

Exploring Speaking Anxiety of Non-English Department Students

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Abstract: The study's goal is to identify the barriers to speaking that EFL learners face at the tertiary level. Speaking anxiety is one of the issues. The levels and factors of speaking anxiety become the focus of this research. This study also investigates speaking anxiety factors experienced by EFL learners. Three factors contribute to speaking anxiety: communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and a lack of selfconfidence. The Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Scale (FLSAS) was adopted to reveal the degree of speaking anxiety. The semi-structured interview was conducted with nine students to explore the source of anxiety. This study involved 81 participants from the Informatics Engineering department students at State Polytechnic of Malang. The findings revealed that Informatics Engineering department students demonstrated a moderate level of speaking anxiety. Furthermore, the study found that low self-confidence is among the highest average of speaking anxiety, followed by fear of negative evaluation and communication apprehension.



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INTRODUCTION

Speaking ability is still considered the primary indicator to measure the EFL learner outputs in Indonesia. People tend to regard someone as a fluent English user if they communicate effectively in the target language. The tendency exists in many Indonesianbased industries, which frequently assess their candidate's proficiency by conducting an English interview as one of the critical stages in hiring new employees. They underline speaking ability over other skills. This practice has demonstrated that English proficiency was regarded as the main output of language skills.

Most EFL learners in Indonesia believe they are struggling to learn a foreign language because of the limited time to practice English. The majority of students speak Indonesian as well as their native languages daily. They might have little time to practice when getting into an English course or attending English lessons at school. As a result, most of them struggle to develop their language proficiency skills.

Many EFL learners assume they need extra effort to study a foreign language. Some researchers found the effort as the source of problems in learning a foreign language. Sometimes EFL learners found themselves unready to attend English class.

They are nervous when performing English in class. Some studies on this phenomenon have resulted in language anxiety. Horwitz (2001) assumed that all foreign language students

experience the same anxiety during the learning process. Some researchers in recent decades have initiated foreign language anxiety in the Indonesian context. Male (2018) discovered that their students experienced high levels of anxiety while speaking in class. Subekti (2018) investigated the relationship between language anxiety and student speaking performance, and the participants demonstrated high anxiety in their classroom participation as a result.

Given the significance of English as a foreign language, students might believe that speaking is one of the most challenging skills to master. A foreign language is different from their native language. In other words, mastering spoken English as well as using them in communication can be very stressful for EFL students. Most students might speak when they are forced by their teacher. Most conditions put pressure on students. The truth is that fluency in any language requires many hours of practice. Learning a foreign language is sometimes difficult since they do not use language naturally as well as their spoken in the native language.

Speaking is one of the most productive skills for EFL learners to be mastered. Mastering speaking is essential in spoken language when delivering messages that exhibit characteristics different from those of written language. In practice, EFL learners may find it difficult to speak English at first.

Speaking is essential in spoken language when delivering utterances that differ from written language. EFL learners, such as undergraduate students in the Informatics Engineering department at the State Polytechnic of Malang, may find it difficult to speak English at first. Most of them are rarely performed in spoken English due to some factors: limited time for practice, an unsupported learning environment, and anxiety about learning a foreign language. The last point is the main focus of this research to be discovered.

Most EFL learners consider speaking difficult to master because it requires interactions. Other fundamental skills, such as reading, listening, and writing, can be practiced independently, but students cannot practice speaking on their own. In other words, students need the effort to find someone with whom they can practice speaking. Nunan (2000:39) states that one of the most critical aspects of learning a second or foreign language is speaking. Furthermore, he observes that the success of language learning is measured by the ability to hold a conversation in the target language.

As for mastering spoken English, speaking with peers and even foreigners in their language is the objective of many EFL learners. However, the fundamental issue is they should speak in the target language. Consequently, some issues of the shortcoming of student confidence or avoiding making errors become a consideration (Boonkit, 2010). Students may be burdened or stressed as they were expected to speak in a second or foreign language before they are fluent.

The problems in speaking are also found in Informatics Engineering students at State Polytechnic of Malang. The output students are required to master English for communicative purposes. During their studies, all undergraduate students in the Informatics Engineering department take three different English courses. The expected output from the courses is that they can communicate in English. Making the student participate and actively respond to their spoken performance is a challenge. Students discovered they did not participate in the classroom activity because of obstacles related to their speaking performance. Since they lack practice, their classroom participation is considered low. Some students found themselves feeling insecure when speaking English or being concerned about unfavorable perceptions from their peers as a result of their low fluency. This situation may drive stress for students. Ellis (2015) stated that the learner with inadequate linguistic knowledge (grammar, pronunciation, and lexis) tends to have high anxiety levels. The intricate situation in the learning setting withdraws students from the expected learning objectives.

When learning a foreign language, most EFL students struggle with the fear of speaking. They believe that learning a foreign language is difficult because they are not native speakers of the target language. The purpose of this study is to investigate the speaking anxiety factors experienced by non-English department students at the State Polytechnic of Malang's Information Technology department. This study will also look into the factors that contribute to EFL learner speaking anxiety at the tertiary level.

THEORETICAL SUPPORT

Language Anxiety

Teaching speaking in an EFL context means administering to learners mastering communication skills that must also be developed and practiced on their own. In spoken English performance, most students encountered difficulties in their language classroom. The issues are related to settings that trigger anxiety in students. According to MacIntyre & Gardner (1989) anxiety is a feeling of worry and emotional reaction that occurs while learning and using a second or foreign language.

Horwitz (2001) argued that most foreign language learners encounter this phenomenon, called "language anxiety." This is why there has been so much interest in research in the past decades. As foreign language learners, students must learn many parts of speech to master the English spoken language. Students may find the learning process stressful in some ways. Students may become frustrated while learning proper spelling, vocabulary, word pronunciation, and parts of speech. Ozturk and Gurbuz (2013) explained that this situation caused the learner to be unable to perform their speaking due to anxiety. When students are unable to communicate effectively and persuasively, whether in or out of the classroom, they become aware of their anxiety (Mokhtar, 2020). This condition explains how the barriers in language learning occur. Some students might know their anxiety, and some of them might not since they were forced to acquire English. They don't understand the unrevealed problems in learning a foreign language if anxiety does exist.

Foreign Language Anxiety

(Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986) discovered that foreign language anxiety sourced from three factors: Communication comprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety are all factors to consider. The students are hesitant to communicate in a second or foreign language, particularly when it comes to skills that require direct responses (listening and speaking). Students with severe anxiety tend to avoid communication as much as possible. The negative evaluation leads to the learner experiencing errors and mistakes in language learning as a threat. Students who are afraid of negative evaluations prefer to remain invisible by withdrawing from class activities. Learners experiencing test anxiety regard foreign language learning as unintended, and they are unwilling to improve their communication skills.

Horwitz (2001) argued that most foreign language learners encounter this phenomenon, called "language anxiety." This is why there has been so much interest in research in the past decades. Anxiety occurs when a person is concerned about something that could affect their performance. Previous research has found that non-native students frequently experience anxiety in language classroom settings. According to (Horwitz et al., 1986), anxiety refers to the learner's feelings of tension, worry, and apprehension. (Horwitz et al., 1986) also discussed the specifics of foreign language anxiety, such as community apprehension, negative evaluation, and test anxiety.

The first is apprehension about communicating. Students are unable to express themselves in the target language at this occasion (foreign language). The inability to express oneself or comprehend another person causes frustration and anxiety. The second point is the fear of being judged negatively. When an EFL learner is concerned about their performance and is unsure of what they are saying in class, they may be reluctant to make a good impression. The third point is test anxiety, or fear of academic evaluation. The pedagogical requirements of the school and teacher require that the student be assessed on aspects of proficiency while acquiring that proficiency.

Speaking Anxiety

The unsettled emotions and personality qualities that affect a learner's performance in the classroom are known as anxiety. Learners often feel anxious when participating in class activities and expressing themselves in a foreign language. Anxiety can manifest as a mental condition or as a personality feature that reduces a learner's productivity. How the learners consider a scenario or activity and how essential it is to them will determine their level of anxiety. Therefore, it is crucial to concentrate on the origins of anxiety, which are covered below, to determine how it may influence a learner's performance.

An EFL learner may experience nervousness, sweating, and anxiety when required to speak in English, such as when answering questions in spoken English or delivering a presentation in front of a class. In many cases, this feeling has even hit the speaker's state of mind long before they start to speak up. In the literature, this type of situation is regarded as "speaking anxiety." When dealing with the spoken language, EFL learners frequently experience anxiety. Foreign language learners experience speaking anxiety when asked to perform spontaneous activities in front of the class or during on-the-spot assessments (Price, 1991). Furthermore, Price (1991) and MacIntyre (2017) explain that two main reasons why learners experience speaking anxiety are their fear of making wrong pronunciation and their worries about being humiliated by their peers as a result of such errors.

The Factors that caused Speaking Anxiety Communication Apprehension

Students' communication apprehension is one of the causes of their speaking difficulties. Shyness has generated by fear or anxiety about communicating with others and is linked to communication apprehension. Communication apprehension arises in language learning from personal issues of the learner when they encounter difficulties in the learning process. They struggle to understand the utterances or to make others understand what they were talking about. Communication anxiety is known as a problem with interpersonal communication ability Mohamed Noor, Rafek, Megat Khalid, & Mohammad (2015). When a learner is afraid to talk it has less control over how they respond to communicative situations.

Fear of Negative Evaluation

Fear of negative evaluation is the fear of being negatively evaluated by others. It also refers to the desire to avoid evaluative situations or the unwillingness of others to criticize one's performance. Peer evaluation is a nightmare for students who are afraid of negative feedback. They would uncomfortable when they were evaluated by their peers. This situation increased students' anxiety about their ability to perform well. Even when performing in groups, students must remain silent and restrained to avoid negative judgment from their peers.

Self-Confidence

Students' anxiety can be classified as a result of personality traits. This issue is related to the student's upcoming performance. A second or foreign language learner may succeed if their self-confidence is strong (Du, 2009). Students who can manage and have a strong sense of self-confidence can deal with any situation in the classroom. Students with a lack of selfconfidence are unable to control their performance in the classroom because they avoid making any errors that are part of the learning process. When students are worrying about making mistakes and feeling humiliated, it indicates that they are not achieving the target language (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). Moreover, socially anxious learners are worried about humiliating or embarrassing themselves in front of others (Zhiping & Paramasivam, 2013). So some students tend to hinder their ability to avoid unimagined responses or acts when they are unable to perform speaking fluently. Confidence is one of the personal factors associated with anxiety (Park & Lee, 2005). A language learner's proficiency automatically improves when they demonstrate fluency in the target language. A language learner who feels inadequate and unconfident in the target language, on the other hand, will see their proficiency suffer as well as their personal confidence. Speaking performance is linked to self-confidence in some ways (Zhang, 2001).

At the tertiary level, similar research has been conducted on non-English department students. Indrianty (2016) discovered student anxiety in speaking among hotel and tourism colleges in Bandung. Her study looked into the nature and source of anxiety. She found three types of anxiety: communication anxiety, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. She found that a lack of vocabulary and preparation contributed to students' anxiety when speaking. To reduce anxiety, she suggested the lecturer improve teaching strategies. Toubot, Hock Seng, & Binti Atan Abdullah (2018) found various types of anxiety among EFL learners in Libya in their research on fourth-year English department students. They revealed communication anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, and low self-confidence among Libyan students. The findings showed that most Libyan students had moderate to severe EFL speaking anxiety. Furthermore, they observed that the factor of low self-confidence received the highest average, followed by the factors of fear of negative evaluation and communication apprehension. The most recent study of speaking anxiety was conducted by Pakpahan & Gultom (2020). Their study investigated the students' speaking anxiety during the online learning of undergraduate students. Their research involved 30 participants, all university students majoring in English education. According to their findings, the students demonstrated 30% with a high level of anxiety, 63,3% with a moderate level of anxiety, and 6,6% with a low level of anxiety. Most of the students considered have a moderate level of anxiety. The number of participants with high anxiety levels decreased after they spoke through online activities.

METHOD

This study employed a sequential explanatory mixed method, which combines quantitative and qualitative research. This study is known as a sequential explanatory because it used a two-phase design in which quantitative data was collected beforehand, followed by qualitative data. The purpose of the qualitative results is to explain and interpret the quantitative findings (Ivankova et al., 2006).

The current study was carried out during the academic year 2021-2022, with 81 non-English department students in the Informatics Engineering Study Program at State Polytechnic of Malang. The researcher selected first-year students since they took two English courses during their first semester. They were more likely to be more familiar with English after taking two English classes this year. The participants were chosen using the cluster random sampling method. The data on student anxiety was collected using the FLCAS (Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale) as proposed by Oztürk and Gürbüz (2014). The scale has been organized using a Likert Scale with responses ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. These scales were distributed to determine the level of speaking anxiety among students.

The FLCAS, which consists of 18 statements, is used to collect quantitative data. Data was gathered using an instrument that employed a 5-point Likert scale for each item. The overall score based on each respondent's responses to each item on the Likert scale is computed for the first research question. Consequently, the overall score for the 18 items varied from 18 to 90 for each respondent (one point for each item equals 18 points of minimum score in total, whereas five points for each item equals 90 of maximum score).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

According to the findings in Table 1, the majority of students had a moderate amount of speaking anxiety. From the questionnaire, 81 participants showed results, 44,44 percent of the individuals scored between 54 and 72, indicating a moderate level of speaking anxiety. Additionally, 38.30 percent of the students scored lower than 54, which suggests a low level of speaking fear, compared to only 17,26 percent of the students, who had a high level of speaking anxiety.

Table 1. Level of Anxiety of Participants				
Level of Anxiety	Percentage	Number of		

		respondents
Low (< 54)	38.30	31
Moderate (54 – 72)	44,44	36
High (> 72)	17,26	14
Total	100 %	81

No	Statements	SD	D	N	Α	SA
8	I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.	3	9	31	24	14
11	I can feel my heart pounding when I am going to be called on in English classes.	5	20	34	15	7
16	I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules I have to learn to speak English.	7	24	35	12	3
4	I get frightened when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in English.	3	21	26	19	12
7	I feel nervous while speaking English with native speakers.	3	7	21	32	18
12	I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do.	1	9	25	23	23
14	I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in English classes.	1	12	36	22	10

Figure 1. Communication Apprehension Percentages

In this point, students find it difficult to employ proper communication in the classroom. Some students struggle with speaking because they are unable to communicate effectively. Most participants become nervous in some situations, like when their lecturer calls their name to answer a question or reads aloud the text. Sometimes students struggle to participate in the discussion because they are not aware of certain patterns in speaking. When students were unable to respond to their peers or lecturers, they became frustrated and this affected their speaking performance.

No	Statements	SD	D	Ν	Α	SA
18	I get nervous when the English teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.	1	8	41	22	9
2	I am afraid of making mistakes in English class.	2	11	26	30	12
6	I get embarrassed to volunteer answers in English classes.	1	15	35	21	9
10	I am afraid that my English teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	5	29	30	14	3
17	I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak English.	9	28	20	14	10

Figure 2. Fear of Negative Evaluation Percentages

If their lecturer asks them to answer or ask a question, students pretend to be silent. They become anxious when they are unable to prepare a question or answer. Another factor that contributes to negative evaluation is when the student avoids making mistakes, as a result of which they do not receive feedback on their speaking performance. Another reason that makes students remain silent during the class, they feel uncomfortable when making an error and get jerked by their classmates. Another reason students remain silent in lessons is that they are embarrassed to make mistakes in front of their classmates. Students believe that if they do not make any mistakes during an activity, they will be able to save for the rest of the semester. This negative experience with learning a foreign language may linger in the student's memory.

No	Statements	SD	D	Ν	Α	SA
13	I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other students.	3	15	25	29	9
1	I am never quite sure of myself when I am speaking in English.	2	19	29	21	10
5	I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English classes.	3	12	29	25	12
9	I don't feel confident when I speak English in classes.	2	18	30	21	10

Figure 3. Lack of Self Confidence Percentages

The learner's low self-confidence reflects their self-perception of their ability. The psychological aspects of the learner contribute to the burden of speaking. Some students expressed discomfort with performing their spoken language. When they have to speak in front of their classmates, some students become nervous. Their psychological assumptions are that other students will outperform them. So they pretend that they are unable to perform. In some situations, students prefer to prepare rather than react spontaneously in order to avoid errors.

The source of anxiety

There were 14 participants who were classified as having a high level of anxiety. Half of them participated in the interview to find out what was causing the students' anxiety. A semi-structured interview was conducted with seven students. The interview was designed to elicit information about the factors that contribute to speaking anxiety. Two of them were, "What makes you feel apprehensive about speaking?" and "How do you feel while participating in a speaking activity in a classroom?" Students' replies to the question throughout the interview were quite consistent. The students' replies can generally be divided into three categories: Learning environment, Lexical features, and personal.

Learning Environment Factors

At this point, students demonstrate their responses to their surroundings while speaking English. This part also includes students' responses to the lecturer and peer feedback on their speaking performance. The learning environment has a significant impact on the dominant factors that contribute to students' anxiety. While interviewed, seven participants gave similar responses. Most of them were nervous when speaking because they were afraid of making mistakes. They do not want to be embarrassed in front of their classmates and lecturers. They believe that making any mistakes will result in failure for the rest of the course.

I'm afraid that my friend will laugh at me when I speak in front of the	(MS)
class	
I'm not comfortable when speaking, because someone will laugh at my	(AS)
English. I'm not confident with my English.	

Learning a foreign language is regarded as difficult in some ways. Students in EFL classes are encouraged to learn and master the foreign language. This is especially difficult for EFL students who have limited practice time. Most EFL learners believe they have no tolerance for errors because they want to master the target language quickly. As a result, students tend to avoid making mistakes, and the only way to do so is to remain silent. Students focus more on how to avoid mistakes than on how to correct them. Some of them find it difficult to speak in public at times. They were embarrassed to be discovered speaking English by their peers. They prefer to join the classroom activities that do not require them to speak intentionally. They would rather work in pairs than in groups of four. Because they feel more at ease practicing English with a small group of people, and it is easier for them not to be distracted by others.

I start to talk and I feel like all of my friends stare at me and start (HA) laughing...I can't feel that way.

My heart can't stop beating when my lecturer called my name to speak in (IIH) front of the class. I can't stand longer if I have to speak in front of my friend. I prefer to talk with some people.

In other cases, students are afraid of being judged negatively by their peers or lecturers. They are concerned in some cases because their friend laughed at their grammatical errors. So, rather than making any mistakes, they pretend to be silent. Students' perspectives on mistakes have a negative impact on their performance. However, mistakes or errors that occur during the learning process are normal in the process of learning the target language. Other studies in Indonesia have discovered this phenomenon of negative evaluation (Abrar, 2017; Hutabarat & Simanjuntak, 2019). The fear of negative evaluation is somehow stressful to students who are learning a foreign language. They cannot learn the target language smoothly since they feel uncomfortable expressing their target language.

The fear of negative evaluation is somehow stressful to students learning a foreign language. To deal with this phenomenon requires the lecturer's support and also a settled learning environment that enables the students to take part in learning activities joyfully. When the learning environment (classroom participants) is welcoming and comfortable for the students, they will perform better and reduce their anxiety. A lecturer has to provide positive feedback and become a role model in the classroom. A great lecturer teaches their students to correct the error, not to ignore it.

Lexical Features Factor

Another issue that contributes to students' anxiety is a lack of lexical knowledge. Some students struggle to deal with lexical features when speaking English, which is a significant issue to address. Students seem to focus on producing utterances as much as possible rather than producing them correctly. They are sometimes unaware of the pronunciation, grammatical rules, and lack of vocabulary.

Ah,I don't know how to say some words in English, sometimes is difficult (MOA) to remember all of them and use them while speaking...

umm,,,What if I'm saying wrong? people will judge me. We learn English (SJ) and there is so many things to learn about vocabulary, grammar, and many more. I need a time to process it in my brain, and to say something correctly is not easy.

Some students are afraid of making mistakes in structures. That is one of the reasons why students find it difficult to learn a foreign language. They are concerned that if they make a mistake, their words will not be recognized and understood. Teaching English in an EFL context is limited to focusing on proper grammatical usage. In other words, for the majority of EFL learners in Indonesia, English becomes grammar-oriented. The truth is that grammar is mostly used in English written forms when there is a specific format to follow. When we speak English, we are still dealing with grammar, but not as strictly as when we write it.

I always worried if someone not understand what I'm saying....I afraid (HA) when they start asking the same question to me because they did not understand my English..It feels bad.

First, I'm not confident with my language. I'm not practice my English (SJ) and I feel bad when my speaking is wrong because of my bad grammar.

Furthermore, when EFL learners lack lexical resources, their concern about grammatical issues becomes a barrier. Some participants struggle to remember some of the vocabulary and thus perform poorly during the speaking activities. At this point, the lecturer must provide some strategies to help their students easily memorize and learn vocabulary. To assess students' vocabulary banks, a lecturer can create a flash quiz. As a result, they expand their vocabulary and learn how to use it in conversation. Allowing students to learn vocabulary at their own pace motivates them to learn a foreign language.

Personal Factors

The personal factor is mostly related to the student's motivation for learning a foreign language. During the interview, some of the students mentioned that personal factors also generated their speaking anxiety. This factor also relates to the degree of interaction among others. Some students mostly talk with their friends or parents, but not with their lecturer. They communicate with their lecturer on a regular basis, or ask their friend to talk to the lecturer.

I rarely talk to my lecturer, because my English is not good. I always ask (MOA) my friend to help me ask my question the the lecturer. I'm afraid if my lecturer did not understand my English.

For me talking to friend is more fun than to speak with lecturer. I always (MS) nervous whenever to talk with my lecturer.

To deal with the problem, lecturers should talk to their students personally to understand their problems with learning. It is important for lecturers to have engagement with their students. This aims to identify the students' problems and easily get the solution. As a result, student anxiety can be reduced, and engagement between lecturer and students can be increased.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals the foreign language anxiety of non-English department students (Information Technology Department) in the state polytechnic of Malang. In addition, the study is also focused on finding out the level of anxiety and the causes of anxiety. The FLCAS discovered the level of anxiety within the results was low (38%), moderate (44%), and high (17.26%). The findings of the study showed that 81 students in the information technology department had a moderate level of anxiety.

Additionally, it is advised that the lecturer establish a pleasurable learning environment through entertaining and interactive activities in order to deliver meaningful learning and meet the learning objectives. By allowing students to participate fully in all learning activities without fear of criticism or making mistakes as a necessary part of the learning process, learning anxiety can be reduced. For further research into foreign language speaking anxiety, more diverse participants from various learning settings across the country are needed to assess the level of anxiety in depth. Lower-level research is also required to determine the root causes of the most common issues encountered by EFL learners in Indonesia. In other words, assessing language anxiety in the context of EFL paints a clear picture of how learning strategies and learning objectives should be embedded in the classroom.

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