



Premise : Journal of English Education and Applied Linguistics

e-ISSN: 2442-482x, p-ISSN: 2089-3345

<https://fkip.ummetro.ac.id/journal/index.php/english>

DOI: 10.24127/pj.v12i2.7417

STUDENTS' STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME ENGLISH SPEAKING ANXIETY

by

Ani Rizkiya*

English Education Department, Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Indonesia

anirizkya01@gmail.com

Bambang Widi Pratolo

English Education Department, Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Indonesia

bambang.pratolo@pbi.uad.ac.id

*corresponding author

(Article History: Received: 2023-03-15 ;Revised1: 2023-03-28 ;Revised2: 2023-04-24 ;Accepted: 2023-05-02;Published: 2023-06-20).

Abstract:

Speaking anxiety appears detrimental to English learners since it can lead to negative self-perceptions, mental slowness, and poor performance. As a result, students cannot achieve a high degree of English competence, particularly fluency. English Education students at Universitas Ahmad Dahlan Yogyakarta experienced a fear of speaking because they find it challenging to communicate with lecturers and peers in English. This study investigates students' English-speaking anxiety levels, the factors that cause students' English-speaking anxiety, and the strategies the students use to overcome English-speaking anxiety. This qualitative study utilized questionnaires and interviews to answer the research questions and collect data. The questionnaire of 33 statements related to anxiety in speaking English; semi-structured interviews were used to collect the data for this study. Six students were interviewed, and 85 students in the third semester were respondents to the questionnaire, a random sample. This study found that 34 students had moderate anxiety levels, while the anxiety factors that influenced students were communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. The students' strategies to reduce anxiety are preparation, positive thinking, relaxation, and peer seeking. Those strategies could reduce the students' English-speaking anxiety. The results of this study can be used as input for students who experience anxiety in speaking English and for English teachers to understand their students' anxiety better.

Keywords: Anxious; apprehension; strategies; speaking anxiety

Abstrak:

Kecemasan berbicara tampaknya merugikan pelajar bahasa Inggris karena dapat menyebabkan persepsi diri negatif, kelambatan mental, dan kinerja yang buruk. Akibatnya, siswa tidak dapat mencapai tingkat kompetensi bahasa Inggris yang tinggi, terutama kefasihan. Mahasiswa Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di Universitas Ahmad Dahlan Yogyakarta mengalami ketakutan untuk berbicara karena mereka merasa tertantang untuk berkomunikasi dengan dosen dan teman sebaya dalam bahasa Inggris. Studi ini menyelidiki tingkat kecemasan berbahasa Inggris siswa, faktor-faktor yang menyebabkan kecemasan berbahasa Inggris siswa, dan strategi yang digunakan siswa untuk mengatasi kecemasan berbahasa Inggris. Penelitian kualitatif ini menggunakan kuesioner dan wawancara untuk menjawab pertanyaan penelitian dan mengumpulkan data. Kuesioner 33 pernyataan terkait kecemasan dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris; Wawancara semi-terstruktur digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data untuk penelitian ini. Enam mahasiswa diwawancarai, dan 85 mahasiswa semester III menjadi responden Kuesioner adalah sampel acak. Penelitian ini menemukan

How cite this article:

Rizkiya, A., & Pratolo, B. W. (2023). Students' strategies to overcome English speaking anxiety. *Premise; Journal of English Education and Applied Linguistics*, 12(2), 660–679. <https://doi.org/10.24127/pj.v12i2.7417>

Rizkiya & Pratolo (2023)

bahwa 34 siswa memiliki tingkat kecemasan sedang, sedangkan faktor kecemasan yang mempengaruhi siswa adalah pemahaman komunikasi, kecemasan tes, dan ketakutan akan evaluasi negatif. Strategi siswa untuk mengurangi kecemasan adalah persiapan, berpikir positif, relaksasi, dan pencarian teman sebaya. Strategi-strategi tersebut dapat mengurangi kecemasan berbahasa Inggris siswa. Hasil penelitian ini dapat digunakan sebagai masukan bagi siswa yang mengalami kecemasan dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris dan bagi guru bahasa Inggris untuk lebih memahami kecemasan siswanya.

Kata kunci: cemas, ketakutan, strategi, kecemasan berbicara

INTRODUCTION

Language anxiety is an adverse emotional condition that makes learning or acquiring a new language difficult. Mahmoodzadeh (2012) argues that most students have various learning difficulties while learning English, mainly spoken language lessons. Almost every action necessitates English as a communication tool, while certain activities demand the use of English as a communication tool (Farid, 2019). Sari (2017) stated, "Anxiety is natural and is experienced by everyone at times." One of the most common issues students face is anxiety. Mental and physical illness, anxiety is characterized by emotional, cognitive, and behavioral symptoms. Badriyah and Novita (2023) define anxiety as a state of mind that includes one's emotions, including physiological reactions like embarrassment or palpitations and behavioral reactions like stuttering and restlessness. In other words, pupils become agitated when they are anxious. Students will learn these skills more effectively if they are confident in their ability to express themselves and practice regularly. According to Aghajani and Amanzadeh (2017), anxiety, especially foreign language anxiety, is caused by linguistic challenges that learners may have during studying. As a result, identifying foreign language anxiety is crucial in assisting students in quickly learning the target language. Selvam et al. (in Hussein, 2021) stated that Language anxiety has a "negative impact on student performance, attitudes, emotional state, and enjoyment of the language learning experience." Students learning English as a second or foreign language often struggle with anxiety as they attempt to process and shape their thoughts in response to the new linguistic information (Çağatay, 2015). As a result, anxiety becomes one of the most critical speech problems.

This is consistent with the findings of Anggraeny et al. (2020), who found that anxiety is an efficient factor that plays a crucial role in language learning. Students can be nervous about anxiety (Suadnyana & Nova, 2021). Nervous students may also experience fear and

Rizkiya & Pratolo (2023)

worry, which can be negative emotions (Simkins-Bullock & Wildman, 1991). They also have trouble concentrating and frequently forget what they have learned. Language anxiety associated with learning a foreign language is known as anxiety. When studying English as a foreign language, many students experience language anxiety (Herwanto, 2013). According to Melouah (2013), the most significant component in general and specific speaking learning that influences students' speaking skills that they must acquire is language anxiety. This is according to several prior studies on language anxiety (Sadiq, 2017). Lababidi (2016) studied and explored people's perspectives and experiences with foreign language anxiety in one of his studies (FLA). Many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers pay little attention to the foreign language anxiety (FLA) component of speaking ability (Saputra, 2018). Psychophysiological and behavioral markers were discovered to be the two types of language anxiety expressions. Anxiety physical symptoms include tremors, racing heartbeats, perspiration, and flushing. Foreign language speaking anxiety can make it difficult for EFL students to speak English fluently. Anxiety over speaking in a foreign language is a significant element that might affect a learner's oral productivity (Akkakoson, 2016). As a result, this anxiety must be considered to lessen their foreign language speaking anxiety in speaking class, negatively impacting their speaking abilities. In recent years, anxiety about speaking a foreign language has become a fascinating subject to investigate. Numerous anxiety studies support this.

Anxiety is characterized as a harmful manner of expressing one's emotions. When anxious, people experience jitteriness, worry, and terror (A. B. P. Sari & Iswahyuni, 2019). Speaking anxiety appears detrimental to English learners since it can lead to negative self-perceptions, mental slowness, and poor performance. Speaking English fluently is a typical challenge for non-native speakers. One of the most challenging skills for language learners to master is speaking (Dalem, 2017). As a result, students cannot achieve a high degree of English competence, particularly fluency (Sulastri & Ratnawati, 2018). English Education students at Universitas Ahmad Dahlan Yogyakarta experience a fear of speaking because they find it challenging to communicate with lecturers and peers in English. As the researcher found in the classroom, many students, including the researcher, were observed hesitating or avoiding speaking English when prompted by the lecturer. When their names are called,

Rizkiya & Pratolo (2023)

students produce only one or two utterances in English before returning to their mother tongue, Indonesian. Speaking anxiety is one factor that makes it difficult for them to speak English. This study investigates students' English-speaking anxiety levels, the factors that cause students' English-speaking anxiety, and the strategies the students use to overcome English-speaking anxiety.

Research into students' anxiety in speaking English is prompted by the fact that researchers can observe all the learning activities in the classroom. Investigating students' anxiety levels when speaking English is the primary goal of this study, which is why the researcher is interested in researching this topic. These factors exacerbate students' anxiety about communicating in English, and so are the coping mechanisms they employ to deal with their anxiety. Students' anxiety levels may rise when they communicate in English in front of a group of strangers, especially in public (Suadnyana & Nova, 2021). A case study at the English Education Department of Universitas Ahmad Dahlan examined students' strategies for overcoming English-speaking anxiety. Based on the above background, the problem can be formulated as follows:

1. What is the student's level of English-speaking anxiety?
2. What factors cause students' English-speaking anxiety?
3. What strategies do students use to overcome English-speaking anxiety?

METHOD

Design

The researcher applied qualitative research to address research questions. According to Creswell (2012), qualitative research aims to study phenomena and problems from multiple students' educational viewpoints. According to him, one of the characteristics of qualitative research is the study of difficulties and the formation of a profound grasp of the central phenomena. Researchers applied qualitative research using questionnaires to answer the first and second research questions and interviews to answer the third research questions.

Participant

Rizkiya & Pratolo (2023)

The study was conducted at Universitas Ahmad Dahlan (UAD), Yogyakarta, in the English Department. Participants in this study were all third-semester students, totaling 85 students, because the researcher considers them subjects that deserve to be studied. The researcher wanted to know whether third-semester students have anxiety in speaking English and chose six students based on their highest level in answering the statements in the questionnaire to be interviewed based on their respective levels.

Instruments

Two kinds of instruments were employed: questionnaires and interview guides. Questionnaires were given to participants to fill out. Participants were categorized into three levels using the questionnaire: high anxiety level, medium anxiety level, and low anxiety level. It allowed participants to fill out forms at their own pace. The Foreign Language Class Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) was established by Horwitz et al. (1986) and has been used in several studies to assess students' anxiety levels. In this study, FLCAS had a good level of validity and reliability. Since the participants were Indonesian students, the researcher translated the questionnaire into Indonesian for Indonesian participants.

Furthermore, the items of the questionnaire can be found in the appendix. In FLCAS, there were 33 question items. On a 5-point Likert scale, student responses varied from "Strongly Agree" (SA), "Agree" (A), "Disagree or Disagree" (NA), "Disagree" (D), and "Strongly Disagree" (SD) (SD). Horwitz, Horwitz, and 22 Cope (1986) were the authors of the questionnaire. Questionnaires were used to classify students' levels and factors on English speaking anxiety. This questionnaire was also translated into Indonesian because the participants were Indonesian students.

Interviews were used as the second technique in the study; the researchers interviewed six students with three anxiety levels: two in the high-level category, two in the moderate-level category, and two in the low-level category. They were used to find students' strategies for overcoming speaking anxiety. Pratama (2018) states that these interviews are neither completely fixed nor wholly independent and are perhaps best viewed as flexible. Researchers generally start with a pre-planned strategy of questions but then pursue a more conversational interview style, which can result in questions being answered in a more natural order for the

Rizkiya & Pratolo (2023)

flow of the conversation. In this case, the researcher provided interview guide questions, which can be changed based on the interviewees' responses. As a result, they did not just concentrate on the interview guide questions. The interviews took place in Indonesian. A voice recorder was used to record the interview. Through subject groups and informal questions that interviewers may ask in different ways for different individuals, semi-structured interviews were used to emphasize discussions with research participants. Researchers used this method to inquire about participants' sentiments, concerns, challenges, situations that caused them to be anxious, other 23 aspects of their English-speaking anxiety, and coping mechanisms. A voice recorder was used to record conversations during the interview.

Data collecting technique

This study used questionnaires and interviews to collect data. The questionnaire is a list of questions that must be answered by the respondent or the person to be measured. In this study, the researcher made 33 questions and statements about anxiety in speaking English. This study also proposed semi-structured interviews to collect data. Researchers applied semi-structured interviews to re-check and prove the previously obtained information. Interviews were recorded via voice recorder. Semi-structured interviews were used to maintain the focus of discussion with research participants through topic groupings and informal questions that the interviewer could ask in different ways. Through this method, the researcher asked the participants about their feelings, anxieties, difficulties, situations that caused them anxiety, other factors related to their English-speaking anxiety, and strategies to overcome anxiety.

Data analysis technique

According to Miles et al. (2014), analysis has three main components: data condensation, data display, and drawing and verifying conclusions. The researcher analyzes the data using Miles and Huberman's theory in this study. The first is data condensation, which condenses data to a manageable size throughout the analysis. In this component, the researcher summarizes the data, selects the main problems, and finds patterns from questionnaires and interviews. The second is data display. Data views organize, condense, and organize information in ways that are visually appealing and easy to understand. The last is

Rizkiya & Pratolo (2023)

conclusions drawing and verifying; the data is reduced and displayed simplified to draw conclusions. Data from questionnaires and interviews are used to answer research questions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

According to the research questions, this section describes the data collection and analysis results. The researcher used FLCAS questionnaires that have been distributed to all respondents and the interview anxiety test from a few respondents to gather the data.

Students' level of speaking anxiety

A questionnaire (FLCAS) consisting of 33 items was used To measure anxiety and speaking anxiety levels. Since the questionnaire was a 5-point Likert scale, the total score ranged from 33 to 165 (one point for each item equals 33 points of the minimum score, whereas five points for each item equals 165 maximum scores, based on the Likert scale grading). A total score of more than 132 was interpreted to demonstrate a high level of speaking anxiety. In contrast, a total score ranging from 99 to 132 demonstrates a moderate level of speaking anxiety, and a total score of less than 99 indicates a low level of foreign language speaking anxiety (Ün, 2012).

Table 1. Percentages of students' level of speaking anxiety

Category Score	Percentages	Number of Students
High level	21%	18
Moderate level	40%	34
Low level	39%	33
Total	100%	85

From the results presented in **Table 1**, we can see that students in the program had moderate levels of speech anxiety. According to the descriptive results, 39 percent of the participants scored less than 99, indicating a low level of speaking anxiety, while 40 percent scored between 99 and 132. Some 21% had a score above 132, indicating high anxiety levels when speaking. Students appeared to have moderate to high speaking anxiety in most cases. It is because students are aware that mastering a foreign language is essential to their academic success and their ability to land well-paying jobs back home.

The Factors of students' speaking anxiety

Volume 12 No 2, June 2023,

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>

Rizkiya & Pratolo (2023)

For the analysis of the questionnaire, Horwitz et al. (1986) mention the problem related to three dimensions of anxiety: the items presented reflect communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation in foreign language learning. Seven items dealt with communication anxiety, 20 dealt with test anxiety, and six dealt with fear of a negative evaluation, all included in the questionnaire.

Communication apprehension

Communication apprehension was the first factor influencing students' language anxiety. The questionnaire results show that communication anxiety can influence students' ability to deal with language anxiety. According to research that has been conducted, communication anxiety has been linked to language anxiety in students. As a result, students struggling to comprehend what is being said in class will struggle to improve their English proficiency. It is clear from the questionnaire results that 50% of students strongly agreed with the statement about communication fear in Table 2. Almost all students feel the fear of communication factor that affects their anxiety.

Based on **Table 2**, communication apprehension could influence students to experience language anxiety when speaking English. The statements in the communication apprehension were agreed upon by 50% of the respondents. The strongly agree and agree scores outperformed the neutral, strongly disagree, and disagree scores. Only 26% of respondents said they did not agree or disagree with the statement, while 24% said they strongly disagreed and disagreed with it.

Table 2. Communication apprehension factor

Statement	SA+A	NA	D+SD
I never feel pretty sure of myself when speaking in my English class.	51%	29%	20%
I start to panic when I speak without preparation in English class.	78%	12%	11%
I would not be nervous speaking English with a native speaker.	34%	39%	27%
I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other students.	31%	38%	32%
I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my English class.	60%	25%	15%
I get upset when I do not understand what the teacher is correcting.	33%	27%	40%
It frightens me when I do not understand what the teacher is saying in the English class.	62%	15%	22%
X (Mean)	50%	26%	24%

Rizkiya & Pratolo (2023)

Test Anxiety

Test anxiety was the second factor influencing students' language anxiety. Students who took a speaking test in class were more likely to suffer from language anxiety, according to the results of the questionnaires.

Table 3. Test anxiety factor

Statement	SA+A	NA	D+SD
I tremble when I know I will be called on in English Class.	62%	24%	13%
I feel confident when I speak in English class.	44%	40%	16%
I can feel my heart pounding; why will I be called on in English class?	86%	19%	7%
Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious.	61%	18%	21%
I often feel like not going to my English class.	11%	27%	62%
I can get so nervous in English class that I forget things I know.	45%	28%	27%
When I am on my way to English class, I feel very sure and relaxed.	53%	41%	6%
The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.	7%	22%	71%
I do not feel pressure to prepare very well for English class.	48%	34%	18%
I try to make a habit of studying English frequently.	89%	11%	0
I try to relax when I am in my English class.	89%	11%	0
I always think positively that I can speak English in the classroom.	84%	16%	0
I tell myself I am OK when I feel anxious in my English class.	78%	21%	1%
I never tell myself that a complex problem for me is also tricky for others.	53%	31%	16%
I do not want to participate in the speaking English class.	8%	19%	73%
I study hard the day before I give a performance that requires me to speak English.	73%	18%	9%
I take a deep breath when I feel anxious in my English class.	76%	20%	4%
I avoid getting involved in a situation which can make me feel anxious when speaking English in the classroom	61%	26%	13%
X (Mean)	57%	24%	20%

Based on **Table 3**, more than half of the people polled said that taking a speaking test made them feel nervous. They did not, however, offer to answer the teacher's questions in front of the whole class. Moreover, they were frightened when others spoke more fluently than they did themselves. It can be seen from the statements that 57% of students strongly agree that the test anxiety in **Table 3** factor exceeds the communication apprehension factor. A test in a speaking class could cause students to experience language anxiety. It was demonstrated that 57% of respondents agreed with the statements. The strongly agree and agree score was higher than the neutral, strongly disagree and disagree scores, which were 24% for the neutral score and 20% for the strongly disagree and disagree score, respectively.

Rizkiya & Pratolo (2023)

Fear of Negative Evaluation

Fear of negative evaluation was the third-factor influencing students' language anxiety. Fear of negative evaluation was the third-factor influencing students' language anxiety. According to the study, students feared receiving negative feedback on their speaking performance in class. Questionnaire results indicated that students' language anxiety was linked to their fear of being judged negatively. When speaking in front of the class, students should exercise caution to avoid causing problems that might result in the teacher correcting their pronunciation or even making fun of their mistakes. It can be seen from the questionnaire results that 61% of students strongly agree with the fear of negative evaluation statement in **Table 4**, even higher than the communication apprehension factor and the test anxiety factor.

Table 4. Fear of negative evaluation factor

Statement	SA+A	NA	D+SD
I keep thinking that other students are better than I am in speaking English.	84%	13%	4%
It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my English class.	36%	31%	33%
I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do.	81%	14%	5%
I fear other students will laugh at me when I speak English.	53%	15%	32%
I get nervous when the teacher asks questions that I have not prepared in advance.	78%	19%	4%
I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	36%	26%	38%
X (Mean)	61%	20%	19%

Based on **Table 4**, students afraid of being judged negatively may experience language anxiety. It was demonstrated that 61% of students strongly agreed and agreed with the statements. The agree score was higher than the neutral, strongly disagree, and disagree scores, which were 20% for neutral and 19% for strongly disagree and disagree.

Students' strategies to overcome speaking anxiety

The researcher found five strategies for reducing anxiety in speaking English adopted from Kondo & Ying-Ling (2004): preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, peer seeking, and resignation, which can be seen in the explanation below.

Preparation

Preparation is a student's attempt to gain self-control by honing their study and learning methods. If students are asked to focus more on the subject that commonly affects their anxiety,

Rizkiya & Pratolo (2023)

then the researcher has succeeded. They took the time to study and practice before giving a presentation in front of the class, etc. Preparation is a top priority for participants 1 and 3, who said as much in their responses as possible. Participant 1 admitted that starting a conversation or speaking in English required preparation because she could not speak spontaneously and did compile written or typed text. At the same time, Participant 3 focused on preparation, like practicing in front of a mirror.

"Yes, I focus on preparation when I try to speak English. I have to start first to string words, sentences, and so on and cannot speak spontaneously" (S1, SA).

"For preparation, of course, I have to focus on preparation because I am not very fluent in English. I usually practice in front of a mirror before class starts" (S3, AA).

From the illustration above, it can be concluded that the preparation needed by students with preparation anxiety is carried out, such as preparing by compiling texts and writing notes before starting to speak in English and practicing in front of a mirror before a class starts.

Relaxation

This method of reducing somatic anxiety symptoms aims to relax the body and mind. What did students respond to when the researcher asked, "Do you try to move around position when speaking English?" Anxious participants 1 and 2 responded to their condition in distinct ways. Participant 1 found a way to make himself less nervous by controlling his breath and drinking a glass of water, while Participant 2 managed not to be nervous by taking a breath and moving his limbs.

"Changing positions, yes, Sis, but more often the person regulates his breath and drinkswater so he is not nervous and anxious" (S1, SA).

"Yes, sis. and take a deep breath, exhale slowly, the situation is calm, and I like to move mybody parts to relax and not be so tense, Sis" (S2, MP)

From the illustration above, it can be concluded that the method used by each student is almost the same: they catch their breath, drink a glass of water, and move their limbs.

Positive thinking

Students' anxiety is reduced when they adopt a positive outlook and believe everything will turn out fine. These methods help students overcome their anxiety by focusing on positive and uplifting aspects of the situation. Responding to the question, "Do you try to be

Rizkiya & Pratolo (2023)

confident and imagine yourself giving a great performance to alleviate your fear of speaking English?", Participants 1 and 2 have different ways of dealing with high anxiety levels. Participant 1 struggled to think positively and felt shy, while Participant 2 still tried to think positively even though she was anxious.

"It is difficult for me to develop self-confidence; sometimes I still worry even though I think positively, and sometimes I feel shy when speaking English" (S1, SA).

"A little self-confident even though I am still anxious and afraid, but still trying to be confident, Sis" (S2, MP).

From the illustration above, positive thinking is one way for students to become more confident in speaking English. Doing this makes them brave to speak in front of their friends because it brings situations that can make their thinking work well. It contrasts with Participant 1, who found it challenging to think positively because they were embarrassed.

Peer seeking

A student's willingness to seek out classmates with difficulties understanding the material or managing their anxiety is vital to the peer-seeking strategy. When the researcher asked the students if one of the strategies to overcome anxiety was to learn English with their friends, they said yes. Participant 1 liked studying with smarter friends. Participant 2 liked to study with friends whose abilities were better to improve their English skills. If they have a friend or a diligent peer, it can help them learn to speak English and encourage them to exchange ideas because they can get inspiration from their sharing with friends, and from that, they can become more diligent themselves.

"I like Sis, but with a friend smarter than me" (S1, SA).

"I like it. It helps me improve my English skills and find friends who are better than me" (S2, MP).

Discussion

This study was conducted in the third semester of the English education study program at Universitas Ahmad Dahlan to determine the most prevalent speaking problems in English and the students' coping strategies. Key findings from this study include a number of them.

Rizkiya & Pratolo (2023)

First, the questionnaire and interview utilized for result analysis revealed that speaking difficulties among students were primarily brought on by anxiety.

Students' level of speaking anxiety

In this study, students at Universitas Ahmad Dahlan were found to have moderate anxiety about speaking English, as evidenced by data collected through a questionnaire. This may be due to the student's belief that they could speak English fluently as a second or third language. These students are usually at ease during English tests and may even feel confident enough to volunteer answers in their English class. There were a few students in this study who were highly anxious. According to the study's findings, students with high anxiety levels have lower academic achievement, which in turn causes them to become even more anxious. Anxiety is the most prevalent form of performance anxiety.

According to Sulastris and Ratnawati (2018) study, this finding is different. According to their findings, ABA-UMI students' anxiety tends to be low. Similarly, a study by Taysi (2015) found that Turkish EFL students were moderately concerned about speaking English. In a study by Nazir et al. (2014), students at the National College in Pakistan with high anxiety levels had difficulty speaking in a second-language classroom. So, it can be concluded that from several findings that have different results about students' anxiety in speaking English, not all researchers find students experiencing high anxiety. However, some researchers also find that students experience high anxiety. Three factors cause students' anxiety in speaking English, including:

Communication apprehension

According to Anggraeny et al. (2020), the inability to understand what is being discussed or said in class causes students to experience language anxiety. The questionnaire results show that communication anxiety can influence students' ability to deal with language anxiety. According to research that has been conducted, communication anxiety has been linked to language anxiety in students. As a result, students struggling to comprehend what is being said in class will struggle to improve their English proficiency. According to the questionnaire results, students will be afraid if they do not understand what the teacher is saying. Students with a lot of communication anxiety tend to avoid and withdraw from other

Rizkiya & Pratolo (2023)

students. Communication apprehension may exist in most everyday communication situations or may even be part of a general anxiety trait that arises in many facets of individual life and learner personality (Tanveer, 2007). Anggraeny et al. (2020) conducted their study and found that 62.5 percent of the students agreed that communication apprehension was one factor in their language anxiety when speaking in class.

Test Anxiety

Foreign language anxiety is performance anxiety stemming from a fear of failure relevant to a discussion of test anxiety (HORWITZ et al., 1986). According to the findings of the research, the speaking test caused anxiety in the majority of students. Students who took a speaking test in class were more likely to suffer from language anxiety, according to the results of the questionnaires. More than half of the polled people said that taking a speaking test made them nervous. They did not, however, offer to answer the teacher's questions in front of the whole class.

Moreover, they were frightened when others spoke more fluently than they did themselves. As a result, students may experience anxiety before a test in a class where they are required to speak in front of an audience. Compared to Anggraeny et al. (2020), who found that 43.6 percent of respondents agreed that facing a speaking test was a significant factor in their language anxiety, this study's findings are strikingly different.

Fear of negative evaluation

Zhiping & Paramasivam (2013) say, "fear of negative evaluation by teacher and peers as another in-class concern as an important source of anxiety. They feared being humiliated in front of the class, especially if the lecturer made disparaging remarks while correcting them. Other people's opinions and evaluations were also too much to handle for them. A third type of anxiety associated with foreign language learning is described by Horwitz et al. (1986) as the fear of negative evaluation, defined as "apprehension about others' evaluations, avoidance of evaluation situations, and the expectation that others would evaluate oneself negatively. According to the study, students feared receiving negative feedback on their speaking performance in class. Questionnaire results indicated that students' language anxiety was linked to their fear of being judged negatively. When speaking in front of the class, students should

Rizkiya & Pratolo (2023)

exercise caution to avoid causing problems that might result in the teacher correcting their pronunciation or even making fun of their mistakes. Most students agreed with the nineteenth statement on the questionnaire, "I am afraid that other students will laugh at me when I speak English." As a result, students in public speaking classes tend to be apprehensive and nervous. While Anggraeny et al. (2020) found that 61.8% of students agreed that fear of negative evaluation was a factor in their language anxiety, this finding differs from theirs.

Strategies to overcome speaking anxiety

There are some strategies for students to overcome their speaking anxiety. According to the findings of the research, there are five strategies that students use to reduce their anxiety when speaking in English. Preparation is the first step. Preparation is a critical part of helping students become fluent speakers of English. Students typically work extremely hard to write concise summaries of their class notes. Students' subjective assessments of their mastery of the subject matter should improve as a result of implementing these strategies and their anxiety about language classes.

The second approach is to unwind. Relaxation in speaking English makes them feel more confident than without it and helps them convince themselves that they can do it, making it easier for them to speak English. As a result, it is critical that we first take a moment to calm down before we begin speaking English. To feel more at ease while speaking English, they needed to take a deep breath and calm down, so they had to do it. Tseng (2012) stated the same thing, stating that the calming effect of exercise on the breath helps to transform nervous energy into usable energy.

The third strategy is positive thinking, which is characterized by reducing the stress and anxiety students feel due to their faulty cognitive processes. In order to alleviate the student's anxiety, these strategies are designed to shift their focus away from the stressful situation to positive and pleasant cues. Although perfection is impossible, Tseng (2012) emphasized the importance of being aware of this fact.

The fourth strategy is the peer-seeking tactic. In this strategy, students were willing to look for other students in the class who appeared to be having difficulty comprehending or coping with their feelings of stress. Intelligent students are more likely to get their attention and

Rizkiya & Pratolo (2023)

motivate them to speak than lazy ones. For those who have difficulty speaking in front of others, this method can help them 46. According to Tseng (2012), if students focus more on their native language, they will be more motivated to pursue English as a second language.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher drew the bold conclusion that there are four strategies for reducing English speaking. For students to reduce their English-speaking time, Kondo and Ying-Ling (2004) identified five strategies: preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, peer finding, and resignation. However, only four strategies were available to the researcher in this study: preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, and seeking out a peer group. When all else fails, resigning is the only option. It is because students must alter their habits. Students must engage in the behavior to alter their behavior patterns, but this will not help them if they are unsatisfied with their feelings or have not found an answer to their problem.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

Conclusion

In sum, the third-semester students at Ahmad Dahlan University had moderate levels. It is affected by the students feeling contented when speaking English in the classroom, and they were not fearful of making mistakes such as grammatical rules, disremembering vocabulary, and being shy when their peers laughed at them. It can influence them to overcome anxiety. As for their preparations before learning and speaking English, for example, students compose words, compose sentences, and practice in front of a mirror.

Limitation

The research process contains limitations or flaws. Researchers recognize that there must be numerous difficulties and obstacles in a study. One of the factors that became an impediment in this study was the difficulty of inviting students to fill out a questionnaire on the Google form, requiring a long time, as well as the difficulty of inviting students to interviews via WhatsApp or Google Meet because they needed to prepare the appropriate time.

Implication

Based on the study conducted to identify students' anxiety levels, factors causing anxiety, and strategies to overcome anxiety in speaking English performance, several

Rizkiya & Pratolo (2023)

implications are identified. First, students have a moderate level of anxiety, not too high or too low. Second, students' anxiety can come from the communication apprehension factor, where students are hesitant to speak English and are afraid of not understanding communication in class. The next factor is test anxiety, where students are afraid to fail in speaking English and are embarrassed to answer the lecturer's questions. Second, lecturers must be aware of this phenomenon and understand how to prevent anxiety among students, apply the proper methodology, and create a pleasant classroom environment that is not too strict. Third, the researcher hopes that the other researcher could also conduct the other students' strategies for reducing anxiety in speaking English.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Alhamdulillah, thank Allah SWT for the blessing and mercies to finish this research. As the second writer, the author would also like to thank Dr. Bambang Widi Pratolo for his assistance, guidance, motivation, and encouragement.

BIO-PROFILE:

Ani Rizkiya holds a Bachelor of Education (English Language Education) degree from Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Yogyakarta. She is currently pursuing a master's degree in English Education at Universitas Ahmad Dahlan. She is enthusiastic about researching English education. Furthermore, she is eager to pursue any opportunity to expand her knowledge of teaching English to Indonesian students.

Dr. Bambang Widi Pratolo received his doctorate in TESOL from Monash University in 2015. He worked at Monash University in Australia from 2009 to 2015 and is now a senior lecturer at the Universitas Ahmad Dahlan in Indonesia. His research interests include professional beliefs and practices among teachers, student voices, learning strategies, and innovative pedagogy. With nearly 30 academic publications and extensive consulting experience, he has played critical roles in organizing numerous international English-language education conferences and serving as a senior advisor and manager for several peer-reviewed academic journals worldwide.

Rizkiya & Pratolo (2023)**REFERENCES**

- Aghajani, M., & Amanzadeh, H. (2017). The effect of anxiety on speaking ability: An experimental study on EFL learners. In *journal of applied linguistics and language research* (Vol. 4). academia.edu. www.jallr.com
- Akkakoson, S. (2016). Speaking anxiety in English conversation classrooms among Thai students. *Malaysian journal of learning and instruction*, 13(1), 63–82. <https://doi.org/10.32890/mjli2016.13.1.4>
- Anggraeny, D., Said, I., & Febriani, R. B. (2020). The EFL students' perception of their foreign language anxiety in speaking class. *Jurnal wahana pendidikan*, 7(1), 29. <https://doi.org/10.25157/wa.v7i1.3123>
- Asma Melouah. (2013). Foreign language anxiety in EFL speaking classrooms: A case study of first-year LMD students of English at foreign language anxiety in EFL speaking classrooms. *AWEJ Volume4 Number, 1(1)*, 64–76. www.awej.org
- Badriyah, I. L., & Novita, D. (2023). Students' anxiety in English speaking class at a private junior high school in East Java, Indonesia. *International social sciences and humanities*, 2(1), 84–93. <http://proceeding.unmuhjember.ac.id/index.php/iss/article/view/130>
- Çağatay, S. (2015). Examining EFL students' foreign language speaking anxiety: The case at a Turkish state university. *Procedia - social and behavioral Sciences*, 199, 648–656. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.07.594>
- Dalem, M. (2017). The EFL students' perception of their foreign language anxiety in speaking class difficulties of speaking that are encountered by English language students at al Margeb University. *Premise: Journal of English education*, 6(2), 20. <https://doi.org/10.24127/pj.v6i2.1002>
- Diao, Z., & Paramasivam, S. (2013). Anxiety of speaking English in class among international students in a Malaysian university. *International journal of education and research*, 1(11), 1–16.
- Farid, M. (2019). The effectiveness of using TED talks videos in improving students public speaking skills in senior high school. *JALL (Journal of Applied Linguistics and Literacy)*, 3(1), 61. <https://doi.org/10.25157/jall.v3i1.2642>
- Herwanto, R. (2013). Factors that cause language anxiety in the English classroom speaking performance in SMP Negeri 4 Pakem Yogyakarta. *Jurnal pendidikan bahasa dan seni Yogyakarta*, 15(5), 1–144.
- HORWITZ, E. K., HORWITZ, M. B., & COPE, J. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 70(2), 125–132. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1986.tb05256.x>
- Hussein, N. H. (2021). Anxiety in oral presentation among ESL students: Factors and strategies. *International online journal of language, communication, and humanities, special issue November*, 100–108.
- John, C., & Timothy, G. (2021). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating*

Rizkiya & Pratolo (2023)

quantitative and qualitative research. nuir.nkumbauniversity.ac.ug.

- Kondo, D. S. (2004). Strategies for coping with language anxiety: the case of students of English in Japan. *ELT Journal*, 58(3), 258–265. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/58.3.258>
- Lababidi, R. A. (2016). Language Anxiety: A case study of the perceptions and experiences of students of English as a foreign language in a higher education institution in the United Arab Emirates. *English Language Teaching*, 9(9), 185. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v9n9p185>
- Marzec-Stawiarska, M. (2015). Investigating foreign language speaking anxiety among advanced learners of English. In *second language learning and teaching* (Vol. 14, Issue, pp. 103–119). researchgate.net. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-38339-7_7
- Miles, M. B. A., Huberman, M., & Saldana, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis, a methods sourcebook.* Saeg publication. Inc.
- Nazir, M., Bashir, S., & Raja, Z. B. (2014). A study of second language speaking anxiety among ESL intermediate Pakistani learners. In *International Journal of English and Education*. ijee.org.
- Pratama, R. (2018). A students' strategies to overcome speaking anxiety in public speaking class. *English education journal EEJ*, 7(9), 5–6.
- Sadiq, J. M. (2017). Anxiety in English language learning: A case study of English language learners in Saudi Arabia. *English language teaching*, 10(7), 1. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v10n7p1>
- Saputra, J. B. (2018). An analysis of students' speaking anxiety toward their speaking skills. *Premise: Journal of English education*, 7(1), 111. <https://doi.org/10.24127/pj.v7i1.1334>
- Sari, A. B. P., & Iswahyuni, D. (2019). The students' speaking anxiety on the youtube video project in EFL learning in Indonesia. *Premise: Journal of English education*, 8(2), 176. <https://doi.org/10.24127/pj.v8i2.2179>
- Sari, D. (2017). Speaking anxiety as a factor in studying EFL. *English education Journal (Eej)*, 8(2), 177–186.
- Selvam, P., Mohd, E., S., B., Swaminathan, V., & Baskaran, S. (2016). Effects of debilitating and facilitative anxiety on speaking in a second language among Malaysian ESL learners. *UMCCed*, 1–20.
- Simkins-Bullock, J. A., & Wildman, B. G. (1991). An investigation into the relationships between gender and language. *Sex Roles*, 24(3–4), 149–160. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00288888>
- Suadnyana, I. W., & Nova, M. (2021). Students' awareness on speaking anxiety in English for specific purpose speaking project. *EDULIA: English education, linguistic and art journal*, 2(1), 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.31539/edulia.v2i1.2768>
- Sulastri, S., & Ratnawati, R. (2018). Students' strategies in reducing anxiety in learning English. *ELS Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, 1(4), 423–428. <https://doi.org/10.34050/els-jish.v1i4.5047>

Rizkiya & Pratolo (2023)

- Tanveer, M. (2007). Investigation of the factors that cause language anxiety for ESL / EFL learners in learning speaking skills and the influence it casts on communication in the target language. By. *University of Glasgow, Scotland, June* 1–92.
<https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.1.1995.1129>
- taysi, eda. (2015). A study on Turkish EFL students' English speaking anxiety. *International journal of languages' education, 1*(UDES 2015). <https://doi.org/10.18298/ijlet.309>
- Tseng, S. (2012). The factors cause language anxiety. *WHAMPOA – An interdisciplinary journal, 63*(1), 75–90.
- Ün, E. (2012). Sources & levels of foreign language anxiety in Turkish university students relative to language proficiency, intentions for use and perceived barrier. In *unpublished master's thesis. konya: selçuk acikerisimarsiv.selcuk.edu.tr*.