The purpose of this study was to investigate EFL freshmen students’ reasons of speaking anxiety and then to find out strategies used in overcoming their anxiety in speaking English. This research design was qualitative method. The researcher identified a research problem based on trends in the field or on the need to explain why something occurs. Described a trend means that the research problems could be answer best by a study in which the researcher saw to establish the overall tendency of responses from individuals and to note how this tendency varies among people. The instruments of this research were observation and interview. The participant of this research was the freshmen students of English Department in Muhammadiyah University of Makassar., the total participant involved in this research was 36 students. Based on the result of data analyses, it could be concluded that the students’ reasons of speaking anxiety were lack of preparation, lack of vocabulary and the attention from the classmate. Based on those reasons the students tried to apply five strategies to overcome their anxiety in speaking English, namely preparation strategy, relaxation strategy, positive thinking strategy, peer seeking strategy, resignation strategy, nonverbal communication. Those strategies help the students to deliver their opinion, in group discussion, and in individual presentation. However, the students were still need assistant to increase their pronunciation, speech content, and sentence structure, and self-confidence.

Keywords: strategy, anxiety, speaking, qualitative

INTRODUCTION

One of the students’ barriers in communication is anxiety. Anxiety is the distinct complex of self perception, feeling, beliefs and behaviour related to the classroom learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process particularly in speaking English (Horwitz et al.1986: 128). Speaking in the foreign language is often cited by students as their most anxiety-producing experience” and also “difficulty in speaking in class is probably the most frequently cited concern of the anxious foreign language students seeking help at the learning skills centre (Horwitz et al. 1986: 126).

For many learners, there is a genuine fear of performing foreign language. According to Cui (2011: 4) found that this paper has presented some findings of high school students’ anxiety in Chinese EFL classroom. It was found that most students experienced anxiety in classrooms. Male students were found to have higher anxiety of English classes than females. Moreover, it also
found that anxiety is a debilitator in language learning, especially anxiety of tests and English classes.

Some factors can hinder students’ anxiety in performance and achievement and decrease their willingness to participate in learning activities particularly in speaking English. Anxiety has received the most attention as an important component of personality trait (Savile-Troike, 2006: 90). The statement indicates that the students with anxiety are likely to avoid such activities in which require them to speak because of fear of making mistake and over the risks when speaking English. Tseng (2012: 78-82) states that there are four factors cause language anxiety in speaking English: self perception, cultural differences, presentation in the classroom and fear of making mistakes. While, fear of negative evaluation, fear of speaking inaccurately and fear of being in public and shyness are the factors of language anxiety according to Zhiping & paramasivam (2013: 5-6).

Because of many factors of language anxiety in classroom activity, there are such strategies that students’ can use to overcome their anxiety in speaking English. Strategies are the behaviours and technique they adopt in their efforts to learn. Selection from among possible strategies is often a conscious choice on the part of learners, but it is strongly influenced by the nature of their motivation, cognitive style, and personality (Savile-Troike: 2006: 91). In addition, with use the strategies the students are expected to perform better in speaking in English by minimizing their anxiety and the teachers are expected to be able to reduce their students’ anxiety in speaking English in the classroom.

Research Question

In relation to the background above, the research question of this research was “What strategies do students’ apply in overcoming their anxiety in speaking English?.

CONCEPT OF ANXIETY

According to Horwitz (1986: 128) states that language anxiety is the distinct complex of self perception, feeling, beliefs and behaviour related to the classroom learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process particularly in speaking English.

Horwitz (2001: 113) states that anxiety is the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system. Horwitz (2001: 113) also states that anxiety has been found to interfere with many types of learning and has been one of the most highly examined variables in all of psychology and education.

Zeidner (1998: 17) Anxiety is a complex phenomenon and there has been wide disagreement about its definition and criteria. Thus, anxiety has been variously conceptualized as a stimulus condition, as a probability of a harmful future outcome, and as response to a stressful condition.

In Second Language Acquisition research (SLA), anxiety has received the most attention with lack of anxiety as an important component of personality trait or self confidence (Savile-
Troike, 2006: 90). Anxiety correlates negatively with measures of second language proficiency including grades awarded in foreign language classes, meaning that higher anxiety tends to go with lower levels of success in learning. In addition, to self-confidence, lower anxiety may be manifested by more risk-taking or more adventurous behaviors.

Savile-Troike (2006:90) we need to keep some complex issues in mind when we read about or interpret research in anxiety:

a. The direction of cause and effect is uncertain. Lower anxiety levels might very well facilitate language learning; conversely, however, more successful language learners might feel less anxious in situation of second language learning or foreign language learning, and thus be more self-confidence.

b. Instructional context or task influences anxiety level and reporting. For example, foreign language classes or tests which require oral performance normally generate more anxiety than do those in which production is in writing. Small-group performance generates less anxiety than whole-class activity.

c. Although personality factors are defined as individual traits, systematic cultural differences are found between groups and learners. For example, oral performance in English classes generates relatively more anxiety for Korean students than for Turkish students. This may be because of cultural differences in concept “face” or because of cultural differences in classroom practices and experiences.

d. Low anxiety and high self-confidence increase student motivation to learn, and make it more likely that they will use the second language or foreign language outside of the classroom setting. It is therefore not clear whether more successful learning is directly due to lower anxiety or to higher level of motivation and more social interaction.

1. Types of Anxiety

Zeidner (1998: 83) state that Spielberger’s state-trait model of anxiety made the useful distinction between anxiety as a personality trait (A-Trait) and anxiety as a personality state (A-State).

a. State Anxiety

Zeidner (1998: 293) states that state anxiety is current research distinguished between the individual’s actual experiences of anxiety in a specific situation.

According to the Spielberger in Zeidner (1983: 83) states that state anxiety refers to a transitory emotional state of tension and arousal determined by the interaction between a person’s trait and present situation.

Spielberger also states that state anxiety refer to the specific level of anxiety experienced in a particular evaluative or test situation, such as an important college examination or athletic competition.
b. **Trait Anxiety**

Spielberger in Zeidner (1983: 83) states that trait anxiety refers to a stable disposition to react with anxiety across varying context.

According to Zeidner (1998: 293) states that trait anxiety is the individual’s predisposition to have anxious experiences or engage in anxiety-provoking behaviors in a stressful situation.

Zeidner (1998:293) also states that trait anxiety is a relatively stable condition of the individual, best conceived as a latent disposition or probability to respond with elevated levels of state anxiety under stress. Trait anxiety has also recently been shown to be a multidimensional construct which interacts with specific types of situational stress to influence the level of state anxiety experienced.

2. **Test Anxiety**

According to Zeidner (1998: 17) test anxiety as a scientific construct, refers to the set of phenomenological, psychological, and behavioral responses that accompany concern about possible negative consequences or failure on an exam or similar evaluative situation. Test anxious or anxiety students are characterized by a particularly low response threshold for anxiety in evaluative situations.

Horwitz (1986: 127) test anxiety refers to a type of performance anxiety stemming from a fear of failure. Test anxious students often put unrealistic demands on themselves and feel that anything less than a perfect test performance is a failure. Students who are test anxious in foreign language class probably experiences considerable difficulty since tests and quizzes are frequent and event the brightest and most prepare students often make errors.

**RESEARCH METHOD**

**Research Design**

This research design was qualitative method. The researcher identified a research problem based on trends in the field or on the need to explain why something occurs. Described a trend means that the research problems could be answer best by a study in which the researcher saw to establish the overall tendency of responses from individuals and to note how this tendency varies among people. The aims of this study were to investigate the causes of students’ speaking anxiety and strategies used by the students’ in overcoming their anxiety in speaking English.

**Participant**
The participant of this research was the freshmen students of English Department in Muhammadiyah University of Makassar, the total participant involved in this research was 36 students.

Instrument of the Research

The instruments of this research were observation and interview. It was used to find out what strategies do students applied in overcoming their anxiety in speaking English in the classroom.

Procedure of Collecting Data

Firstly, the researcher did observation in the speaking class. In this observation, the researcher noted all students’ barriers in speaking presentation. Then, the researcher selected one of those barriers to make deep research. The focus of this research was students’ anxiety. After that, the researcher interviewed the students to investigate students’ reasons of speaking anxiety and they the interview was continued to know the strategies used in overcoming their anxiety in speaking English.

Technique of Data Analysis

The data from interview recorded through audio recording. It enables the researchers to keep the information safely (Creswell: 2012). The data also transcribed, categorized, and interpreted to answer research questions. There were steps in analyzing data through interview. First, transcribing the data based on the audio recording. Second, the researchers reduced inappropriate data, which are not relevant to the study. Afterwards, categorized the data into theme; strategies in overcoming students’ anxiety.

RESULT

The result of the data analysis collected by using and questionnaire was presented in this part. Questionnaire conducted to find out the students’ strategies in overcoming their anxiety in speaking English. The finding of the main problem is described as follows.

The interview data showed that most of the students felt anxiety in speaking because of some reasons. First, it was because the lack of preparation. When they got assignment to present the idea in the next meeting, the students did preparation one day before the presentation. So, it made the students looked bad in front of the class and they did a lot fillers and pauses. The voice of the speaker was heard nervous. Second, the lack of vocabulary. The students were difficult to arrange and construct the idea. Some of them did not mastery the grammar of the sentences. The idea of the speaker was difficult to be understood. The last was the students felt inconvenient of their classmates eyes. The attention of their friends made the speaker thought that he/she have to do the best.
There were five strategies used by the students to overcoming their anxiety in speaking English, namely relaxation strategy, positive thinking strategy, peer seeking strategy and resignation strategy.

1. Relaxation Strategy

Based on the interview data, one of the strategies used by the students was relaxation strategy. In overcoming students’ anxiety in speaking, the students try to be calm, take a deep breath, and the students pretended to play with the hand. Even though, this strategy could not successful one hundred percent, but it could minimize student’ anxiety in front of the classroom.

2. Preparation Strategy

Beside relaxation strategy, the students also applied preparation strategy. The students’ strategy was preparing their self better before speak, try to make habit of studying English frequently, and the students study hard the day before the students speak English in the classroom. The students also made several repitions such as speak in front of the mirror and speak to the friend who wants to hear. Doing good preparation helped the students confident in speaking English.

3. Positive Thinking

Positive thinking strategy also applied by the students to overcome their anxiety in speaking English. Positive thinking was the third strategy that the students used in overcoming their anxiety in speaking English after relaxation and preparation strategy. The students always think positively that the students are able to speak English, the students try to be confident when the students speak English, and the students imagine that they can give a great performance when the students speak English in the classroom.

4. Peer Seeking

Peer seeking strategy was also strategy that students applied to overcome their anxiety in speaking English. The students tell their self that the others also feel anxious when speak English, the students tell their self that the difficult problems in speaking are also difficult to others, and the students try to talk with friend around them.

5. Resignation

Resignation strategy was strategy that used to overcome students’ anxiety in speaking English, but this strategy was not popular in among the students. In this strategy, the students did not want to participate in the English class and the students prefer to be quiet because of fear of making mistakes when speak English.

6. Nonverbal Communication

In presenting students’ idea, they also used gestures such as making movement of their hand and body. The gestures used were for minimizing the students’ anxiety and to emphasis the point of the idea. However, the observation data indicated that some of the
gestures used by the students were unnecessary. It was because the idea and gestures did not related to each other.

DISCUSSION

Speaking anxiety in learning foreign language is a barrier experienced by the students in the classroom. In Second Language Acquisition research (SLA), anxiety has received the most attention with lack of anxiety as an important component of personality trait or self-confidence (Savile-Troike, 2006: 90). Anxiety correlates negatively with measures of second language proficiency including grades awarded in foreign language classes, meaning that higher anxiety tends to go with lower levels of success in learning. In addition, to self-confidence, lower anxiety may be manifested by more risk-taking or more adventuresome behaviours.

Based on the interview data, one of the strategies used by the students was called relaxation strategy. In overcoming students’ anxiety in speaking, the students try to be calm, take a deep breath, and the students pretended to play with the hand. The students showed their non-verbal communication in overcoming anxiety by playing their hands. Some of the girls students looked playing her veil before starting to speak in front of the class. It was very clear, when the students were invited to give opinion, they starting the speak by taking a deep breath, they were nervous, and used a lot hesitation. As Suleimenova (2013) found in his article that when students felt nervous they might have hesitated or stumbled or simply looked uncomfortable and became silent. In other words, anxious students feel a deep self-consciousness when asked to risk revealing themselves by speaking the foreign language in front of their peers. However, these problem disappeared only in a few minutes. Later the students looked calm in speaking.

Beside relaxation strategy, the students also applied preparation strategy. The students’ strategy was preparing their self better before speak, try to make habit of studying English frequently, and the students study hard the day before the students speak English in the classroom. Giving the topic a week or a day before speaking class begin was help the student to make good preparation at home. It is because the students have time to practice before presenting it. Mohammad and Nadhia (2015) state that there are various causes of anxiety, the first one is lack of preparation. Having preparation show the students were more confident and relax in speaking.

The next that the researcher called on students strategy in overcoming anxiety is positive thinking strategy. Positive thinking was the third strategy that the students used in overcoming their anxiety in speaking English after relaxation and preparation strategy. The students always think positively that the students are able to speak English, the students try to be confident when the students speak English, and the students imagine that they can give a great performance when the students speak English in the classroom. As students’ answer on the interview that thinking positive could minimize their anxiety. Even though, the topic was difficult, but they believed the lecturer gave them appreciation what they have done.
Peer seeking strategy was also strategy that students applied to overcome their anxiety in speaking English. The students tell their self that the others also feel anxious when speak English, the students tell their self that the difficult problems in speaking are also difficult to others, and the students try to talk with friend around them. The students thought they were beginner students in learning English, so doing mistaken would not the problem at that time. It because the others also did the same things. The last strategy used by the students was resignation strategy was strategy that used to overcome students’ anxiety in speaking English, but this strategy was not popular in among the students. In this strategy, the students did not want to participate in the English class and the students prefer to be quiet because of fear of making mistakes when speak English. In students’ point of view be a quiet students could minimize their anxiety. However, in researcher’s mind that is not a strategy to overcome the anxiety, because keep silent do not give ourselves to practice English. By doing a lot practice and speak in front of the friends give a chance to make it as habit, so it disappeared anxiety.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of data analyses and finding in the previous section, the researcher concluded that the students applied five strategies to overcome their anxiety in speaking English, namely preparation strategy, relaxation strategy, positive thinking strategy, peer seeking strategy and resignation strategy. Those strategies help the students’ to deliver their opinion, in group discussion, and in individual presentation. However, the students were still need assistant to increase their pronunciation, speech content, and sentence structure, and self-confidence.

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