

**EXAMINING ORAL COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION, OMPETENCE
AND PERFORMANCE AMONG TOURISMSTUDENTS IN VOCATIONAL
HIGH SCHOOL**

By

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Abstract

This study, analyzed the students' communication performance and competence in the speaking class. This study also measured the students' communication apprehension level and its correlation with communication performance and competence. 30 students of second year students of SMK Pariwisata Kosgoro Cirebon took part in this study. The data were gathered through questionnaire, presentation test to get the score of communication performance and interview test to get the score of communication competence. The correlation study was used to investigate the relation of each variable. The result from the students' performance showed that 66,7% of the students scored below the school standard score (75) and 70% of the students scored below standard score in the interview test. The participants showed the highest apprehension to public speaking and the lowest apprehension to group discussion. Their level of apprehension showed that 43.3% students were in moderate level and 56,7% students were in high level of apprehension. It was also found that communication apprehension was negatively correlated with communication performance. While the result from the correlation between communication apprehension and competence showed that there was a very low positive correlation but, there was a high positive correlation between communication competence and performance.

Key words: *communication apprehension, competence, performance*

Introduction

Speaking skill is one of the most important skills to be developed and enhanced in oral communication. Today English has become the main language

used in many industries. In tourism industry, English is the most important language for the communication. In Indonesia the number of foreign visitors in March 2013 were 725 thousand, up to 10,1

percent compared to the same month last year. The Indonesian government has set the ambitious target of welcoming a total of nine million foreign tourists in 2013 (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2013). In 2014 it should be at least 10 million foreigners to visit Indonesia. Dealing with this issue, providing tourism students with a good oral communication will help the students to deal with their work in the future because communication skills are important element of tourism industry. Understanding of performance expectations are keys to the achievement of tourist satisfaction. Good oral and written communication skills are the top skills important to hospitality and tourism practitioners at different position level (Kay and Russette, 2000).

In SMK Pariwisata Kosgoro Cirebon, English is not only taught for the classroom context but it is also for the specific context. The students should be able to have a good competency in speaking using second language in order to have a great ability in speaking performance to succeed in their workplace tasks effectively.

However, difficulties in communicating in second language among students in SMK Pariwisata Kosgoro Cirebon are experienced as the language taught in foreign language context where students have limited language experienced. Many psychological factors such as shyness and anxiety are considered as the main causes of students' reluctance to speak (Brown, 2001). Regarding the causes of anxiety, Horwitz and Cope (1986, in Zhao Na, 2007) based on their study, found out three main causes of students' anxiety i.e. communication

apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation.

This Journal presents the results of examining oral communication apprehension, competence and performance among tourism students in vocational high school. It also attempts to show the relationships among those variables.

Communication apprehension (CA) is defined as the fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons (Richmond & McCroskey, 1998 in Richmond, J.S. Wrench, and Joan Gorham, 2009). Usually communication apprehensive people may not appear apprehensive unless they are exposed to a communication in unfamiliar surroundings and people. Normally people do not face communication apprehension in friendly and safe environment. It is believed that, friendly environment affirms positive and helpful reaction while communicating, so people feel comfortable in sharing information, in answering questions, and in giving speeches in friendly environment. Two prime factors affecting communication apprehension are hereditary and the existing circumstances of the person. In other words, we can either be born with certain innate characteristics or we can acquire them through learning. Some of the elements, which are supposed to be the situational-causes of communication apprehension are low childhood nurturance, originality, mannerism, subordinate status, conspicuousness, unfamiliarity, dissimilarity, the degree of attention from others, evaluation and prior history including schooling and higher education.

Communication competence is the degree to which a communicator's goals are achieved through effective and appropriate interaction. Communicative competence enables learners to "convey and interpret messages and to negotiate meanings interpersonally within specific contexts" (Brown, 2000, p.246). Brown (2004: 141-142) indicated that one can be called have speaking competence if he/she is able to imitate a word or phrase or sentence, produce short stretches of oral language design to demonstrate competence in a narrow band of grammatical, phrasal, lexical, or phonological relationship, respond a very short conversation, standard greetings and small talk, simple requests and comments, and the like (responsive), take the two forms of either transactional language which has the purpose of exchanging specific information, or interpersonal exchanges which have the purpose of maintaining social relationships (interactive), maintain social relationships with the transmission of facts and information (interpersonal), and develop (monologue) oral production including speeches, oral presentations, and story-telling, during which the opportunity for oral interaction from listener is either highly limited or ruled out together (extensive).

While communication performance according to Brown and Yule, there are three function of speaking, "...three part version of Brown and Yule's framework (in Richards, 2008 p. 21): talks as interaction: talk as transaction: talk as performance. Each of these speech activities is quite distinct in term of form and function and requires

different teaching approaches." In this term the writer will only focus on talks as performance. Brown and Yule defined the talk as performance as speaking activities are the activities which more focus on monolog better than dialog. Function of speaking as performance happened at speeches, public talks, public announcements, retell story, telling story and so on. McCroskey (2001) stated that there are four types of communication context that are particularly relevant to the classroom. Those are dyadic communication (conversation), small group communication, large group communication and public communication.

Review of Literature

Researchers investigated how communication apprehension could influence communication competence and performance. Research conducted by Dawit Amogne and Abiy Yigzaw (2012) "Oral Communication Apprehension, competence and performance among maritime engineering trainees in Bahir Dar University, Ethiopia found that the students indicated that they were generally apprehensive in EFL oral communication. The participants showed the highest apprehension to public speaking. It was also found that communication apprehension was negatively correlated with both communication competence and communication performance and the trainees' self reported communication competence was found to have been positively correlated with their communication performance.

The second is Sunada Patil and Tripti Karekatti (2012) conducted a study of 100 engineering students of an engineering in Western Maharashtra. The results indicated that most of these engineering students 48% perceived themselves to have high and only 9% perceived to have low communication apprehension while communicating in English. 43% students had moderate communication apprehension. It is also found that students are more apprehensive while giving oral presentation or speech. While, in group discussion they have low apprehension.

The last is the research done by Alzeen, Razak and Nek komal Yeop Yunus "Communication Apprehension (CA): A case of Accounting students" indicated that more than 50% of the highest level of CA for the generalized context pertaining to four contexts in group discussions, meetings, interpersonal and public speaking and the relationship between the overall CA with the other four contexts in CA showed significant with positive relationships.

The study attempts to find out how are the students communication apprehension, competence and performance in the speaking class. it also investigate the correlation of each variables. Thus the objectives are as follows:

1. To find out how are the students' communication performance in the speaking class.
2. To find out how are the students communication competence in the speaking class.
3. To find out how are the students' communication apprehension toward each of the oral communication context.

4. To find out how are each of the variables correlate each other.

Methodology

The method of this study is quantitative method and the research design applied in this study is correlational study. The correlational study is used to investigate the correlation between communication apprehension, competence and performance.

Population

The population of this study is the second year students in SMK Pariwista Kosgoro Cirebon majoring in hospitality, culinary and dressmaking. The sample is selected by using purposive sampling. The total sample in this study was 30 students.

Instruments

Questionnaire

Questionnaire is used to measure the students feeling toward different types of communication context. The questionnaire used in this study was personal report of communication apprehension – 24 (PRCA-24) scale (James McCroskey, 1998 in Richmond 2009), which composed twenty-four statements concerning in students feelings about communicating with other people in different context such as discussion, meeting, interpersonal communication and public speaking.

Test

Presentation test was conducted to test the students' communication performance. The communication performance test was rated by adapting Brown's oral proficiency scoring categories (2001, pp 406-407). This study focus on grammar, fluency and pronunciation. The score was added by 5 the multiplied it by 5 ((N+5) X 5 = total score)

Interview

The interview was used to examine the students' communication competence. The interview contains of 6 questions. The questions were made based on the students' department. Those are about culinary, hospitality and dressmaking. The score was rated by adapting oral proficiency scoring system from Brown (2004) which scoring about comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and pronunciation. The score were calculated by summing up all scores from the whole aspects then multiplied it by 4 ($N \times 4 = 100$).

The Research Procedure

The data were gathered through three instruments: questionnaires, test and interview. Descriptive statistics was used at this investigation. Then the results were correlated each other to find out whether any correlation between communication apprehension and performance, communication apprehension and competence, and the last was between communication competence and performance.

Data Analysis

The students' communication performance in the speaking class

Table 1

Statistics

Communication Performance

Mean	65.3333
Median	67.5000
Mode	70.00
Std. Deviation	13.70460
Minimum	40.00
Maximum	85.00
Sum	1960.00

The standard score of English lesson in SMK Kosgoro Cirebon was 75 while from the table above it can be seen that the mean of communication performance score from 30 students were 65,3. While the median was 67,5. Mode of 30 students was 70, it can be seen from the distribution relative frequency tabel that the frequency of scores 70 were 5. While the standard deviation were 13,7. It was counted in order to measure how good were the mean in standard deviation represented the data. The smaller standard deviation, the closer data with the mean value which mean it were significant. From the analysis could be found that the minimum score of 30 students were 40 and the maximum score were 85.

The students' communication competence in the speaking class

Table 2

Statistics

Communication Competence

N	Valid	30
	Missing	1
Mean		61.7333
Median		68.0000
Mode		68.00 ^a
Std. Deviation		19.97746
Minimum		20.00
Maximum		88.00
Sum		1852.00

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

The mean value of communication competence of 30 student were 61,7. While the median of 30 student were 68,0 and the mode were 68,0. Meanwhile the standard deviation of 30 student were 19,97. The minimum score of 30 student were 20 and the maximum score of 30

student were 88,0. From this table we could see that the mean value were higher than the standard deviation (61,7>19,97). It meant that the smaller

standar deviation the closer data to the mean value, and it meant that the mean value were significant enough to represent the data.

The students' communication apprehension Level
Table 3

Statistics

	CA in Group Discussion	CA in Meeting	CA in Interpersonal communication	CA in Public Speaking	Overall in CA Level
N Valid	30	30	30	30	30
Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	15.7667	17.7333	17.4333	19.2333	70.1667
Median	16.0000	18.0000	18.0000	19.0000	72.0000
Mode	13.00 ^a	18.00	18.00	15.00 ^a	64.00 ^a
Std. Deviation	3.25559	3.09542	2.59553	3.49071	8.20884
Minimum	11.00	12.00	13.00	14.00	55.00
Maximum	22.00	22.00	22.00	25.00	84.00
Sum	473.00	532.00	523.00	577.00	2105.00

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

This is the result of the communication apprehension questionnaire which measured the students' feeling by rating their level of apprehension toward group discussion, meeting, interpersonal conversation and public speaking. Table 3 shows the result of the analysis of the questionnaire. From the table it is seen that the students were found to be most apprehensive in public speaking with mean value was 19,23 with standard deviation 3,49. This was followed by meeting which mean value was 17,73 and the standard deviation 3,09 and interpersonal communication which mean value was 17,43 with standard deviation 2,59. The last was the communication apprehension in group

discussion which had the smallest mean value 15,77 and the standard deviation was 3,25. While the average of oral communication apprehension was found to be 70,17. The minimum score was 55,0 and the maximum score was 84,0. Regarding the maximum score of communication apprehension level (120) and the minimum score of communication apprehension level (24), it could be seen that the overall average were in the moderate level of communication apprehension. From the whole scores in the questionnaire the percentage of communication apprehension level were as follows:

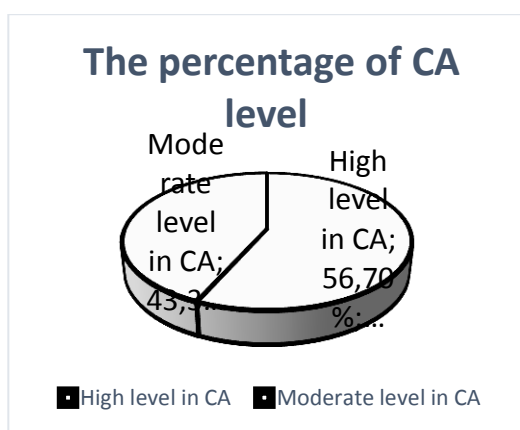


Figure 1 The percentage of CA level

Figure 1 shows that 43,3% of the students or 13 students from the students were in the moderate level and 56,7% of the students or 17 students from the sample were in the high communication apprehension level.

The correlation of communication apprehension, competence and performance

The result from the data analysis found that communication apprehension was negatively correlated with communication performance. The correlation coefficient was -0,016 and the determination coefficient was 0(zero). While the result from correlation between communication apprehension and competence showed that there was a very low positive correlation between communication apprehension and competence. The correlation coefficient was 0,071 and the determination coefficient was 0,005 or it could be said that the communication competence was influenced by communication apprehension 5%. On the other side, the correlation between communication competence and performance showed

different result. It showed that both of the variables had a high correlation. The correlation coefficient was 0,701 and the determination coefficient was 0,491. It meant that communication performance was influenced 49,1% by communication competence.

The result of the study are in agreement with the research done by Pitt et al (2010) who concluded that communication apprehension to have had significant negative effect on sale's students' performance and the research done by Rojo and Laurilla (2007) who reported that there was no significant relationship between students' EFL communication apprehension and their competence in oral communication. However, the result was partly contrasted with reports made by Dawit Amogne and Abiy Yigzaw (2012) who reported that communication was negatively correlated with communication competence, but on the other hand the result from Dawit and Abiy showed the same result that was the trainees' self reported communication competence was found to have been positively correlated with their communication performance.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The results from communication performance and competence showed that more than 50% of the students were score below the standard score from the school.

While the result of communication apprehension has shown that the students were in the moderate and high level of communication apprehension. The result also reported that the students were highly apprehensive in public speaking.

Results in correlation test showed that communication apprehension negatively correlated with communication performance. While the finding from communication apprehension and competence showed a low positive correlation. It is also found that communication competence had a high relation with communication performance. It meant that the higher the students' competence score, their performance in speaking class would higher too.

For further research the writer recommends to use different techniques in taking sample. It is also recommended that the next researcher to use more complete parametric statistics in correlation study and investigated different speaking context.

For reducing the communication apprehension, it is really recommended for the teacher to use the right method and approach of teaching. Make the speaking class as fun as possible so the students can get involved in every activity. Teacher and students are also should speak more actively by using a foreign language so it would give the students the opportunity to learn and give more experience.

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