AN ANALYSIS OF SPEAKING ANXIETY DURING PRESENTATION PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to determine the level of students' speaking anxiety during performance presentations, and factors that influence students' speaking anxiety. A mixed methods approach was used to explore and explain the data on student anxiety. The participants of this research are students in the third semester of class 2022 of the English language education study program at Tanjungpura University. The Foreign Language Scale Anxiety (FLSA) questionnaire and interviews were data collection tools. Based on the questionnaire results, students' anxiety levels were classified into three categories: mild, moderate, and severe. Additionally, the interview results highlighted several factors contributing to students' speaking anxiety during performance presentations, including communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety. Students employ various strategies to mitigate their anxiety during presentations, such as controlling their breathing, calming themselves, self-encouragement, prayer, and regular practice.
Keywords*: Speaking Anxiety, Presentation Performance, Descriptive Study.*

INTRODUCTION

According to Harmer (2007), Speaking performance covers various aspects that are important in a person's oral communication abilities. This research focuses on collecting data on one of the courses in semester 3, namely "Speaking for Academic Presentations". In this course, students are designed to understand public speaking theory and develop public speaking skills, especially in the form of informative and persuasive speeches. According to Santoso and Taufiq (2015), persuasive speech and informative speech are included in the type of speaking performance called "presentation". In this research, the researcher found that students experienced speaking anxiety during their performance presentations.

Speaking anxiety is a prevalent issue among students learning English as a foreign language, particularly during performance presentations. This anxiety can hinder language acquisition and negatively impact students' academic performance and confidence. Various factors contribute to speaking anxiety, Horwitz (1986), figured out that there are three kinds of anxiety in language learning. They are communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. Anxiety is a complex, multifaceted experience that contains a combination of different, yet interrelated elements. According to Leutenberg and Liptak (2011), anxiety affects individuals in the following ways: 1) physical symptoms, 2) cognitive aspects, 3) emotional effects, and 4) behavioral effects.

The Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Scale (FLSAS) was developed by Öztürk, and Gürbüz (2014), has been widely used to assess speaking anxiety in different contexts. However, this study aims to adapt and validate the FLSAS specifically for measuring anxiety during performance presentations among third-semester students in the English Language Education Study Program batch 2022 at Tanjungpura University. The subjects of this research were students in the third semester of the Department of English Education at Tanjungpura University for the 2023/2024 academic year. This study includes all 95 students from the class of 2022. Data collection was conducted through the

use of questionnaires and interviews. Based on the explanation, the researcher had a great intention to analyze the level and the factors that cause students' speaking anxiety in English subject presentation performance.

METHODS

The research adopted a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative and qualitative data to gain a comprehensive understanding of speaking anxiety among students. The Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Scale (FLSAS) questionnaire, adapted from Öztürk and Gürbüz (2014), consists of 18 items that have been adjusted to suit the research and then used to measure anxiety levels. The researcher found that there was 1 item that was considered invalid regarding the subject taken. Therefore, the researcher will only use 17 items out of 18 items. Therefore, the researcher revised the items and carried out revalidation to test the validity. Apart from carrying out expert assessments, the distribution of the questionnaire is intended as a trial or try-out. This trial is called a pilot test or pilot study (Sugiyono 2006). The researcher conducted a pilot study to ensure the reliability and validity of the scale measurements. Scale reliability was assessed by acceptable Cronbach's alpha scores using SPSS v26 with 27 students. According to Ferdiana (2018), the research instrument is to be reliable if Cronbach's Alpha value is > 0.60.

After that, the data from the questionnaire was collected from 95 students from English language education Universitas Tanjungpura with a Google form questionnaire. The questionnaire is one of the common devices for collecting information and a form or instrument including a set of questions and secure answers that respondents (from a specific population) fill to give the researcher information needed for the study (Taherdoost 2021). The researcher used the Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Scale (FLSAS) questionnaire from Öztürk and Gürbüz (2014). This has been adapted and adjusted to the needs of this research, which has been tested for validity using the Cronbach alpha value. The questionnaire used is a questionnaire that has been adjusted so that all parts of this questionnaire are included in the unfavorable group. The researcher distributes questionnaires to students to learn about their speaking anxiety levels. The anxiety scale consists of 17 items with a 5-point Likert scale from Rensis Likert (1932), if students answer questions with "Strongly Agree" then students get a score of 5, then if students answer "Agree" students get a score of 4 if students answer "Neutral" students get a score of 3 if students answered "Disagree" students got a score of 2, and if students answered "strongly disagree" then the score obtained will be 1. And then the data obtained was collected and calculated using SPSS so that the results showed severe, moderate, and mild levels of anxiety.

After collecting quantitative data through questionnaires, qualitative data was collected by conducting in-depth interviews with 9 students who were willing to be interviewed representing different anxiety levels (mild, moderate, severe). The interviews were transcribed, coded, and analyzed to identify themes and patterns. After finding out the level of the students with the questionnaire, the researcher found out the factors faced by the students in speaking English during the interview. The factors found are reinforcements of students' anxiety levels. According to Creswell (2014), qualitative interviews can provide additional context and details that enrich the quantitative data from questionnaires. In this research, after collecting quantitative data through questionnaires, qualitative data was collected by conducting in-depth interviews with students who showed severe, moderate, and mild levels of speaking anxiety. Some students are afraid of

negative evaluation, communication apprehension, and test anxiety. Then, the questionnaire consists of 17 items and is divided into three categories by Horwitz and Cope (1986).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study of anxiety in the speaking performance of English subjects in the third semester of Universitas Tanjungpura and what are the factors that students' anxiety in speaking performance in terms of presentations in front of classmates and discussions related to the description and explanation of the findings. Based on questionnaires and interviews that have been conducted, there are various levels of anxiety and several factors that influence students when giving presentations performance.

To analyze the level of students' speaking anxiety, FLCAS (Foreign Language Class Anxiety Scale) was used together with the Likert Scale. Participants' responses were scored such that higher scores indicated severe anxiety, scores between high and low indicated moderate anxiety and lower scores indicated mild anxiety. According to Öztürk and Gürbüz (2014), a total score of more than 72 demonstrated a severe level of speaking anxiety; a total score ranging from 54 to 72 presented a moderate level of speaking anxiety, and participants who had a total score of less than 54 showed a mild level of foreign language speaking anxiety. After calculating all the items of scales obtained from the questionnaire, the researcher got the results of students speaking anxiety levels.

Table 1. Overall Level of Anxiety
Adapted from (Öztürk and Gürbüz 2014)

Range	Level	Percentages
Less than 54	Mild	25.3%
Between 54 – 72	Moderately	66.3%
More than 72	Severe	8.4%

Based on Table 1 the results from the FLSAS questionnaire revealed that the majority of students showed that 66.3% experienced moderate anxiety during English presentations, while 8.4% reported severe anxiety and 25.3% mild anxiety. This indicates that speaking anxiety is a significant issue for a substantial portion of students in the program.

After that, the question items were divided into category items from Horwitz and Cope (1986), and qualitative data from interviews provided deeper insight into the factors that contribute to speaking anxiety. The main factors identified are Communication Apprehension, Test Anxiety, and Fear of Negative Evaluation. The researchers selected 9 participants from 95 students because based on several students who experience anxiety in speaking English based on the FLCAS questionnaire, these 9 students have agreed to be interviewed. The interviewees are 3 students from the category of students with mild levels of anxiety, 3 students at the moderate level, and 3 students from the category of students who have a severe level of language anxiety.

From the categorization carried out, the researcher accumulated the results of the questionnaire to calculate the average of the factors mentioned. So, it produces the percentage below:

Table 2. Results of Category-Speaking Anxiety

Anxiety Categorize	Percentages
Communication Apprehension	36.3%
Test Anxiety	17.3%
Fear of Negative Evaluation	46.4%

Table 2 shows the results of categories that make students experience speaking.anxiety. With communication apprehension results of 36.3%, test anxiety 17.3%, and fear of negative evaluation 46.4%. From this statement, we can conclude that the dominating factor in making students experience speaking anxiety is fear of negative evaluation. This means that 46.4% of students agree that the factor that causes them to experience speaking anxiety when performing presentations is fear of negative evaluation.

Then the qualitative data from the interviews provided deeper insight into the factors that contributed to the speaking anxiety conveyed. The results of the interviews were packaged with efforts to strengthen the data from the questionnaire. Meanwhile, the communication appreciation factor was strengthened by interview data from ANP "feelings of fear and panic, body began to tremble slightly, feet and hands felt cold." NNF and NA have similar physical symptoms, namely "feeling my body starts to shake, panicking, cramping, and dizziness". This is similar to NA's statement, "Well, my hands are shaking, sometimes cold liquid comes out. And I start a lot before the presentation that I prepare so that I don't make mistakes." AN also mentioned feeling "tense and nervous, and my heart was racing. Sometimes I even have difficulty speaking clearly or remembering the points of my presentation." This statement is included in the category of communication apprehension and is included in the physical symptom anxiety criteria. This is a physical manifestation of the anxiety that a person experiences when speaking or communicating in tense situations such as presentations.

Test anxiety shows that the majority of respondents experience severe anxiety regarding making mistakes in English presentations because they are worried it will impact their grades. This indicates that concern about the impact on grades is the main factor influencing anxiety levels in presentation situations. As FR said, "Actually, I'm afraid that if I forget my presentation material, it will damage my group's grades." FR's fear of forgetting presentation material, leading to potential damage to the group's grades, aligns with the cognitive aspect of test anxiety, particularly the fear of failure and its consequences. This fear reflects a strong sense of responsibility and concern for the overall outcome, adding to the pressure of the presentation, which is a common feature of test anxiety.

And fear of negative evaluation reflects the effects of behavioral and cognitive aspects, where students are afraid of making mistakes when speaking and feel less competent than their classmates. This is supported by SB's admission that fear is a natural human response before a presentation, "In my opinion, feeling afraid when presenting is a natural human response. Personally of course I'm afraid something will go wrong," in line with the general fear of negative evaluation, which indicates a worry about something going wrong or not meeting expectations, which can lead to a negative evaluation.

The researcher found that communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation were the main causes for most students to experience anxiety. Most students responded that they had problems with anxiety because they fear of negative evaluation. Fear of misinterpretation or communication apprehension was also a factor that is felt to be a common cause for students. This study was similar to the findings from Santriza (2018). He found three factors that caused speaking anxiety: communication

apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation (Santriza 2018). This is in line with the statement that communication apprehension is a fear of communicating with others and is one of the biggest factors that contribute to anxiety (Horwitz and Cope 1986).

Meanwhile, many studies have found a negative correlation between students' English skills and speaking anxiety, one of which is research conducted by Mulyani (2011). Mulyani found a negative correlation between students' abilities and student anxiety in her study. She found that students who experienced high anxiety were students who had low English language skills (Mulyani 2011). This factor was related to students' fear of misunderstandings that may occur when speaking English, both when expressing and capturing information. Due to the factor of fear of negative evaluation, the students get anxious because they are not ready to accept other people's evaluations when they are practicing speaking in class. Even, they keep thinking that other students are better in language than themselves. From the interviews that have been carried out, the researcher also found that students employ various strategies to manage their speaking anxiety during presentations. These strategies include: Controlling their breathing, Calming themselves, Self-encouragement, Prayer, and Regular practice.

CONCLUSION

This research reveals that speaking anxiety is a common problem among students studying languages, especially in academic presentation situations. Through the use of questionnaires and interviews, it was found that the majority of third-semester students at the Tanjungpura University English Language Education Program experienced speaking anxiety at various levels: mild, moderate, and severe. Based on the data collected, 66.3% of students experienced moderate anxiety, 8.4% experienced severe anxiety, and 25.3% experienced mild anxiety. From the interview results, it was found that the dominant factor that causes speaking anxiety is fear of negative evaluation with a percentage of 46.4%, followed by communication apprehension at 36.3%, and test anxiety at 17.3%. In addition, this research also identified several strategies that students use to manage their anxiety during presentations, such as controlling breathing, calming down, encouraging themselves, praying, and practicing regularly.

Based on the conclusions above, this research provides several suggestions for improving the quality of English learning in the classroom. For lecturers, it is recommended to integrate techniques for managing presentation anxiety into the curriculum, provide constructive and supportive feedback to increase self-confidence, and allocate additional time for presentation practice and simulations. For students, it is beneficial to make thorough preparations before presentations, take special courses or training to improve speaking skills, and seek support from friends or mentors to overcome anxiety. For other researchers, it is suggested to further explore the factors that cause anxiety during presentationsS, develop more effective strategies or intervention programs to reduce speaking anxiety, and conduct comparative studies between students from various majors to identify differences in speaking anxiety levels. In this research, the researcher still has limitations in collecting data such as only the class of 2022 participating in this research. It is hoped that other researchers can progress or overcome the limitations of this research.

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