Thought Stopping: Public Speaking Anxiety

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Abstract: The problem of anxiety when speaking in public is still common today. This problem occurs due to the individual's inability to be with other individuals in public. To overcome this problem, one thing that can be done is to use the thought stopping counseling technique. The aim of this research was to determine the effect of the thought stopping technique in reducing public speaking anxiety among students at SMPN 1 Abung Surakarta. This research uses a quantitative research approach with experimental research type. The design used is one group pretest-posttest design. The results in this study indicate that the thought stopping technique is effective in reducing public speaking anxiety. The research results showed that public speaking anxiety was reduced after providing group counseling services using the thought stopping technique. The latest thing from this research from previous researchers is the use of the thought stopping technique, which is a technique used to cure negative thoughts that can damage oneself.

Keywords: Group Counseling; Public Speaking Anxiety; Thought Stopping

Introduction

Humans are social creatures who will communicate, when interacting with each other in public spaces, humans cannot be separated from the need for communication, whether verbal, written or other forms of communication, the aim is none other than so that humans can understand each other and know what messages are being conveyed. delivered so that a reciprocal relationship occurs (Pranoto et al., n.d.). Currently, the ability to speak in front is one of the absolute skills needed in the global era. This is triggered by the demands of the times and current technology which force individuals to be able to compete to improve their quality (Girsang, 2018).

Students often experience anxiety about speaking in public. This problem occurs because of students' inability to deal with other individuals in public. Students argue that public concerns are fear of being criticized or judged negatively, fear of forgetting, shame, fear of failure, fear of the unknown and fear because of bad experiences in the past (Saputri & Indrawati, 2017). Students think that they do not relax when ordered to stand up and express their opinions in front of their friends. According to Seiber, anxiety is considered as one of the inhibiting factors in learning which can interfere with a person's performance and cognitive functions, such as concentrating, remembering, forming concepts and solving problems (Setianingrum & Mayasari, n.d.). Public speaking anxiety is also included in one of the social anxiety disorders, which is one of the most common disorders that can affect the population, which is related to the fear of being observed and judged by other people (Hinojo-Lucena et al., 2020). According to Osborne, this feeling of anxiety arises from physical fear of the listener, namely fear of being laughed at by people, fear that he will become a spectacle for people, fear that what he will say may not be appropriate to say, and fear that he might be boring. Individuals who are shy and socially anxious tend to be withdrawn and ineffective in social interactions, not speaking fluently and having difficulty concentrating. This is possible because the individual perceives that there will be a negative reaction. Public speaking anxiety is one of the biggest fears and really interferes with an individual's work (Lisanias et al., 2013). According to Gail W. Stuart, indicators of public speaking anxiety can be understood in behavioral responses (for example, shaking limbs, sweating on the palms), affective with feelings of worry, and cognitive such as

difficulty expressing words. The cause of anxiety about public speaking cannot be separated from a lack of public speaking skills (Annisa & Ifdil, 2016).

Public speaking anxiety can be a factor inhibiting learning because it can interfere with students' cognitive functions (Amali, 2020). Anxiety about speaking in public is a psychological problem that requires appropriate coping strategies. People who are anxious when speaking in front of many people can be said to be emotionally disturbed so this is of course closely related to one of the coping strategies (Putri pusvitasari, 2015). *Coping is visible and hidden behavior that a person does to reduce or eliminate psychological tension in stressful conditions* (Maryam, 2017).

The problem of public speaking anxiety experienced by students can involve behavioral responses (for example, shaking limbs, sweating in the palms of the hands), affective with feelings of worry, and cognitive such as difficulty expressing words. So this research will use a service in guidance and counseling, namely a responsive service with group counseling strategies combined with thought-stopping techniques. where this responsive service is a service provided immediately to students who experience problems (Hermawan et al., 2019). The thought stopping technique is expected to be able to maximize the services provided by guidance and counseling teachers to students in helping to deal with student problems. According to Davis, M., Eshelman, E.R and McKay, M, thought stopping is an effective and fast technique for helping someone who is disturbed by negative thoughts and worries that often accompany panic and anxiety disorders. The use of thought stopping is intended because a person's thoughts and beliefs can sometimes lead to negative behavior. The thought stopping technique can also be used to change a person's negative thoughts into positive thoughts (Badriyah, 2020). According to Videbeck, S. L, thought stopping therapy is one of the behavioral therapies used to help individuals change thought processes. Habits of thinking can shape changes in behavior, with one thought, it can automatically give clues to other threatening thoughts (Wahyuni Sari & Abdullah, 2021).

Based on the explanation above, responsive services through group counseling with the thought stopping technique in reducing public speaking anxiety in students show that there is an effect obtained after carrying out treatment using the thought stopping technique, this is proven by several studies which show that the thought stopping technique is stopping has an effect on reducing anxiety, one of which is anxiety about speaking in public.

Method

This research uses a quantitative approach with a type of experimental research designed as pre-experimental designs research, namely a type of research that only uses one group. In this research, researchers used the One-Group Pretest-Posttest Design form, with the data collection technique used was a questionnaire and the data analysis method used was a non-parametric statistical method, using the Wilcoxon test.

Results and Discussion

Anxiety is a problem that often occurs in individuals. Individuals who experience anxiety can be seen from the behavior that appears, namely: (1) Disturbances in attention and concentration; (2) Emotional changes; (3) Decreased self-confidence; (4) Obsession arises; (5) Lack of motivation (Rhamadian, 2022). Same opinion NurCita & Susantiningsih (2020) Continuous anxiety will have an impact on decreasing student achievement and the inability of students to fulfill their roles and obligations, if it is not immediately controlled and handled. Considering the importance of reducing anxiety that occurs in students, it is necessary to reduce anxiety that occurs in class VII students at SMPN 1 Abung Surakarta.

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The total number of students in class VII C at SMPN 1 Abung Surakarta is 30 students. In this study, researchers took 8 students who represent the picture of public speaking anxiety in students in class VII C of SMPN 1 Abung Surakarta. Subjects in this study were taken using purposive sampling by administering a public speaking anxiety scale. Several stages were carried out in this research, namely first, a pretest to find students who had the characteristics of anxiety about speaking in public. Second, the formation of an experimental group whose characteristics are anxiety about public speaking. The third treatment is by applying the thought stopping technique. And finally gave the same posttest to the experimental group. Group counseling was carried out in 6 meetings according to the students' time. In this study, public speaking anxiety conditions were classified into high, medium and low categories.

Based on the data that researchers obtained, the results of this research can be described through pretest and posttest. In accordance with the purpose of conducting the pretest, namely to determine the condition of anxiety about speaking in public before being treated with the thought stopping technique. The pretest results show that the 8 students in the sample were in the high speaking anxiety category. Meanwhile, in the posttest results after being given treatment, it was seen that the 8 students in the sample experienced a decrease in anxiety and were in the moderate category. With a description of the research results as follows:
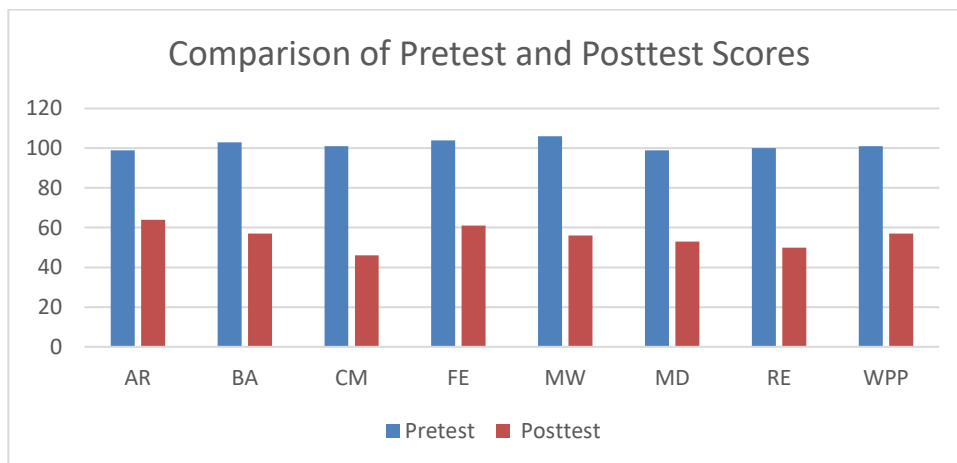
Based on the table above, it can be seen that the 8 research subjects involved in the calculation experienced a decrease in scores from pretest to posttest after being treated with group counseling using the thought stopping technique.

Testing the effect of the thought stopping technique, the researcher developed a hypothesis using the Wilcoxon test on pretest and posttest data, the results of this test can be seen in the following table:

Table 3. Results of the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test pretest posttest public speaking anxiety

➡ **Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test**

Ranks

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Posttest - Pretest	Negative Ranks	8[a]	4.50	36.00
	Positive Ranks	0[b]	.00	.00
	Ties	0[c]		
	Total	8		

a. Posttest < Pretest
b. Posttest > Pretest
c. Posttest = Pretest

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Pretest	8	101.63	2.504	99	106
Posttest	8	55.50	5.782	46	64

Test Statistics[a]

	Posttest - Pretest
Z	-2.527[b]
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.012

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

b. Based on positive ranks.

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the Z value obtained is -2.527 with the Asymp.Sig value. (2-tailed) 0.012, where the value is less than <0.05 so that it can be concluded that the decision making "Hypothesis is accepted" means that there is a difference between the results of the pretest and posttest public speaking anxiety scale, so that it can answer the problem formulation, namely "there are The influence of responsive services through group counseling with thought stopping techniques in reducing public speaking anxiety in students. This is in accordance with opinion Purnomo & Pulungan (2022) Thought stopping techniques can be given to eliminate various disturbing thoughts such as worry and other anxious feelings. The results of this research also show that the application of group counseling using the thought stopping technique is effective in reducing public speaking anxiety in students. The initial condition of public speaking anxiety in the high category can be reduced to low public speaking anxiety by providing group counseling using the thought stopping technique for 6 meetings. The results of this study are in accordance with previous research conducted by previous research, which shows that the thought stopping technique is effective for treating anxiety.

Implementation of group counseling using thought stopping techniques, carried out by researchers to regulate negative thoughts or eliminate disturbing thoughts within oneself. As in the counseling group that received thought stopping technique intervention, the counselees were students who experienced anxiety about speaking in public, the symptoms shown were; behavioral responses (eg trembling limbs, sweat on the palms), affective with worry, and cognitive such as difficulty expressing words. Therefore, students who experience anxiety about speaking in public will be treated by researchers through providing group counseling interventions with thought stopping techniques to reduce the anxiety they experience when speaking in public.

Researchers can also observe the changes experienced by each student from each intervention provided by the researcher at each meeting. Starting from the student's worksheet, then at each counseling session, the researcher gives homework assignments in the form of repetition of techniques that have been previously applied at school, each student is able to determine the plan of change they want to achieve, and they have the will to change their speaking anxiety behavior. in public that they experience.

Conclusions and Suggestions

Based on the results of the research and discussions that have been carried out, it is concluded that the thought stopping technique is effective in reducing anxiety about speaking in public. Thought stopping is effective for controlling negative thoughts and stopping negative thoughts from becoming positive thoughts. This can be seen from the behavior that appears, such

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as starting to be able to speak clearly in public, starting to stop sweating and shaking. With the emergence of this new behavior, students are more comfortable in participating in the learning process. Recommendations for future researchers are to utilize the thought stopping technique to be further developed for different problems so that later it can be used as comparison material.

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