Student’s Silence Experience on EFL Classroom: Factors and Solutions

THESIS
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
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Abstract

This study is aimed at investigating factors that influence student’s silence and also finding out student’s effort to overcome silence. There were 100 students who enrolled BIP 4 class of Faculty of Information Technology (FIT), Satya Wacana Christian University (SWCU) who participated in filling close-ended and open-ended questionnaires. In discovering factors of silence, this study analyzed qualitatively as well as quantitatively so that finally the results of the study found that there are four major factors that influence the students to keep silent in the classroom. The four factors are student’s English proficiency, fear of making mistake, teacher methodology, and also alleged with anxiety. Furthermore, this study also discovered that taking an active part of the discussion is the most beneficial effort of the students to overcome silence so that they can increase their participation rate in the classroom. This study is useful for the teachers to create a good atmosphere in the classroom as well as reducing silent behavior in classroom.

Keywords: student’s silence, classroom participation, student’s effort,

INTRODUCTION

It is commonly found that there were many kinds of student’s characteristics in classroom such as active students, passive students and also silent students. One of the characteristics is assumed to be called silent student. Since the definition of silence could be vary as well as their type, this study is only focus on the reluctance on classroom participation just like Nakane (2002) stated, who studies the silence of Japanese students in Australian universities, defines that the silence is constructed in part by their resistance against classroom participation. Some Japanese students actually “do not like participating or asking questions in discussions” Nakane (2002). She suggests that Japanese students are not always silenced but choose to be silent. Nakane also points out the different levels of Japanese student silence by based on certain types of classroom structures; they tend to
remain silent in lectures and to talk in group discussions. She further argues that levels of silence depend upon familiarity. There have been many studies concerning on silent students itself. Most of the studies refer to the Asian learners that showed some signs of silent in the classroom participations. This assumption was confirmed by several authors and experts. In many observations, Asian learners were considered being silence in language classroom, they tended to participate passively and not give any responds to the teacher (Chen, 2003; Cortazzi & Jin, 1996; Jackson, 2001a, 2002b, 2003; Tsui, 1996; Zou, 2004 cited in Liu, 2005). Based on my personal experience, I also have the same thought regarding the quiet classroom interaction. I personally considered myself more as a silent student. I preferred to be quiet all the time especially when teacher asked me to answer questions; I preferred to wait for teacher to answer questions himself rather than I gave my answer in class. Surprisingly, my experience was also similar to Ping (2010) who wrote reflective journal on in-class silent student that said she often experienced bad feelings like fear of making mistakes. It drove her to have lack of confidence and less motivation of learning in the classroom.

Therefore, I begin to think the reason why they are preferred to be silent. This case of preferring to be silent in the classroom encouraged me to find the answer why they prefer to be silent and whether they have the willingness to do something more than just be a silent in the classroom which mean how they try to speak up more in the classroom.

Several studies had investigated student’s silence in the EFL classroom. Most of the studies refer to aspects that influence students becoming silent. The aspects concerning on the students’ silence are assumed to be the key to reduce silence in classroom activities by asking what is their effort to speak up more in classroom.

The first studies come from the Chinese students who are learning English as second language. Xie (2009) stated that student’s silent behavior was not only derived from cultural
background or poor language proficiency, but also the factors of interactions with teacher since the teacher is the one who has ultimate control in the classroom. Bear in mind that the meaning of ultimate control in here according to Xie (2009) is that students were not allowed to express their own ideas by rejecting it, thus, teacher elaborated her own ideas that seems fit with particular topic. Assuming that teacher took too much control would make students only said what is “comfortable” for their teacher as a result not to use students’ own initiative. This situation would make students tended to be silent is the cause of students’ preference to be silent. Additionally, Xie (2009) also pointed that “the teachers not only judged subjective opinions but also shut down student-initiated ideas that while tangential, may have been of educational value. Student-initiated ideas were only allowed so long as they conformed to the teachers’ agenda”

Another finding was revealed by Karim and Shah (2008) which examined the cause of silence among students at International Islam University in Malaysia. Karim and Shah (2008) found that the degree of classroom participation anxiety was higher with Malaysian students than with non-Malaysian students. Hence, by trying to correlate with three variables: “students perceived oral competence in English, teacher’s verbal immediacy behaviors and student’s motivation to study” only two correlations were conjecturers of “classroom participation anxiety” that were “students perceived oral competence in English” and “teachers verbal immediacy behaviors”. According to their findings, it is safe to say that the reason why students becoming silent is because the lack of English proficiency and teacher who use too much control in the classroom. Furthermore, a research conducted by Liu (2005), which is located in Hong Kong, found another reasons of the student’s silence behavior. The reason is because teacher considered students as passive and reticent because their English is poor. According to interviewees in his study, Liu (ibid) also added that the students were reluctant to participate due to their lack of understanding materials given by the
teacher, their fear of being embarrassed by their peers, and tendency to be a passive learner during their secondary schooling (Flowerdew et al., 2000; Jackson, 2001b, 2002b, 2003; Liu & Littlewood, 1997; Tsui, 1996 cited in Liu 2005).

From these studies, it can be summed up that silent in EFL/ESL classroom is caused by multiple reasons which may vary from one context to another. This study explored the participants’ efforts of how they overcome their silent in classroom. Determining from the context of this study, the main goals are to provide a preliminary analysis of the EFL students about the reasons of being silent and what is their effort to speak up more in the classroom. It hopes this study may enlighten teacher’s ability to deal with those silent learners effectively.

In regard of the aims of this study, two research questions appear to investigate this matter “what are the aspects causing the student’s silence in EFL classroom?” and also “what are the student’s effort to speak up more in the classroom?”

LITERATURE REVIEW

From several studies of student’s silence, this study summarizes that there are 4 major aspects of being silence that will be discussed below and also the efforts of several experts regarding on how to overcome the silent students. These 4 major aspects are somewhat intertwined one another. Which means that one aspect can be the reason of another aspect.

1. Student’s silent due to their anxiety

One of reasons why learners become silent in a class comes from their own anxiety. They may experience nervous when they are expected to respond to teacher’s questions, or they may feel afraid if their friend laugh at their performance in English. Gardner and MacIntyre (1993 in Zhang & Zhong, 2012) argued that language anxiety defines as the fear
that happens when students are asked to respond to the teacher or to do tasks in target language in which students are not proficient. This definition of anxiety is also confirmed by giving evidence from another study that is come from Chinese students. In line with this theory, Liu and Littlewood (1997) and Jones (1999) stated that “this anxiety factor is also allegedly related to certain aspects of Eastern culture, such as desire to be right and perfect and fear of losing face. Another similar reason of students’ silent on their anxiety comes from Liu (2005) who conducted on the study about students’ reticence in Chinese EFL context stated that student’s reluctant and worries to speak English to others in class is caused by anxiety. For some students, low self-perception of competence is caused when language learners compare themselves to others or are pessimistically evaluated by their peers or teachers. Thus, many researchers believed that competitiveness (Bailey, 1983; Young, 1991 cited in in Zhang & Zhong, 2012) and fear of negative evaluation (Horwitz et al., 1986; Kitano, 2001; Gregersen, 2002; Young, 1991 in Zhang & Zhong, 2012) were two of the primary causes of anxiety. Some anxious language learners tend to concern about the competence of others and compare their own performance in a pessimistic manner with those of their peers. In Bailey (1983) analysis’s of competitiveness and anxiety in second language learning, students who like to compare themselves with other students are likely to feel stressful.

2. Student’s silent due to their interaction with peers

Instead of anxiety aspects of the students, interaction with peers also contributes a reason why students become silent. These assumptions are based on Liu’s study (2005). It revealed that Asian learners especially Chinese are well-known about their modesty. Chinese students are taught to be always modest because it is show the politeness and respect to others. In line with her, Pon, Goldstein & Schecter (2003) also conducted a study about immigrant Chinese high school students in the city of Toronto who preferred to be silence
and found some reasons of being silent that can be trace from the interactions between peers. The students were reluctant to speak because if they are making mistake, they fear that their English will be despised by English speaking peers (Canadian students) or by their immigrant Chinese peers as doing “show off”. Brick and Louine (1994) stated that Chinese students usually believed that correctness as the most important quality in classroom activities. Therefore, the students are required to answer questions correctly, which means failure is not an option. In other word, if by any chance the students fail to answer because lack of accuracy in target language. They usually felt it could be an embarrassing moment for the rest of their life. As a result the Chinese feared appearing foolish by making mistakes if they enthusiastically participated in class, as these act could prove to be a disaster for them, such as being laughed at by peers or classmates.

3. Student’s silent based on the teacher’s methodology

Interaction with teacher is also considered as aspect of silence from outside the students. The methodologies that teachers use can sometimes make students confuse and tend to remain silent while only listening to teachers and giving less respond. One of methodology in teaching and learning activities was teacher-centered. Cheng (2000) believed that the methodology may be considered as fatal method and lead to the students who becoming more silent. Teachers should provide more chances to make students to speak up more or to participate in learning process by reducing control over materials and what students should do of classroom interaction. It will make students are able to response more often and more complex (Gutierrez 1994; Johnson 1995 cited in Xie 2009). They also believed that teacher should takes a role as the facilitator which gives some opportunities for students to enhance their skill in speaking English and trust students to improve their skill without too much control.
Another study to enhance the statements above comes from the Japanese learner of English. The study conducted by Harumi (1999) pointed to the 167 university students stated that Japanese learners of English want the teacher to adjust their teaching style somehow; for example, by addressing them individually so that they do not have to compete to take turns, giving an opportunity for students to give their opinion or even encourage the students to speak up. For these reasons, enough chances to know that teaching style and methods, itself needs to be negotiated in each learning circumstances. It is valuable to be flexible and open to appreciate good aspects of our own and others through the negotiation between learners and the teachers. Derived from these studies, it safe to say that teaching style did matter in the reasons why the student tend to be silent in the classroom.

4. Student’s silent based on the English proficiency

English proficiency could be the significant factors regarding of what makes student becoming silent. From my experience, when I lacked of English proficiency several years ago, I became afraid when teacher asked me a question. My fear grew even further like anxiety, scorned by peers, afraid of losing face and so on. It was not just because I didn’t want to participate, but sometimes it was because I didn’t know how to say in English and express what I mean, regarding to this, i believed that the lack of English proficiency can be the rudimentary aspect why student becoming silent because from there, the reason can be explore more even complex, thus this reflection of the past was back up by Cheng (2000) believed that the low in English proficiency are the most common factors that affect the student’s silence in the classroom. Low English proficiency can be range from lack of grammars verbs understanding and inability to produce correct pronunciation. In his study Cheng (ibid) stated that Asian EFL/ ESL learners tend to be silent in class when they have a low English communicative ability. Furthermore, Tsui (1996, cited in Cheng, 2000) also
confirmed that most of teachers recognized students’ reticence is because of the low in English proficiency.

It can be observed from those aspects above that there is indeed connection between internal and external aspects. For example in the interaction with teacher that Cheng (2000) stated about the false method, since teacher who use too much control in the classroom, can make the student become anxious to learn in the classroom.

**Efforts to overcome the silence**

Additionally, some researchers had found some solutions based on the student’s perspective on how to overcome silence behavior. Unfortunately, only small number of researches could possibly interpret the perspective from the students to overcome the silence due to lack of solutions or the student’s own strategies for coping with silence itself. Most of the researches did however mention that the students usually rely on the teachers’ ideas to eliminate the silence itself. One of the studies derived from the research conducted by university student in Sweden. Hadziosmanovic (2012) stated that based on her research, students believed to be more easily provoked to speak if by any chance the students can discuss the material by talking to their peers rather than in the whole class. The intention of this student’s thought is that the silence in the classroom could be minimalized by having a discussion with only their peers. Furthermore, Hadziosmanovic (2012) did mention that benefits from teaching strategies and scaffolding of the speaking activities could really decrease the silence in the classroom. The students suggest working with common parts of presentations. In this way the teachers should be able to provide different techniques challenging students’ silence behavior.

Another demonstration of the student’s thought to overcome the silence is come from the university students in Hong Kong. The research conducted by Littlewood and Liu (1997)
showed that “group discussion” is the most top priority chosen by the students of strong desire to eliminate the silence and thus enhance the active participation rate. Even further, a research conducted by (Spratt 1999 cited in Cheng, 2000) indicated that the students are prefer to a more of like Taking part in discussions, taking part in language games, working in small groups, talking to classmates in English in class and working in pairs to increase their participation rate and as well as decrease the silence in the classroom.

The Study

Context of the study

The place where the study conducted was in Faculty Technology and Informatics of Satya Wacana Christian University Salatiga, Central Java, Indonesia. The subjects of this study were four groups of BIP (Bahasa Inggris Profesi) course. In this course the students were taught about the Basic English such as writing, speaking and grammar. As a foreign language, English was not actively used in oral communication outside the class. However, English is very crucial to master since they are closely associated with technological items that use mostly English. This study also wanted to discover whether the participants which is non-English major are also had problems in dealing with silent in the classroom.

Participants

The participants of the study are 100 students from Faculty Technology and Informatics of SWCU. Most of them were the second year students and the rest were the third year students. They were attending BIP (Bahasa Inggris Profesi), the course which provided them with specified English in the introduction of technology. They have already taken Bahasa Inggris Dasar, which was a course which provide them general English course. In this study, the researcher wanted to know how students who were not come from English major
were distracted by their own silence in learning English in classroom. All names mentioned are pseudonyms.

**Instrument of data collection**

To answer the research questions, I used open-ended and close-ended questionnaire to identify why they are silent and also how they try to speak up more in the classroom. They needed to answer the questions on the questionnaire. As the students’ first language was Indonesian, the questionnaire was written in the Indonesian language in order to avoid misunderstanding.

**Procedure of Data Collection**

Before distributing the questionnaires, 10 participants were chosen randomly to check the clarity of the questionnaire then the researcher spread the questionnaire before the BIP class was began with the lecturer’s permission. The participants were asked to fill in the questionnaire and return it as soon as they complete in answering the questions. After all the questionnaires had been collected, the finding of the questionnaire was ready to be analyzed.

**Data analysis**

The collected data were counted to see how the participants’ responses related with the silent in the classroom. First, the participants’ responses were divided into 2 categories, i.e. speaking or listening responses to show the student’s preference while in the classroom. It is assumed that based on the definition by Nakane (2002) that implied about the resistance in the classroom participation, students who remain listen in the classroom all the time are subjugated into the term of silence. It proves that students have low classroom participation
and therefore they tend to be silent. Furthermore speaking is vice versa. Student who feels
that they are having higher classroom participation rate is considered very active and speak a
lot in the classroom.

Apart from dividing the participants’ responses into two categories the analysis also
discussed about those preferences. It can be made to identify the factors of why the students
become silent in the classroom that will be classified into the 4 different aspects: student’s
silent based on their anxiety, student’s silent based on their interaction with peers, student’s
silent based on their interaction with teacher (teacher’s methodology) and the last is the
aspect of student’s silent based on the English proficiency. In addition, the analysis also
discussed about the student’s effort to break the silence in the classroom. To enrich the
discussion, I also provided with the participant’s opinion of how they should act toward the
silent behavior.

Findings & Discussion

To answer the research question “what are the aspects causing the student’s silence in
EFL classroom?” first, the research needed to reveal whether or not the students are really
silent in the classroom. It is taken into consideration that based on the definition stated by
Nakane (2002) that said about resistance in the classroom participation, this study tried to
prove whether or not the students did remain passive and be silent in the classroom. The
study proved that most of the students did remain passive by just listen to the teacher the
whole time. As displayed in Figure 1 below, listening 73% is found as the most students’
preference of being in the classroom.
From the summary of the data, the research revealed that speaking (27%) is the least preferred by the students. As the data showed, the range of the data is significantly different; it shows that the majority of the students prefer to listen in the classroom while few choose to speak.

To summarize, it was found that the majority of the students favored to just listen in the classroom by hit the highest score of 73% students due to the lack of English proficiency mostly. While in contrast, only 27% students who prefer to speak in the classroom. It can be assumed that the majority of the students are passive and therefore remain to be silent.

**Factors of being silent in the classroom**

Since the research had successfully discovered that most of the participants did not really active in the classroom by preferred listen in the teacher’s explanation rather than actively speak and participate in the classroom, here the research wanted to know further, what are the factors that contribute to why the students are not really active in the classroom.
since it was believe that the factors could be vary regarding of each of the participants. From the collected data, it showed that the highest score, 33% of the students believed that lacking of English proficiency has become the common factor of why the students reluctant to speak in the classroom and therefore become silent.

**FIGURE.2 Factors of being silent**

The data above also reported about fear of making mistake (24%), anxiety (17%), fear of losing face (11%), and the last is teacher’s methodology (6%). Beside the factors that are provided in the questionnaire, beside the factors that are provided in the questionnaire, the participants also gave their own opinion about the factors that make them silent. They are peer interaction (4%), class environment (3%), and also fear of friend perception (1%).

In the following section, the factors that made the students become silent are discussed more specifically.

1. **Lack of English proficiency**

From the data showed above, it was found that English proficiency take very important role by hitting the highest score (33%) that makes the student reluctant to speak in
the classroom. This study assumed that lack of English proficiency range from lack of grammar and vocabulary as well as unable constructing grammatical sentence in a good way. This assumption were backed up by Constantine, Ferro and Dairy (participants) that said

“I can’t speak too much in English so prefer to listen and be quiet.” (Constantine, 27th march 2013, my translation)

“When I want to make a sentence using some tenses I feel confuse so I just being quite in the class” (Ferro, 27th march 2013, my translation)

“I feel confused, when I want to say something in English, I don’t know what words to say, so I remain silent” (Dairy, 27th march 2013, my translation)

In the statements above, lack of English proficiency is one aspect that is far more concerning. Furthermore, it was found that 40 out of 75 students who prefer to listen in the classroom stated that it is because they couldn’t construct grammatical sentence in a good way and therefore they choose to remain quiet and listen in the classroom.

The statement from Constantine is In line with Tsui (1996 in Zhang & Zhong, 2012) that stated low English proficiency is responsible for student reticence that no doubt has difficulties in target language productions.

2. **Fear of making mistake**

From the data gathered, it showed that fear of making mistake is also considered as concerning factor that need attention. The data gathered hits the score of 24% second only to the English proficiency factor. This data was conveyed by Diamond and Mooney that stated
“I’m afraid to participate more in the class because I’m afraid if I do wrong” (Diamond, 27th march 2013, my translation)

“Somehow, I fear I will get bad mark if I fail to answer teacher’s question in the class si I prefer to be quiet” (Mooney, 27th march 2013, my translation)

Again, it was found that 20 out of 75 students who prefer to listen in the classroom state that due to lack of English proficiency, they became hesitate to participate in the classroom. This study took an assumption that silent in the classroom could be caused by the feeling of fear making mistake due to low English proficiency that make them to be silent in the classroom. This were taken into consideration by Zhang & Zhong, (2012) that stated when language learners compare themselves to others such as their peers or teachers, they tend to form low self-perception of competence.

3. Anxiety

The next thing discussed was anxiety. Anxiety may result from learners’ own beliefs, poor language abilities, self-perception of incompetence and also fear of negative perception from others.

From the data collected, it showed that Anxiety also took an important role in what makes the students prefer to listen and be quiet in the classroom. It seemed that anxiety is not a factor that can be interpreted as “stand alone” factor. As it was said above, in a simple way, anxiety was supported by other factors that in this case which is English proficiency. It was found in Nigel statements (participants) that stated

“I feel anxious and unconfident to speak English and I’m afraid to start a conversation” (Nigel, 29th march 2013, my translation)
“I can feel the butterfly in my stomach when I try to raise my hand to participate in the classroom so I decide to just quiet. (Hino, 29th march 2013 my translation)

Those statements above show that feeling nervous and unconfident may lead to be passive and less talk. Similar with Liu (2005) that student’s reluctant and worries to speak English to others in class are caused by anxiety.

4. Fear of losing face

Differ from the factor of fear of making mistake; the fear of losing face could be interpreted as the fear of looking “foolish” or “dumb” toward the appraisal of their peers. It was found in Athenna, Romeo, Delta, Foxtrot statements that stated

“I’m afraid that my friends will laugh at me when I do wrong” (Athenna, 29th march, my translation)

“When I make errors, I think other students surely will mock me. That’s what I am afraid of. So it bound me to speak” (Romeo, 29th march 2013, my translation)

“Instead of my friends teased me, I prefer not to talk at all” (Delta, 29th march 2013, my translation)

“When I say the wrong words, surely they are going to laugh at me” (Foxtrot, 29th march 2013, my translation)

Those statements above pointed that the fear of scorned by peers could also become the hindrance for the students to participate more in the classroom; therefore they remained to be silent in class. Liu (ibid) also believed that the students were reluctant to participate due to
their lack of understanding the materials given by the teacher, their fear of being embarrassed by their peers, and the tendency to be a passive learner during their secondary schooling (Flowerdew et al., 2000; Jackson, 2001b, 2002b, 2003; Liu & Littlewood, 1997; Tsui, 1996 cited in Liu 2005).

5. Teacher’s methodology

The teacher’s methodology is also one aspect to be considered. Draco, Charlie and Omega (participants) stated that the teacher didn’t give any chance to the students to speak.

“I will speak if I am given an opportunity to speak, but the teacher isn’t given any.” (Draco, 28th March 2013, my translation)

“Sometimes, the teacher just explaining the material all the time, I had come to the class, just listen to the teacher, and given time for one minute to speak, how come we are not just being silent?” (Charlie, 28th March 2013, my translation)

“The way the teacher teaches unclearly, we only sit down and listen and taking notes that’s all” (Omega, 29th March 2013, my translation)

It can be assumed that teacher probably just explaining the materials all the time. This kind of methodology like Cheng (2000) showed is teacher-centered in teaching and learning activity may be considered as fatal method and lead to the students who becoming more silent.

Apart from that, some students felt that there are still some other factors besides those five factors that were displayed. First, 1% of the student thought that fear of friends judgment is one aspect that was being considered. This includes feeling of being judged as superior in the class. It was believed that Asian students are well-known about their modesty like Liu (2005) proposed. The majority of the students preferred to avoid being judged as “show-off”.
Followed by 3% of the students who thought that class environment is one factor that made them to remain silent. Most of the students in the class are considered as silent student, so that others will behave in such way that makes the whole class become silent. The last factor is peers interaction (4%), here the students alleged that peers is the aspect that can also concerning. This includes that not all of the students in the class can speak English. Based on the data gathered, some of the students prefer to interact with the native language and therefore, the use of English is not really important to them.

To summarize, the discussion above shows that most of the factors above were basically used in contributing of why the students tend to be silent in the classroom. The most common factor that occurred is English proficiency by hit the highest score of 73%. These findings also well stated by in contrast, only 6% of the students who believed that teacher’s methodology take an important role in their silent behavior in the classroom.

**Students’ effort to overcome the silence**

Apart from determining the students’ factors as well as the factors of willingness to speak up more in the classroom, the next thing that was discussed in this study is the students’ clarification to overcome the silence. It was related to answer the research question. Based on the collected data, it was found that 7% out of 100 participants were not given any efforts to overcome the silence, therefore the students’ efforts in the figure 5 below were taken from 93 participants who give their statements about how to overcome the silence. The research found that the majority of the students prefer to take active discussions activities (45%). Additionally, 24% of the participant believed that maintaining active communications with the lecturer is a good way to break the silent attitude in the classroom. Meanwhile 30% of the
participants favored to seek opportunities to use the language as effective as possible. Figure 5 below will displayed about the data from the participants.

**Figure.5 students’ effort to overcome the silence**

![Chart showing students' effort to overcome silence](image)

From the data above, taking an active part in the discussion activities in the classroom covered role-plays, presentations, group discussion, simulations, pair work, etc. It was assumed that by doing an active part in class discussion, the participants feel more eager to speak up. In this case, doing a small presentation may make the participants speaking in classroom and practicing their language. It was clearly defined from Griffin’s statement

“I tried to be more active in the classroom because sometimes siting and being quiet are really boring so when the teacher asked to make a group discussion I could freely share my ideas and opinions and practice my English in the classroom” (Griffin, 30th march 2013, my translation)

Despite taking an active part in the discussion activities, some of the participants enjoy seeking opportunities to use language in the classroom by talking with friend in English and finding partners to practice English. Below is the statement from Hawai that feels talking with peers in English is a good way to overcome the silent.
“Sometimes, I tried to have a chat with my friend in the classroom using English. Though we both still learning, I felt it is okay if we are making mistake and no one will laugh at us. We talked about many things outside the materials. I hope by doing that I can work cooperatively with my friend to increase my English ability” (Hawai, 30th march 2013, my translation)

In regard to the students’ effort to overcome the silence, here, 24% of the participants proposed that by building communication with the lecturer, it would greatly enhance their active behavior in the classroom. This includes asking questions to the lecturer and having conversations. Communicating with teachers could be considered as the way to build a good relation between the students and the teacher. As displayed in the Marco’s statement below.

“When the teacher asked the students whether there is any question regarding to the materials, I always raised my hand to ask a questions. Sometimes, it was not simply I did not know about the materials but it was just because I needed to communicate with the lecturer that perhaps I can improve my English proficiency” (Marco 30th march 2013, my translation)

From the data above, it could be seen that apparently the participants are willing and eager to participate. It was showed by the data that most of the students give their statements and only 7% of the participants do not give their opinion. It could be interpreted that 45% of the participants suggested that by taking an active part in the discussion activities could greatly enhance their active behavior in the classroom. Hence, 30% of the participants believed that communication with the lecturer by asking questions becomes one way to overcome the silence in the classroom. Besides that, 24% of the participants proposed using opportunities to use English with peers is also alleged to overcome the silence.
Conclusion

Summarizing the whole findings and to answer the research question “what are the aspects causing the student’s silence in EFL classroom?” and also “what are the student’s effort to speak up more in the classroom?” The very first thing that this study have done was to discover whether or not the students in the classroom did passive and remain to be silent in the classroom. Doctrine by the definition of Nakane (2002) that stated about the resistance in the classroom participation, this study found out that 73% of the students choose to listen in the classroom and in addition based on the students comments in the questionnaire, it signed that students did remain passive in the classroom by just listen to the teacher in the classroom.

This study found several aspects that caused the students to be silent in the classroom. The most obvious finding to emerge from this study was that there were five aspects regarding silent student. They are low English proficiency, students’ anxiety, teacher’s methodology, and peers interaction. This study found that the majority of the students, (33%) believed that low English Proficiency is the main aspect of students’ reticence in the classroom that stated clearly by (Cheng, 2000). To be more specific, this silent behavior was showed in the students’ response that the majority revealed the students preferred to listen in the classroom rather than speak. Lack of vocabulary and grammar were the problems faced by the students and in doing so, they preferred to sit by and listen to the teacher instead of speak in order to avoid of making mistake.
In addition to answer the second research question, research also discovered that based on the students’ opinion, this study also dealt with some solutions to overcome the silence. The students’ responses revealed that the major solution to overcome the silence is by taking an active part in discussion activities, which cover role-plays, presentations, group discussion, simulations, pair work, etc. Based on the analyses and discussions in the previous section, it can be concluded that most of the students desire to learn spoken English well and were willing to interact with others in oral English language classrooms. However, due to various reasons such as, low English proficiency, lack of confidence, anxiety, cultural beliefs, personality, and fear of losing face, more than two-thirds of the students remained reluctant to respond to the teacher and kept quiet until being told so.

At this point, I would like to admit that this study still had a limitation, especially with the findings of the data. This study only use questionnaire as the primary instrument of collecting data from the participant. Further works need to be done since I believe that by adding in depth interview as well as observation will enrich the data and could make the data and the study would have been more conclusive.

Finally, I would like to summarize all of this study into one student’s thought found in the questionnaire, it is expected that this findings in this study can be used as a consideration for the teachers to understand the nature of the silent among the students as well as enlighten teacher’s ability to deal with those silent learners effectively since this study have discovered the student’s effort to overcome the silent.

“*I don’t know English, it is my less favorite subject in college. That’s why I remain silent and passive in English class. It's okay, because somehow I try to learn English little by little. My silent and passiveness in English class is not because I can’t. It is because I learn.*”

(Komeng, 10th June, 2013 my translation)
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APPENDIX

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect the data regarding the aspects that influence the student’s reluctantly toward the classroom activity and also how to overcome it. You don’t have to give your name and your identity in this questionnaire. Your answer will only be used in this research. We are really hoped that your answer is as honest as possible.

1. What do you prefer in the classroom: why?
   □ Speaking       b. Listening

2. How often do you speak English in class:
   □ Never       b. A little       c. Often       d. As much as possible
3. If your answer is A or B, what is the reason why you choose that? (E.g. English proficiency, Anxiety, scorned by peers etc.)
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

4. If your answer is C or D, what reason do you believe encourage you to talk in the class? (E.g. personal factors, environment, peers, English proficiency etc.)
_____________________________________________________________________

5. What factors do you think that contributes you to be silent in class? You may choose as many items as you like.
   □ Feeling of anxious
   □ Fear of losing face
   □ Feeling of lacking English Proficiency
   □ Teacher’s methodology in classroom (never give the students chance to speak, difficulty of the materials, teacher explain the material all the time)
   □ Fear of making mistake
   □ Others (if any)
_____________________________________________________________________

6. How can you overcome your silence in class (based on your factors above)
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

7. Do you try to speak up more in the class? Why?
   □ Yes
   □ No
_____________________________________________________________________

8. What is/are your effort/s to participate more in the classroom? You can choose more than 1
   □ Interesting material
   □ Supportive friend (not scorned you if you do wrong)
   □ Interesting teacher’s methodology
   □ Class environment that interesting
   □ Feeling confident in the classroom
   □ Have a good English proficiency
   □ Others (if any)
   □
_____________________________________________________________________

😊 Thank you

References


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