
An Analysis of Speaking Anxiety of The Second Semester of English Foreign Language (EFL) Student of Tadulako University

Zikrullah , Afrillia Anggreni*, Sriati Usman, Aminah Suriaman

Tadulako University, Indonesia

*Corresponding author, e-mail: zikrullah83abparasulu@gmail.com

Abstract

Feeling anxious in speaking English still becomes a serious phenomenon for EFL students. Therefore, the aims of this research is to identify the factors that cause Students' Anxiety in speaking English and the students' efforts to overcome their anxiety. Data on this qualitative research were collected through questionnaire, observation and interview. The questionnaire adopted from Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) was distributed to 181 students. After analyzing, the result figures out that 89 of 181 students experienced low levels of anxiety, 87 of 181 students experienced medium levels of anxiety, and 5 of 181 students experienced high levels of anxiety. It means that in the level of students' anxiety are in low to moderate. Then, based on the result of distributing questionnaire, observation sheet and interview, the researchers found that high factors that cause students experienced anxiety in speaking are speaking in front of the public or class, lack of English knowledge and lack of preparation or readiness. Furthermore, interviews were conducted to 5 students who had high levels of anxiety to identify their effort to handle their anxiety. The result conveys three efforts that students do to overcome their anxiety namely well preparation, relaxation, and positive thinking. This research implies that the lecturer should always train the students to speak in public place, evaluate and improve speaking component mastery of the students, and always monitor the students' readiness before performing in front of the class.

Keywords: *Analysis, Anxiety, Effort, Factor, Speaking*



This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

©2021 by author

Introduction

Speaking skill is a process to communicate our ideas, thought and feeling effectively through verbal means. This skill is the most essential for effective communication. It involves the production of clear, easy-to-understand that conveys information to an audience. In learning a foreign language, speaking is regarded as the most fundamental skill because a large number of the learners learn a target language such as English to improve their speaking skill. However, many foreign learners believe that it is one of the most difficult skills to be acquired because they do not implement in their daily life. In addition, there are several factors that cause EFL students think it difficult, namely linguistic and non-linguistic factors. The linguistics factor includes vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar while the non-linguistic factor covers confidence, anxiety, and topical knowledge (Astuti, 2019) . Therefore, to require a good speaking, the student should pay attention to the two factors.

Regarding to two factor, non-linguistics contribute a big effect to the succes of linguistics factor. One of them is anxiety. Anxiety is a feeling of dread, fear, and discomfort that can cause physical symptoms such as sweating, restlessness, and a rapid heartbeat and can be also happened to anyone. Anxiety is a normal response to stressful conditions, but it becomes a pathological disorder when it is severe and difficult to manage (DeMartini et al., 2019). Anxiety presents feeling of nervous, worried and fearful to doing something (Ansari, 2015). Anxiety is the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system (Damayanti & Listyani, 2020). Thus, anxiety is unavoidable problem and has big role in the success of the students in communicating their ideas or feeling.

Anxiety in speaking, also known as speech anxiety or glossophobia. It is the fear of speaking in front of others. It is a type of social anxiety disorder that can be triggered by the possibility or reality of speaking in public. Anxiety in speaking can range from a slight feeling of "nerves" to almost incapacitating fear. Anxiety is actualized as pivotal factors that has devitalizing effect on the oral performance (Hanifa, 2018). Speaking skill is known as the big stimulant for creating EFL' anxiety (Luo, 2014) Therefore, because anxiety has a considerable as cause in speaking, the researchers are interested to analyze the high factors that cause students feel anxious and their effort to break their anxiety.

Method

This research used qualitative design. To collecting the data, the researchers distributed questionnaire to identify the level of students' anxiety and the high factor that contribute to the students to feel anxious, doing observation to identify the factors that cause students feel anxious and conducting interview to identify the factors and efforts of the students in overcoming their Anxiety. Next to analyze the data from questionnaire, the researchers applied FLCAS questionnaires scale by (Debreli & Demirkan, 2015). The questionnaire consisted of ten items, each with a 5-point rating system: Strongly Agree (scale point 4), Agree (scale point 3), Disagree (scale point 2), and Strongly Disagree (scale point 1). Then, the levels of students' anxiety was determined by summing up students' questionnaire scores and classified them into three categories as in Table.

Table 1. The Range of Anxiety

The avarage score	Category
≤99	Low
99-132	Moderate
≥132 High	High

For observation, the researchers checked the observation sheet. Furthermore for interview, the researchers recorded the process of Q and A, transcribed the recording and analized by using three steps namely data reduction, data presentation, and withdrawal conclusion based on (Miles et al., 2014).

Results and Discussion

Results

Data was collected through questionnaire, observation and structured interviews. Distributing questionnaires, doing observation and conducting interview aimed to answer research question regarding to what factors cause students to be anxiety in speaking. On the other hand, only interview was used to answer the research question about how students overcome their speaking anxiety.

The result of questionnaire

The result of the level of students' speaking anxiety through the FLCAS questionnaire can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. The level of students' speaking anxiety

Level of students' anxiety	Total students	Percentage
Low	89	49%
Moderate	87	48%
High	5	3%
Total	181	100%

Based on questionnaire, the result shows that 49% (89 of 181 students) experienced low level of speaking anxiety, 48% (87 of 181 students) experienced moderate and 3% (5 of 181 students) experienced high. It can be interpreted that majority of student experience moderate level of speaking anxiety.

Furthermore to know the factors that contribute the high level of students experienced anxiety can be seen in table 3.

Table 3. The high factors that contribute the students' anxiety

Items	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly agree
I feel nervous when I have to speak English in public.	22,65%	66,85%	9,94%	0,55%
I worry about making grammar or pronunciation mistakes when speaking English in front of other people.	23,76%	66,30%	9,39%	0,55%
I feel anxious that others will judge my	22,65%	54,14%	20,44%	2,76%
When it comes to speaking English, I feel insecure about my language skills.	20,99%	53,59%	22,65%	2,76%
I often feel tense or anxious before having to deliver a presentation or speech in English.	19,34%	64,64%	16,02%	0%
It is difficult for me to express my thoughts or ideas clearly in English in front of classmates or other audiences.	21,55%	56,35%	20,44%	1,66%
I felt pressured by the expectation of speaking English fluently and without a hitch.	16,57%	56,35%	24,86%	2,21%
When speaking in English, I find it difficult to find the right words to express my ideas or feelings.	18,78%	68,51%	12,15%	0,55%
I feel anxious that others will criticize or evaluate my English skills.	17,13%	46,96%	32,60%	3,31%
My mind is often filled with fear that I won't be taken seriously or respected because of my mistakes in speaking English.	11,05%	55,25%	30,39%	3,31%

Table 4.1 displays that the high factors (up to 80%) that contribute to the students' anxiety in speaking are speaking English in public, making grammar or pronunciation mistakes when speaking English in front of other people, finding the right words to express ideas or feelings, and deliver a presentation or speech in English.

The result of observation

Observation is done to support the result of the questionnaires related to high factors that appear feeling anxious in speaking. The result can be seen as follow:

Table 4. Factors that Cause Anxiety in front of the class

No	The factor that cause anxiety in front of the class	Yes	No
1	The students have lack of eye contact during speaking in front of the class because lack of self confidence	✓	
2	The students pretend to be busy when the lecturer ask them to speak in front of the class because they feel shy	✓	
3	The students refuse the instruction of the lecturer to practice speaking in front of the class because lack of knowledge and show their panic.	✓	

4	The students seems fidget, stutter, stammer and lower their voices when speaking in front of the class because lack of preparation	✓
5	The students sweated, lost focus, fidgeted, spoke too fast, and laughed to cover up anxiety when performing speaking activities in front of the class	✓

Table 4 exhibits that students are indicated be anxious to speak in front of the class and/or waiting turn to speak because lack of self-confidence, lack of knowledge and readiness

The result of Interview

The researchers then conducted interview to five students who feel a fairly high anxiety more than others. The result can be seen as follow:

1. What causes do you feel anxious when speaking English?

S1: Speak in front of the class and explain mostly in English

S2: When the lecturer ask me to speak

S3: When called by the lecturer to speak

S4: I think because English is difficult

S5: Asked by the lecturer to speak in front of the class

Based on the answers of five students, it can be indicated that students tend to often be anxious when they are asked by the lecturer to speak in front of the class and think that English is challenging

2. What make you feel difficult to express your thoughts or ideas in English in front of classmates or other audiences?

S1: I feel that my lack of study makes it difficult for me to convey my ideas when speaking English.

S2: My lack of confidence makes it difficult for me to express my opinion in front of many people.

S3: My limited vocabulary makes it difficult for me to speak in front of my friends.

S4: I thought my friends would laugh at me when I started speaking in front of the class.

S5: I often have difficulty expressing my ideas in front of my friends because I often feel nervous.

Based on the answer above the researchers can interpret that the students are difficult to express their ideas because of lack of study, lack of confidence, limited vocabulary, ridiculed by peers and nervous.

3. Are you worried about making grammatical or pronunciation error in speaking? Why does it happen?

S1: My limited vocabulary makes me worried about whether my sentences are correct or not.

S2: I think my lack of study makes me worried about my grammar and pronunciation.

S3: I have a lack of confidence when I want to speak.

S4: I am ashamed of my grammar and pronunciation skills when I want to speak.

S5: I think that I don't have good grammar and pronunciation skills when it comes to speaking.

Based on the answer, the researchers indicate several causes of students feel worried in speaking namely less vocabulary, lack of grammar and pronunciation knowledge, and lack of confidence

4. How do you manage your anxiety?

S1: To overcome anxiety, before the lesson starts I usually prepare so that I can be more fluent when speaking in front of the class.

S2: When I feel anxious in speaking, I usually pause for a moment while breathing so that I feel calm.

S3: I usually think positively that I can speak in front of the class so I don't feel anxious.

S4: Before the lesson starts, I usually make preparations, and when I feel anxious, I choose to calm down so that my anxiety decreases.

S5: When I feel anxious, I pause to talk, and then think ideas to continue my speaking activity

Based on the students' answers, it can be indicated that the students' effort to overcome their speaking anxiety are preparation, relaxation and positive thinking.

Therefore, from the result of questionnaire, observation and interview, the researchers can interpret that the primary factors that provoke students' anxiety in English speaking are speaking in front of the public or class, lack of English knowledge and lack of preparation or readiness. On the other hand, their effort to handle their anxiety are preparation, relaxation and positive thinking.

Discussion

There several factors cause students feel anxious in English speaking are found in this research. Speaking in front of the class by using foreign language is one of the factors that contribute to appear anxiety to the students. It happened if students do not have many ideas about the topic and their lecture unexpectedly invites them to speak thus they do not have well preparation. (Marwan, 2007) discovered that a lack of preparedness or related to their readiness was the primary cause of students feel worried. (Iizuka, 2019) discovered that attending classes without adequate preparation can cause anxiety. Furthermore, feeling doubt about their performance can also create anxious. Performance factor such speaking in front of the people make many students feel uncomfortable, shy, frustrated and it will causes speaking anxiety (Hanifa, 2018). Speaking in front of the class can cause a high level of them to feel anxious when doing spoken English in front of the class (Humare & Pramustiara, 2022). Furthermore, being Laugh by the others if doing mistake when speaking in front of the class contributes significantly to students' anxiety. (Opriorika et al., 2023) claim that many students feel nervous and even they tremble when they know that they will be called in the language class and the teacher is ready to correct every mistake they make, and they are afraid if other students laugh at them. Mocking from the classmates or correction of teacher in front of the class will bring an impact to the students' confidence. Thus, with the lack of self-confidence, the students will show their panic

Lack of English knowledge or cognitive factor is also a trigger that cause the EFL learners stress to speak. The limitation of words makes the students difficult to communicate their ideas thus they will show their panic. In addition making error in grammar and pronunciation make the students will be shy whereas if the teacher directly correct their mistake in front of their classmate. A poor of linguistics knowledge can decrease students' motivation and confidence and it creates the emergence of anxiety (Hanifa, 2018) Inaccurate grammar, limited vocabulary, fear of speaking in public, fear of making mistake are some factors are the characteristic of students with debilitating speaking anxiety (Ansari, 2015). The most factors of the students feel panic in speaking class is pronunciation and grammar (Erdiana et al., 2020). Many EFL students believe that the complexity of English knowledge can mislead learners' expectations of their own language learning, hinder their efforts, increase their anxiety, limit their perception of new approaches to language learning, and reduce their use of the target language (Hayati, 2020). In this case, the role of the teacher is needed. She or he need to clarify to the students if making mistake in learning a foreign language is not embarrassing thing but it gives information for them to evaluate and improve their English mastery. In addition, the lecturer should find media, methods, strategies and techniques to motivate the students to enhance their English knowledge and to decrease students' anxiety either before or during process of teaching and learning speaking

In addition, this research also find that although the EFL students of Tadulako University are in moderate level, they still have effort to overcome their anxiety. Several ways were preparation, relaxation and positive thinking. (Rizkiya & Pratolo, 2023) confirm that there are four strategies that can reduce anxiety in speaking, namely preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, and peer seeking. With well- preparation, the students will boost their self-confidence and improve their speaking performance. Furthermore, it's simpler for them to speak English when they're at ease because it gives them a sense of confidence that they can do the task and helps them convince themselves that they can. They have to take a deep breath and relax too in order to feel more comfortable speaking in English. Positive thinking is also needed which aims to lessen the tension and worry that the learners experience as a result of their flawed thought processes. These tactics aim to deflect the student's attention from the stressful circumstance to pleasurable and positive cues, thus reducing their anxiety.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to investigate the high factors that cause of students feeling anxious and how students overcome or manage their anxiety. Respondents of this study amounted to 181 people and 5 people as informants. Based on data there are some factors found in this study, namely: speaking in front of the public or class, lack of English knowledge and lack of preparation or readiness. With several factors causing

anxiety about speaking in students, the researchers also find out the efforts of the students to handle their anxiety namely preparation, relaxation, and positive thinking.

Acknowledgment

In this article, the researchers would like to say thanks for the Rector of Tadulako University, the Dean of Teacher Training and Education Faculty and the Head of English Education Department who always support, motivate and guide the researchers in conducting research, writing academic articles, and publishing in reputable journal either national or international. Hopefully, this article provides benefits for readers and other researchers.

References

- Ansari, M. S. (2015). Speaking Anxiety in ESL/EFL Classrooms: A Holistic Approach and Practical Study. *International Journal of Educational Investigations*, 2(4), 38–46.
- Astuti, E. S. (2019). Faktor-faktor yang Mempengaruhi Speaking Performance Mahasiswa Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris. *Paradigma: Jurnal Filsafat, Sains, Teknologi, dan Sosial Budaya*, 25(2), 27–33. <https://doi.org/10.33503/paradigma.v25i2.543>
- Damayanti, M. E., & Listyani, L. (2020). An Analysis of Student' Speaking Anxiety in Academic Speaking Class. *ELTR Journal*, 4(2), 152–170. <https://doi.org/10.37147/eltr.v4i2.70>
- Debreli, E., & Demirkan, S. (2015). Sources and Levels of Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety of English as a Foreign Language University Students with regard to Language Proficiency and Gender. *International Journal of English Language Education*, 4(1), 49. <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijele.v4i1.8715>
- DeMartini, J., Patel, G., & Fancher, T. L. (2019). Generalized Anxiety Disorder. *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 170(7), 49–64. <https://doi.org/10.7326/AITC201904020>
- Erdiana, N., Daud, B., Sari, D. F., & Dwitami, S. K. (2020). A study of anxiety experienced by EFL students in speaking performance. *Studies in English Language and Education*, 7(2), 334–346. <https://doi.org/10.24815/siele.v7i2.16768>
- Hanifa, R. (2018). Factors generating anxiety when learning EFL speaking skills. *Studies in English Language and Education*, 5(2), 230–239. <https://doi.org/10.24815/siele.v5i2.10932>
- Hayati, N. (2020). The Relationship between English Language Learning Beliefs and English Academic Achievement among the English Major Students of IAIN Samarinda. *Jurnal Budaya FIB UB*, 1(2), 14–22.
- Humare, I., & Pramustiara, P. (2022). Students' Anxiety in Speaking in Front of the Class. *Knowledge E*, 138–147.
- Iizuka, K. (2019). Strategies for Foreign Language Anxiety. *JALT*, 103–112.

- Luo, H. (2014). Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety: A Study of Chinese Language Learners. *Journal of the National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages*, 15(1), 99–117.
- Marwan, A. (2007). Investigating Students' Foreign Language Anxiety. *Malaysian Journal Of ELT Research*, 3, 37–55.
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, J. (2014). *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Method Sourcebook* (3rd ed.). SAGE.
- Opriorika, G., Mulyadi, & Sufiyandi. (2023). An Analysis of Students' Anxiety in Learning English. *Journal of English Education and Teaching (JEET)*, 7(4), 1177–1190.
- Rizkiya, A., & Pratolo, B. W. (2023). Students' Strategies to Overcome English Speaking Anxiety. *Premise: Journal of English Education*, 12(2), 660. <https://doi.org/10.24127/pj.v12i2.7417>