

FOREIGN LANGUAGE SPEAKING ANXIETY AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

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Abstrak: Speaking skills are very important for English students. However, students often face obstacles when they try to meet the demands of communicating. They have anxiety when speaking in English because English is their foreign language. Therefore, speaking anxiety becomes a challenge for them. This research was conducted to determine the level of anxiety and the factors that make students' speaking anxiety. The participants in this study were 26 English Education students who had taken speaking classes at UIN Fatmawati Soekarno Bengkulu. A mixed method design was used in this study. Researcher used questionnaires and interviews in collecting the data. The findings from the FLCAS questionnaire classify students' anxiety levels, namely 2 students or 7.7% have very high anxiety, 12 students or 46.2% have high anxiety, 11 students or 42.3% have low anxiety, and 1 student or 3, 8% had very low anxiety. After knowing the students' anxiety level, the researcher conducted interviews to find out the factors that cause speaking anxiety. Based on interviews, the factors that influence participant anxiety are inadequate confidence, lack of competence, and concern with making mistakes. After knowing the level and factors of student anxiety, the lecturer can use learning methods that are appropriate to the conditions of the class.

Keywords: Foreign language anxiety, speaking anxiety, factors of speaking anxiety

INTRODUCTION

Public speaking is a term used to describe speaking to a large audience (such as during a speech or presentation). Oral presentation, a type of public speaking, is a common practice and evaluation method in many universities around the world (Dwyer & Davidson, 2012). One of the most anxiety-inducing types of communication, this style of speech is generally expressed as one of the most widespread human anxieties. This is referred to as "anxiety" in psychology, which is defined as a feeling of anxiety from moment to moment; it is a temporary emotional state of feeling fear that makes able to fluctuate from time to time and vary in intensity (MacIntyre, 1999). As a result, anxiety about speaking L2/FL can occur before, during, or after activities that involve spoken L2/FL. There are behavioral, cognitive, and physical ways that this situation-specific anxiety can manifest itself. Worried speakers may avoid speaking the language and give up quickly. Cognitively, they may worry about doing poorly compared to others, not being able to express themselves, and making grammar mistakes. The target language is seldom used as a communication tool when speaking a foreign language. Consequently, there are fewer opportunities for language learners to use the target language in verbal tasks (Brown & Lee, 2015). Toubut et al. (2018) explored that an important aspect that affects students' speaking ability is the psychological aspect, because the quality of personality and L2 learning has a close relationship.

Some studies of language anxiety in foreign languages show that there is link between cognitive types and learning modalities has an important bearing on students' oral

presentations and their fear of public speaking (Chen & Hwang, 2020). Yang & Quadir (2018) states that anxiety and learning performance were both adversely connected with prior English proficiency. Tsang (2022) states that for EFL students, speaking English is a difficult skill to master. Especially thrilling are the oral presentations in English, which are a very broad activity and assessment method used by many people around the world. By reducing students' fear of public speaking in English, curricula and teaching can make using English for oral presentations less daunting. English is often used as a medium of communication in oral presentations, especially in higher education settings (Hincks & Edlund, 2009). Badrasawi et al., (2020) stated that helping students learning English as a second language (ESL) to manage their anxiety during oral presentations is extremely important, considering the large number of students who do it around the world. To reduce their speaking anxiety level, students are also instructed to use English more frequently in various contexts and to develop their self-confidence.

For EFL students, speaking English is a difficult skill to master. Especially thrilling are the oral presentations in English, which are a very broad activity and assessment method used by many people around the world. By reducing students' fear of speaking in public in English, curricula and teaching can make using English for oral presentations less daunting (Tsang, 2022). Zarrinabadi et al. (2021) said that the impact of teacher praise on student participation and engagement in class is almost always underappreciated. Language teachers can greatly reduce their students' nervousness and have a beneficial impact on their growth mindset and readiness to use a second language by using praise for effort. Woodrow (2006) stated that anxiety is undoubtedly a problem when learning languages, and for some students, it makes it difficult to speak English. Therefore, it is very important for teachers to be aware of this in interactions with students and offer help to reduce fear of the second language. The theory of stages of anxiety is also supported by this study. The effectiveness of the anxiety reduction approach in second language learning classes also has to be demonstrated empirically.

Several studies exploring the factors that cause speaking anxiety must be handled in more detail by experts to overcome this problem. An important aspect that influences students' speaking ability is the psychological aspect, because the quality of personality and L2 learning have a close relationship. In addition, students feel more anxious when their professors/lecturers are present in class (Toubut et al., 2018). In addition, both perfectionist and anxious students share similar traits, such as higher performance expectations and a greater level of worry about mistakes (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002). Horwitz et al. (1986) state that exam anxiety (fear of failure), fear of unfavorable judgment (worry about the opinions of others), and communication fear (fear of communicating with people) are all factors in language anxiety. Using a qualitative method Liu (2006) concluded that speaking anxiety among students ranged from moderate to severe, especially when they had to answer their teacher or speak in front of the class. It is important to understand that anxiety is a very complicated experience that is made up of a variety of moods. Haryanto (2022) states that anxious students are caused by the fear of making mistakes, besides that they are also afraid to be the center of attention. Hesitation produces language because fear of mistakes causes students not to speak up in class, so that students cannot practice more optimally on their speaking skills. In Indonesia, elementary school students have learned English, but there are still many students who find it difficult to communicate in English. Lots of research has discussed students' speaking anxiety, but until now this problem is still one of the big problems in English classes. Anxiety in students' speaking makes students afraid to use a foreign language. The researcher conducted this research in order to find out the level and factors that cause students' speaking anxiety in class. This research can help lecturers/teachers and students identify student anxiety factors, so they can determine how to effectively treat these symptoms. Therefore, this research was conducted to answer the following questions: 1. What is the level of foreign

language speaking anxiety (FLSA) experienced by English students at UIN Fatmawati Soekarno Bengkulu? 2. What are the factors that cause anxiety in speaking among English students at UIN Fatmawati Soekarno Bengkulu?

METHOD

Research Design

This study used a mixed methods research design. Quantitative method is used by using a questionnaire to determine the level of student anxiety. After that the researcher conducted interviews to get more in-depth information about students' speaking anxiety. This interview was conducted to obtain information about the factors that cause students' anxiety when speaking.

Participants

The participants in this study were second and third year English Education students at UIN Fatmawati Soekarno Bengkulu who have taken speaking classes. There were 26 participants who filled out the questionnaire and 4 participants who conducted the interviews.

Data collection

Questionnaire and interview

This study used a questionnaire created by Noorrachima (2020) and it was adapted from the Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety (PRPSA) by McCroskey (1970) which describes public speaking anxiety and the Foreign Language Class Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) by Horwitz et al. (1986). This questionnaire explains the causes of students' fear of public speaking and has been validated by experts from Brawijaya University and SPSS. Participants were asked to rate 30 questionnaire items, each of which was answered with a four-point Likert scale, ranging from 4 "Strongly Agree" "Agree" "Disagree" to 1 "Strongly Disagree". After that, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews to get in-depth information about how the participants felt when they spoke English in public.

Researcher has distributed questionnaires using the Google form. Then the researcher analyzed the students' speaking anxiety based on the questionnaire. After that, the researcher conducted interviews to get in-depth information. The interviews were conducted one by one so that the participants were more comfortable and easier when conveying their perceptions and answering questions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Data Analysis Procedures

Researcher analyzed the questionnaire using SPSS. There are 4 choices in this questionnaire, namely Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). = 1. To get the desired information, the researcher transcribed and coded the interview data. In order for the research framework to be conceptualized and classified into several group categories, the researcher uses this coded data to facilitate the analysis process (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Monette et al., 2011).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

Research question 1

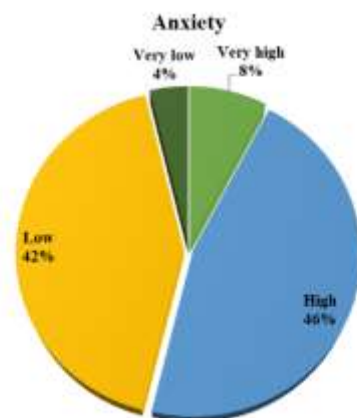
To answer the first research question, researcher used a questionnaire. The following is the result of the first question. The description of the statement items was carried out using a frequency distribution test with the following results.

The results of the frequency distribution of anxiety in speaking a foreign language show that most of the statements were given a low response by respondents with an average between 2.08 and 3.04.

Tabel 1. Description of Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety

No	Anxiety	Interval	Amount	Percent
1	Very high	97.5 - 120	2	7.7
2	High	75 - 97.5	12	46.2
3	Low	52.5 - 75	11	42.3
4	Very low	30 - 52.5	1	3.8
Total			26	100

The results of the description of anxiety in speaking a foreign language from 26 respondents obtained that 2 people or 7.7 percent had very high anxiety, 12 people or 46.2 percent had high anxiety, 11 people or 42.3 percent had low anxiety, and 1 person or 3.8 percent had very low anxiety.



Research question 2

To answer the second research question, the researcher conducted interviews with several participants. Based on the results of the interviews, there are several factors that make students anxious when speaking in class.

Inadequate confidence, the first factor that causes student anxiety is that it comes from the students themselves, as said by the participant:

Participant 1 said that the cause was **inadequate confident**.

P1: "Anxiety has always been inherent in myself, when I use Indonesian I often worry, I often feel insecure because I can not speak in public."

Likewise what was said by participants 2 and 3. They said that the causative factors came from their own reason:

P2: "The reason is that, at first, it may come from self-suggestion from my brain, like thinking about what other people think of me, afraid of being laughed at, afraid of not making the presentation right, afraid of making a mistake."

P1: "I still lack confidence when I speak English, because my vocabularies are limited, grammar and pronunciation are still wrong."

This participants' statement showed that they have an insecure personality. Even though they spoke in Indonesian, their feelings of insecurity remained, so they were embarrassed to be the center of attention and they felt anxious when they have to give a presentation or speak in front of the class. Their anxiety increases when they have to speak or present in English.

The second factor is **the lack of competence**. In addition, participants also said that they did not believe in their competence. When the participants wanted to convey their ideas, they

experienced difficulties when they wanted to say them, so they found it difficult to participate in the Speaking class.

P1: "Apart from not being confident, another reason is that I lack vocabulary."

The third participant said that if she did not believe in his competence and saw that her friend was smart, his anxiety would increase.

P3: "The cause of anxiety is when I do not prepare enough, moreover I often forget what grammar to use when I'm going to speak and when I see other friends who are good/smart, my anxiety level goes up."

The fourth participant also said that it was difficult for her to participate in class.

P3: "My friends are good at speaking English, I can't speak fluently like my friends, I often keep quiet during discussions, during presentations usually my method is memorizing, so when I'm nervous it makes me forget."

Participants feel inferior resulting from feelings of low competence from themselves. This makes it difficult for them to participate in class.

The third factor is **fear of making mistakes**, as expressed by participant 1.

P1: "I am more often silent during class discussions, if the lecturer appoints me to speak, then I will give my opinion by mixing with Indonesian. When I speak, I fear that I will make a mistake."

The second participant also said that he was afraid of being wrong with grammar.

P2: "I find it difficult to speak or convey my ideas because I am afraid of using the wrong grammar. When I speak, I always try to remember what grammar that I have to use."

The third participant also said that she was concerned that if she made a mistake, her friends would make fun of her.

P3: "I think my friends are smart, I get nervous and shake when I am presenting a presentation. I am afraid my friends will laugh at my mistakes. I am also afraid that my friends will ask when I give a presentation."

Some of these statements show that they realize that they are afraid of making grammar/pronunciation mistakes so they are not active in speaking class. In addition, the participants feared that if they made a mistake, their friends would tease them.

DISCUSSION

Based on the findings above, the questionnaire classifies students' anxiety levels into four categories, 2 people have very high anxiety, 12 people have high anxiety, 11 people have low anxiety, and 1 person has very low anxiety. Based on the results of the interviews, there were several factors that caused participants' feelings of anxiety, namely inadequate confidence, lack of competence, and fear of making mistakes.

Based on the interview results, students who have low self-esteem say that they are often anxious or nervous. Therefore, students must prepare their appearance first before they speak or perform. If they have one prepared, it will make it less likely that they will become anxious or afraid of public speaking. Some students find it difficult to convey their ideas when discussing in the speaking class

All of the factors above made students become inactive in class. Participants were uncomfortable when speaking English because they were not confident, lack competence, and afraid of making mistakes (assuming that their classmates will make fun of or laugh at the mistakes they make). This result was consistent with study by Gusti (2021) shows that the factors that influence student anxiety are nervousness, embarrassment, worry and fear of making mistakes. The factors causing student anxiety are lack of self-confidence, negative

assumptions about oneself, and fear of making mistakes when speaking (Azarfam & Baki, 2012; Ozturk & Gurbuz, 2014). Eight elements that may contribute to students' anxiety include insufficient vocabulary, students' perceptions of the English language, peer ridicule, lack of preparation, low confidence, speaking in front of the class, unclear input, and instructor personalities (Lestari, 2021). In addition, they are also afraid that if they make a mistake, their classmates will laugh at them (Suleimenova, 2012). They also often forget facts or ideas they convey when they are anxious. Azarfam and Baki (2012) said that the symptom of anxiety that is often experienced by students is forgetting when they want to convey facts/ideas. Nuraeni and Yolanda (2021) say that fear of communication is a factor that dominates student anxiety.

CONCLUSION

This research was conducted to determine the level of anxiety and the factors that make the speaking anxiety of undergraduate students of English education at UIN Fatmawati Soekarno Bengkulu. The level of anxiety was 7.7% had very high anxiety, 46.2% had high anxiety, 42.3% had low anxiety, and or 3.8% had very low anxiety. These results are in line with the research by Gusti (2021), Lestari (2021), Nuraeni and Yolanda (2021) which show that inadequate confidence, lack of competence, and fear of making mistakes are factors that influence student anxiety. These factors can affect them when speaking such as presentations or discussions in class, these factors make them anxious, nervous, forget the ideas/facts they want to convey so they are dissatisfied with their performance.

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