

The Cause of Students' Anxiety in Speaking English among 11th Grade at SMAN 13 DEPOK

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to discover the causes of students' anxiety in speaking English. The study employs a qualitative descriptive approach involving participants from grade XI MIPA 3 of SMAN 13 Depok. The design of the study involves descriptive analysis through a speaking test and questionnaires. The result of this research indicates that the speaking skill impacts students' anxiety level. The better the speaking ability supported by basic knowledge of English such as vocabulary, grammar, etc., including self-confidence, the lower the level of anxiety experienced. This research contributes to the understanding of the causes of students' anxiety in speaking English, particularly in the context of English language learning. It highlights factors such as fear of mistakes and lack of confidence that hinder students' willingness to communicate effectively. The implications of this research are expected to be adopted by educators as an alternative to enhance the students' awareness of their own anxiety in English.

Keywords: Students' anxiety; English speaking; Anxiety factors; Speaking skills

INTRODUCTION

Speaking English has emerged as one of the most crucial skills in today's globalized world. English is utilized not just in educational settings, but also in professional environments and daily routines. Ikhsaniyah (2022) stated that "English is the lingua franca, which means that English is the language used to bridge communication between users of different languages in the world." Grag & Gautam in Ikhsaniyah (2022) also stated that "Another advantage is that English language users will easily communicate and interact with people around the world." Therefore, Indonesia must enhance its human resources by equipping them with adequate skills and abilities such as English speaking ability to allow them to interact with people worldwide.

According to Bygart in Al-Roud (2016), "Speaking skill is the ability in using oral language to explore ideas, intentions, thoughts and feelings to other people as a way to make the message clearly delivered and well understood by the listeners." Speaking English in public for some people is not an easy thing to do. Megawati in Fahrenah et al (2024) stated that

“Speaking English is a difficult skill that has a negative relationship with students’ speaking ability and anxiety, therefore, mastering it is not as simple as it seems.” Speaking is a complex skill to learn, students should consider the grammatical rules, vocabulary, and comprehension. Speaking is a challenging skill to master; students need to take into the grammatical rules, vocabulary, and understanding or comprehension. Students may feel fear, anxiety, and panic when asked to talk; they often hesitate and frequently decline if the teacher or anyone requests them to converse in English, choosing silence over speaking. These traits suggested that students suffer from symptoms of language anxiety.

According to Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope in Anzanni, S., & Dewi, D. N. (2023) stated that “Anxiety is a personal’s experience of tension, fear, nervousness, and worry linked with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system that can occasionally disturb students from having a successful performance in language learning.” When learning English, certain students feel anxious, scared, and concerned while using the language. Anggraeny, et al in Andi, Lusia A., et al (2022) show that “Students have difficulty improving their English-speaking skills. Difficulties in learning to speak English students are characterized by lack of vocabulary, fear of grammatical errors, and pronunciation.” These difficulties can cause anxiety when speaking in public.

The writers chose anxiety in speaking English as the object of research because this is an interesting phenomenon to study, especially among students who are pursuing high school in Indonesia and also to find out what are the causes that dominate anxiety problems to enable teachers to discover effective methods for ensuring that students speaking activities remain successful. This research is crucial since anxiety related to speaking in English may hinder students from seizing available chances to enhance their speaking abilities. Moreover, a greater comprehension of the elements that lead to anxiety will assist educators in creating more effective and supportive teaching methods. For instance, by fostering a more pleasant and welcoming educational environment, delivering effective motivation, and supplying diverse and engaging speaking exercises. This research will significantly enhance the evolution of English language teaching approaches that better address the emotional and psychological requirements of students.

The research conducted has similarities and differences with previous research, such as research conducted by Purwanti, K. et al (2019) from Halu Oleo University with research entitled "Students' Speaking Anxiety in An EFL Classroom: Gender Perspective at SMA

Negeri 2 Kendari ” and research conducted by Muktiningrum, N., I., et al (2024) from Makassar State University with research entitled “Speaking Anxiety of Students in EFL Classroom Based on Gender in Higher Education”. These two studies both discuss speaking anxiety and use FLCAS as a data collection method. The difference with the research conducted by the writers is that both studies discussed speaking anxiety based on gender, whereas the writers conducted research on speaking anxiety that did not differentiate between genders.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Speaking

When learning English as a second language, individuals must master four crucial skills. The skills are classified as productive (speaking and writing) or receptive (listening and reading). These skills are linked to each other. Having expertise in various skills is essential to excel in communication, but mastering the art of speaking effectively can offer numerous advantages to the speaker. One way is for the speaker to express their ideas, opinions, or thoughts directly, which can be a more effective communication method. Many language learning experts have put forward various definitions of speaking.

According to Brown in Ikhsaniyah (2022) speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves the process of receiving, producing, and processing information. Also, Pambudi (2020) stated that speaking is very important in our life to communicate and express our feelings to each other. Another definition of speaking comes from Lado in Asma (2019) describes speaking as the ability to express oneself in life situations, or the ability to report acts or situations in precise words, or the ability to converse, or to express a sequence of ideas fluently. As said by Leong et al (2017), speaking is not only an activity of expressing words by mouth but also conveying information through words from our mouths. In other words, speaking is an activity to convey information through verbal or non-verbal, it can also be supported using body language and facial expressions.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that learning English as a second language requires mastering four essential skills: productive (speaking and writing) and receptive (listening and reading). Mastering speaking effectively offers numerous advantages, as it allows speakers to express their ideas, opinions, and thoughts directly. Different language learning experts define speaking as an

interactive process of constructing meaning and conveying information through verbal and non-verbal means, including body and facial expressions.

According to Harris in Ikhsaniyah (2022), there are five speaking skill components concerned with comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency. Another point of view, Stefani and Roba'i (2019) state that the problems that occur in mispronunciation caused by the speaker, that's why to mastering pronunciation is the important thing, because the different pronunciations will have different meanings. Consequently, the speaker needs to articulate the words accurately, considering intonation, emphasis, and other factors. This is done to prevent the confusion that may result in misinterpretation.

Speaking should be instructed through interactive activities. Teachers need to identify suitable activities that will motivate students to participate actively in them. Participating in classroom activities and communicating with other students can enhance their motivation to learn English.

Speaking is considered the most challenging skill to score, administer, and prepare for among the others. One of the reasons is that it might be challenging to decide which criteria to use when assessing oral communication. The following elements are typically examined when evaluating speaking: appropriateness, listening comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. It is difficult to measure students' oral proficiency. Compared to other skills, speaking skill has more linguistic elements. Rubric-based assessment in an educational setting does not work well when performance consists of multiple-choice or marking activity responses. So that rubrics such as how well, appropriately, or thoroughly a question was answered can occasionally be used to assess test performance.

Table 1. The Rubric adapted from Helmanda (2019)

No.	Components	Score
1	Comprehension	
2	Grammar	
3	Vocabulary	
4	Pronunciation	
5	Fluency	

Table 2. The Scoring Rubric adapted from Helmanda (2019)

Score Point	Description
Score 4	1. Response is fluent 2. Story sequence and details enhanced by vocabulary and correct use of complex grammar 3. Response is free of errors that cause confusion
Score 3	1. Response is mostly fluent 2. Story sequence and details enhanced by vocabulary and correct use of simple grammar 3. Response may have some errors, but these cause only limited confusion
Score 2	1. Response has lapses or hesitations that interfere with story flow 2. Minimum of story sequence and details provided by basic use of vocabulary and grammar 3. Response has errors that cause confusion
Score 1	1. Response has many lapses or hesitations that interfere with story flow 2. Response may be only one word or sentence 3. Response may have little or no grammatical structure
Score 0	1. Response is unintelligible; 2. Response is in the native language; 3. Student refuses to speak

2. Anxiety

Horwitz in Wulandari (2022) stated that anxiety is a sense of apprehension or doom that is accompanied by certain physiological reactions, such as accelerated heart rate, sweaty palms, and tightness in the stomach. When individuals display signs of anxiety, their behavior changes from the usual; they may forget what they did, have a harder time recalling information, lose confidence, and more. Wiedemann (2015) also defines anxiety as subjective, behavioral, and physiological characteristics. He states that anxiety involves feelings of fear characterized by physiological reactions usually such as shaking, sweating, increased heart rate and blood pressure, and increased muscle tone.

Haskin et al in Siha (2023) argue that when a person feels unsure about doing something, they will experience anxiety that causes feelings of fear and lack of self-esteem. Anxiety and fear may seem similar things, but they have different meanings. Halgin and Whitbourne in Fatmawati (2022) describe the difference between fear and anxiety, fear is a natural alarm response to a dangerous situation while anxiety is more future-oriented, a feeling of apprehension and uneasiness about the possibility of something terrible might happen. From the various explanations above, it can be said that anxiety is a feeling of fear, worry, nervous, and discomfort with stressful situations that cause trembling, shaking, sweating, and increased heart rate and blood pressure, so it is difficult for someone to do something perfectly.

Horwitz in Ikhsaniyah (2022) states that there are three types of anxiety: trait anxiety, state anxiety, and situation-specific anxiety. On the other hand, MacIntyre in Cui (2020) defines language anxiety as the worry and negative emotional reaction aroused when learning or using a second language. From a theoretical perspective, foreign language anxiety is a form of situational-specific anxiety. MacIntyre and Gardner in Asma (2019) add that the feeling of tension and apprehension is specifically associated with second language contexts, including speaking, listening, and learning. A negative consequence of anxiety in language learning is that students with elevated anxiety tend to achieve lower results. Thus, it is crucial to comprehend the impact of anxiety on language learning, as it is a significant factor affecting the process, regardless of whether the context is formal or informal.

Horwitz and Cope in Ikhsaniyah (2022) mention the effect of anxiety on language learning, they divided it into two categories: second language studies and clinical experience. Horwitz and Cope's research in Ikhsaniyah (2022), claimed that many language studies have conducted research about the effect of students' anxiety on student's English language skills, particularly in speaking. Certain researchers discovered that there was no meaningful impact between students' anxiety and students' English abilities. They indicated that students experiencing significant language anxiety often steer clear of different forms of challenging or complicated communication, whether in the exchange they express or the messages they interpret. According to Horwitz and Cope in Rifaldi (2024) about clinical experience, anxiety in students can make it difficult for them to focus while studying. Students may also become forgetful, which can prevent their ability to utilize the second language skills they have effectively developed. Moreover, students with anxiety disorders will experience physiological issues such as sweating and palpitation. In certain situations, this anxiety can lead students to miss class to escape the fear they experience while learning.

Gaiban and Elmenfi in Ikhsaniyah (2022) found that speaking the English language was the most significant difficulty experienced by students. Oral performance is difficult for many language learners to handle. Speaking in front of the class causes a lot of anxiety and fear in many students. They found it extremely

difficult to answer or talk in English while being able to understand when someone spoke it. Students who experience speaking anxiety typically act passively in class. Because active students overshadow them, they become less noticeable to the teacher since they do not communicate or interact much during the learning process. This symptom is prevalent among students suffering from anxiety. They often avoid class activities and hesitate to demonstrate their skills. The primary cause of speaking anxiety is a lack of confidence in their abilities, leading to feelings of nervousness, embarrassment, and fear of showcasing their speaking skills. They fear making mistakes while speaking, being ridiculed, and receiving negative feedback from their peers or teachers. Consequently, students choose to remain silent in class.

To conclude the explanation above, the research conducted by Manda (2021), "The Correlation of EFL Students' Speaking Anxiety and Their Speaking Performance, " showed how students' speaking performance is impacted by their anxiety. Learning a language requires both courage and ability and is crucial for measuring and improving students' English skills. Nonetheless, many students suffer from speaking anxiety and avoid any activities related to oral performance.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used qualitative method. This study was conducted at SMAN 13 Depok, Indonesia. The focus of this research is what causes students' anxiety in speaking English in SMA Negeri 13 Depok. The writers select 20 students from XI MIPA 3 at SMAN 13 Depok as sample of tis research. The research conducts speaking test to determine students' speaking skill in English based on a rubric that assesses pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency. Each student will be scored on a scale of 1-4 and will be categorized into very good to poor.

Table 3. Speaking Skill Rubric Assessment

Indicator		Score Indicator
Pronunciation	4	• Easy to understand and has a native speaker accent
	3	• Easy to understand even with a mother tongue accent
	2	• Pronunciation is not very clear, but can be understood by the listener
	1	• Unclear pronunciation
Grammar	4	• No or few grammatical errors
	3	• Sometimes there are errors, but not affect the meaning
	2	• Frequently uses grammatical errors
	1	• Using incorrect grammar

Vocabulary	4	• Using appropriate vocabulary and expressions
	3	• Sometimes uses inappropriate vocabulary that needs further explanation
	2	• Frequently uses inappropriate vocabulary
	1	• The vocabulary used is very limited and often repeats the same words
Fluency	4	• Speak very fluently
	3	• A little bit bothered by language issues
	2	• Often hesitate in speaking
	1	• Stop speaking for a long time

Data was also collected through the FLCAS (Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale) questionnaire to the respondents. The questionnaires contained questions about students' anxiety experiences. Each student should answer all the FLCAS questions, consisting of 20 questions distributed by selecting one of the options from four answer scales based on their own experience. And will be categorized into 3 main factors causing anxiety according to Horwitz in Ikhsaniyah (2022), namely communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation.

Table 4. FLCAS

No.	Indicator	Number of items	Total
1	Communication apprehension	1, 6, 9, 11, 16, 18	6
2	Test anxiety	2, 5, 8, 10, 12, 14, 19	7
3	Fear of negative evaluation	3, 4, 7, 13, 15, 17, 20	7
Total			20

In this research, the writers used triangulation method according to the types of triangulations referenced. In collecting data, the writers used methods by compiling speaking tests, questionnaires, and documentation. The writers obtain data from observations carried out during learning activities and conditions in the classroom. After that, the writers collected data by conducting a speaking test in the form of a presentation of material, questionnaires to all students in class XI MIPA 3.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Students' speaking test through a presentation assessment given by the teacher.
Students' speaking test was determine to measure students' speaking skill based on a rubric

assessment that was classified into four indicators, they are pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency. Each student will be scored on a scale of 1-4 and categorized into very good to poor.

Table 5. The result of students' speaking test

Name Code	Pronunciation	Indicator Grammar	Vocab	Fluency	Total	Category
AI	2	2	1	2	70	Average
ANR	2	2	2	2	80	Good
AB	2	2	2	1	70	Average
DTZ	2	2	2	2	80	Good
FDP	2	2	2	1	70	Average
JLG	2	2	2	2	80	Good
KNTT	2	2	2	2	80	Good
KA	2	1	1	1	50	Poor
MDNR	2	1	2	1	60	Average
NDA	2	1	2	2	70	Average
NA	2	2	2	2	80	Good
NAJ	2	2	2	1	70	Average
NSA	1	1	2	1	50	Poor
RAP	2	1	1	1	50	Poor
RNK	2	1	2	2	70	Average
RMA	2	2	2	2	80	Good
RSR	2	2	2	2	80	Good
SAZ	2	1	2	1	60	Average
SKM	2	2	2	2	80	Good
ZK	2	1	1	1	50	Poor

The results of the speaking skills assessment table show that 10 students are included in the good category and 4 students are in the less category, on average, most of the respondents are included in the Average category. In the assessment in the table, no one got the very good category because it is clear that students' ability to speak English is still lacking which may be caused by several factors. only a few students seem to have a good command of English.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the average student has the ability to speak English in the Average category and only a few reach the good category. Then the writers aim to find out more about the reasons why this can happen by providing a questionnaire about English speaking anxiety.

FLCAS Questionnaire

FLCAS (Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale) aims to find out more about the causes of students' anxiety in speaking English. It consist of 20 questions which is divided into three sections according to three factors of anxiety. The score will be calculated on a Likert scale of 1 (storngly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) and will be categorized into low, medium, and high.

Table 6. The total score and categorization

Name Code	Score	Communication Apprehension	Score	Test Anxiety	Score	Fear of Negative Evaluation
AI	16	High	18	High	21	High
ANR	14	Medium	17	High	17	High
AB	15	Medium	16	High	16	High
DTZ	11	Medium	22	High	16	High
FDP	17	High	17	High	20	High
JLG	19	High	21	High	21	High
KNTT	16	High	20	High	13	Medium
KA	17	High	21	High	21	High
MDNR	14	Medium	20	High	17	High

According to the table above, student 1 received a score of 16 in the communication apprehension anxiety section, 18 in test anxiety, and 21 in fear of negative evaluation. All three factors fall into the high anxiety category. However, the highest anxiety score is 21 in fear of negative evaluation, which indicates that student 1 experienced more fear of negative opinion, a bad impression, criticism, etc.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that about 70% of respondents have a high level of anxiety on communication apprehension that arises when they are unable to understand the information presented and also unable to convey information clearly when they communicate. Then, 100% of respondents have a high level of test anxiety that arises when they fear of failing an examination or test. Furthermore, about 90% of respondents fall into high level anxiety on fear of negative evaluation that arises when they fear of negative opinion, criticism, bad impression, or evaluation. This can impact their social condition, such as speaking in front of the class, a job interview, etc.

Discussion

This research found that most students from XI MIPA 3 of SMAN 13 Depok were at Average category of English speaking skill, and students with good category were in the minority. It can caused by lack of vocabulary, lack of self-confidence, etc. Then, the questionnaire results found that most students were at a high level of communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. Based on the data, there were only 10 respondents categorized at medium level in the communication apprehension section, then the rest were at high level anxiety of communication apprehension. This aligns with Horwitz's theory, which recognizes communication apprehension as a factor influencing speaking anxiety. Students facing communication anxiety might feel anxious, self-conscious, unsure, or unwilling to talk in English during class.

CONCLUSION

Based on these findings, the writers argue that many factors that cause students' speaking anxiety come from their negative beliefs. Thus, students' negative perceptions about speaking are identified as the main reason that causes their speaking anxiety. Based on the findings, the writers conclude several actions that students can take to reduce their anxiety: change the mindset, avoid negative thoughts before or during speaking, increase self-esteem, eliminate the fear of mistakes, and stop overthinking during oral exams.

In short, of the three anxiety factors mentioned, test anxiety is often the most common, especially among students. This anxiety arises from the pressure to achieve good results in exams and can affect academic performance. However, this experience can vary depending on the individual and the context. Understanding these factors can help teacher and related individuals in fostering a supportive educational atmosphere, which can enable learners to manage anxiety and improve their speaking skills effectively.

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