Student-teachers' Emotion Regulation in Speaking

Aloysia Berlindis Lasar[*1]

[1]Institut Filsafat & Teknologi Kreatif Ledalero

Abstract: Several scholars in education have asserted that emotions play a significant role in motivation to learn. On the side of self-regulated learning theory, it is believed that a learner would succeed more if he owned fully constructed self-regulation in learning. This research aims to describe the student-teachers' academic emotions, specifically in speaking, and later to elaborate on their tendency to regulate it. The researcher applied mixed methods in this study. The data was obtained through questionnaires and in-depth interviews. Supporting theory used to gain the description of the student-teacher state of academic emotion is the theory proposed by Pekrun et al. (2002). The result showed that the student-teachers tend to perceive negative emotions about their ability to speak. However, they managed to use a cognitive reappraisal strategy to modify their academic emotion in both stages of preparation and mastering speaking. Meanwhile, they tend to use expressive suppression to manage their academic emotion in performing speaking. Moreover, the implications and implementation of emotion regulation in the East Nusa Tenggara context as a part of the researcher's reflection are also discussed.

Keywords: student-teachers, emotion, regulation of emotion, speaking

INTRODUCTION

Several scholars in education have asserted that emotions contribute to learning motivation (Garret & Young, 2009; Bown & White, 2010; Imai, 2010). Further, Pekrun et al. (2002) also state that both positive and negative emotions can inactive as well as active learners' motivational behavior in learning. It is essential to pose a question to what extent emotions influence learning. Pekrun et al. (2002) declare that feelings and emotions are assumed as the result of the appraisal that students make of particular situations while learning. Moreover, according to Scherer (2005), feelings and emotions help learners to prepare for their actions. It means that emotion influences how someone is acting in such particular ways. It can affect whether or not the person stops or continues handling the best effort that can improve their learning progress. Referring to the notion, this study was aimed at identifying the student-teacher's emotions in speaking and elaborating their tendency to

regulate it. It is considered pivotal to identify how these student-teachers learn to speak English as their second language. Identifying the learning process of student-teachers, the language instructor can pose a clue of how the learning design could suit their needs and background knowledge, especially on emotion and emotion regulation in learning. Therefore, this study used self-regulated learning theory, second-language acquisition theory, and emotion and emotion regulation as frameworks.

In learning, there are three types of knowledge that one needs to master to experience learning meaningfully. Those types are declarative, procedural, and conditional knowledge (Brown, 1987; Jacobs & Paris, 1987; Schraw & Moshman, 1995). Declarative knowledge refers to knowing what. It is simply about "What is this?" and "What is that?". This type of knowledge is commonly about what we have had at school. Books, commercials, and TV/radio news are kinds of commercial media that provide these types of knowledge. We can get it on a daily and practically everywhere.

On the other hand, procedural knowledge refers to knowing how. If we already have been able to define, identify, and recognize something, we need to be able to acknowledge 'the how'. Unless we would never be able to move forward and do something about it. For instance, when a learner knows that was in the form of to be used to describe an action that happened in the past, he should be able to understand how to use it in a sentence; is the word 'was' placed at the beginning of a sentence or is it in the middle? It works the same when the learner is expected to notice the most appropriate pronunciation of a certain word, etc.

Conditional knowledge refers to knowing when to use the same example as before. Such knowledge helps learners to know when to use the word was. This knowledge enables learners to identify whether the word fits the subject I, you, or she. This one is practical and very beneficial. To accomplish those learning types effectively, learners need to apply learning strategies. One of the strategies proposed by experts in learning theories is having what is called self-regulation. Self-regulated learning (SRL) theory explains that learners succeed more when they possess a fully constructed self-regulation throughout the process of learning.

Theoretically, SRL can be defined as a 'self-maintenance and self-regulatory strategy' which is used 'to solve action-related conflicts' (Mbato, 2013, p.86). A similar concept is also explained in metacognition theory. It is assumed that in the process of 'thinking about thinking' in learning, a learner needs not only to embrace the ability to learn effectively but also to recognize the strategies (Livingston, 1997). Regarding emotion regulation, I point out SRL as the ability that is expected from learners to plan, monitor, and evaluate their emotions in learning. Further, Mbato (2013) explains that 'to grow in self-regulation, learners need to reflect on these three key elements: affects, strategies, and tasks' (p. 63). Therefore, SRL provides some benefits for learners to gain the three mentioned types of knowledge equally.

Specifically in language learning, there are four fundamental skills namely reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Those four basic skills are also widely known as 'macro-skills' (Temple & Gillet, 1984). Each skill requires a set of elements that a language learner should embrace. Those skills are not to be compared in terms of their significant function in that intended language. All of those are equally important. To see how these skills differ in

the process of mastering and their function in real practice of the language, experts then identify it into several stages and levels based on learners' needs and learning contexts.

Richards (2008) mentions that the mastery of speaking skills in English is a priority for second-language learners of English. As it is categorized as a productive skill, Richard further explains that spoken interaction is proved by many researchers to embrace a complexity either for first or second-language learners (p.19). In line with that, Jones (1996, p.12) writes:

> In speaking and listening we tend to be getting something, exploring ideas, working out some aspect of the world, or simply being together. In writing, we may be creating a record, committing events or moments to paper.

Jones (1996) emphasizes the complexity that lies when a learner is mastering particular speaking skills. Besides writing, speaking seemed to be a more complex skill since it requires creating and exploring right on the spot and somehow in the form of an impromptu action. While in writing, learners are required to create and explore ideas on paper, which makes it possible for the learner to take a look at it and revise it later. The complexity that is clarified on that is not intended to rate which skill is easier compared to the other. Yet, it is to emphasize demands within the process of mastering that particular skill that learners need to recognize.

Emotion regulation is a term used to describe processes in which learners can manage what emotions they have when they experience them, and how would be their expression upon them (Gross, 2002). It may diminish and reinforce emotions depending on learners' purposes (Gross & Thompson, 2007). Some scholars conclude that emotion regulation involves a similar aspect we have discussed in self-regulated learning earlier, namely the ability to monitor, evaluate, and modify emotion (Schutz and DeCuir, 2002). Further, it is explained that several emotional aspects take a role in emotion regulation. There are 'eliciting situation, attention, appraisals, subjective experience, behavior, or physiology' (Gross & Thompson, 2007). In sum, Gross (2002) admits that emotion regulation aims to boost positive emotional experiences and diminish the negative ones. Yet, on the other side, he found that individuals seek to increase, maintain, or decrease both. Further, it also can be conscious or unconscious (Gross, 2002).

Gross (2001) then proposes a model of emotion regulation containing some strategies. The strategies are identified to express the emotional responses. According to Gross (Sheppes & Gross, 2011), there are five points to consider. The five families of emotion regulation strategies are: 'selection of the situation, modification of the situation, deployment of attention, change of cognitions and modulation of responses (behavioral, experiential or physiological)'. Further, it is explained that the first four points are 'antecedently focused' (representing the behavior we may have before we respond fully to the emotion). The last one is 'response focused' (representing the action once we have the emotion/ongoing emotion).

Gross emphasized that each strategy can bring different effects (Gross, 2001). Even though there is no fixed answer to which strategy that works as the most effective one. Mauss et al. (2007) then suggested one option is to reach its proximity by using the model of

emotion regulation that Gross (2001) had proposed. Since it is considered effective to at least differentiate those two strategies: response-focused and antecedent-focused. In the area of research on emotion regulation, those strategies are common and popular as cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression (Balzarotti et al. 2010). Cognitive reappraisal is a strategy that focuses on the antecedent. It means when one uses this strategy, that particular person is managing the emotion by changing the way a person thinks about the antecedent. Besides, in expressive suppression, one would reduce the ongoing emotion. Meanwhile, the one diminished is the expression, not the emotion itself (Gross 2002). That is also explained that when a particular person is applying an expressive suppression strategy to manage emotion, there is sympathetic activation occurs in the brain. Therefore, it is expressive and diminished, not the emotion itself.

Through some experimental and correlational studies, it has been discussed that the reappraisal strategy is associated with a decrease in negative emotions. At the same time, it increases the positive ones, while the suppression works on the other side. It enhances negative emotions and suppresses positive ones at the same time (Gross, 2001; Gross & John, 2003; Mauss et al., 2007). Furthermore, it is explained that one's ability to invert and modify the reaction towards emotions brings a meaningful significance to that individual's self-regulation of learning and, therefore, would lead to academic success (Pekrun and Linnenbrink, 2017). Garret and Young (2009) explored the emotional reactions that originated during a Portuguese as a foreign language course for a period of eight weeks. Although their study was not focused on accounting for emotions, emotions became the core of the description provided by Garret and Young's responses to instruction, revealing the significant role that emotions play in language learning processes. Imai (2010) investigated the manifestation of emotions during group work preparation for a second language oral presentation. He found that during the task of preparation, language learners' mental processes were structured through oral expressions of their emotions. It, then, developed into a common group of feelings. Thus, emotions felt by the three members of the group served to construct the same feelings towards the activity through negotiation of their reactions to the learning task they were carrying out. From this finding, Imai (2010) concluded that even negative emotions can be a developmental resource for foreign language learners.

METHOD

This study is trying to describe the academic emotion of the student-teachers in mastering English speaking skills and how they would regulate it. Therefore, the method used in this current study was a mixed method. Ary (2010) describes several designs that work in mixed-methods research. Among the six methods proposed by them, the researcher considered this research to be designed concurrently. Further, Ary explains that in concurrent design, quantitative and qualitative data were gathered inseparably. The separation is also applied in both analysis and interpretation. The researcher then would integrate the conclusion and draw the meaning of it.

Moreover, Creswell (2011) mentions that the mixed method is a method that integrates quantitative and qualitative data in the research (p.43). In this study, the analysis drawn from the data engages both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Therefore, the mixed method

is considered even more suitable as a research method to apply. This finding is supported by Creswell (2011) as he explains:

> The researcher bases the inquiry on the assumption that collecting diverse types of data best provides a more complete understanding of a research problem than either quantitative or qualitative data alone. The study begins with a broad survey in order to generalize results to a population and then, in a second phase, focuses on qualitative, open-ended interviews to collect detailed views from participants to help explain the initial quantitative survey (p.48)

Furthermore, this research was carried out for the whole semester by observing student-teachers' performance in English class, specifically speaking performances, and recording their answers in questionnaires and interviews regarding their emotion and emotion regulation in speaking. The researcher invited 66 student-teachers from *Program Studi Pendidikan Keagamaan Katolik* to participate in the research. It started with a questionnaire on how they perceive their academic emotion in speaking distributed to the 66 student-teachers and an in-depth interview with five of them on how they would regulate their academic emotions in speaking.

Table 1. The Flow of Data Collection

Variable	Data Collection Technique	Data
Academic emotion	Questionnaire	Perceived academic emotion
Regulation of emotion	In-depth interview	Tendency of strategies used and narrative data

RESULTS

From the questionnaire, the results can be described as follows.

1. Enjoyment perception in speaking

The student-teachers initially perceived negative enjoyment in speaking, especially at the beginning of the semester.

Table 2. Perceived Enjoyment in Speaking

Statement F1: *I enjoy speaking English*											
Responses											
Never	%	*Rarely*	%	*Sometimes*	%	*Very often*	%	*Always*	%	Total	%
16	24.24	20	30.3	27	40.9	0	0	3	4.54	66	100

From the table, it can be seen that most students do not have the enjoyment in speaking. However, through interviews, S2 revealed that the enjoyment is positively changing as they are introduced to games and ice-breaking in the class. S2 states,

> "*When the teacher used games in speaking class, I feel happy in learning. Even though I still do not know so many vocabularies, I enjoyed the class so much*".

In line with S2, S4 also states,

> "*The speaking activity becomes really fun with icebreaking. It makes me relax and not too focused on my lack in speaking*".

Table 3. Perceived Joy about Success in Ability to Speak

Statement F6. I feel comfortable about my ability to speak in English											
Responses											
Never	%	*Rarely*	%	*Sometimes*	%	*Very often*	%	*Always*	%	Total	%
0	0	19	28,78	39	59,09	4	6,06	4	6,06	66	100

In the questionnaire, the domain of joy about success is interpreted into three different statements. Each represents aspects of speaking proficiency, namely speaking ability, pronunciation, and fluency. This specification aimed to help learners identify their feelings related to more specific items of speaking itself. Thus, as can be seen in the data, their tendency is different among these three aspects. In terms of the ability to speak, as shown in Table 3, students tend to respond to sometimes response. It may indicate that they sometimes feel comfortable, but some other times they do not. Referring to the numbers presented in the table, the differences between those who rarely feel comfortable and those who always feel comfortable are almost equal.

As an additional point, there is also a slight tendency for the students to feel not really comfortable with their ability to speak. This is shown by the numbers on rare responses that are fairly significant. There are even 28.78% responded to rarely. In the interview, some reasons are revealed behind the tendency to feel uncomfortable with their ability to speak. Lack of practice, the presence of competitors, and high requirements are on the list of the reasons they have. S1 states:

> "*The thing that makes me feel inferior about my speaking is seeing that finding my other friends who have been able to speak well and fluently*".

The similar statement is also revealed by another student (S4) as he states:

> "S*peaking is one of subject that requires lots of practices in front of the class. When I saw my friends who have been able to speak very well and I become easily doubt on my own speaking ability.*

On the other hand, a fifth semester student (S5) has another way to see others who are better than herself which pushes her to try harder instead. She says:

> "*Some of my classmates have already been good in English. And I learned from them. From them, I learned to notice that everyone is unique in terms of speaking ability and that includes me. That pushes me to show my ability to and want that my friends can see mine too*".

The statements above may give a glimpse of the background that contributes to the students' tendency not to feel comfortable with their own ability to speak. As a part of *the joy about of success* domain, there is also statement F7 asking for students' feelings about their own pronunciation. In Table 4, it can be seen that students still tend to respond to *sometimes* response.

Table 4 Joy about Success in Pronunciation

F7. *I feel comfortable about my pronunciation*											
Responses											
Never	%	*Rarely*	%	*Sometimes*	%	*Very often*	%	*Always*	%	Total	%
34	51,51	16	24,24	6	9,09	9	13,36	1	1,51	66	100

In line with the previous statements regarding feeling comfortable with their speaking, these students also tend to feel uncomfortable with their own pronunciation. There are only a few responded to very often and always. From the interview, S4 states,

> "*For me, pronunciation is the most difficult one, for it is pronounced different from what it is written*".

Similar perception is also stated by S2:

> "*I feel that pronunciation is really hard. Even with help of google, I still feel not confident with my pronunciation*".

2. Students' tendency of using strategies in regulation emotion in speaking: cognitive reappraisal strategy

Cognitive reappraisal strategy specifically refers to an act of changing thought towards the situation that causes certain emotions. To describe students' tendency to use cognitive reappraisal strategy in regulating emotion in speaking, a formulated statement to elaborate in the questionnaire. The statement is to describe the possibility of cognitive reappraisal strategy being used by the students in regulating their academic emotions by managing confidence.

Table 5. Cognitive Reappraisal in Managing Confidence

Statement C1: *When I want to feel more confident about my speaking, I change what I'm thinking about that had startled me*											
Responses											
Never	%	*Rarely*	%	*Sometimes*	%	*Very often*	%	*Always*	%	Total	%
1	1,51	0	0	20	30,30	32	48,48	13	19,63	66	100

Statement C1 describes a tendency of the students to manage confidence in speaking can be seen in Table 5. Specifically, this statement adjusts whether or not the students change their thoughts on the situation that causes the emotion. There is a significant number of students responded very often. This finding indicates that most of these students tend to use this strategy. It is supported by the result of interview as S5 states:

> "*I usually get so nervous when I am about to perform speaking. I am afraid of making mistakes or getting blank about what I have prepared before. Thus, I try to talk to my friends and forget that I am about to perform speaking*".

Based on the statement from S5 above, there is a notion appears saying that trying to forget the situation would be one of the ways to manipulate thinking. S5 says that this is what he does almost every time he faces tests or any occasion in performing speaking. In line with this, S1 also states:

"Every time I am about to have the host seat turn or any speaking tests, I always try to minimize the feeling of being not confident by pretending that this is not a test, just an ordinary speaking practice session instead".

3. Expressive Suppression Strategy

Expressive suppression strategy specifically refers to an act whether or not expressing what the students are feeling about certain situations in speaking. To describe students' tendency to use expressive suppression strategy in regulating their emotions in speaking, a statement was formulated regarding the expressive suppression strategy that the students might use to handle wariness in speaking.

Table 6. Expressive suppression in handling wariness in speaking

Statement ES1: *While speaking, if I am worrying about my performance, I will try not to show it*											
Responses											
Never	%	*Rarely*	%	*Sometimes*	%	*Very often*	%	*Always*	%	Total	%
1	1,51	4	6,06	26	39,39	28	42,42	7	10,60	66	100

Statement ES1 describes a tendency of the students to use expressive suppression strategy in managing wariness. In Table 6 shows that most students tend to be very often trying not to show their wariness in speaking. This finding indicates that all students tend to be positive in this statement. In the interview, some detailed use of this strategy is revealed by the students. S3 tells:

"I always want to hide my nervousness. I do not want the audience notice that I am worrying about my ability while I perform speaking".

Another experience was shared by S5, as he said:

"Being professional while speaking is a requirement, Therefore I always try to manage it so that others won't notice my wariness and found out that it helps me to feel less worry in speaking."

From the statements above, it can be said that the students tend to use this strategy while they are speaking either in daily conversation or speaking tests. They have shared some reasons why they prefer not to let others notice their emotion for the sake of the performance itself.

DISCUSSION

1. Student-teachers' perception on their academic emotion in speaking

Learning and teaching are considered to be cognitive enterprises. Moreover, the enterprise bounds to learning experiences in which emotions cannot be separated from the process. Yükselir (2014) mentions that emotional experience in the learning process impacts learners' moods and would not work perfectly similarly from one to another learner. That supports the idea that seeing students perceived academic emotions in learning might be fruitful in the teaching and learning process.

The data showed that most student-teachers tend to perceive negative emotions in speaking at the beginning of the semester. They do not really enjoy learning to speak and

feel awkward in speaking English. From the interview, it was revealed that most of the student-teachers do not feel confident in speaking English. However, there is a tendency to change perceptions throughout the semester. The number of positive responses toward those items are increasing by the middle of the semester. After receiving feedback from the lecturer and some modifications in the learning activities, the student-teachers showed some positive emotions towards their English-speaking learning process. This finding may be interpreted as a positive effect of having a positive emotion toward learning. Aguilar and Lopez (2013) affirm that comfort and confidence in learning may affect the perspectives that learners will use in seeing their own process of learning. They may see that as they have gone through certain periods of learning, they will see the progress and the fact that their effort throughout their learning process showed results (p.8). It supports the fact that the student-teachers grab more enjoyment in speaking as they reach the end of the semester.

The findings also revealed that the possession of feeling enjoyment in speaking might be affected by their motivation to learn English. Kelly (2004) states that academic emotions, both positive and negative ones, are authored by students' focus and motivation. Moreover, motivation in learning has a tight boundary with learners' self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997), attribution (Weiner, 1992), self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 1985) and self-worthiness (Covington, 1998). Therefore, it can confirm that students' perception of their emotions might be based on what they have possessed in terms of the boundaries under motivation. Confidence in performing language skills has a connection to motivation in learning as well. As described by Bandura (1997), confidence is a result of perceiving the ability in certain skills by the learners themselves. Further, Bandura mentions that the perception can come up with consideration upon learning goals and the framework that can provide a context for the goals in learning. As it is clear year by year, the learning goals are certain and strengthened as the process undergoes.

However, in the interview, an additional fact appears. The participant revealed their perception of the difference between nervousness and self-confidence in speaking. Students in finding showed that they perceive nervousness as something different from being confident. When they admit that they have self-confidence, yet at the same time, they still feel the nervousness. It is clear to see through what scholars defined between those two. Self-confidence is defined as an individual's recognition of his own abilities, loving himself, and being aware of his own emotions (Hashwani, 2008). On the other hand, nervousness may be seen not as a contrary side of confidence. Yet, it is defined as a result of a situation that the learners might face in the learning process (Brophy, 1998).

2. ELESP students' tendency on implementing emotion regulation strategies

Findings on students' tendency to use strategies in regulating their emotions in learning came up with two big ideas. Firstly, students tend to use cognitive reappraisal strategies in the preparation stage. Secondly, students tend to use expressive suppression when they are in the stage of performing speaking tasks. Gross (2001) uncovers that these two strategies impact different focuses on the emotion process.

Cognitive reappraisal is assumed as an attempt to redefine the antecedent of the emotion or the causal factors (Lazarus and Alfert 1964; Gross and John, 2003). The factors

are commonly attached to certain situations that stimulate particular arising emotions. Moreover, Gross and John (2003) affirm that this typical strategy can be used before full emotion occurs. This fact legitimizes the logic found in the data that mentions that cognitive strategy is used in the preparation stage. As we have discussed before speaking is a spontaneous endeavor, most emotional reactions might happen during the performance while the student is performing their speaking. As a result, the students are allowed to anticipate in the responses whether to let the endeavor be perceived as an emotional aspect or not.

On the other hand, the cognitive reappraisal strategy, expressive suppression focuses on the response. In other words, this strategy is applied to manage the emotion that is already in the process of arising. This data may support the findings that reveal students tend to use this typical strategy in their performance. Sheldon et al. (1997) emphasize the importance of practicing this strategy for learners as it requires skills to manage emotional responses as the emotion exists. Gross and John (2003) also mention it as a challenge for learners' performance in learning.

CONCLUSION

Understanding emotions is an important, but often underestimated, determinant of success in the academic field. Therefore, this research aimed to contribute to emotion in learning understanding. There are two things that may be concluded in this research. First, the student-teachers tend to perceive negative emotions in speaking. Second, the students tend to be uncertain about being at ease in speaking. It is affected by their frequent self-monitoring of their own speaking. This data corresponds to their tendency to feel uncertain state as well as being afraid of making mistakes in speaking. For these two domains, students showed that sometimes they might feel at ease and not be afraid of making mistakes. Yet, some other times, they tend to feel like they are not at ease and are afraid of making mistakes in speaking.

Furthermore, the findings showed that the student-teachers tend to use a cognitive reappraisal strategy in managing their emotion in speaking, specifically in the preparation stage. The cognitive reappraisal strategy used by students is generally taking some form. Firstly, they change the way how they perceive the negative potential situation or the causal. Secondly, they pretend to have another 'better scenario' related to the situation that has the potential to initiate negative emotions toward speaking. Thirdly, they change the object of their thought to switch their attention from the situation when negative feelings start. Then, the findings also showed that the student-teachers tend to use expressive reappraisal strategy to handle their emotion in speaking more in the stage of performing speaking. They generally prefer not to express their feelings while speaking for two different reasons. The first one is because the students may find it hard to hide. The second one is because the students may prefer to consider the context of the speaking. If the context does not need the factual feeling the students face while speaking, they would hide it and vice versa.

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