who want to conduct English speaking training in this place should socialize directly to the school principal, especially to the English teacher, to determine the right implementation time so that it does not interfere with students' class hours. In addition, in delivering the material, it is recommended to use language that is easily understood by students so that they can follow the training well and effectively.

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