"IT'S NOT EASY TO SPEAK ENGLISH": INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' LANGUAGE ANXIETY IN ACADEMIC INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION PRACTICES

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Abstract: During the past few years, an increasing number of international students from Thailand have come to Indonesian campuses to pursue their undergraduate degree in the departments they selected, including in the department of English. What is it like to learn to speak English as international students in the context of English as a foreign language? As they come from a country where English is taught and learnt as a foreign language, what challenges they face in relation to speaking? The study reported the anxiety experiences of five international students from Thailand as they engaged in English use and learning situation in

Indonesia. Drawing on a narrative inquiry method, the results revealed self-esteem, social environment, fear of making mistakes, formal classroom environment, social status and self-identity, cultural differences, presentation in the classroom, and university admission system were reasons of their language anxiety. The study also offers insights into how international students who learn English in Indonesia can be better supported during the stay in Indonesia as a host country.

Keywords: *intercultural, Indonesia, International students, language anxiety*

INTRODUCTION

The academic programs for international students are based on the Minister of Education and Culture regulation number 14 year 2014 which provides, one of them, the framework for scholarships for international students wishing to complete their higher education in Indonesia. These programs are aimed to strengthen the quality of the national higher education institutions specifically in the aspects of their academic effectiveness, efficiency, productivity, creativity, innovation, quality, and competitive force. The national implementation of this policy has been in the forms of memorandums of understanding with other countries such as Korea, Madagascar, Philippines, including Thailand to have their students complete their undergraduate degree in Indonesia (Suryaningsih, 2013).

For Thailand international students, choosing to study in Indonesian universities is seen to give some advanced advantages because Bahasa Indonesia is used as lingua franca among Indonesians. Given that Bahasa Indonesia has a close structure and meaning to Malay, one of the working languages in Thailand, it is hoped to help the students to adapt and communicate easier during their stay. Despite prospective advantages of similar structures between Malay and Bahasa Indonesia, for Thailand students who

study English in Indonesia the academic challenges can become more complex as English is not the official language in Indonesia. Psychologically, for instance, students who learn English as international language often express a feeling of stress, nervousness or anxiety while learning to speak English and claim to have a mental block against learning English due to the differences of social contexts, cultural environments where the first and second or foreign language learning take place (Hashemi, 2011).

Anxiety has been the most researched affective factor and attracted many attentions of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) researchers and teachers for more than forty years (Teimouri et al., 2019). Gregersen and MacIntyre (2014) describe language anxiety as "the worry and negative emotional reaction when learning and using a second language and is especially relevant in a classroom where self-expression takes places". Anxiety potentially impedes the learning of a target language and hinders academic success, projects negative attitude toward the target language and its culture, grows self-doubt, influences identity construction, and jeopardizes self-esteem (Gkonou et al., 2017). Horwitz (2016) confirms that anxiety is situational, contextual and culturally different on its way causing learners' anxiety. Situation-specific second language anxiety concept is understood as of anxiety which occurs consistently in a given situation for instance during classroom or while using the language (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991).

Language anxiety especially in classroom context has been a great interest since the seminal article by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) which gives birth to FLCAS (Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale). The interests have been evident by the development and validation of the batteries measuring each of the language skill-specific anxiety for instance Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS) (Saito et al., 1999) for reading, the Second Language Writing Anxiety Scale (SLWAI) (Y.-S. Cheng, 2004) for writing, and the Foreign Language Listening Anxiety Scale (FLLAS) (Elkhafaifi, 2005) for listening. While for speaking, in Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope's

initial FLCAS scale, it is described as one of the components to understand anxiety in classroom under the name 'communication apprehension' of which it is explained as a specific anxiety directed towards (public) speaking in one's primary language (Horwitz, 2017). Although Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety has always been interpreted to be constructed by three components of anxiety namely communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation, language anxiety should be explained through more than these three constructs (see Horwitz 2017).

Tseng (2012) summarizes psychological and socio-cultural factors associated with anxiety; namely low self-esteem, social environment, culture differences, social status and self-identity, gender, strict and formal classroom, presentation, and fear of making mistakes. Self-esteem is "a psychological and social phenomenon in which an individual evaluates his or her competence and own self according to some values, which may result in different emotional states, and which becomes developmentally stable but is still open to variation depending on personal circumstances"(Alcala, 2007). When learning the second or foreign language, most of the students experience a low self-esteem. Baumeister et al. (2003) said that people who have high self-esteem are more willing to speak out than the people who have low self-esteem. Additionally, people need self-esteem for keeping well-being, coping efforts, reflecting their status in a dominant hierarchy, facilitating self-determination and for social inclusion and exclusion.

Social environment is interpreted as everything around humans, both living and non-living, that affects life in general and in particular. The environment has an important role in the contexts of learning a second language as students interact everyday with other people around them including their own peers, teachers, and society (neighbors) where they live. A study by Rochecouste et al. (2012) involving 798 international students' in Australia on language growth and language learning strategies found out that social learning strategies such as social study support groups helped to develop

participants' English. One of the conclusive suggestions emerged from this study was that it is important to provide opportunities for social interaction and environment to encourage students to take a risk to engage in social activities (p.6). This echoes Spada and Lightbown's (2010) argument contending that language acquisition may not be successful if language learners or users do not have access to social relationship in situations where they are considered valued partners in communication. As language practices involve social practices, learners who practice the target language inside classroom but not outside will find it difficult to speak which enhances anxiety.

Cultural differences can cause language anxiety. In most research, speaking anxiety in relation to cultural differences stems from, one of them, different accepted cultural thoughts (Toyama & Yamazaki, 2022). Tseng (2012) asserts that the more unfamiliar the students to the culture of target language, the more they experience anxiety in the target language as the cultural background of speaker and the cultural background of target language can be very different, such as the using of vocabularies. The messages that are delivered by the speaker will not be well-accepted because of the interpretation mistakes due to differences of students' cultural background and the target language vocabularies.

Social status is a powerful reason why students are anxious. Giles et al. (cited in Hashemi and Abbasi, 2013) says that social status or social distance between interlocutors (between international students and people from the host country) can have a considerable influence on communication. A study by MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) in Canada, compared the attitudes of French speaking people and English speaking people toward English and French language and culture. They found out the influence was more significant to the French speaking English compared to English who speak French. What insinuated this was that the French speaking people saw English as mandatory and because they live in English as a first language context. Additionally, as English was seen as a threat to

French culture (learners' identity), the attitude and motivation of learning English became more complicated.

Gender has been frequently observed in connection to affective factors and performance. However the results are inconclusive (J.-M. Dewaele & Al-Saraj, 2013). Ozturk and Gurbuz (2013) and Park and French (2013), for instance, found that language anxiety has relationships with gender. Other studies confirm the otherwise (Kimura, 2008; Matsuda & Gobel, 2004). The study of Yashima et al. (2009) revealed that anxiety was observed partially inside individuals as for instance female participants have higher anxiety compared to males in public speaking. Dewaele, Petrides, and Furnham (2008) lead Cheng and Erben (2012) to believe that language anxiety and gender exist because of cultural reasons. Tseng (2012) explains that the gender-related anxiety might appear because of the different experiences of feeling anxious or comfortable while talking to the opposite sex, which is culturally-laden. He describes:

> "Only in those cultures where males and female students study in segregation, people are more likely to feel communication anxiety when talking to the opposite sex. Conversely, some participants from the same cultures (e.g. Pakistani, Omani, Libyan, etc.) stated that they do not feel any such anxiety".

The formal classroom environment plays a role to induce language anxiety. Tense atmosphere is intimidating. Quiet class will raise language anxiety because in such classes someone will attract big attention from all students as the individual will raise their voice leading to feeling of losing confidence (Effiong, 2016). In highly evaluative situations, particularly in the L2/FL classroom where performance is constantly monitored by both their teacher and peers, pressures that appear give higher stress in learning the second language.

Expressing ideas in front of people is challenging for many students because preparations like practicing English in terms of content delivery and intelligibility should be done beforehand. In this process, some students get anxious and their confidence is lost. Young (1990) found that students are more comfortable being not called

forward to speak. Daly as cited in Young (1991) adds activities requiring oral communication such as oral reading, oral quizzes, oral reports at random are those which cause anxiety. These suggest that the oral performance such as presentation and being called in front of the classroom contribute to anxiety.

Fear of making mistakes is stemmed from fear of negative evaluation. Jones as cited in Tseng (2012) explains that learners feel afraid and panic because of fear to look awkward, foolish and incompetent in the eyes of learners' peers or others. In this case, the speaking and learning language will become a serious problem. Moreover, Gregersen and Horwitz as cited in Hashemi (2011) exert that fear of making mistakes has been found to be strongly linked with the learners' concern to save their positive image or impression in the mind of their teacher and peers.

This current study initially emerged out of several short conversations between the participants and the first author as a fellow student in English Department in a university located in eastern part of Java. They shared their anxiety to speak English in a class like giving opinions, presenting in front of class, even making free short discussions in small groups. They told that they were not confident because they were afraid of making some mistakes. These happened continuously and as a result, they listened more than they speak. Researches on speaking anxiety have been of great interests (Effiong, 2016; Gkonou et al., 2017; Liu, 2019; Pawlak, 2011; Subekti, 2018). They focus on EFL student participants taking degree in their own countries. Another research angle is the investigation of anxiety experienced by EFL students who were learning English in the context where English is the first language. Some examples were the study by Okada (2015) who studied Japanese students' anxiety while studying in the US, and Abrar (2019) who investigated two Indonesian graduate students' speaking challenges in classroom and university-surrounding settings in the UK. However, little has been known about speaking anxiety of international students who learn English in a context where English is not spoken by the community

especially in Indonesia. Horwitz (2016) agrees on Park's (2014) argument that components of anxiety includes learning contexts where foreign language anxiety is being examined as anxiety is triggered and manifested differently in different culture. She calls for research on language anxiety that takes cases with learners from variety of cultures and language learning situations (Horwitz, 2017).

These concerns foreground this study. This study makes a case of five stories of Thailand college learners in Indonesia who experienced English speaking anxiety when studying English literature major. Understanding the reasons of their anxiety helps elaborating challenges of international students who are learning English in a context where English is not the first language nor the national language of the surrounding community. To guide this study, two research questions are: 1) What caused the participants' speaking anxiety? and 2) How did the anxiety influence their learning and use of English?

METHOD

This study is a narrative inquiry; perceiving stories, interviews, and conversations as data and experience as a phenomenon to tell (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). We used narrative inquiry as a method to understand Thai international students' challenges in academic intercultural communication practices during their stay in Indonesia as it frames multiple layers of consciousness; making connections between personal and social and cultural aspects which exhibit the dynamic of vulnerable self (Ellis & Bochner, 2000). This current study took a phenomenon of language anxiety of international students who learn and use English in the context where English is not spoken as a first language. In the light of narrative inquiry, the participant stories are meant to be an understanding of lived and expressed experienced to help other people to make sense and negotiate the experience (Eastmond, 2007). This leads to the socially responsible knowledge which is locally useful (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008), thus,

providing an opportunity to empower international students with similar experience and bring up social awareness to the parties sharing the same environment with the international students.

Participants

The participants of this study were five purposively selected international students from southern Thailand who study EFL in English Department in one of public universities in East Java. They got a scholarship from the institutional cooperation between the university where they were studying and *Majelis Islam Thailand*. These participants were selected because they exhibited noticeable language anxiety which impede their communication practices in their academic life. There should be six students; however, one of them withdrew her participation because she moved to a college in her country. Their profiles are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Participants' profiles

Participants	Gender	Age	Major	Semester
T1	M	26	English	11
T2	M	23	English	9
T3	F	23	English	9
T4	F	24	English	11
T5	F	22	English	5

Data collection and analysis

This study drew on data from focus group interviews and individual interviews using open-ended semi structured type of interviews. According to Kvale (1996), interview was a conversation of which the purpose was to gather descriptions of the life-world of the interviewee. Morgan (1996) cited in Yuan and Zhang (2017) said that a small focus group was more appropriate with emotionally charged topics i.e., speaking anxiety with the possibility of high level of participant involvement. First of all, a consent form informing the research was signed before the interviews began. They were informed regarding the benefits of participating this study along with any

possible risks, and that they were free to end the interviews any time, to refuse to answer certain questions, or to ask questions. The interviews (see the list of questions in the appendix) were mainly conducted by the first author because she was closer to the participants, and to optimize data collection to explore the factors that contribute to the participants' English-speaking anxiety and to elucidate how those factors contributed to their speaking anxiety. The interviews took place when they had free schedule time and the places were determined on the basis of the participants' convenience. The interviews used Bahasa Indonesia and English upon participants' agreement and choice for comfort. The five students were gathered into a small group. Each interview lasted around 60-90 minutes. The interviews were conducted eighteen times during the course of six months.

The first round of the interviews was group interview. This was done for three times and was conducted to gather preliminary description of the language anxiety they experienced. The second round was individual interviews. Each interview was exclusively done with one participant lasting for around 60 minutes. Each participant was interviewed three times. The first author mainly served as a "facilitator" by asking the participants some open questions, regarding their reasons of studying English in Indonesia and how they felt about learning English in Indonesia (in relation to their learning background support); how they practiced English in Indonesia of which English is not first or second language of the community; and whether they experienced complicated problems during learning English, especially when speaking in English. The participants were encouraged to talk to each other by sharing experiences, asking questions, and making comments (Krueger and Casey, 2014 as cited in Yuan and Zhang, 2017). The relatively free flow of mutual discussions among participants offered the first author opportunities to learn about the participants. These all interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed by the researcher for further

analysis. The result and the story from participants in the results and discussion was translated into English in the discussion section.

During the study, researchers' roles were assigned differently. Generally, we worked simultaneously through data collection, analysis, and interpretation. The first author served as the sole interviewer for this current study as she and the participants were friends, making the interviews less anxious as they shared experiences during their academic communication practices. After data collection together we analyzed the data as we were re-reading the transcription of the interviews depicting their factors associated with their speaking anxiety experiences as subjects of analysis.

Using a thematic narrative analysis approach Riessman and Speedy (2007) analyze all data from the interviews which focused on the "what's" of the stories and seek to identify common elements in order to theorize across cases. The data were coded and themed based on thematic analysis phases (Braun & Clarke, 2006). First, we transcribed data, read and reread the data, and noted down the initial ideas. Second, we coded the interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collated data relevant to each code. Third, we searched for the entire data set (level 2), generated a thematic 'map' of the analysis. Fifth, we defined and named themes to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells; generating clear definitions and names for each theme.

FINDINGS

In this section, we present the experiences shared by the participants regarding their language anxiety while speaking in the classroom and outside the class. Each participant's experiences and perspectives including their factors of language anxiety and their reasons of the anxiety were discussed as unity.

Factors of speaking anxiety

The data analysis of this study showed that there were eight factors of speaking anxiety experienced by participants during learning EFL with different number of distribution of reasons among all participants. The factors were self-esteem, social environment, fear of making mistakes, formal classroom, gender and cultural differences, social status and self-identity, presentation in the classroom. However, from the interview analysis we found out another reason of their language anxiety, that is the university admission system. Not all participants experienced all of the factors of English-speaking anxiety. T1 and T2 did not experience the gender factor. T3 and T4 did not experience the cultural differences factor, meanwhile only T5 who experienced all of the factors.

Table 3. Factors of speaking anxiety

Name	Self-esteem	Social environment	Fear of making mistakes	Formal Classroom environment	Gender	Social status and self-identity	Cultural differences	Presentation in the classroom	University admission system
T1	√	√	√	√	-	√	√	√	-
T2	√	√	√	√	-	√	√	√	√
T3	√	√	√	√	√	√	-	√	√
T4	√	√	√	√	√	√	-	√	√
T5	√	√	√	√	√	√	-	√	√

Self Esteem

Referring to Table 3, all participants shared that their anxiety was related to self-esteem. From the interview problems of self-esteem were two; past experience and lack of confidence. During their study in the university, T5 and T2 were anxious to practice English speaking with their friends who had high English competence because they thought that their ability of speaking English was not good. They shared,

"I was shy because of my English competence because someone from my country laughed when I spoke English "lo.. loo you are speaking English" (they mocked my speaking)" (T2)

They added that the problem of speaking anxiety become more serious when they were studying English abroad. They realized that their ability was lower than their Indonesian friends' ability because of a different teaching system. They testified that in classrooms in southern Thailand, senior high school students got English lesson without practicing it in a real life. Speaking subject was not given there. Students were only asked to remember new English vocabularies without practicing English speaking and reading skill. This was why she was not confident to speak English because she was not used to speak English. She added,

"We usually speak Thai language during English learning and speak Malay in our home. English subject was only given once in a week. The duration of English subject was 40 minutes. Besides, sometimes the teacher was not present in the meeting." (T5)

Another cause of lack of self-esteem experienced by the participant was an experience of failure. T1 and T3 once had a bad experience.

"I received corrections from a junior student last semester. When I was speaking in listening class my friend said that I should speak English like this (his friend corrected his sentence in front of other classmates)" (T1)

He was anxious to speak English because he was shy of being corrected in public. In another story, T3 shared that teachers demanded her to be able to speak English, and she desperately wanted to do so. Unfortunately, it was not easy to be done.

"I could not speak English well and I was not confident to speak English. Since elementary school, students in my country had been given an English subject, but I realized that my (Thai) English

teaching system which I got was not the same with Indonesian teaching system. They did not focus on the use of English. In addition, students in the senior high school did not use English when the English presentation was held. Even, sometimes the teachers could not speak English. At that time, students were only asked to remember new vocabularies and then they would get a score from their teacher." (T3)

Social environment

To the participants, social environment problem was everybody's challenge. They lived in the place that did not use English in the daily life; their learning context used *Bahasa Indonesia* in the daily activities. Other Thai students communicated with them using *Bahasa Indonesia* to build a close relationship with people around them. Therefore, they preferred to speak Bahasa Indonesia in their daily activity rather than English. This condition was not supportive to their academic life. T5 said,
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> "My environment did not support me to speak English. My Indonesian friends often used Bahasa Indonesia. Furthermore, my friends from Thailand used Melayu. Because of this condition, I got the English-speaking practice only from my lecturer. Hence, I was anxious because I could not speak English." (T5)

T5 did not have partners to speak English which made her anxious to speak English. To cope with this problem T4 ever tried to make a commitment with her fellow Thai students who learned English in the department to speak English whenever and wherever they met. Unfortunately, it did not work. Some of them prefer to use Thai language because they were more comfortable to use it than English. Moreover, they use Thai language to make their messages delivered well and keep their communication away from misunderstanding. This suggests that the social environment was critical to assist them becoming successful learners and users of English.

Fear of making mistakes

From the interviews, these international students often confessed "I am afraid of making mistakes". They did not want to get a negative comment from others, to be laughed by friends and teachers, and to look foolish. In the interviews, they worried about how they sound, and were scared of sounding silly.

> "I was afraid of making mistakes in speaking English because in my English class there was my lecturer. Surely, the lecturer knew the English competence of each students. (T1)

> "I cannot answer question in English. I am afraid to be scolded if I make a mistake. I am afraid of being despicable. It does not mean that the lecture frequently insults his students, but I once have experienced it. Hence, I am afraid to speak English. It made me think that I had better keep quiet." (T3)

Formal classroom environment

Formal classroom environment was a classroom situation of which generally, it has a quiet, serious, and tense atmosphere. There is a significant pressure for students in such environment because their speaking will be listened clearly. Hashemi (2011) asserts that the more friendly and informal the language classroom environment, the less it is likely to be anxiety provoking.

> "Many times, I feel that I fail to make someone understand what I say. In the formal class there are many students… there are many eyes looking at me whenever I came forward. Hence, I would always be nervous, and it is difficult for me to start to speak." (T3)

T3 was anxious to communicate with others because she worried about making her partner (of presentation) and the other students, who are listening misunderstand of what she said. The situation demanded her to speak English well however she got nervous of being a center of attention and got questioned without being able to answer.

"I was afraid if my lecture asked me something. I was afraid if I could not answer it. In addition, the class atmosphere is not relaxed making me unable to speak English and feeling depressed." (T4)

Gender and Cultural difference

In this study, some participants revealed that gender and cultural differences are intertwined reasons of anxiety provoking reasons. They were seldom to communicate with someone with different gender. What they believed according to their culture and religion limit their freedom to communicate with the different gender.

"I was anxious and shy to speak English not only because it is not good but also because my interaction with my female friends was not often like my interaction with my male friends. My religion (Islam) teaches some boundaries over different gender interactions… " (T2)

Their anxiety in speaking is also caused by communication patterns of the Indonesian friends. In the interview they acknowledged that their female Indonesian friends were more open and easier to talk to than males. This benefited the participants whenever they got speaking roles in classroom practices. T1 said,

"Most of my female friends who can speak English would always agree to cooperate in speaking English, whereas the male ones would not. I found it more confident speaking English with the female more than male friends. More importantly, I would never start a conversation unless start first" (T1)

Another interesting finding is their anxiety was also provoked by a stereotype existing in their home country. In southern Thailand English and male were negatively portrayed. Males who learned to speak English will be considered 'sissy'. This worsens his anxiety as he struggled against a value which he believed to be true.

Social status and self-identity

In this study, the self-identity and social status are framed within participants-teachers' and participants-Indonesians' relationships. Through the interviews all participants shared their social status as students in relation to teachers and friends reflecting that these relationships are the manifestations of how they explain their identity ramified in the portrayal of social status. T4 shared,

> "I was afraid of making mistakes during speaking in English with my lecturer. I was also more afraid to speak English with my lecturer than I speak with my friend. It was different because when I was speaking English with my friends, I enjoyed it more and felt more relaxed. Meanwhile, the teacher did not allow me to tell jokes when we have a conversation. Moreover, when she asked me about something I felt tense. So I should limit the conversation…and I think it is more polite." (T4)

In the interviews, they portrayed teachers as people who play God; what their teacher thought who they were including if teachers thought they were low and unsuccessful, the participants would believe it was true. Most of what they thought about themselves, their self-identity, was created by teachers' statements about them. It was worst when these teachers made evaluations and gave negative comments. In the case of participants with Indonesian students, they saw that Indonesian system of English teaching and learning was better than of their country's which made them felt to be in constant inferiority to converse with Indonesian friends.

Presentation in the classroom

All participants faced anxiety because of individual presentation in the classroom. Having all eyes toward them, thinking and finding answers whenever they were questioned, feeling of everybody was listening and having judgment over their performance were reasons of their anxiety.

> "As I was always anxious to speak English in the classroom because my English was not very good, I prefer to choose a group presentation than an individual presentation because there were friends who accompany me. I definitely feel more comfortable to do a group presentation."(Laugh) (T3)

Based on the story above, T3 preferred to join an English presentation group. She was nervous to present English alone because she felt that she did not have good English competence. She believed that she would get a better score and enjoyed more if she joined a group presentation.

Misunderstanding on the university admission system

All participants except T1 underwent forced choice of department they would like to study in. In the interviews they shared that there was an error of admission system of foreign students which forced the participants to choose English department as their choice, for in fact they would like to study in Indonesian literature department. From the beginning of the process of scholarship selection, the socialization was not clear to the participants, and there was not a person with knowledge who accompanied them to make decision.

> "When I was offered a scholarship, I was told by my Thai teachers to choose English education….and if for instance I got accepted in the wrong department I could change my department once I was accepted by the university. When I was accepted in this university, I was informed that I could not enter English Education program because there were too many Thai students who had already enrolled there. In this situation I thought that I could move to another department like my teacher said. Then, he asked me to choose another department. I then chose Indonesian literature department as my major. Unfortunately, at the end, I got a letter which informed me that I was accepted in English department."(T4)

DISCUSSION

Research on anxiety of international students is more on acculturation than linguistics for example in US (Okada, 2015). Many of which deal with length of stay and its relationship with anxiety, cultural proximity with the country where they study, and acculturative distress in connection with sense of social connectedness. This study describes speaking anxiety experienced by international students from Thailand who studied English major and interact socio-culturally in Indonesia.

Eight factors were found to influence the initiation of anxiety. Past experience and lack of confidence were causes of lack of self-esteem of these students. From the participants' interpretation, Indonesian English learning and teaching system was better than their host country. This becomes a domino effect. The high perception over the English proficiency of teachers and Indonesian students created such stresses which consistently feed up the speaking anxiety. Hashemi (2011) asserts that speakers' sense of inferiority complex while talking to someone higher in status may cause stress or anxiety which might lead to the loss of one's positive self-image or self-identity. Moreover, teachers' use of humiliation, fear, and intimidation can cause students to develop habits of disorders, shyness, withdrawal, and anxiety (Yunus et al., 2011). This suggests that an authoritative figure in classroom as the only medium where English is used should be able to create such atmosphere where anxiety is minimum. Botes, Dewaele, and Greiff (2020) empirically found that anxiety is connected to perceived English proficiency. Traditional classroom environment where usually filled with monolingual use of English and demand students to follow native speaker's English standard as the norm puts stresses leading to halted language performance. In classes where multilingualism, the use of all linguistic repertoire, is a normal norm, students feel more relaxed.

Formal classroom environment was also found to contribute to speaking anxiety of the participants. Research on speaking anxiety revealed that in the rigid, tensed classrooms where interactions among peers and between teacher-students are frequent cases, anxiety increases (Effiong, 2016). Students normally felt heart pounding, to be under microscope and judged. These situations are related to their fear of making mistakes and of negative. Type of classroom activities such as an individual presentation was also found to be anxiety provoking for these international students. In one of the interviews, participants testified that some types of speaking activities were fearful than others, for instance asking them to present alone in front of the class. As they believed that they did not have sufficient knowledge and proficiency to do so, the imagination of failures goes wild. Additionally, they felt humiliated by having their junior correct the language in front of the classrooms. This is taken as negative evaluation which in turn feeds their fear of making mistakes (Aydin, 2008). Another anxiety provoking activity in classroom is related to cultural differences between the host country and home country. In many speaking anxiety research, for instance being picked to answer teacher's questions (Horwitz et al., 1986) and presenting individually and spontaneously within allocated time (Padmadewi, 2016) are activities which are anxiety provoking. In the interview of this study, topics which have relationship to specific host country's cultures were found to be a cause of anxiety for instance speaking about 'sate' (Indonesian signature menu described as grilled chicken or goat meat in skewers with spicy coconut or ketchup sauce). Unfamiliarity toward the topics selected would likely increase anxiety. This suggests that cultural communication-based activities should be taken carefully by considering international students' level of familiarity. The cultural communication activities could be turned into intercultural based-communication activities in class to minimize anxiety on

unfamiliar topic especially which focus on cultural explanation or exploration.

Another cause of speaking anxiety of these international students are socio-cultural related causes; social environment, gender and cultural differences. In their case, Bahasa Indonesia was a key to social connectedness with their Indonesian peers and society where they lived. Using Bahasa Indonesia helped them to maintain good social relationship. However, this situation was not supportive to their being English department students. Not only that they had very limited home country's friends to speak or practice English, but also their Indonesian peers did not use English in and outside campus contexts. It is dissimilar from anxiety of EFL students who studied English in the context where English is a first language where they could benefit from surrounding community who use English in daily life for acquisition. Clement et al. (2001) assert that frequent positive contacts with L2 users and society result in more linguistic-confidence and positive image of learners. Although simply going abroad does not guarantee successful acquisition (DeKeyser, 2014), the presence of exposes of L2 and the contacts made with the language are advantageous to acquisition of the language (Cigliana & Serrano, 2016).

The case of cultural value was also found to influence the speaking anxiety faced by these international students as it relates to gender. Islamic cultural values and norms limit different sexes' shared activities. According to what they believed, men and women who were not a family member could not be together in a certain place. Therefore, for females having male friends while doing exercises assigned by teachers is conflictual and vice versa. This also puts challenges when they had to speak to other opposite sex friends both in the classroom to have a speaking roleplay or when to converse outside the class. Referring to this fact, different understanding on similar cultural values (most Indonesians, 88 percent of the total population, are muslims)

might cause uncomfortable feeling. With this to say, intercultural understanding on no matter how close the culture of the host country is with the home country is a form of academic support.

This study was explorative in nature as it focuses on the reflections and the causes of speaking anxiety of international students learning and using English is a context where English is a foreign language. Participants mentioned several issues that fall under psychology and socio-cultural issues which confirm that the two are interrelated. Three implications could be drawn from this study. Firstly, international students had undergone challenges generally similar to learners who learn and use English as a foreign language; self-esteem, formal classroom, presentation in classroom, and fear of making mistakes. Therefore, understanding that they struggle over similar issues to host country's students is a step to create instructions and classroom atmosphere which are anxiety minimum. Secondly, being international students, they experience adjustment problems both academically and socially. Addressing international students' needs as reflected in the interviews (for instance Indonesian peers using English together, intercultural loaded activities to bridge understanding) is an effort of change to a betterment of adjustment process. Thirdly, an issue which arises from the experiences of the participants is a misunderstanding on the admission system. The result of the interview showcased the weakness of the system which created complications such as students end up studying in a department that was not his/her choices. The interviews show the discrepancy within the system upon and after the admission. It is evidential that they were made to change the department after they arrive to the host country to adjust to the university quota. This implicates the need to refine the system to assure that students are given the advocacy not only during the recruitment process but more importantly after they are admitted to the university. The advocacy provided by the system should also be

extended to help students to better adapt to their academic and local socializations.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the findings from this study indicate that international students who learn English as a foreign language in Indonesia experienced several anxiety provoking causes in speaking. While in much literature of speaking anxiety is inflicted from communicative apprehension, the findings also show what Horwitz (2016) contends that anxiety is situational, context-bound, and cultural. Situated as English as a foreign language, the learned language of these international students is not a home language for the Indonesian citizens which cause them a dual challenge; academic and social. Their academic context demands high proficiency of English while their social context requires them to speak Bahasa Indonesia to build social-connectedness. The struggle to win two battles is complicated with their perception over themselves and how they think others (teachers and Indonesian peers) perceive them. Contextually, the causes of in-class speaking anxiety was found to be rooted from their fear of negative evaluation and self-esteem, and also challenges they experienced such as speaking instructions which are cultural. These discomforts leading to anxiety would likely result in unsuccessful adjustment and academic achievement. This study suggests that capturing the elements of speaking anxiety of the international students could lead to more well managed strategy to host these students for their successful academic venture.

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Appendix
Interview Questions – English version
   1. How do you feel when you are speaking English?
   2. Do you enjoy speaking English?
   3. Do you speak English outside and inside classrooms?
   4. How do you practice English in your daily life?
   5. Do you have problems when you are speaking English?
   6. Are you anxious to speak English?
   7. What is your obstacle to speak English?
   8. Are you afraid to make a mistake when you are speaking English? (Fear of making mistakes)
   9. Are you not confident to speak English in front of people? (Self-esteem)
   10. Does your anxiety influence you to speak English? Why?
   11. Are you nervous to speak English with your opposite sex? Why? (Gender)
   12. Is there different feeling when you are speaking English with your friends outside and inside classroom? How come? (Social environment)
   13. Do you use English to communicate with them?
   14. In your opinion, is it important to speak English with them?
   15. Who take the most important role in your English speaking practice?
   16. Are you confused if your target language words have many different meanings? Why? (culture differences)

17. How do you speak English with your teacher? Do you speak English with him/her like you speak English to your friends? (Social status)
18. Are you more anxious to speak English inside classroom rather than outside classroom? Why? (Formal classroom environment)
19. What do you feel when you are speaking English in front class? Why? (Presentation in the classroom)