

Chapter One

Introduction

There are seven sub-points in this introduction to be presented to find out the role of gender in the students' anxiety in speaking within the discussion forum. To begin with, the background of this research discusses the facts related to the topic, followed by the statement and delimitation of the problems, the research questions, the objectives of the research, the significance of the research, which states the benefit of this study and wrapped by the organization of the study.

Background of the Research

Speaking skill is one of the skills that should be pursued if someone wants to get the best result in learning a second language or target language, especially in the context of the English language. Speaking skill becomes one of the essential skills in language learning because of the aim of the language itself, that is, for communication. According to Gillis (2013), the key to communication is speaking because it is the most effective. In the context of education, there are so many activities that can sharpen students' speaking performance. One of them is through the group discussion. Argawati (2014) stated that group discussion is one of the activities used when learning speaking skills. However, learning speaking

skills in a foreign language can not be mentioned as an easy one to do. In some cases, speaking skills in foreign language learning were fearful for some learners. They prefer to write what they mean rather than speak up about it directly. This case happens because of some reasons, for sure, and this phenomenon can be called anxiety in speaking.

Speaking anxiety can happen to all students when trying to learn the English language through speaking skills. Lestari (2020) defined speaking anxiety as a condition when students are not comfortable, depressed, and doubtful in talking in English with others because of their deficiency in mastering the English language and their fear of making mistakes. This kind of anxiety can affect the learning process a lot because when the students are too afraid of making mistakes, they will not want to try, and in the end, they can not train their speaking skills.

There are many causes of speaking anxiety. Wardani (2017) found that affective factors such as the introverted personality of the students, not wanting to be an attention taker, and having a negative mind can lead the students to experience speaking anxiety. Mohtasham and Farnia (2017) reported about the factor in linguistics leading to speaking anxiety. It found that it was hard for students to remember some vocabularies, so it made them afraid to speak. A study by Gaibani and Elmenfi (2014) stated that students found difficulty in speaking because they lack of competencies in learning the English language itself. Thus, it gave them the anxiety to speak in front of many people. Additionally, Gaibani and Elmenfi (2014) mentioned that the gender of the students plays a crucial role in

this anxiety experienced by the students. The findings from Hwa and Jaya (2014) also showed that speaking anxiety could happen because of many factors, such as students' self-esteem, abilities to talk in English and gender.

From the statement above, it can be mentioned that gender can influence students' anxiety in speaking. Several authors have even recognized the significant difference between males and females in speaking anxiety. Mohtasham and Farnia (2017) found that female experiences more anxiety compared to male students in speaking performance. A previous study from Mahmoodzadeh (2012) reported that male students suffer from speaking anxiety more than female students when facing grammar mistakes in their speaking performance.

In a nutshell, various studies focus on finding out the significant difference between genders toward speaking anxiety in general. Nevertheless, it is still a limited study that tries to investigate the significant differences between males and females in speaking anxiety in the context of group discussion. Instead, group discussion is one of the activities to promote speaking skills, and it is commonly used in the classroom.

Statement of the Problems

In ELED (English Language Education Department) settings, one of the ways used by the lecturer in teaching speaking is through the discussion forum. All the students were grouped to discuss and have a conversation about a specific topic given by the lecturer. Both male and female students were usually in the same group. Based on the researcher's interview with the students, there was a

phenomenon when the students were anxious when they had to speak in the group discussion. Since some of the female students stated that they felt anxious, this phenomenon led the researcher to become curious whether there was a significant difference between the male and female students' anxiety when they were encouraged to discuss some topics in the same group. Finally, the researcher is interested in that field and tries to figure it out.

Delimitation of the Problems

Many speaking activities are used in the teaching and learning process, such as presentation, role play, speech, debate, group discussion, interview, and many more. Each of the activities can lead the students to have speaking anxiety. However, the researcher only focused on the group discussion in this research. In addition, the research participants were only in the area of the English Language Education Department batch 2019. Furthermore, the research of this study was limited only to the quantitative approach in terms of survey design to figure out the level of students' group discussion anxiety and the significant difference between genders in the group discussion anxiety.

Research Questions

Research questions are formulated as below:

1. What is the level of male students' speaking anxiety in the group discussion?

2. What is the level of female students' speaking anxiety in the group discussion?
3. Is there any significant difference between male and female students towards their level of speaking anxiety in the group discussion?

Objectives of the Research

Based on the research questions, the objectives of the research are:

1. To know the level of male students' speaking anxiety in the group discussion in ELED of a private university in Yogyakarta.
2. To know the level of female students' speaking anxiety in the group discussion in ELED of a private university in Yogyakarta.
3. To find out the significant difference between female and male students towards speaking anxiety levels in the group discussion.

Significant of the Research

This research tries to positively influence some parties, like the students, the teachers, and other researchers.

For the students. By conducting this research, the researcher hopes that the students, both female and male, can pay more attention to their speaking performance rather than worrying about their gender differences, especially when it comes to the group discussion. Usually, both female and male students are in

the same group to discuss some topics.

For the teachers. The teachers can consider how they can provide the best attention to the students when they are in the group discussion. They can decide how to create the best combination in the discussion forum between males and females. So, again, the gender differences do not burden the students.

For the other researchers. This research can be one of the sources for some researchers who want to do the same research related to the role of gender in their speaking anxiety, especially in the group discussion. In addition, hopefully, this research can encourage other researchers to arrange the study in the same field.

The Organization of the Chapter

There will be five chapters included in this research report. The first one is the introduction with seven sub-chapters inside. In the introduction, there is the background of the research, which discusses why the researcher decided to conduct the related topic. Then, it is continued with the statement of the problems, when the researcher states how the problem was coming up to the related topic. There is also delimitation of the problems and the research questions formulated, followed by the research objectives. Finally, the last two are about the significance of the research explaining how this research will be helpful to others and the organizational study, which will reveal the order of every chapter in this research report.

The second one is a literature review consisting of theory and concepts and

the previous studies related to gender and students' anxiety in speaking in the context of discussion forums. This part reveals some concepts about the definition of speaking anxiety, group discussion, and also the role of gender when it comes to speaking anxiety. This chapter also consists of previous findings of its significant relationship between gender and students' anxiety in speaking, particularly in the context of group discussion.

The third one presents the methodology used in this research. This chapter discusses several points, such as the research design, which is in the quantitative design, and the population and its sample. The third chapter also shows how the researcher collected the data by using a questionnaire and its analysis on the data collection.

The fourth chapter is about the findings and discussion. After collecting the data, this chapter shows the results with some information answering the research questions formulated. Lastly, the conclusion and recommendation are in the last chapter. The chapter aims to sum up this research and give a recommendation for future researchers who will use this topic in their research.