The Influence of Students’ Anxiety on Speaking Performance in EFL Large Class: A Survey Study

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the study is to examine the influence of anxiety on students’ speaking performance. The researchers adopted a quantitative approach and employed a survey to collect data. This study involved fifty-three students from the second semester of the English Literature program at a private university in Jakarta. To collect data, the researchers used both standard tests and questionnaire. A speaking test was conducted to obtain speaking score and the Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) questionnaire was employed to get anxiety score then a regression analysis was conducted. The result shows that there is an effect of anxiety on speaking performance in EFL Large class. It is proved that the value of $t_{count}$ > $t_{table}$ (negative/invisible side) (2.987 > 2.008) or $\text{Sig. value} < 0.05$ (0.004 < 0.05) so that $H_0$ is rejected and $H_a$ is accepted. The effect is negative because the $t_{count}$ is negative, meaning that if anxiety (X) increases, speaking skill (Y) will decrease. From the data that has been researched, it is found that a high level of anxiety will affect the ability to speak English. Collaboration among all stakeholders, especially teachers and students, is required to overcome anxiety and enhance their communication skills.

INTRODUCTION

English is a global lingua franca and a mode of international communication, and it is recognized as a foreign language in Indonesia. The pace of technological advancement is accelerating, so mastery of the English language is undeniably one of the keys to improving job opportunities and success (Maruf et al., 2021). As a result, Indonesia as part of the world community is aware of its importance. The implementation of English language teaching in Indonesian has begun a long time ago. Since it has become an international language, English is also studied as a foreign language in Indonesia (Rahayuningsih et al., 2022; Maruf & Anjely, 2020). Initially, English was solely taught at the higher education level, but as the necessity and popularity of English have grown, the curriculum of teaching English has evolved with the goal of enhancing English proficiency and mastery, particularly communication skills (Maruf, 2023; Mujayanah et al., 2023). We must have good English-speaking abilities to be able to communicate internationally. Fauzi & Asi (2023) proposed that the ability to produce and use language in
spoken interaction is a key component of one's linguistic competence.

The ability to express oneself effectively in front of an audience is often cited as the most challenging and complex of all other skills to acquire (Khairul & Putri, 2022; Arifin et al., 2022). Therefore, speaking becomes an exceptionally challenging task for EFL students (Maruf & Helingo, 2022). Everyone should practice public speaking despite its difficulty because it's the best way to get one's point across (Najiha & Sailun, 2021). A student's command of the English language can be gauged by how well they are able to express themselves grammatically and in context. Students with English language learning goals may run into snags along the way (Al-Khasawneh, 2016). It was difficult for many students of EFL to become fluent in the target language. Problems with grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency were commonplace difficulties they often faced (Fauzi, 2021; Purwantoro et al., 2021). Research indicates that 81.33% of students struggle with acquiring grammar and vocabulary (Syahdila & Trisno, 2023). However, Brown in Al-Khasawneh (2016) foreign language anxiety has been a topic of study for several academics since the 1970s, when it was first identified as a significant affective factor in second language acquisition. In addition, Juhana in Arifin (2017) stated that students may experience psychological problems when speaking, such as fear of making mistakes, shyness, anxiety, and a lack of confidence. In fact, the study revealed that 68.67% of students experienced difficulties in communicating due to anxiety (Syahdila & Trisno, 2023). Meanwhile, everyone needs to be proficient in English due to the demands of the modern world, particularly this generation.

Liu & Huang in Astuti & Haris (2018) reported that students' language worries are the most significant predictor of their academic outcomes. Furthermore, various forms of language anxiety have been linked to lower language skills and performance (Bensalem, 2017). Recent research into the topic of language anxiety and its effects on performance has revealed that it is the single most detrimental factor to successful language learning. Putri (2020) found these factors that make students anxious about speaking English: self-perception, class condition, and fear of making mistakes. The results showed that those factors are proven to hinder the development of students' speaking skills. Hasibuan & Irzawati (2020) An observation was made regarding the link between anxiety in public speaking and the subsequent performance. The presence of fear and nervousness induced by speaking anxiety can have an impact on the performance of oral language. Anxiety like this is a normal response to the pressures of taking part in such a task. The results also showed that the stress associated with public speaking had become intolerable. The majority of students encounter anxiety when engaging in oral English communication within the classroom, primarily due to limited linguistic knowledge, inadequate preparation, fear of errors, and concerns over potential ridicule from peers.

According to Torky in Saputra & Akib (2020), Communicating with others is defined as an interactive process wherein ideas, facts, and feelings are exchanged in an appropriate manner. Najiha & Sailun (Najiha & Sailun, 2021) Similarly, it was proposed that speaking is an everyday activity that involves two people interacting with one another through the use of words to convey meaning to one another. It's a way of talking that's both communal and influenced by its setting (Tiana et al., 2023). This means that the speakers must make good use of oral language throughout the entire activity in order to get their message across to the listeners. Brown & Yuke in Rao (2019) said that students will be evaluated most heavily on their ability to communicate verbally. Students spend a lot of time studying the language, but they still have trouble using it when they need to in real life situations (Rao, 2019). People from all walks of life recognize the value of polished public speaking skills and work hard to improve their own communication abilities.

Anxiety is one of the affective factors that can make public speaking difficult. Common descriptions of anxiety include feelings of nervousness, fear, tension, or stress. One of the most common mental illnesses is anxiety. Anxiety is typically the result of a physiological response to a stressful event. Horwitz & Cope in Damayanti & Listiyani (2020) anxiety has been defined as a state of increased autonomic nervous system activity accompanied by a subjective experience of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry. Another definition given by Sutarsyah (2017) Anxiety is a psychological phenomenon distinguished by the presence of physical, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral elements. In addition, Angela & Listiani cited in Damayanti & Listiyani (Damayanti & Listyani, 2020), anxiety is not a medical condition, but rather a learned response to life's unknowns. On the other hand, if one's anxiety levels are too high, they may become incapacitated.

Anxiety comes in a wide variety of flavors. Different classes, with some overlap, have been identified through research in the field of second language acquisition (Ulyah et al., 2021). People who are trying to learn a new language frequently experience anxiety. Trait anxiety, in which a person is prone to feeling anxious no matter the circumstances, is the first type of anxiety. Some people are more predisposed to this form of anxiety than others. Trait anxiety, then, is a general disposition toward feeling on edge all the time. Second, there's situational anxiety, which manifests as feelings of unease or tension in specific situations in response to external stimuli like the above-

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mentioned fear of verbal interaction by Machntyre & Gardner in (Al-Khasawneh, 2016). When speaking a foreign language (language anxiety) or taking a test (situational anxiety) can cause a person to feel uneasy. Besides, Horwitz & Cope cited in (Al-Khasawneh, 2016) anxiety about receiving a negative evaluation from other people was proposed as a third type of anxiety.

Horwitz et al. in James et al. (2020) a form of situational anxiety characterized by apprehension and tension in the ESL setting, it has been argued. This persistent nervousness is a cause for concern in any setting where students are learning a new language. Anxiety about learning a new language is known as "Foreign Language Anxiety" (FLA). Horwitz et. al in James et al. (James et al., 2020) stated that the Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) was developed specifically for use in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. There are three main causes of FLA, or apprehension when learning a foreign language, that have been identified: Anxiety about being judged negatively by others is related to a fear of negative evaluation, and anxiety about communicating with others is related to a fear of communicating with others (Najiha & Sailun, 2021). Horwitz and Cope’s 33-item Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) is the gold standard for gauging FLA. The items fall into two categories: positive and negative (Mitha et al., 2018).

Speaking English well is highly advantageous in many areas, but academics benefit the most. Because there are still many Indonesian students still struggle with communication, the researchers were driven to investigate one of the elements that affect student speaking and it is anxiety. The effect of anxiety on students’ speaking performance will be examined in this study by obtaining data of students’ anxiety and their speaking score and analyzed it based on determined research methodology. Subsequently, teachers will be able to use the study's findings as a reference to effectively manage students' anxiety and enhance their communication skills.

**METHOD**

The scientists employed a quantitative approach and carried out a survey to collect data. As indicated by Bryman, this is a research methodology that highly values numerical information (Rahman, 2020). This approach represents an investigation that involves the gathering and examination of data, with researchers assuming the roles of both participants and data sources. Instead of depending on individuals to uncover and interpret the implications of their own behaviors, quantitative studies assess how such behaviors can be quantified and classified (Rahman, 2020). Based on Check & Schutt in Ponto (2015), The term “survey method” encompasses the methodology of acquiring data by interrogating a representative sample of the population. In this type of investigation, the process of participant recruitment, data collection, and the selection of tools for measurement can adopt various approaches.

There were 53 participants enrolled in the English Literature program at a private university in Jakarta who took part in this investigation. The researchers utilized standardized assessments and surveys to gather their findings. Horwitz and Cope's Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) developed specifically for use in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, was administered to assess the anxiety levels of the respondents. The dialog and interview as speaking test were also conducted to obtain students’ speaking score. Prior to the formal data collection, 20 students were selected to test the accuracy and consistency of the measuring instruments. As proposed by Arikunto (2019), The survey's reliability was assessed utilizing the Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient technique, while the Alpha Cronbach coefficient was employed to determine the survey's internal consistency.

Data analysis was carried out to evaluate the research hypothesis. The data analysis process involves describing data for each research variable, performing the prerequisites tests, and testing the hypothesis. Either the prerequisites test or the classical assumption test needs to be run before a regression analysis can be performed to make sure the data is valid and trustworthy. The regression scatterplots can be examined for heteroscedasticity with the help of the glejser test, the residual normality test, and the linearity test, among others. To test the hypotheses, a straightforward regression analysis was performed in SPSS 20.0. SPSS creates a “coefficients table” to display the results of the regression line calculation. Additionally, a determination analysis was performed to ascertain the degree to which the independent variable influenced the dependent variable.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Data Description**

Anxiety about, and proficiency in, a foreign language are the independent variables (X1 and Y), respectively. This data description was used to calculate the minimum and maximum scores as well as the mean and standard deviation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tabel 1. Research Data Description</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>64.45</td>
<td>12.325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>87.83</td>
<td>4.367</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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This section also includes information on students' foreign language anxiety and speaking skill. Table 1 shows that most of the students have above-average anxiety and speaking scores.

Prerequisites Test of Regression Analysis

The classical assumption test is necessary before using linear regression. A linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables, a normal data distribution, a normal residual distribution, and the absence of heteroscedasticity are all necessary for the validity of this test. Below, we detail the findings of studies that used the classical assumption test.

1) Residual Normality Test

To determine if residual or confounding variables in a regression model follow a normal distribution, statisticians use the normality test. The t and F tests are well-known for assuming that the residual values are normally distributed. The Normal P-P Plot of regression is a standardized graph that can be used to detect it by examining the distribution of data from diagonal sources. If it clusters around the line and moves along the diagonal, the regression model is regular and can be used to predict the independent variables. Figure 1 displays the outcome of this investigation.

![Figure 1. Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual](image)

Kolmogorov-Smirnov's One Sample Test is another normality-checking option (Priyatno, 2014). The data is assumed to be normally distributed if the significance level (Asym Sig 2 tailed) is greater than 0.05. The data is not normally distributed if the significance value (Asym Sig 2 tailed) is less than 0.05. You can see the outcome in Table 2 below.

![Table 2. NPar Tests (Residual Normality Test)](image)

2) Heteroscedasticity Test

The purpose of the heteroscedasticity test is to determine if the residuals of different observations have unequal variances within the context of the regression model. Homoscedasticity, or the absence of heteroscedasticity, is a desirable feature of a good regression model. Examining the distribution of points on regression scatterplots for evidence of heteroscedasticity. Heteroscedasticity does not exist if the data points are dispersed above and below the 0 on the Y axis and there is no discernible pattern (Ghozali, 2016).

![Figure 2. Scatterplot of Heteroscedasticity Test](image)
heteroscedasticity. According to Gozali and colleagues (2016), heteroscedasticity is not present when the significance level between the independent variable and the residual absolute is greater than 0.05. Table 3 shows the final result.

The significance level of the independent variable in the heteroscedasticity test is 0.521 > 0.05, indicating that the regression model has no heteroscedasticity issues.

3) **Linearity Test**

The linearity of a relationship between two variables can be tested in this way. The Mean-Test for Linearity test in SPSS is used for this purpose. If the significance value in linearity is less than 0.05, then the relationship between the two variables is said to be linear; alternatively, if the significance value in deviation from linearity is greater than 0.05, then the relationship between the two variables is said to be linear (Priyatno, 2014).

Table 4. Linearity Test

The output shows that the relationship between X and Y is linear. This is because 0.004 is less than 0.05, the threshold for statistical significance (at F Linearity).

**Hypothesis Test**

1) **t – test result**

The t test in multiple regression is used to determine whether the regression model of the independent variable partially has a significant effect on the dependent variable. In addition, the value of table can be seen in the statistical t table at df = n-2 or 53-2 = 51 (k is number of independent variables). With a significance of 0.05, and a 2-sided test. Obtained result ttable = 2.008. The result can be seen in Table 5 below.

Table 5. t- Test Result

Table 5 shows that anxiety affect speaking. This is proved that the value of t is calculated > t table (negative side / invisible side) (2.987 > 2.008) or Sig.value < 0.05 (0.004 < 0.05) so Ho is rejected and Ha is accepted. The effect is negative because the tcount value is negative, it means that if anxiety (X) increases then speaking (Y) will decrease.

2) **Determination analysis (R Square)**

Determination analysis is a statistical method for determining the relative importance of the independent and dependent variables. An independent variable’s simultaneous impact on a dependent variable can be calculated with determination analysis.

Table 6. Determination Analysis (R Square) Result

Table 6 demonstrates that anxiety contributes 0.149, or 14.9%, towards speaking, with the remaining 85.1% being influenced by unknown variables.

**Discussion**

Many studies have looked at English language anxiety as a topic for research on English language learning. The results of this study show a statistically significant link between anxiety and public speaking competence in large-enrollment English as a foreign language classes. Based on the findings of this study, it is clear that experiencing significant anxiety can have a negative impact on one's English language skills. Fear of public speaking is illustrated in Table 5. To show that Ho is rejected and Ha is accepted, we show that the value of tcount > table (negative/invisible side) (2.987 > 2.008) or Sig. value 0.05 (0.004 < 0.05). A negative tcount indicates a negative effect, so an increase in X also leads to a decrease in Y (speaking).

This finding corresponds with Brown’s theory stated in Al-Khasawneh (Al-Khasawneh, 2016) showing that worry is a major emotional barrier to learning a foreign language. As a result of its complexity and the need for practice and exposure, public speaking is often ranked as one of the most difficult and complex skills to acquire (Khairul & Putri, 2022). Speaking up becomes a major obstacle for those learning a foreign language. Speaking in front of an
audience can be nerve-wracking, but it’s essential for getting one’s point across (Najiha & Sailun, 2021). Students’ command of the English language can be evaluated by observing how well they use standard language conventions when expressing themselves. Students who have trouble communicating in a foreign language often do so because they are uneasy using the target language in that setting (Anwar et al., 2023). Students may worry about their ability to communicate because they lack proficiency in the target language. Since many students, especially those in larger classes, worry about being misunderstood or misrepresented by their peers, anxiety about speaking and listening in class is common.

When there are a lot of people learning at once, like there would be in a large class, everyone gets nervous. Table 6 reveals that anxiety contributes 0.149 or 14.9% to speaking, while the remaining factors were not investigated. It is in line with theory Juhana in Arifin (2017) that the psychological problems in speaking faced by the students are fear of mistake, shyness, anxiety, and lack of confidence. Anxiety is a fear of negative evaluation, manifested by worry about how others see you, avoiding situations in which you might be judged, and assuming the worst about yourself. There is an eerie silence and unease in the classroom right before a student is called on to speak in front of the group. The fear of being judged negatively by others may play a role. It is not just about how teachers assess their students, but also how their peers respond to those assessments. Their biggest fear is that their educators and classmates will think poorly of them.

This supports other research indicating that many learners of FL have difficulty becoming fluent in the language’s native tongue. Common challenges they face include language barriers in the form of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency issues (Fauzi, 2021). Liu & Huang in Astuti & Haris (Astuti & Haris, 2018) language worries are the most significant predictor of academic success, the authors write. Furthermore, it was discovered that various forms of language anxiety negatively impacted language performance (Bensalem, 2017). Several recent studies that looked into the topic of language anxiety and how it relates to performance in a foreign language all came to the same conclusion: language anxiety is the most detrimental factor for language achievement. Putri (Putri, 2020) found that students’ self-perception, classroom conditions, and fear of making mistakes were the three most significant causes of English anxiety. Hasibuan & Irzawati (Hasibuan & Irzawati, 2020) remarked upon the correlation between public speaking anxiety and performance. Performance in oral communication will be hindered by the anxiety and nervousness caused by speech anxiety. Anxiety like this is a normal response to the pressures of taking part in such a task. The results also show that the stress of public speaking has increased anxiety to unhealthy levels. Because of insufficient vocabulary, lack of preparation, fear of making mistakes, and not wanting classmates to laugh at them, most students experience anxiety when speaking English in class.

CONCLUSION

The results indicate that anxiety has an impact on students' ability to speak up in large EFL classes. Students who have trouble communicating typically have a negative attitude toward speaking English in an EFL setting. Students may worry about their ability to communicate because of their limited command of the English language. Since many students, especially those in larger classes, worry about being misunderstood or misrepresented by their peers, speaking anxiety in class is common. When there are a lot of people learning at once, like there would be in a large class, everyone gets nervous.

This study suggests that lecturers should prepare some efficient strategies and address any anxiety felt by students to help them overcome nervousness related to speaking skills. Additionally, they can create a lively ambiance in the class, fostering a pleasant mood. Students who feel pleased and calm will learn effectively. The lecturers can incorporate humor or encourage language to create a comfortable class atmosphere and reduce student nervousness. Students with high anxiety levels need to become more relaxed. Furthermore, when their peers make mistakes in class, students refrain from mocking or laughing at each other when mistakes are made, instead opting to provide support and motivation.

Policymakers and curriculum developers can also utilize the research findings to enhance English language course curriculum and syllabus design. They should consider students experiencing anxiety and adjust parts of the curriculum to help them learn how to manage anxiety during the teaching-learning process. In addition, Institutions' higher authorities should offer training for English teachers and lecturers to help them detect students experiencing language anxiety. By doing this, they can adjust the lesson plan to accommodate students who experience anxiety in speaking.

To what extent other factors contribute to students' reluctance to speak in English, this study does not yet do justice. To help students feel more comfortable speaking English in front of large groups, researchers hope to see more in-depth studies in the future.

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