

AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' SPEAKING ANXIETY AN THE STRATEGY TO REDUCE THE PROBLEM USING QUANTITATIVE DESCRIPTIVE AND CORELATIONAL METHOD

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Abstract: This study aims to investigate the level of speaking anxiety, examine the strategies they use to reduce that anxiety, and examine correlation between the two variables. The subject of this research is third-semester students who joined the public speaking class of the English Department at the University of Islam Malang, consisting of 30 students. The research used a quantitative, descriptive, and correlational design. The data were collected using FLCAS questionnaires by Horwitz (1986) and the Strategy questionnaires by Kondo and Ying-Ling (2004). The data were analyzed using IBM SPSS v.24 with Pearson Product Moment to determine the correlation between variables. The researcher found that students experience a medium level of speaking anxiety ($M=3.11$), with fear of negative evaluation ($M=3.23$) being the most prominent factor. Despite their anxiety, relaxation ($M=4.12$) was the most frequently used. Overall is classified as high-level with a score ($M=3.91$). In addition, this research found that there is no statistically significant correlation. This can be seen from the results with a sig (2-tailed) $p = 0.108$, $p > 0.05$. It can be concluded that the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted, and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is rejected. This implies that the use of strategies has a small impact on reducing students' speaking anxiety.

Keywords: speaking, anxiety, reducing strategies, correlation analysis

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is the act of communicating thoughts, ideas, and emotions through spoken language. It involves the ability to express oneself orally, using structured statements to convey meaning and understanding. Speaking is a productive skill that involves the effective transmission of communications through the use of the voice in oral communication (Brown, 2001). In the field of English language teaching, speaking remains one of the most challenging skills for learners to master. Saputri et al. (2021) state that one effective method is to practice speaking English in ordinary life and establish it as a habit. Therefore, speaking proficiency requires specific strategies, especially to prevent communication breakdown or miscommunication. Language anxiety is a well-documented phenomenon that negatively affects learners' performance, participation, and long-term motivation. As stated by MacIntyre (1995) listening, speaking, reading, and writing are the four skills of language acquisition and assessment, while speaking is a skill that causes a lot of anxiety. Although speaking is an important component of language acquisition, many students lack the ability to communicate in English and often show reluctance to communicate due to their difficulty with the foreign language.

Students enrolled in English education programs are expected not only to master speaking for communication purposes but also to demonstrate proficiency in delivering academic presentations, discussions, and teaching simulations. However, many of these students struggle with anxiety that affects their ability to perform effectively in speaking tasks. According to Pappamihiel (2002) anxiety is a multifaceted concept that is influenced by one's self-efficacy and perceptions of the possible and perceived hazards present in specific situations. It is characterized by feelings of tension, apprehension, and worry, often accompanied by physiological arousal. This research investigation was chosen by the researcher because it is crucial to understand the reasons why most students in Indonesia have anxiety when learning English, especially when

teachers instruct them to speak in English. Research on English speaking anxiety has been widely conducted such as this one conducted by Indrawati et al. (2022) found that most 66% of students experience Mildly Anxious when speaking in public. There is also research from Najiha & Sailun (2021) which found that most experienced level in the third-grade students was Mildly Anxious. However, the research did not discuss concrete strategies that students use to overcome the problem.

Therefore, this study not only analyses the level of anxiety, but also the strategies that students use. The researcher wanted to investigate and gain a more detailed the factors that students experience and the potential for anxiety to increase in order to understand the issues of anxiety in speaking English. It is imperative to develop a more thorough comprehension of students' apprehension, as it has a substantial influence on the English learning process. Additionally, it is crucial to understand solutions that will help students recognize that English is not a source of fear. This will inspire students to be bolder in their English learning and will increase their confidence in speaking English without experiencing anxiety.

Based on the phenomenon, the researcher is intrigued in analyzing the students' anxiety level, the most frequently used strategies, and the correlation between students' speaking anxiety and strategies for reducing students' speaking anxiety in EFL-speaking classrooms. This study focusing investigates on third-semester students who are in the early stages of professional training.

METHOD

This study adopts a quantitative descriptive and correlational approach. Descriptive statistics provide insights into the distribution of speaking anxiety and strategy usage, while correlational analysis identifies the relationship between the two variables. Meanwhile, correlation is a relationship between two or more

variables that is linear in nature so that changes in one variable followed by changes in other variables with a certain pattern Sugiyono (2019).

The study involved thirty students of third-semester of public speaking class students from the English Education Department at University of Islam Malang. These students were purposively selected because they are currently enrolled in a public speaking course and represent a population that has high anxiety due to frequent speaking assessments. These respondents is dominated by women totalling with 26 students and the man there are 6 students. These respondents are around 19-20 years old.

Two main instruments were used. The first questionnaire is Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) by Horwitz et al. (1986) this 33-item scale measures language anxiety in three domains: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. The second questionnaires by Kondo & Ying-Ling (2004) Strategy Questionnaire. This instrument identifies five categories of anxiety-coping strategies including preparation, relaxation, peer seeking, and resignation with 15 questionnaires. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) to measure students' anxiety levels in various speaking situations.

To prevent any misunderstandings that may occur, the researcher provides a detailed explanation of the questionnaire completion process prior to the completion. Next, the researcher gave the questionnaire to the students and asked them to access the google-form that had been distributed to the class WhatsApp group. Subsequently, the researcher requested that the students to fill out the questionnaire through the Google Form that had been provided. The form was used by the researcher to administer the speaking anxiety questionnaire and strategies for reducing speaking anxiety simultaneously. Furthermore, the researcher took the time to review the questionnaire before proceeding to fill it

out. Data collection was conducted during scheduled classroom hours. Questionnaires were distributed and returned on the same day to ensure full participation.

Data analysis was carried out using IBM SPSS software. Descriptive statistics described the students' levels of anxiety and strategy usage, while Pearson correlation was used to analyze the relationship between the two variables. The interpretation level of anxiety analyzing using a score range of 1.0 to 5.0. the students anxiety level classified into several levels, including “low anxiety”, “medium anxiety”, and “high anxiety” after the researcher obtained the results. The category speaking strategies using oxford’s scale 1990 with three categories: high, medium, and low. The strategies frequently used as evidenced by the high score (3.5-5.0) which ranges from “usually used” to “always or almost always used.” Strategies “sometimes used” are indicated by the medium score (2.5 - 3.4). In contrast, low scores (1.0 - 2.4) indicate infrequent use, with categories ranging from “never used” to “seldom used”.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Finding

Based on the FLCAS results, students’ speaking anxiety was generally at a medium level in three categories: Communication Anxiety, Test Anxiety, and Fear of Negative Evaluation. The mean score for communication apprehension anxiety is 3.04, while the mean score for test anxiety is 3.06. The highest score is 3.23 for fear of negative evaluation, indicating medium anxiety. Overall, students experience a medium level of speaking anxiety with score 3.11, but they can manage effectively using appropriate strategies and a supportive learning environment. Common anxiety indicators included nervousness during oral presentations, fear of making grammatical errors, and avoidance of speaking in front of the class. These findings align with literature indicating that speaking anxiety typically peaks during early stages of language training.

Table 1. Allocation of Speaking Anxiety

Classification	Mean	Interpretation
Communication Apprehension	3.04	Medium anxiety
Test Anxiety	3.06	Medium anxiety
Fear of Negative Evaluation	3.23	Medium anxiety
Overall	3.11	Medium

Results from the Kondo and Ying-Ling questionnaire indicated that the most frequently used strategies were:

Table 2. Allocation of Speaking Strategy

Classification	Mean	Interpretation
Preparation	3.92	High
Relaxation	4.12	High
Positive Thinking	3.83	High
Peer Seeking	3.83	High
Resignation	3.85	High
Overall	3.91	High

Based on the table shows that all the average score and the interpretation of the strategies. Relaxation with a mean score of 4.12 in the high category was the most frequently used strategy of the five strategies identified. This shows that students often apply this relaxation strategy such as self-soothing exercises to reduce their anxiety. Preparation with (M=3.92), resignation (M=3.85), positive thinking (M=3.83), and peer seeking (M=3.83) are frequently used strategies that fall into the high category. These findings indicate that students actively prepare themselves before speaking, maintain a positive outlook, and seek support from peers to alleviate their anxiety. This suggests that some students can accept anxiety as an inevitable aspect of their lives, but they continue to strive to manage it. Overall, the mean score was 3.91, which falls into the high category. The

findings show that the students applied a combination of several strategies, which resulted relaxation being the most commonly used approach.

Pearson correlation analysis showed a that the correlation coefficient was .300 indicating a low (weak) correlation. This implies the use of a strategies for reducing speaking anxiety increase slightly, but the relationship is not strong. The significant negative correlation between strategy use and speaking anxiety ($r = 0.108$, $p > 0.05$). So, the result means that the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is rejected and the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted. It can be concluded that there is no correlation between speaking anxiety and strategies for reducing speaking anxiety.

Table 3. Correlation of Speaking Anxiety and Speaking Strategy

Correlations			
		Speaking Anxiety	Strategies Reduce Anxiety
Speaking Anxiety	Pearson Correlation	1	.300
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.108
	N	30	30
Strategies Reduce Anxiety	Pearson Correlation	.300	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.108	
	N	30	30

Discussion

In this study, other factors may significantly influence the level of speaking anxiety. Such as individual factors, previous learning experiences, or environmental support. The rejection of this hypothesis can also be explained through the theory that speaking anxiety is a complex phenomenon and cannot be reduced only by one strategy Scovel (1978). Psychological factors such as confidence level, experience in public speaking, and social environment, may have a more significant influence on speaking anxiety than the strategies adopted. In addition, another possibility is that the strategies adopted by the respondents in this study were not applied consistently or did not last long

enough to produce significant effects. Some studies have suggested that the effectiveness of strategies for reducing speaking anxiety depends largely on the duration of practice and the individual's emotional involvement in using the strategies Dörnyei (2005). The results of this research investigation show that speaking anxiety reduction strategies cannot be effectively addressed with a single strategy; instead, it necessitates a comprehensive intervention that incorporates emotional, contextual, and experiential elements in English communication. The results of this study support the Oxford (1990) theory, which posits that students employ a combination of cognitive, affective, and social strategies to address language learning difficulties.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study concludes that third-semester English education students experience medium levels of speaking anxiety in all three of the categories with the fear of Negative Evaluation being the highest score of the factor that influence their speaking anxiety. However, relaxation being the most frequently used by students to reduce their speaking anxiety. The consistent use of effective coping strategies particularly preparation, relaxation, peer seeking, and positive thinking and resignation contributes to reduced anxiety. These findings provide insight into the importance of not only teaching language skills but also equipping learners with the tools to manage anxiety. After an analysis that has been completed by the researcher, the results of this study imply that there is no statistically significant correlation. This can be seen from the results with a sig (2-tailed) value of $0.108 > 0.05$. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted, and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is rejected. It can be concluded there is no correlation between students speaking anxiety and the strategy for reducing speaking anxiety. This implies that the used of strategies have a small impact on reducing students speaking anxiety.

The findings indicate that although students' pursuit to reduce speaking anxiety using many strategies, the efficiency of these ways in substantially reducing anxiety levels is uncertain. The study suggests that students should practice speaking

in English individually and in groups, try different strategies to overcome anxiety, and participate in English speaking activities to build confidence. It also recommends changing their mindset towards mistakes and creating a supportive learning environment. Future research should explore other factors affecting speaking anxiety, such as self-confidence and language learning experience, and use qualitative research methods. Future research should also focus on the effectiveness of specific strategies, a diverse sample, and the role of educators in reducing speaking anxiety.

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