

Anxiety-Related Silence in Speaking among Indonesian EFL Junior High School Students

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ABSTRACT

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In Indonesia, students learn English as a foreign language, which is rarely used in everyday life and it makes them difficult to learn. One of the phenomena in the classroom when learning English is the silent phase of a student. This does not only happen when the teacher explains the material, but also when students are asked to answer questions or practice talking to their friends. This article will discuss the silence that occurs in students when they are asked to speak in English. The method used is qualitative by using data triangulation to strengthen the research results. The subjects of this study were 8th grade students from 3 different provincial schools, they are SMPN 1 Sukahening, Tasikmalaya, West Java; SMPN 2 Tayu, Pati, Central Java and SMPN 4 Muara Teweh, Central Kalimantan. Taking this subject is used to see whether the silence experienced by students in each place has the same meaning or not. The results showed that effect of silence in the classroom on English learners triggering negative thoughts, feelings and emotions. The silence experienced by students was caused by several factors, such as low English mastery, lack of self-confidence and lack of preparation.

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Introduction

Silence is an inseparable part of human communication; it carries out messages (Al Jahdhami, 2018) that can be very complex in meaning. The user can use it to express whether it is a negative or positive thought. A person uses purposeful silence to convey something without expressing it in verbal communication. In nature, silence is a neutral behavior, but in silence, negative and positive judgments can be embedded by the interpretation (Tannen & Saville-Troike, 1985). Similar to verbal communication, silence is a type of medium for the messages experienced by its user to be aware of another person interacting or noticing the silence.

In classroom practice, in general, silence occurs frequently. It is used by the teacher and the student, which Bao (2019) defined as the silence of educated people. Silence among the students in the classroom can be a positive or negative aspect for the sake of the learning process. Harumi (2015) stated that silence equals adaptation time for students to prepare for their interactions and

answers. Furthermore, Liu (2002) identifies silence as a sign of honor, agreement, attentive listening, and active thinking.

In contrast, silence is a problem that can lower the students' productivity, for it is some form of disattention, unattracted, less competence, and inability to create an engagement with previous knowledge (Bao, 2019). Students' silence can be a sign of resistance to interacting verbal with the teacher (Schultz, 2009), the symptoms of low respect for the teacher or resistance to classroom instructions (Gilmore, 1985), and a protest against an unfavorable teaching style or the teacher itself (Ladson-Billings, 1996). A student with silence is also described as having low achievement in education and unable to develop cognition without mentoring (Liu, 2002).

According to King (2013), in a foreign language setting where verbal communication is encouraged, silence can signify students' unsuccessfulness in connecting and acquiring speaking competence in the target language. Concerning verbal activities, some studies have revealed that the negative mental process is disturbing a human cognitive process towards activity in processing and conveying a language. Learning a new language can trigger anxiety which is a human experience in response and behavior toward the perspective of harmful and dangerous situations (Moss, 2002). Anxiety can make humans unable to control their behavior and discourage them from doing something they consider a threat or danger. An anxious person will draw too many worries about some activities that are considered able to downgrade or threaten their sense of identity (Fischer, 1970). The case also happens among students who have to learn a foreign language and do not have any experience in exposing themselves to the target language. Students' fear of going wrong is one of the causes. Horwitz et al. (1986) revealed that verbal communication in a language is a threatening aspect of learning a foreign language; anxious students have more difficulties developing their verbal competence in communicating using the target language.

Research about anxiety-related silence in ESL and EFL settings is crucial; it is to create awareness for the language teacher about the issue. Identifying the meaning and the causes of anxiety-related silence among the students is significant for the sake of the teaching and learning process. A teacher can choose convenient approaches for the students and appropriate strategies in the teaching and learning process to improve the student's learning process and achievement. This research investigates the meaning and causes of silence about the anxiety in the EFL setting of junior high school students across Indonesia in speaking.

From the previous background, the researchers formulated the research question: what are the meaning and the causes of the silence about the anxiety in the EFL setting of junior high school students in three schools across Indonesia in speaking practice in the classroom? The study is essential to fill the gap of the previous silent research that mostly investigated the matter in the tertiary student population. The research can be used as guidance in analyzing the students' silence

in the English classroom practice and in determining the approach to be used in junior high school students' English classrooms to encourage them to practice spoken English. Earlier diagnosis of anxiety-related silence in EFL classrooms will bring up a more comprehensive cure for the problem in EFL classroom practice, especially in verbal engagement and communicative aspects. The findings and discussion will be divided into three sections. Each section will explain the silence and the factors influenced in each school. The finding will discuss the meaning and the causes of related anxiety silence in the EFL setting of junior high school students at three schools across Indonesia in speaking practice in the classroom.

Literature Review

The state of the art of this research is to prove that students in junior high school can speak in their mother tongue, and Foreign Language (FL) leads to differences in aversion, self-awareness, fear, or even anxiety. Their position is that they rarely find it difficult to understand others or make themselves understood in their mother tongue. However, when speaking in a foreign language, they are often faced with linguistic and socio-cultural standards that they did not know before. There are various forms of silence among students that must be summarized, elaborated, and linked into relevant discourse. Indonesian teachers who teach English as Foreign Language (EFL) students in Indonesia often find students' experiences of silence an individual choice, but other times, silence occurs due to the power of circumstances. Together, the insights remind us that to truly understand the meaning of silence, one needs to move beyond questions of personal identity and more importantly, examine the dynamics of silence in broader sociocultural and cultural contexts and educational contexts.

Silence can be generated by external or internal factors. As an external process, Indonesian EFL students will remain silent comes from environmental influences. As an internal process, silence is a form of determination to become an individual choice according to the character and favorite learning style of students. Someone's silence in this case can be sociological, namely in the form of delivering messages to the public. Mills (2000), in proposing the notion of sociological imagination, argues that individual problems, which seem to be a limited part of social experience, may not be single cases but have the ability to represent the concerns of groups, communities, or society at large. Anxious learners can convey various meanings by their silent appearance in class, which naturally triggers negative thoughts. This then increased their anxiety about using the target language leading to more forms of silence.

Empirical evidence in recent years suggests that a part of fluency in communication develops silently in students' minds before being presented as a form of social interaction, with research conducted on speakers by Bao (2014; 2020), De Jong et al. (2012), Derwing, Munro, Thomson & Rossiter (2009), and Riazantseva (2001) who studied speech back to their respective thought

processes. These studies are inspired by the discipline of social psychology where the combination of cognition and behavior can naturally shape the ability to speak in a social context. Not wanting to talk, however, doesn't mean students stop communicating. On the other hand, the silence practiced by EFL students is a socio-political strategy to deal with situations that do not support their mental well-being. In line with that, Ladson-Billings (1996) observed that silence can be used as a tool to apply certain teaching and learning styles or certain types of teachers. When students feel that teachers do not have confidence in their abilities and existence, they will feel helpless, weak, and isolated (Morita, 2004), and tend to withdraw not only from activeness, cooperation and participation in learning but also from the overall desire to learn or study. The discourse on silence as resistance has highlighted how silence can be an interactive process in Comment [U1]: It would be better if the authors could also justify the state-of-the-art of this research and state research gaps based on the elaboration of the body of literature (including previous studies) response to other human behavior (see, for example, Montoya, 2000). Silence, in many cases, can prove two conflicting functions, both suppression, and defense. The teaching of EFL in Indonesia can be caused by polemics about the curriculum, which seems to be unstable.

Fortunately, a few internal and external factors help students maintain their learning excitement. Supportive institutions, schools and agencies, conducive social networks, and strong positive emotions from teachers and students have become evidence and well demonstrated as the main characteristics of resilience. High competitive culture in schools that focuses on student achievement or minimum competency assessment (AKM) can cause students to be silent for fear of answering wrongly or expressing opinions that tend to be disapproved by most students. If an EFL student's answer is wrong or a slightly unusual opinion will be laughed at, both by the teacher and by fellow students, then the student will usually choose silence as a means of self-protection to feel more secure. The opposite can also happen if silence has become a common norm, a natural way, and a valued part of everyday life at school. The difference in personal impact from silence is whether silence is chosen as a state of respect, a state imposed by others or withdrawn as a means of self-protection.

Silence can also be used, for example, to close oneself off or withdraw from the outside world—a form of self-protection from others or something the person knows but doesn't want to say or talk about (Alerby, 2020). Silent conditions in highly complex classrooms indicate that the behavior of EFL students limits opportunities to develop speaking skills and can also encourage negative thoughts and further foster students' speaking anxiety. If a student is anxious and feels too nervous about speaking the target language in class, despite having the will, it can lead to frustration at missing out on speaking practice opportunities or self-doubt about their language skills. In addition, if the silence is facilitative or has good moments, such as pauses to prepare for what they want to

say, if students remain anxious in speaking, they will become too aware of themselves and their performance in class will decline.

EFL students are afraid of getting a negative response or negative evaluation from the teacher and their friends. Having a better understanding of how anxious learners perceive the silence of their classrooms can have an impact on developing the potential to scale up interventions that can support nervous learners to turn into speaking. The anxiety of Indonesian EFL students in learning foreign languages is caused by self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to language learning in the classroom that arises from the peculiarities and uniqueness of the language learning process (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope, 1986, p. 128). Learning a foreign language is unique because students are required to communicate using a language they have not mastered perfectly. Three components of anxiety in learning English as a foreign language have been identified (Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope, 1986, p. 1) communication fear, 2) negative evaluation fear, and 3) test anxiety.

Students who exhibit communication fear do not feel comfortable communicating in the target language in front of the class or other people—their language knowledge is limited, especially about speaking skills. Students who experience fear of negative responses do not perceive language errors as a normal part of the learning process. Students instead perceive mistakes as a threat to their self-image, and sources of negative evaluation from either the teacher or their peers will create fear in students. As a result, they are more silent, withdrawn, and reluctant to participate in language activities (Ely 1986). Students with speech anxiety perceive the process of learning a foreign language, and especially oral tests, as a test situation rather than an opportunity to learn to communicate and improve skills.

Method

This research used a qualitative study to determine why students were silent when they got speaking material. As Maher did in her research, to investigate students' silence, we needed to know the functions and forms of classroom silence from the participants' perspectives, who identified as anxious English speakers (Maher, 2021, p.36). The first step in doing our research was observing the classroom to get the raw data of students' who had anxiety and were silent in the learning process. Imura (2004, p.177) said that when learners perceived that they were not going to succeed in communicating, they were likely to choose not to talk, even though they could do well. We did this research on three schools with different provinces to participate; they were SMPN 1 Sukahening, Tasikmalaya (West Java), SMPN 4 Muara Teweh, Barito Utara Regency (Central Kalimantan), and SMPN 2 Tayu, Pati (Central Java).

After observing the classroom, we gave the FLCAS questionnaire to filter the students with high anxiety. They were the target to be interviewed as the next data. We used a semi-structured

interview since it could show who expressed their beliefs on the use of silence in educational settings in relation to talking (Bao, 2015, p.54). Besides, as Rizqi said, the advantage of the method was that the interviewer had a structured direction in hand, even though it was possible to wander from this guidance if interesting issues appeared during the dialogue (2017, p.27).

After students filled in the FLCAS questionnaire and the data were analyzed, we got the students with high anxiety. Then we had coding related to the reason why students were silent. This data became our basic clue for conducting an in-depth semi-structured interview.

1. Participants

This study observed eighth-grade students from three schools in different provinces. Each school had one class of 20-32 students each to be observed and got a FLCAS questionnaire. Thus, the total number of students is 54 who get the FLCAS questionnaire, but only 38 students who fill in the questionnaire. The rest of the students, 16 people, do not fill in the questionnaire for some reason. First, they do not want to fill in the questionnaire, have a problem connecting to the internet, and do not have a mobile phone.

2. Instruments for Data Collection

The classroom observation is conducted to know the students' behavior in class and their ability in English material, especially speaking. There are some indicators as the guide to doing the observation. To obtain complete data in analyzing the factors causing silence in students and the anxiety that arises, the research used three methods: a questionnaire (using FLCAS), semi-structured interview and observation in the classroom.

The researchers used a systematic questionnaire based on Horwitz's Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) to obtain reliable quantitative data. It consists of 33 questions and is organized on a 5-point Likert scale, requesting students to specify their degree of agreement with the items from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

After students fill in the FLCAS questionnaire, the data is analyzed to get the level of anxiety. The students who get the level of high anxiety become the interview target to get more data. Semi-structured interviews are given to the students. In SMPN 2 Tayu, Pati, out of 20 students, there were only 13 students who filled the questionnaire, and four of them had high levels of anxiety. While from SMPN 1 Sukahening, 10 students filled out the questionnaire. The seven students are at an anxious level, and 1 student has a high anxious level. Then SMPN 4 Muara Teweh, 15 students filled out the FLCAS questionnaire. Out of 15 students who filled, 6 students have no obstacles in speaking in the sense that they can overcome the speaking anxiety well with their good and relatively fluent. There are 3 students who have no meaningful obstacles in terms of speaking-anxiety means they are in a moderate position because more answers: neither agree and disagree. Meanwhile, 6 students experienced speaking anxiety and silence both at strong and medium levels.

The interviews were administered to seek the students' feelings when speaking English in front of the classroom and the factors of their anxiety and silence. As Egitim (2018, p.8) studied in investigating factors behind student silence, he had seven open-ended questions related to the factors behind silent behavior. In this study, the participant is a teenager, so the questions were dominated by the close-ended question.

- a. Why do you feel nervous when you speak English?
- b. Why do you think you can't speak fluently in English in class?
- c. How do you feel when asked to speak/answer English questions?
- d. Among speaking English in front of your classmates or English teacher, which do you think makes you nervous the most?
- e. Are you comfortable speaking English with your best friend in class?
- f. Between speaking English in front of the class or your seat, which do you think makes you nervous the most?
- g. Do you understand all the topics being discussed in English class?
- h. What do you do when you don't understand what is being discussed/discussed in class?
- i. Do you choose to be silent and not speak and then try not to invite the teacher's attention to ask you questions?

Discussion

1. Silence in SMPN 2 Tayu

The results of the analysis of the data obtained at SMPN 2 Tayu, from 20 students in one class, there were only 13 students who filled out the FLCAS questionnaire. This is because some students do not have a data quota to fill out online questionnaires through the Google Form platform. The second reason is that some students do not understand the questions asked but do not tell the English teacher. The results of this questionnaire were processed by adding the Likert Scale scores for each question. The sum of these scores is done for each child. As a result, anxiety levels will appear from low, medium, high and very high. Researchers base anxiety levels on Oetting's Scale (1983).

After the anxiety level appears, the researcher creates a category that will be used as the basis for the interview target. Of the 13 children, four children appeared with high levels of anxiety. Then they carried out semi-structured interviews through the WhatsApp platform using the voice note feature. The table below shows the verbatim of the data obtained. Then the researcher analyzed the code that appeared and narrowed it to the theme. This theme results from the causes of anxiety that arise in students. Students often feel afraid and embarrassed when the teacher asks them to speak in English. Starting from anxiety, then comes the silence, which has many meanings. The students' silence was due to the fear and shame that came before they tried to speak. They feel worry if their

friends laugh at them when speaking English incorrectly. In addition, there is a sense of shame when speaking in front of many people.

The next meaning of silence is that they think about what vocabulary to remove when they start speaking in English. Their confession shows that their lack of vocabulary makes them think for a long time, so the teacher and friends finally ask them to talk or answer questions immediately. There may be a sense of panic that fades their ideas to be conveyed.

Table 1. Table of the data obtained

<i>Verbatim</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>Theme</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is especially shy, sometimes seen by friends. Then friends like laughing, so less confident, not sure what to say up front. • Erm... especially afraid of being wrong. Sometimes my friends have different opinions. Then sometimes there are friends who blame, then there are friends who laugh too. So I'm a bit embarrassed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel embarrassed • Not confident in speaking English • Fear of being wrong • Laughed by friends when talking • Blame friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nervous • Friends' mocking
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because you haven't mastered all the English vocabulary, you don't know where you are when you speak English, some are flipped around and some are rich. Then someone laughs at friends if that friend can speak English. • Due to my lack of mastery of English vocabulary. And still don't know where the English word is, that's it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have limited vocabulary • Do not know the grammar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of vocabulary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pretty nervous. But before that I had heard the English teacher speak, so I was able to imitate a little. So don't be too afraid to be wrong. • What I feel is a little nervous and panicky 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling panicked and confused 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Afraid to say something
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because I'm not very fluent in English • Because I don't speak English very well and I'm afraid of being scolded if I answer wrong. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling afraid of being scolded if answering wrong 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not Fluent in English

2. Silence in SMPN 4 Muara Teweh

After collecting the data, we found that these six students experienced anxiety in English caused by: first, fear arose due to the potential for negative evaluations from their friends and second,

perception of the ability to speak English is lower than their friends. Their anxiety and silence when speaking in English class result in students who do not want to participate in speaking activities. This is nearly related to several implicit factors that explain this; investigation shows that their hesitancy is not because they do not watch about their score in learning English, idleness, or lack of interest in English.

The interview results support the conclusion that the participants do not share in speaking conditioning because they believe they are not good at speaking English. Accordingly, they emphasized that their classmates would rate them negatively. In this section, the writer discusses the survey and interview results. The writer used qualitative methods to analyze the results. There is a wide range of anxiety levels among students based on the 33 items in the FLCAS questionnaire. The writer found six students who had different levels of anxiety when speaking. There are 3 students (50%) who experienced the level of "anxiety", and the range of scores for the "high anxiety" level is above 131. This means that one-fifth respondent is in the range above. There is 1 student (17%) at the "mildly anxious" level starting from 98-131 and there are 2 students (6%) who have a "relaxed" level, and the range of scores starts from 66-86. As some students with highly anxious speaking based on interviews said:

Interviewer : Why do you think you can't do well when speaking in English class?

Student 1 : I feel nervous when I am told to stand in front of the class and speak. I always thought I was stupid and not as good as the rest of my friends and this made it hard for me to open my mouth and say a word.

Student 2 : I feel ashamed and afraid to make mistakes. I don't want my friends to laugh at me when I talk.

Student 3 : My English is not good and it makes me shy to speak in front of my friends. I feel like a stupid student in class when I make a mistake

Interviewer : Do you understand all the topics covered during speaking class in English class?

Student 1 : Sometimes, I don't understand what my lecturer is talking about, so I just sit quietly listening to it.

Student 2 : I am reluctant to speak if I do not understand the topic. If I have to talk then I talk away from topic and my friends will laugh at me.

Student 3 : There are some topics that are difficult for me to understand. I didn't want to ask my lecturer for an explanation because many other students didn't ask and I was too embarrassed to do so.

- Interviewer : What do you usually do if you don't understand what is being discussed in English class?
- Student 1 : None. I just sat quietly and listened to my teacher.
- Student 2 : I try to concentrate, but if I still don't understand, I end up giving up.
- Student 3 : I will ask my lecturer to explain. If I don't know how to ask a question in English, I will use Indonesian or the local language.

The findings indicate several factors contributing to students' anxiety in their English class. Student 1 was very worried about speaking in front of the class. He replied that he started to worry when his teacher pointed at him or asked him to practice speaking in front of the class. He said that he started to get anxious and panicked when he spoke English. He also commented that he immediately became anxious when the teacher suddenly asked him a question. He even reported that just being summoned, it could already cause anxiety. Moreover, Student 2 admitted he felt uncomfortable because all the students paid attention to him. She fears being negatively evaluated by teachers and friends who can see her flaws. Furthermore, he thought it might be due to his very poor vocabulary and grammar knowledge.

During the observation, Student 2 seemed nervous and anxious when speaking in front of other people. He lowers his voice or reads hastily to avoid the teacher's correction. He also tends to avoid his teacher by pretending to be busy writing in a notebook or pretending to read a book. He did not even heed the teacher's instructions to practice his speaking skills in front of the class to avoid embarrassment or fear of being called to speak. According to Student 3, unclear input means incomprehensible explanations can also contribute to his anxiety in learning English. Interviews show that he is very disturbed when he does not understand the lesson. She told the writer that she started to feel uncomfortable when she didn't understand what the teacher was saying. He added that he was afraid because he would not understand all the language input, which increased his chances of confusion and failure. He also reported that he often felt intimidated when the teacher only used English when giving lessons. He replied that he was very annoyed when he did not understand the lesson.

3. Silence in SMPN 1 Sukahening

In SMPN 1 Sukahening, the researcher interviewed the English teacher to find out which class practised more silence. Then in a selected classroom, the researcher observed the students' behaviour in the English subject course. After that, the researcher determined that ten students would be assigned the FLCAS questionnaire. The results found that two students have mildly anxious levels, 7 with anxious levels, and only 1 with very anxious levels. Only three anxious level students were available for semi-structured interviews among the seven anxious students and one highly anxious student.

The semi-structured interview revealed that some factors influence the students' silence in performing spoken English in the classroom. The researcher classifies them into four major classifications:

- a. Emotional factors refer to worry about making mistakes and worry about classmates' reactions.
- b. Self-image factors worry about students' and teachers' judgments.
- c. Self-doubting factors refer to their self-view of their competence in English: poor English pronunciation and poor spoken English comprehension.

Table 2. Participants' silent behavior explanations

<i>Explanation Categories</i>	<i>Number of participants</i>	<i>Extracts from semi-structured interviews</i>
Worried about making mistakes	2	Student 1: If I answer it verbally, I may be a little nervous. I'm afraid of being wrong, sir,... Student 3: Nervous, I am afraid to do mistakes in speaking.
Don't have much time in practicing	1	Student 2: Nervous because I am not accustomed to it.
Worried about classmates' reactions	3	Student 1: If I answer it verbally, I may be a little nervous. I'm afraid ... because of my friends watching... If I talk in pairs with the teacher, nervousness may exist, but it is just a little... Talking In front of friends makes me more nervous... I'm afraid of being laughed at. Because being laughed at for one class is shameful. Student 2: Speaking in front of the class, I am more nervous. Because the people are watching ... I fear students' laughing at me. Student 3: In front of friends. I fear making mistakes... Yes, I am afraid to be laughed at...
Worried about students' judgment	3	Student 1: I'm more afraid to look bad in front of my friends. Student 2: I'm afraid to look stupid in front of my friends. Student 3: Yes, I fear the student will see me as not clever
Worried about teacher's judgments	1	Student 2: I'm afraid to look incapable in front of my teacher... Yes, I am scared the teacher will see me as not intelligent... Yes, I am afraid of getting bad grades
Poor pronunciation	2	Student 1: My pronunciation is not good Student 2: My ability is not good
Poor English comprehension	1	Student 2: Mostly, I don't understand what the teacher said.

The interview in Table 2 revealed that the three students were afraid to make mistakes in performing spoken English in the classroom. They were worried about the reactions of their classmates toward the way they spoke English. They do not want to be the object of the students to

be laughed at in the classroom. For them to be the object of laughter is very shameful and humiliating. The fear and worry about something that occurs or may occur in the future leads them to anxiety. These rapid and intense fluctuating emotions make them feel nervous about performing English in the classroom. It is in line with what Smith and King (2018) stated: the sense of humiliation, fear, and anxiety occurs in many foreign language students and encourages them to be silent.

All the students also stated that they were worried about other students' judgment; they did not want to look incapable, not clever, stupid, or ridiculous in the eyes of their classmates. In comparison, only one of the students showed her worries in the teacher's evaluations. She feared the teacher would consider her not clever and give her bad grades. Those students feared that others would perceive them negatively or doubt their intelligence (Maher, 2021). King (2014) stated that negative thought classified as self-image focus occurs because of the excessive thought of the person about their expression in performing English (King & Smith, 2017). The fear of the students' and teachers' judgment manifests in a self-focus image. It is when the persons view themselves as of high value personally. The self-focus image keeps the person from doing something considered not good for their self-image, which is, in this context, performing spoken English. Therefore, the students keep silent to protect themselves from negative evaluations and humiliation, which Bao (2021) defined as protective silence. The silence also is related to their view of their capability to speak English.

Awan et al. (2010) revealed that the fear of making errors in grammar and incorrect pronunciation is the cause of anxiety. The language-speaking anxiety makes the students more afraid and not know what to speak, which Gaibani and Elmnefi (2014) labeled as a lack of self-confidence. Further, Ihmuda (2014) stated that one of the vital factors in discouraging students from confident speaking is a lack of self-confidence. The excerpts show two students' silence because they could not pronounce the English words well enough. Moreover, one of the students stated that she was not used to speaking English, which can be referred to as there not being enough time for the student to speak, which makes her English poor. One of the students also stated that the silence is because of the limited comprehension of spoken English. She could not understand what the teacher mainly said, which meant that the student did not know how to respond to the utterances.

In the Indonesian junior high school context, making errors in speaking English is expected. It is because English is at the primary level. Although the teacher encourages the students to speak English more often and not to be worried about making errors, self-doubt makes the students ought to use spoken English in the classroom. It is also because Bahasa Indonesia and English have different phonological systems. Different from English, In Bahasa Indonesia, the pronunciation

corresponds to the writing. Abrar et al. (2018) stated that the difficulties among English learners among Indonesian natives are because of the phonetic alphabet differences. At the basic primary level, these difficulties occur with an abundance.

Conclusion

Certain beliefs about learning English can contribute to anxiety and frustration among some students in the class. Anxious students tended to believe that their English skills were weaker than those of other students. Many people who struggle with English often have lower self-esteem than those who successfully learn the language. One of the main reasons students feel anxious is a lack of confidence. Another reason students experience anxiety when taking English lessons because they are not well prepared. Unfortunately, students who make mistakes lose focus in their studies. Some people find it difficult to speak up when they don't know what to say, and they may even stay silent for a while or continually.

Many friends seem disturbed, worried, and fearful of being laughed at as one of the biggest sources of anxiety. Some students who received the FLCAS (Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale) questionnaire and were interviewed felt they could not speak or understand the class well. They also feel less competent than other students in their classes. They kept thinking that other students were much better than them. In other words, they have low self-esteem. These findings support existing research (Bao, 2014; King, 2014; Smith & King, 2018), which demonstrates the affective effect of silence in the classroom on English learners that triggers negative thoughts, feelings, and emotions. Furthermore, the findings of this study suggest that reviewing the perspectives of students who are anxious about silence in their classrooms and anxiety about speaking can open up new perspectives on a phenomenon that reveals the underlying factors.

Keep in mind that silence can be very personal and affective for some learners, especially those familiar with what silence means in terms of their language skills. The data obtained from a field study covering three schools from three provinces in Indonesia, namely West Java, Central Java, and Central Kalimantan, through questionnaires and interviews lead to the conclusion that the field of education must distinguish between cultural and non-cultural and cultural practice. Perhaps the quiet and invisible Indonesian children in our class can also find their voice and become real participants in their education. Therefore, we emphasize the importance of understanding and listening to silence and seeing the invisible because it is a prerequisite for making the invisible visible. It is suggested that a "teacher as researcher" approach would be invaluable. Such an approach, which brings together theory and practice embodied in the form of research, can positively affect the professional development of English teachers and students' levels of anxiety, motivation, and language acquisition. Teachers need to pay attention to the needs of students to process students' silent conditions.

Time can be allocated to as many exercises as possible when assignments are designed, with instructions on how much time students may need to be ready to speak and how to follow up with encouragement and motivation from the teacher. Silence must have results, both in the form of speech and produce input to improve students' speaking skills. Hopefully, this article has many benefits, especially for other teaching sites that have similar problems with the phenomena that appear in this study. Some of the limitations of this study were that students judged themselves after experiencing an anxiety situation, not before they started speaking. Therefore, they judge themselves based on their experience in English classes, not their attitude when they will take English classes. Those who are very anxious when speaking in English may have lower self-esteem because of that anxiety. Thus, it does not mean that their level of speaking ability has a causal relationship with the experience of anxiety they experience. This can be caused by the consequences of the anxiety situation itself.

Another limitation of this study is that it was conducted at the same level of education for each participant, i.e., Junior High School level. We acknowledge that this level of research is still limited to Junior High School students, and it may be interesting to select participants from different school levels. Our suggestion for further research based on what we found during this research is that data collection activities can be carried out in class before or when students take English-speaking classes. In addition, the sample of students used covers a more varied level from elementary to high school.

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