



Pre-service Teachers' Oral Presentation Anxiety in The Second Language in A Teacher Training Institute

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ABSTRACT

Oral presentation skills are viewed as essential in terms of the pre-service teachers' pre-service teachers professional development. They feel anxious in oral presentation that can be categorised as fear of negative evaluation (FNE), test anxiety (TA), communication apprehension (CA) as well as topic and content anxiety (TCA). Specifically, the study investigate oral presentation anxiety associated to the themes namely FNE, TA, CA and TCA in the English language classroom. Data for this study was obtained through written self-reflection that was administered to 14 pre-service teachers in Institute of Teacher Education to investigate their oral presentation anxiety before and after the oral presentation. Findings put forward that most of the students express their feelings, attitudes and thoughts with oral presentation anxiety when they have to talk English in the classroom from different themes. The lecturers will have the awareness about the oral presentation anxiety to plan the teaching and learning in oral presentation classroom.

KEYWORDS

Oral presentation anxiety, Pre-service teachers, Written self-reflection.

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INTRODUCTION

In presenting their contents, the students faced anxiety during oral presentation (Brown & Morrissey, 2004; Al-Nouh, Abdul-Kareem, & Taqi, 2015; Al-Saqqaf, 2015). Furthermore, “Standing in front of a group and presenting a talk can be a daunting task for even the most confident of us, and even more so for language learners” (Webster, 2002). Hindo and Gonzalez-Prendes (2011) study on public speaking anxiety showed the existence of the audience become one of the factors on the presenters’ anxiety.

This study aims to identify the pre-service teachers’ feelings, attitudes and thoughts when they have to do oral presentation English in the classroom.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Theory underpinning the study

Affective Filter Hypothesis was associated with oral presentation anxiety. The natural approach to second language learning related with the Affective Filter Hypothesis theory Krashen and Terrell (1995). Many educators have regarded language anxiety as an important factor that contributes to success and failure in foreign language classes (Krashen, 1985; Hammad & Abu Ghali, 2015). The students’ presentation is to be low achievement because anxiety interference (Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope, 1986; Chin et al., 2016; Bilal, Tariq, Rashid, Adnan, & Abbas, 2013).

2. Oral Presentation Anxiety

A major factor which hinders students’ willingness to communicate and their ability to develop effective communication skills is communication apprehension (Amiri & Puteh, 2018). Different strategies for oral presentation have been researched to overcome this feeling over the past five decades (McCroskey, 1972; Brown & Morrissey, 2004; Halim, 2018; Finn, Sawyer, & Schrodt, 2009; Heuett & Heuett, 2011; Safir, Wallach, & Bar-Zvi, 2012; McCroskey, Teven, Minielli, & Richmond McCroskey, 2014; Bibi & Javed, 2020; Mallanhanse, Alias & Bidin, 2020). Finn, Sawyer, and Schrodt (2009); Price and Anderson (2012); Safir, Wallach, and Bar-Zvi (2012) reinforced that anxiety exists in presenters and suggested strategy like TRIPLESPEAK and Virtual reality cognitive-behavior therapy to overcome anxiety feeling.

3. Exploring Oral Presentation Anxiety Through Self-Reflection

Applying self-reflection supervision by Baecher, McCormack, and Kung (2014) are applicable in the Malaysian context as it is viewed that supervision and tutoring are important for students since they were new in this field. Self-reflection supervision gives students the opportunity to analyse their own presentation. Based on the study and suggestions applying self-reflection,

they allow students to vision their presentation many times. Since reflection help students to recall and imitate the students' practice to improve and mirror their own mistakes and strengths, it is appropriate that this current study employs self-reflection to investigate oral presentation.

METHODOLOGY

1. Research Design

The research design of this study is a qualitative case study through written self-reflection, in which the qualitative explored the personal experiences of individuals in self-reflection about the oral presentation in English language classroom. Trustworthiness in qualitative study is enhanced through the written self-reflection multiple times by the pre-service teachers before and after the oral presentation.

2. Participants

14 participants were selected in an Institute of Teacher Education. They are 11 females and 3 males. In the purposive sampling, the pre-service teachers were selected from Teaching English as a Second Language programme.

3. Method of data gathering

The data gathering technique for the qualitative method is through written self-reflection multiple times in different situations. In the written self-reflection, they have to add some comments or suggestions concerning their feelings, attitudes and thoughts when they have to present the fact in English classroom.

4. Methods of data analysis

The data was analysed based on the themes namely test anxiety (TA), fear of negative evaluation (FNE), communication apprehension (CA) and topic and content anxiety (TCA) from the pre-service teachers written reflection. The analysis technique for the written self-reflection is using Braun and Clarke (2013) thematic analysis. The written self-reflection was coded and put in the appropriate themes from the literature review based on the pre-service teachers' responses.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of Oral presentation anxiety through Written Self-Reflection

The analysis of oral presentation anxiety through written self-reflection to express their feelings, attitudes and thoughts when they have to present English topic in the classroom. Theme one was 'fear of negative evaluation', theme two was 'test anxiety', theme three was 'communication apprehension' and theme four was 'topic and content anxiety'. Besides the themes 'test anxiety', 'fear of negative evaluation' and 'communication apprehension',

comparable to the study by Horwitz et. al. (1986), ‘topic and content anxiety’ is emerging theme in this study.

a. Fear of Negative Evaluation

Fear of negative evaluation has a wider scope than test anxiety, because it is not limited to test-taking situations but also affects other evaluative situations, such as job interviews (Horwitz et al., 1986). Limited vocabulary, low confident, nervous in front of people and avoiding eye contact can impede the delivery of the information in oral presentation. Nine out of ten participants faced oral presentation anxiety more before the presentation as compared only one participant experience the feeling after the presentation. Participant 1 wrote that she had limited vocabulary:

Eventhough I know that I have limited vocabulary than my friends I still try to talk English but sometimes I still feel nervous and I’m afraid of others thoughts. Somehow I started to jumble up my words and I started acting weird because I tend to make mistakes when I’m in front a lot of people. (Participant 2: Before oral presentation)

Participant 4 and Participant 7 had less confident to speak English in front of other people.

I admit that I didn’t have so much confident. My confident level is not as high as my friends. (Participant 4: Before oral presentation)

I think, my main problem is my confident level is low especially when I have to speak English in front of other people. (Participant 7: Before oral presentation)

Participant 8 got so nervous when she was standing in front of other people:

I get so nervous when I am standing in front of people. I get so crazily nervous. (Participant 8: Before oral presentation)

Meanwhile, participant 8 and participant 9 were comparing themselves with the other students in their written self-reflection.

Probably because I think I can never be a good presentor like my other friends. (Participant 9: Before oral presentation)

What will people think about me. (Participant 10: Before oral presentation)

Participant 13 had some tendency to avoid having eye contact because he felt nervous.

When I talk in English, I had some tendency to avoid having eye contact with them because when I look them in the eye, I felt nervous. (Participant 13: After oral presentation)

In contrast to participant 3 and 4 who wrote:

In my opinion, talk English in the classroom will make me more confident and improve my speaking skills in English. (Participant 3: Before oral presentation)

I know I've the ability to speak English very well like my other friends do. I know that I can. (Participant 4: Before oral presentation)

Before the oral presentation, participant 5 wished his peers would give him feedback to improve:

No comments. Wish my peers would give feedback but so far I have none, so I don't know what to improve. (Participant 5: Before oral presentation)

b. Test Anxiety

Eight participants experienced the test anxiety in the oral presentation. Four participants that were participant 6, 8, 9 and 10 experienced both before and after the presentation. The factors of test anxiety were 'fear of failure', 'lack of preparation' and 'lack of confidence' and 'language barriers'.

I was nervous. Really nervous. (Participant 10: After oral presentation)

Participant 13 and 14 had test anxiety before the presentation.

I don't really speak English fluently when presenting in English. Sometimes, I just read from my PowerPoint slides. (Participant 13: Before oral presentation)

I'm scared I can't give a good presentation. I always read the powerpoint without explaining anything at all. (Participant 14: Before oral presentation)

Two participants that were participant 2 and 12 had test anxiety after the presentation.

Based on my experience when I'm doing the presentation, I was quite nervous. But it became hard since my slide suddenly not there. Maybe I deleted it without my consciousness, but thank God I managed to cover it at the end of the presentation. Still, I hope my marks will be okay even though my last points was quite messy since it was sudden. I also managed to relax myself after some time. (Participant 2: After oral presentation)

I need to be well prepared before I talk in the classroom. Seriously, I feel nervous when suddenly I need to give an opinion in the class. (Participant 6: Before oral presentation)

Sometimes, even with preparation, I still feel anxious. (Participant 9: Before oral presentation)

Participant 8 and 10 faced 'language barriers' when thinking so hard about grammar mistakes.

I also afraid that my grammar is wrong. (Participant 8: Before oral presentation)

She added feeling not really nervous at the begining but when she started to make a mistake she would be extremely nervous.

Sometimes, I did not really nervous at the begining but when I started to make a mistake, I'll be extremely nervous. After that, I'll do a lot of mistakes. (Participant 8: After oral presentation)

Similarly, participant 10 was thinking hard about her grammar mistakes.

I feel nervous and anxious, because I knew my English is not so good. I think hard about my grammar mistakes (which is very bad) (Participant 10: Before oral presentation)

Participant 10 added:

I was not fully prepared but I deserved what I get as I did not work very hard for it. (Participant 12: After oral presentation)

If I make enough preparations, I won't be afraid to speak or do my oral presentation. I'll make sure that I'll prepare myself before doing any presentation. I feel confident about my presentation just now although there were some minor mistakes. I'm really glad that we have learnt how to do a good oral presentation. (Participant 9: After oral presentation)

He further explained for his test anxiety:

My lips was dried and my mind was quite blank when on the stage. I stuttered and failed in my pronunciation. (Participant 14: After oral presentation)

The participants faced test anxiety more as compared to other themes.

c. Communication Apprehension

Three participants experienced the communication apprehension in the oral presentation that were participant 5, 8 and 12. Participant 8 experienced before the oral presentation. Participant 5 and 12 experienced after the oral presentation. In the discussions around the cause of communication apprehension, many factors have been identified, for example: forgetting what to say; problems understanding others and making oneself understood resulted to communication avoidance.

I tend to forget my information when nervous. (Participant 5: After oral presentation)

I'm not that good at speaking in English. Because I tend to lose my words and most of the times I translated Malay to English. (Participant 8: Before oral presentation)

I am afraid that the lecturers might misunderstood or judge my fluency and grammar. (Participant 12: Before oral presentation)

d. Topic and Content Anxiety

Besides the themes ‘test anxiety’, ‘fear of negative evaluation’ and ‘communication apprehension’, comparable to the study by Horwitz et. al. (1986), ‘topic and content anxiety’ are emerging themes in this study. Three participants experienced the Topic and Content Anxiety in the oral presentation that were participant 1 and 9. Both of them experienced before the oral presentation.

I enjoy to talk in English as in my opinion, English can express more on my emotions but sometimes if the topic is not learned by me, I will feel quite nervous to talk about it but I will always overcome it. (Participant 1: Before oral presentation)

If I'm not prepared for the topics, I'll get scared. (Participant 9: Before oral presentation)

In the findings, most the participants experienced the oral presentation anxiety before than after the presentation. The natural approach to second language learning is proven closely related with the Affective Filter Hypothesis by Krashen and Terrell (1995) that regarded language anxiety as an important factor that contributes to success and failure in English language classes (Krashen, 1985; Hammad & Abu Ghali, 2015). The students' presentation is distracted because anxiety interference. So, pre-service teachers need to be given topic of their interest to present better with less anxiety. The lecturer should not pin point their mistakes directly because that will be more anxiety provoking instead try to encourage them to speak and self-reflect their own mistakes and better themselves in future.

RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Recommendation of further research can suggest assessments for oral presentation together with the self-reflection. The assessment could be done through flipped classroom. Flipped classroom is also internalized for the benefits of it in the teaching and learning. The information could be given through WhatsApp and Google Classroom, the pre-service teachers study the materials or information given as homework and input to ponder before their real oral presentation. Flipped learning assisted in improving pre-service teachers' learning experiences. The teaching and learning took place using Google Classroom, WhatsApp, e-mail and related information communication technology such as search engines in flipped learning. The assessment through flipped learning can internalized the formative assessment that make life-long learning assessment progressively. If the summative assessment is used in the evaluation,

the pre-service teachers could not view their progress gradually because summative assessment is evaluated only at the end of the course. Flipped classroom also incorporate the instructor immediacy to lessen the students' anxiety arousal in overcoming their anxiety especially in assessment. The relationship of teacher clarity and immediacy with student who experience apprehension also affect their cognitive learning (Taber, 2016).

CONCLUSION

The findings on the factors of oral presentation anxiety through written self-reflection; those factors were test anxiety, fear of negative evaluation and comprehension apprehension as well as the discussion of the emerging theme; topic anxiety. The findings were from the pre-service teachers' responses that indicated they also faced anxiety in oral presentation with topic anxiety as one of the factor. The lecturers need to consider the content to ensure less anxiety provoking if the content is something new and more willingness to talk if the content is familiar to the pre-service teachers,

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