

THE CORRELATION BETWEEN STUDENTS' FOREIGN LANGUAGE ANXIETY AND THEIR SPEAKING PERFORMANCE AT SPEAKING CLASS

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Abstract: *This study is aimed to know the correlation between students' foreign language anxiety and their speaking performance, whether or not there is a correlation between them. The research design of this study is quantitative research in form of correlational design. The subjects of this study were 42 students from forth semester students of English Department in Unisma that took speaking 4 class. FLCAS questionnaire that consists of 33 items was used to collect data of students' foreign language anxiety and the document of students' midterm test score to know their speaking performance. The result of this study is there is a low negative correlation between students' foreign language anxiety and their speaking performance, the higher anxiety of students the lower their speaking performance.*

Key Words: Correlation, Foreign language anxiety, Speaking

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is one of language skill that has very important role. However, it is complicated to speak in foreign language because certain abilities are needed when people want to practice their speaking to communicate with others (Rofida, 2021). Therefore, the English teachers or lectures should create and give the most suitable activities or method to develop students' speaking ability. According to Yunus (2010), the teacher can employ a balanced activities technique that combines

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language input, structural output, and communicative output. Besides the important role and need of language, there are some obstacle factors in learning English students mostly encounter, one of those is anxiety.

Anxiety defines as 'a feeling of fear, or nervousness, confusion' (Ahmad & Nisa, 2019). According to Adwas et al. (2019), anxiety is a pathological counterpart of normal fear which is manifest by disturbances of mood, as well as of thinking, behavior, and psychological activity. According to Moss (2014), anxiety is a person's total reaction to a threat or danger; each anxiety experience can include a perception of danger, thoughts about harm, and a physiological alarm and activation process. While language anxiety is when someone feels confused, scared, loses confidence in learning a language. Language anxiety refers to the feelings of worry and negative, fear-related emotions associated with learning or using a language that is not one's native tongue (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). So, it is not a demanding possibility that foreign language learners run into it.

Anxiety holds the important part in the process of learning foreign language (Neman & Ganap, 2018). Thus, it can influence students' learning performance in classroom since severe anxiety can be a serious problem including in academic (Sansaluna et al., 2021). FLA may affect students' self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behavior toward the learning process (Neman & Ganap, 2018). So, that situation can make the students passive in the classroom and feel anxious when the teacher asking several questions, especially in speaking class. When speaking foreign language, students often experience an anxious feeling when they want to produce language, so that this anxious feeling can lead fear of speaking.

Since English has very important role in communicating, language anxiety has a big negative effect on speaking skills. Speaking is close to performance. According to Mahmoodzadeh (2012), Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) can affect negatively on learners' performance. It also can affect negatively on learners' speech and learning in general sense (Mahmoodzadeh, 2012). Speaking class is provided for learners who take English as their major, so they can practice their speaking through that class. However as mentioned above, it is not demanding that college students will have FLA during speaking class.

Therefore, the researchers want to conduct research to know whether there is a correlation between students' foreign language anxiety and their speaking performance.

METHOD

1. Research Design

The researcher used correlational research as research design. According to Johnson (2014), correlational research is a form of no experimental research in which the primary independent variable of interest is a quantitative variable. He also stated that in correlational research, the researcher studies the relationship between one or more quantitative independent variables and one or more quantitative dependent variables. While according to Ary et al. (2010, pp. 349-350), correlational research is no experimental research that is similar to ex post facto research in that they both employ data derived from pre-existing variables. There is no manipulation of the variables in either type of research.

2. Participants

The researcher conducted this study at English Department of faculty of teacher training and education, University of Islam Malang, specifically at fourth semester students. The participants of this study were 42 students who took speaking 4 class and joined midterm test.

3. Instruments

In this study, the researcher used two instruments to collect the data. The first instrument was to identify foreign language anxiety by using Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) questionnaires developed by Horwitz, Horwitz et al. (1986). It consists of 33 items related to students' foreign language anxiety. FLCAS questionnaire consists of positive and negative statements. There are nine positive statements and 24 negative statements. Also, each item will be answered on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. The positive statements would range from 1-5 with the answer Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree, while the negative statements would be ranged from 5-1 with the answer Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. Furthermore, the level of anxiety can

be categorized into three levels; 1) high anxiety level – when the score is more than 144, 2) moderate anxiety level – when the score is 108 to 144, and 3) little or no anxiety level – when the score is less than 108. The positive and negative statements questionnaire is presented in Table 1 and the Likert-Scale of the FLCAS questionnaire is presented in Table 2.

Table 1 Statements of FLCAS Questionnaire

Statements	Questions' Number	Number of Items
Positive	2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 18, 22, 28, and 32	9
Negative	1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, and 33	24
Total		33

Table 2 Likert-Scale of FLCAS Questionnaire

Positive Statements	Description Frequency	Negative Statements
5	Strongly disagree	1
4	Disagree	2
3	Neither agree nor disagree	3
2	Agree	4
1	Strongly agree	5

The level of anxiety can be categorized into three levels; 1) high anxiety level – when the score is more than 144, 2) moderate anxiety level – when the score is 108 to 144, and 3) low or no anxiety level – when the score is less than 108. Table 3 displays the interval score for foreign language anxiety.

Table 3 Score of Foreign Language Anxiety Scaled

No.	Interval Score	Level of Foreign Language Anxiety
1.	≥ 144	High Anxiety
2.	108 – 144	Moderate Anxiety
3.	≤ 108	Little or No Anxiety

Source: Yaikhong, K., & Usaha, S., 2012, page 25

The second instrument was to identify students' speaking performance by using the document of students' midterm test score of speaking class. Table 4 presented the interval score of speaking achievement.

Table 4 Interval Scale of Students' Speaking Achievement

No.	Category	Score Interval
1.	Very High	80 – 90
2.	High	70 – 79
3.	Average	60 – 69
4.	Poor	50 – 59
5.	Very Poor	0 – 49

Source: Audina, R. M, Hasanah, A., & Devitasari, D., 2021

4. Data Analysis

The data of this study was analyzed by using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) computer program version 20 – specifically by Pearson Product Moment Correlation to find out the relationship between two variables and in order testing the hypothesis.

FINDINGS

The results of this research were obtained by using Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) and document of students' speaking midterm test score with the aim of the research to find out the correlation between students' foreign language anxiety and their speaking performance at speaking class.

After doing series of statistical tests, the result analysis of descriptive statistics of students' foreign language anxiety and their speaking performance was described in Table 5.

Table 5 Descriptive Statistic of Foreign Language Anxiety and Speaking Performance

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
FLA	42	20	93	67.57	13.252
Speaking_Performance	42	70	87	77.83	4.236
Valid N (listwise)	42				

In descriptive statistic, 42 students were discovered to be the total number of participants. The maximum score of Foreign Language Anxiety was 93, and the lowest was 20. The mean of the foreign language anxiety for the participants was 67.57, and the standard deviation was 13.252. While the maximum score of speaking performance was 87, and the lowest score was 70. The mean of speaking performance was 77.83, and the standard deviation was 4.236.

The questionnaires also showed that there were three levels of students' perceived foreign language anxiety. Table 6 gave a description of the specifics.

Table 6 Distribution of Foreign Language Anxiety

Interval	Category	Students	Percentage
≥ 144	High Anxiety	1	2.4 %
108 — 144	Moderate Anxiety	24	57.1 %
≤ 108	Low Anxiety	17	40.5 %
Total		42	100 %

Furthermore, from the result of FLCAS questionnaire also showed that there were 17 students (40.5 %) who got the score ≤ 108 in low level of anxiety, 24 students (57.1 %) who got the score between 108 — 144 in moderate level of anxiety, and only one student who got the score ≥ 144 in high level of anxiety.

The speaking score also revealed that there were five categories of speaking achievement. Table 7 gave a description of the specifics.

Table 7 Distribution of Students' Achievement

Interval	Category	Students	Percentage
80 – 90	Very good	17	40.5 %
70 – 79	Good	25	59.5 %
60 – 69	Average	0	0 %
50 – 59	Poor	0	0 %
0 – 49	Very poor	0	0 %
TOTAL		42	100 %

Based on the speaking midterm test scores, there were 17 students (40.5 %) got the score between 80 – 90 for very good category while the others, 25 students (59.5 %) got the core between 70 – 79 for good category.

The findings indicated the correlation between students' foreign language anxiety and their speaking performance by using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was described in Table 8.

Table 8 Correlation between Foreign Language Anxiety and Speaking Performance

Correlations

		FLA	Speaking_Performance
FLA	Pearson Correlation	1	-.361*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.019
	N	42	42
Speaking_Performance	Pearson Correlation	-.361*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.019	
	N	42	42

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The data was analyzed by using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Then, the data showed that the correlation coefficient equaled $r = -.361$ which indicated that there was negative correlation between two variables. The number of $-.361$ resided between $.20 - .40$, that means there is low correlation. Then the level of probability (p) significance (sig.2-tailed) was $.019$ meaning that $p (.019)$ was lower than $.05$. It

means that the highest anxious students, the lowest speaking performance would be. So, the hypothesis testing of null hypothesis (H_0) which is 'There is no significant correlation between students' foreign language anxiety and their speaking performance' was rejected and alternative hypothesis (H_a) which is 'There is a significant correlation between students' foreign language anxiety and their speaking performance' was accepted. The alternative hypothesis answered the research problem.

DISCUSSIONS

The finding of this study confirms the finding of Rofida (2021) that found foreign language anxiety and students' speaking performance have significant negative correlation, and the finding of Taufana & Mirza (2020) that found both variables are correlated in low correlation, so there is a correlation between students' anxiety and speaking skill. However, this finding contradicts the finding of Amaliah (2019) that found there was no relationship between students' speaking anxiety and their speaking performance.

Finally, foreign language anxiety correlate with students' speaking performance. It was possible to happen because every student has different level of anxiety that can influence his/ her ability or skill to perform well. In other words, if students have high level of anxiety, they will perform poor speaking performance. Meanwhile, if the students have low level of anxiety, they will perform good speaking performance.

CONCLUSION

The result of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale questionnaires showed that 24 students of 42 students had moderate anxiety level of foreign language. It can be implied that having anxious feeling in speaking foreign language is a common phenomenon that may be faced by English students. Besides, the result of statistical analysis of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient showed that there was a low negative correlation between students' foreign language anxiety and their speaking performance.

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