

STUDENTS' ANXIETY IN LEARNING ENGLISH
(A Case Study in the Seventh Grade of MTs Hidayatul Ulum)

Englisha Loudia Besti
Universitas Islam An Nur Lampung

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze students' anxiety in learning English at the seventh grade of MTs Hidayatul Ulum. Anxiety is one of the most influential affective factors in foreign language learning, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. Many students experience fear, nervousness, and lack of confidence when using English, especially during speaking activities. This study employed a qualitative case study approach to explore the forms, causes, and impacts of students' anxiety in learning English. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with students and the English teacher, and documentation. The findings reveal that students' anxiety is caused by fear of making mistakes, limited vocabulary mastery, low self-confidence, negative peer evaluation, and teacher-centered instructional strategies. Students' anxiety significantly affects their participation, motivation, and speaking performance. Therefore, English teachers are encouraged to apply supportive, communicative, and student-centered learning strategies to minimize anxiety and enhance students' confidence in learning English.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kecemasan siswa dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris di kelas VII MTs Hidayatul Ulum. Kecemasan merupakan salah satu faktor afektif yang sangat berpengaruh dalam pembelajaran bahasa asing, khususnya dalam konteks bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing. Banyak siswa merasa takut, gugup, dan kurang percaya diri ketika menggunakan bahasa Inggris, terutama dalam kegiatan berbicara. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Teknik pengumpulan data meliputi observasi kelas, wawancara semi terstruktur dengan siswa dan guru bahasa Inggris, serta dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kecemasan siswa disebabkan oleh rasa takut melakukan kesalahan, keterbatasan kosakata, rendahnya kepercayaan diri, tekanan dari teman sebaya, serta strategi pembelajaran yang kurang variatif. Kecemasan tersebut berdampak pada rendahnya partisipasi dan motivasi siswa dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris. Oleh karena itu, guru perlu menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang aman, nyaman, dan suportif untuk mengurangi kecemasan siswa.

PENDAHULUAN

English plays an important role as an international language that connects people from different countries and cultures. In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language starting from primary education up to higher education. Despite its importance, learning English is often perceived as difficult by students, especially at the junior high school level. One of the main problems faced by students is anxiety in learning English. Students often feel afraid of making mistakes, being laughed at by peers, or receiving negative evaluations from teachers. This condition leads to low participation and weak speaking performance in the classroom. Based on preliminary observations at MTs Hidayatul Ulum, many seventh-grade students showed signs of anxiety during English lessons, such as avoiding eye contact, remaining silent, and refusing to speak English voluntarily. Therefore, understanding students' anxiety in learning English is essential to improve teaching and learning quality.

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KERANGKA TEORITIK

Language anxiety is defined as a specific form of anxiety related to second or foreign language learning situations. According to affective filter theory, high levels of anxiety can block language input and hinder language acquisition. Foreign language anxiety commonly appears in speaking activities because students are required to perform publicly. Factors contributing to anxiety include lack of linguistic competence, fear of negative evaluation, previous negative learning experiences, and classroom atmosphere. Teachers play a crucial role in reducing anxiety by creating supportive learning environments and using communicative approaches. A positive classroom climate can encourage students to express themselves freely without fear of making mistakes (Rahmawati, I., &

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METODE PENELITIAN

This research employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to explore students' anxiety in learning English. The research was conducted at MTs Hidayatul Ulum with seventh-grade students as the main participants. Data

collection techniques included classroom observation, interviews with students and the English teacher, and documentation such as lesson plans and students' work. Data analysis followed the steps of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Triangulation was applied to ensure data validity and reliability.

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HASIL DAN PEMBAHASAN

The results of the study indicate that students experienced moderate to high levels of anxiety in learning English. Most students felt anxious when asked to speak English in front of the class. They were afraid of making grammatical errors, mispronouncing words, and being judged by their classmates. Limited vocabulary mastery also contributed to students' anxiety, as they struggled to express their ideas in English. Teacher-centered instructional strategies were found to increase anxiety, as students had fewer opportunities to practice English freely. However, when teachers used interactive activities such as group discussions and games, students appeared more relaxed and confident. These findings suggest that reducing anxiety requires appropriate teaching strategies and positive teacher-student interactions.

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KESIMPULAN

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that students' anxiety significantly affects English learning at MTs Hidayatul Ulum. Anxiety reduces students' participation, confidence, and speaking performance. The main causes of anxiety include fear of making mistakes, low self-confidence, limited vocabulary, and unsupportive classroom environments. Therefore, English teachers are encouraged to implement communicative and student-centered learning strategies, provide positive feedback, and create a supportive classroom atmosphere to minimize students' anxiety and improve learning outcomes.

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