English Speaking Anxiety Among High Degree Students of English Education Study Programs Bau-Bau Universities

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Abstract

This study aimed to analyze the levels of speaking anxiety among students, evaluate the key factors contributing to students' speaking anxiety when using English, and explore strategies based on how students cope with anxiety. This study used a mixed-method design with 75 quantitative and 15 qualitative samples of 5th-semester students from Dayanu Ikhsanuddin University Bau-Bau in the 2023/2024 academic year. The instruments used were questionnaires and interviews. The content validity of the instruments was determined by seeking consideration from one expert (expert judgment) who stated that the instruments used were valid after revision. The reliability estimation of the instruments was calculated using the alpha coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) and deemed reliable. To determine the factors that contribute to speaking anxiety and the fear of making mistakes among students when using English, and to collect data, descriptive analysis was used for quantitative data and thematic analysis for qualitative data. The results showed that the majority of students experienced moderately high levels of speaking anxiety. Specifically, only 6.67% of students had very low anxiety, 8% had moderately low anxiety, 16% had moderate anxiety, 38.67% had moderately high anxiety, and 30.67% experienced very high anxiety. Then, from the results of the interview, various anxiety factors and strategies for dealing with anxiety were identified, and results of the interview, the authors concluded several factors that cause' speaking anxiety, where anxiety factors included internal and external factors consisting of five points, namely: Fear of making mistakes, Lack of self-confidence, Lack of Mastery of Material, Fear of Negative Evaluation, Lack of practice speaking. Meanwhile, strategies used by students include Positive Thinking, Physical Techniques (distractions), Breathing Techniques, Peer Support, Self-confidence, Self-motivation, Relaxation, and Spiritual.

Keywords: *Speaking; Anxiety; Strategies Speaking Anxiety*

Introduction

Speaking English has developed into a global language, significantly influencing education, business, and communication. Brutt-Griffler's concept of "World Englishes", as mentioned in Rao (2019) work, underscores its important role. Terms such as "global language," "lingua franca," and "international language" describe its influence. Effective English communication is essential in today's competitive

world. However, some students experience speaking anxiety, which hinders their learning and self-confidence. The impact of this can reduce academic achievement A supportive approach in English education is essential to overcome this problem. A supportive approach in English language education is essential to address this issue. If left unaddressed, this anxiety can hinder students from better future opportunities, both in education and career. It is therefore important to address this issue immediately so that students can function optimally and not miss out on valuable opportunities in their lives.

Anxiety related to speaking English is a condition that individuals often experience. Feelings of anxiety, fear, or discomfort often arise when they communicate. These situations can include things such as public speaking, class discussions, and interactions with English teachers. People who experience English anxiety may feel anxious, worried about making mistakes, or unsure about expressing themselves. This condition can hinder communication skills and affect students. A supportive approach to English language education is essential to address this issue. If left unaddressed, this anxiety can hinder students from better future opportunities, both in education and career. It is therefore important to address this issue immediately so that students can function optimally and not miss out on valuable opportunities in their lives.

Damayant *et al.* (2020) emphasized that humans rely on interactions with other people as social creatures. In the context of student communication, the reliance on interpersonal exchange becomes clear. However, big challenges arise when students encounter obstacles in confidently conveying information. According to Ramayani *et al.* (2022), anxiety is a feeling of stress, pressure, nervousness, and apprehension that occurs in the functioning of the system in autonomic sensory. This problem often occurs in students' communication skills.

Under ideal conditions, students can overcome feelings of anxiety, fear, or discomfort that often arise in communication. This is universal whether you are speaking in front, participating in a class discussion, or interacting with native English speakers. However, it is important to note that this transition phase is unique, where academic demands and higher expectations of language use can increase anxiety. Students can express their thoughts and ideas fluently and are not constrained by the fear of making mistakes. This enables students to perform and contribute optimally to academic and professional environments. In this way, anxiety about speaking English will no longer be an obstacle and become an opportunity for growth and success.

The best way to overcome students' English anxiety is to implement various comprehensive strategies. Students must develop self- confidence through regular English-speaking practice inside and outside the classroom. Lecturers can encourage students to actively participate in English language activities by providing constructive and supportive input. Students must also enrich their English knowledge and vocabulary by reading, watching films, and listening to podcasts. Students can also do relaxation and stress management exercises to deal with any arising anxiety.

Previous studies have examined conversations among high school students Suryadi, (2021). However, this study has significant limitations, especially in the context of students, which has received little attention. English anxiety experienced by students is a complex problem, mainly influenced by various internal and external factors that are not fully understood. Internal factors such as low English skills and low confidence are often the main sources of anxiety. On the other hand, external factors such as academic pressure, interactions with lecturers and classmates, and learning environments that are not conducive to learning can also trigger anxiety. The social environment can also have an impact, such as the gap between the use of English on campus and in everyday life. Understanding the complexity of factors that contribute to students' English anxiety is the first step in designing appropriate and effective interventions to address speaking anxiety among students.

Compared with previous research, research on students' English-speaking anxiety has several new things. First, attention to student context is an underexplored feature in the existing literature, which primarily addresses anxiety among high school students. College students are in a unique transition phase because they face higher academic demands and expectations for deeper use of English, so anxiety problems may have unique dynamics. In addition, this research will take a comprehensive approach to explore the factors that cause students' English-speaking anxiety. Not only focusing on internal factors but also exploring the impact of external factors.

This study investigates various internal and external factors that influence students' speaking anxiety and the learning environment. In addition, this study also analyzes the influence of social factors such as the gap between the use of English on campus and the use of English in students' daily lives. By understanding these factors, it is hoped that effective strategies can be found to help students overcome anxiety. This topic is chosen because speaking anxiety is a common problem that can hinder students' speaking ability to communicate effectively, which is very important in language learning. Therefore, it is hoped that this study will produce a more comprehensive understanding of the complexity of the problem of English anxiety among students. Furthermore, the results of this study are expected to provide a strong foundation for developing more effective interventions to overcome these problems. Overall, this study makes a new contribution to the literature on English anxiety among students.

Method

This study employs a mixed methods approach to analyze the levels of anxiety in speaking English, to identify the factors causing anxiety, and to explore strategies based on how students cope with anxiety. In this research, the investigators have amalgamated different methodologies to achieve more distinct outcomes. As per Creswell (2015), a mixed methods design involves the collection, analysis, and integration of both quantitative and qualitative data to gain a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. In this study, an explanatory design was utilized, which commences with the collection and analysis of quantitative data, followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data (Creswell, 2015). This study used all fifth-semester students as samples for quantitative analysis. Furthermore, after the results of the quantitative analysis were purposeful, 5 students from each of the three anxiety categories were selected for qualitative analysis. This study used purposive sampling as the sampling method. Creswell (2015) argues that in purposive sampling, researchers deliberately select individuals and locations to study or understand certain phenomena. The data were collected using a questionnaire and interview. The questionnaire was to determine the level of study anxiety and the interview was to investigate more deeply and thoroughly the factors that contribute to students' increased levels of anxiety while identifying effective solutions to alleviate their concerns. The researchers explored both ideas by considering students with high levels of anxiety versus students with low levels of anxiety. Considering the current situation, this study chose face-to-face interviews.

Data Analysis

In this study, there were two sets of data that needed to be processed. The initial dataset consisted of quantitative information, specifically FLCAS questionnaire data. The second data from qualitative information obtained from interviews. The researcher chose the Foreign Language Class Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) by (Horwitz, *et al.* 1986 as cited in Yaikhong, *et al.*, 2012) as a tool to categorize students into high, moderate, and low anxiety level groups.

Questionnaire data filled in by students, calculated using Horwitz's (1986) calculation criteria as follows:

Tabel 1. Likert Scoring

Scale	Positive question	Negative question
Strongly Agree	1	5
Agree	2	4
Neutral	3	3
Disagree	4	2
Strongly Disagree	5	1

(Adopted from Horwitz *et al*. 1986, p.35)

The table provided illustrates that when students respond to questions with a positive context by selecting "Strongly Agree," they receive a score of 1. If they choose "Agree," they receive a score of 2. Opting for "Neutral" results in a score of 3. Answering "Disagree" earns them a score of 4 and selecting "Strongly Disagree" results in a score of 5. Conversely, when students answer questions with a negative context by choosing "Strongly Agree," they receive a score of 5. Opting for "Agree" gives them a score of 4. Choosing "Neutral" results in a score of 3. Answering "Disagree" yields a score of 2 and selecting "Strongly Disagree" corresponds to a score of 1. Once all students' responses had been converted into numerical values, the data was analyzed using an anxiety-level scale.

Next, the data was calculated or analyzed using descriptive analysis. Descriptive analysis was intended to describe the score of the variable value through the sample size in the form of mean, mode, median, standard deviation, maximum value, and minimum value. Descriptive research uses instruments such as questionnaires to gather information from groups of individuals (Ary, *et al*. 2010 as cited in Deveci, *et al*. 2017). To facilitate the explanation of variables, the researcher divides the categories into five levels, namely very low anxiety, moderately low anxiety, moderate anxiety, moderately high anxiety, and very high anxiety. By using the following guidelines:

Table 2. Anxiety Level Scale

Scale	Level of Anxiety
109-165	High anxiety
99-108	Moderately high anxiety
90 – 98	Moderate anxiety
83-89	Moderately low anxiety
33-82	Very low anxiety

(Oetting's Scale as cited in Mawardah 2019)

In this research, qualitative data was collected through interviews. A different set of questions was asked of each group, in line with the researcher's goal of gathering information from each category. Interviews were conducted with students exhibiting high, moderate, and low levels of anxiety to research the underlying causes of their anxiety experiences and identify effective solutions aimed at reducing elevated levels of anxiety when speaking. The data collection technique used in this research refers to the data analysis model used by researchers as the interactive model Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014: 12-14) including data condensation, data display, and Conclusion drawing. The first step in data condensation was conducting interviews to collect raw data from participants that were relevant to the research topic, namely speaking anxiety. Interviews make it possible to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences, perceptions, and emotions involved in situations of speaking anxiety.

Second display data after the interview data is collected, the next step was to present the data in a systematic and structured format. This may include transcribing interviews, generating relevant quotations, or organizing key findings in the form of diagrams or tables. The goal of this stage was to

make the data easily accessible and understandable for further analysis. Last conclusions drawing, the final stage involves conclusions drawn from the findings identified during the interview analysis. The researcher will explore the relationships between the themes that emerge from the interviews and attempt to answer the research questions. The conclusions drawn should be supported by the interview data collected and should ensure that your analysis is consistent with existing observations and findings.

Result and Discussion

Result

Descriptive Statistical Analysis Students' Learning Anxiety

Based on the calculation using IBM SPSS Statistics 22, the data obtained were as shown in the table below:

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Speaking Anxiety Questionnaire

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Speaking Anxiety	75	73	112	100.11	9.157
Valid N (listwise)	75				

From the results of the descriptive statistical analysis in Table 1, the number of respondents in the research (N) was 75 respondents. Speaking anxiety in English had a minimum value of 73.00 and a maximum value of 112, while the mean value was 100.11, and the standard deviation value was 9.16. Then based on the mean in the subject anxiety distribution category, it was in the moderately high anxiety category, which was 100.11.

Table 5. Score category speaking anxiety

Category	Percentage	Scale	Total	Cumulations Total
Very low anxiety	6. 67	33-82	5	5
Moderately low anxiety	8	83-89	6	11
Moderate anxiety	16	90-98	12	23
Moderately high anxiety	38. 67	99-108	29	52
Very High Anxiety	30. 67	109-165	23	75
Total	100			**75**

Based on the questionnaire data above, it showed that 5 students scored between 33-82 which meant students had very low anxiety, 6 students scored between 83-89 which indicated students had moderately low anxiety, and then 12 students scored between 90-98 which indicated students had moderate anxiety, then a total of 29 students scored between 99-108 which meant students were in the category moderately high anxiety, and the last data showed 23 students scored between 109-165 which indicated that students were at very high anxiety. The overall description of the Speaking anxiety variable was in Appendix 2 on page 120.

The data visualization above showed that approximately 6.67% of the students had very low anxiety, indicating high confidence in speaking. These students are generally comfortable and self-assured when engaging in speaking activities, often perceiving such tasks as enjoyable rather than daunting. They were likely to participate actively in class discussions and presentations, which could positively influence their learning experience and academic performance.

About 8% of the students had moderately low anxiety, experiencing occasional anxiety without it being excessive. While generally confident, this group might have occasionally felt nervous in certain speaking situations. However, their anxiety was manageable and did not significantly hinder their performance. These students might have experienced mild apprehension before speaking in front of a large audience or during a high-stakes presentation, but students were able to overcome these feelings and performed comprehensively.

About 16% of the students had moderate anxiety, which was considered normal. This level of anxiety could be beneficial as it might motivate students to prepare more thoroughly and stay focused during speaking tasks. However, if not managed properly, it could also cause some discomfort and reduce their participation in speaking activities. About 38.67% of the students had relatively moderately high anxiety, experiencing significant anxiety, especially in public speaking. Students in this category were likely to feel considerable stress when asked to speak in front of others. This anxiety could manifest as physical symptoms such as sweating, trembling, or a racing heart, and might lead to avoidance of speaking opportunities. Their performance might have been negatively impacted, and they may require more support and strategies to cope with their anxiety effectively.

Finally, 30.67% of the students had very high anxiety, experiencing excessive worry and difficulty in managing their anxiety. This group represented a portion of the students who found speaking tasks extremely challenging. Their anxiety can be debilitating, causing them to avoid speaking situations altogether and possibly affecting their overall academic achievement. These students might have benefited from targeted interventions, such as counseling, anxiety management workshops, and supportive classroom environments, to help them build confidence and reduce their anxiety.

The questionnaire results revealed that the majority of students fell into the moderately high anxiety category see Table 2, with nearly a third experiencing very high levels of anxiety. In contrast, only a small fraction of students exhibited low anxiety levels. This distribution underscores the wide range of comfort and discomfort students feel when speaking. Understanding these differences was essential for educators, as it provided valuable insights for developing teaching strategies and support systems tailored to meet the diverse needs of students. By recognizing and addressing these varying levels of anxiety, educators could create more inclusive and effective learning environments. Such environments not only foster confidence but also helped to reduce anxiety, ensuring that all students could participate fully and succeed in speaking activities.

The next research objective aimed to dig into students' anxiety factors and to find out the strategies that students use to overcome their anxiety.

Internal and External Factors, in the Levels of English-Speaking Anxiety

a. Fear of Making Mistakes

Research findings showed that fear of making mistakes was one of the main factors causing anxiety about speaking English in students. Many students felt anxiety because students were worried about making mistakes, whether in grammar, pronunciation, or word usage. For example, a student expressed, *"I am afraid of being wrong"* This statement described the general anxiety felt by students when speaking English, where students were afraid of making mistakes that could affect other people's perceptions of the student's abilities. Other student also stated, *"I Afraid of making mistakes in language, and I also feel afraid of making mistakes in spelling and pronunciation"*. This statement indicated that students were not only concerned about general errors but also specific errors in spelling and pronunciation, which could greatly affect fluency. Fear of making mistakes was a factor that caused anxiety about speaking English among students. This anxiety was often exacerbated by a lack of self-confidence and social comparison with more fluent peers.

b. Lack of Self-Confidence

Researchers' findings regarding lack of self-confidence impacted students' anxiety in using English. Many students face challenges in developing students' confidence when speaking in English. Several student statements illustrated this feeling clearly. From the interview a student said that *"I feel nervous and not confident and sometimes I can't speak in front of people"* which showed that nervousness and lack of self- confidence could hinder a student's ability to speak in public. From this analysis, it appeared that lack of self-confidence had a big influence on students' anxiety in using English. Students who felt less confident tended to have difficulty speaking fluently and confidently. Concerns about speaking ability and self-assessment were the main obstacles that needed to be overcome in the context of learning English.

c. Lack of Mastery of Material

Research data revealed that lack of mastery of learning material was one of the factors that contributed to students' anxiety about speaking English. A student firmly stated *"I don't know about the material",* showing the limited knowledge he had. A similar thing was expressed by other student who admitted that he felt *"less confident and more like not mastering the material"*. Uncertainty and inability to master learning material seemed to be a source of worry for students when asked to speak English. A feeling of not mastering the content or topic of discussion could give rise to doubt and anxiety in students. Lack of mastery of this material caused students to feel incompetent and not confident to communicate their thoughts fluently and effectively in English. These findings indicated that mastery of learning material was an important issue that contributed to the problem of speaking anxiety experienced by students. Students' limited knowledge and understanding of English learning material seemed to be an obstacle for students to be able to speak confidently.

d. Lack of Practice Speaking

Researchers also revealed from student interviews that the lack of practice speaking in front of other people was one of the sources of anxiety in speaking English experienced by students. A student expressed, *"Maybe nervous and don't have enough practice speaking in front of people".* A similar thing was conveyed by other student who stated, *"I feel nervous and not confident and sometimes I can't speak in front of people"*. Limited opportunities to practice and display English speaking skills in front of other people made students feel nervous and awkward. Without sufficient practice, students would have difficulty developing fluency, accuracy, and confidence in communicating. These findings indicated that limited experience speaking in public or formal situations could give rise to feelings of anxiety and lack of confidence in students. For students who rarely had the opportunity to speak in front of other people, this situation became something unfamiliar and scary, thus triggering anxiety.

e. Fear Evaluates Negative

Research findings showed that fear of negative assessment was one of the main factors causing anxiety about speaking English in students. Many students felt anxious because they were worried about negative judgments from others about their speaking abilities. For example, a student expressed, *"Well, because I often pay attention to my friends' gazes, so I'm afraid of secretly criticizing me from behind, maybe that's what makes me feel like I can't speak well"*. This statement illustrated how excessive attention to their friends' views could create a fear of hidden criticism, which in turn affected their confidence when speaking. Another student added, *"The causes of my anxiety are fear of other people's judgment, lack of confidence in my speaking abilities, and discomfort because I am so quiet."* Fear of others' judgment combined with a lack of self-confidence and discomfort due to their reserved nature, all of which contributed to speaking anxiety. This fear of negative evaluation was often exacerbated by students' perceptions of their peers' abilities. Students who felt that their friends were better at speaking

often felt intimidated and more anxious. As a result, building self-confidence and reducing focus on other people's judgments become an important step in overcoming speaking anxiety. This research highlighted the importance of understanding and overcoming the fear of negative assessment as part of efforts to reduce students' speaking anxiety.

The Strategies to Overcome Anxiety Students Speaking Anxiety

a. Positive Thinking

Research findings showed that positive thinking was one of the main strategies used by students to overcome anxiety about speaking in English. Students use a variety of approaches to apply positive thinking in anxious situations. For example, one student stated, *"Positive thinking and try talking with my friends"*, indicating that positive thinking could help reduce anxiety through social interaction. Other student also said, *"Try to overcome my fear and encourage my brain to think positively and I always convince myself that I can do it"*, emphasizing the importance of strengthening oneself through positive thinking. Some students also emphasized the importance of self-motivation as part of positive thinking. For example, a student said, "Positive thinking and self-motivation", indicating that positive thinking often went hand in hand with efforts to motivate oneself. Thus, positive thinking proved to be an effective strategy used by students to overcome anxiety about speaking English. This approach helped students face fears and increased self-confidence. Positive thinking not only relieved anxiety but also built a strong foundation for students' success in communicating in English. Self-motivation and self-confidence resulting from positive thinking played an important role in helping students overcome challenges in learning English.

b. Peer Support

Research findings also showed that peer support was one of the important strategies used by students to overcome anxiety about speaking English. This support played a vital role in helping students feel more comfortable and confident in scary situations. Several students emphasized the importance of peer support in diverting attention from anxiety. One student stated, *"Think positively and try to divert by talking to the friend next to me".* This statement underscores how interactions with friends could be an effective distraction from anxiety. By talking to friends, students felt calmer and were able to overcome the anxiety that students felt. Peer support helped students feel less alone in dealing with anxious situations and provided an important sense of community. Overall, support from peers played an important role in helping students overcome English-speaking anxiety. With emotional and social support from friends, students felt more comfortable and confident in dealing with anxious situations. This support not only helped relieve anxiety but also provided opportunities for students to practice and develop better speaking skills.

c. Relaxation

The research findings also showed that relaxation techniques were an effective strategy used by students to overcome anxiety about speaking English. This technique helped students calm themselves before and during public speaking, thereby increasing self-confidence and reducing nervousness. A student (S64) described his experience with this technique: *"I try to stay calm by imagining myself in a calm situation and avoiding the audience's gaze".* This student tried to create a calm state in his mind by imagining himself in a calm situation and avoiding the audience's gaze. This approach showed that positive visualization and distraction from the audience could be very effective in reducing anxiety levels. By focusing on calming mental images, students were able to reduce the pressure they felt from their surroundings and more easily manage the stress that arose when speaking in public. This relaxation technique, which combined visualization and avoidance of direct eye contact, provided a practical way for students to maintain calm and self-confidence in potentially anxiety-provoking situations.

d.Physical Technique (Distraction)

From the research data, it was found that physical distraction techniques were one of the effective methods in overcoming anxiety about speaking English. This technique involved using physical objects to distract attention from anxiety, helping students stay focused and calm while speaking. For example, a student said, *"I hold a pen, paper, or whatever I brought from my bag while remembering the material so, I can divert my anxiety".* Holding an object such as a pen or paper helped students focus on something other than their anxiety. Another physical distraction technique was playing with held objects. In addition, some students also used physical distractions in combination with other techniques, such as prayer and deep breathing. Deep breathing techniques were also often used in conjunction with physical distractions. Other students said, *"I always take a deep breath and then exhale slowly, usually I also use distractions such as a pen to reduce my anxiety."* Taking deep breaths helped calm the nervous system while playing with objects helped keep hands busy and the mind focused. In this case, physical distraction techniques proved to be an effective method in overcoming anxiety about speaking English. By using physical objects such as pens or paper, students could distract themselves from anxiety and stay focused. A combination of physical distraction with other techniques, helped students feel calmer and in control. This technique provided a practical and easy-to-use tool to help students overcome English- speaking anxiety and increase students' self-confidence.

e. Spiritual

Based on the data, the researchers found that spiritual techniques played an important role in overcoming anxiety about speaking English. Based on interviews, some students used spiritual approaches to calm themselves and build self-confidence before speaking in public. One student said, *"Read bismillah, usually always say to myself that I can get through it and also while playing with my pen".* By reciting the bismillah and reminding themselves that students could get through the situation, these students utilized their spiritual beliefs as a source of strength and calm. Other student emphasized the importance of prayer in overcoming anxiety, *"I pray in my heart that everything can be overcome".* Prayer in the heart provided a sense of calm and confidence that all challenges could be faced. This approach showed how spiritual beliefs could provide great emotional support and help students feel more prepared and confident in dealing with stressful speaking situations. The use of these spiritual techniques not only helped calm the mind but also strengthened students' mentality, thereby improving their ability to communicate in English.

f. Breathing Technique

The researcher's discovery showed that breathing techniques were also an effective strategy in managing anxiety when speaking English. One student explained his experience, *"I always take a deep breath and then exhale slowly, usually I also use distractions such as a pen to reduce my anxiety".* By taking deep breaths and exhaling slowly, these students could calm themselves and reduce anxiety levels before public speaking. This approach not only helped stabilize breathing but also distracted attention from perceived tension. Next, other students said, *"Take a deep breath and try to focus".* By focusing on deep breathing techniques, these students could improve concentration and reduce distractions that might arise while speaking. This technique helped students to remain calm and focused on the message they wanted to convey, thereby increasing the clarity and effectiveness of communication in English. Using breathing techniques was not just about regulating breathing, but also positively influenced the psychological and emotional aspects of students in facing challenging speaking situations. Thus, breathing techniques became an important tool in managing anxiety and improving speaking performance in English.

g.Self-Motivation

The research findings showed that self-motivation was also a strategy used by students to overcome anxiety when speaking English. One method used by students was to build self-confidence through self- motivation, as expressed by one student "The first thing is to think positively that I can, then I also often hold something like playing with a pen to overcome my anxiety." This approach helped reduce students' anxiety levels and increased motivation in facing challenging tasks. Some students also emphasized the importance of building self- motivation before speaking, as expressed by a student, *"I always build self-motivation first then stay focused and always convince myself that I can"*. This way, students felt more mentally and emotionally prepared to tackle the challenges of public speaking. This statement emphasized that positive thinking and self-motivation strategies played a crucial role in helping students overcome English-speaking anxiety. By focusing thoughts on positive things and building internal motivation, students could increase their self-confidence in facing demanding communication situations. This approach not only reduced anxiety levels but also has a positive impact on developing students' speaking skills.

Discussion

Based on the findings of this research, the majority of students of the 5th-semester students of the English Language Education Department had moderately high anxiety and only a few students had low anxiety. Specifically, only 6.67% of students had very low anxiety, 8% had moderately low anxiety, 16% had moderate anxiety, 38.67% had moderately high anxiety, and 30.67% experienced very high anxiety. It can be concluded that the majority of students had moderately high speaking anxiety, which could be an obstacle in students' speaking activities. Then, from the results of the interview, various anxiety factors and strategies for dealing with anxiety were identified

The first case discussed in these findings is the cause of students' speaking anxiety. The results show that five causes cause students to experience anxiety. Researchers found that fear of making mistakes, Lack of mastery of the material, fear of making mistakes, Fear evaluates negative, Lack of confidence, and Lack of practice speaking were the main causes of most students experiencing anxiety.

Fear of making mistakes found to be one of the factors influencing speed Research by Seref, *et al.* (2021) shows fear of mistakes contributes significantly to public speaking anxiety in students. The main causes include failure, feelings of inadequacy, and lack of self-development. (Zang, 2006 as cited in Dalem, *et al.*, 2017) explained that students were afraid of making mistakes because they were worried that their friends would laugh at them and receive negative judgment from their friends if they made mistakes speaking. However, reflection on mistakes can help students build better mental models (VanLehn *et al.* as cited in Käfer *et al.* 2019). Positive management of fear of mistakes can increase students' self-confidence and active participation in learning.

A lack of self-confidence was identified as an anxiety factor Suparlan (2021) shows that students experience anxiety because of a lack of confidence and fear of feeling less competent than other students. Lack of self-confidence can affect students. Mahmoudi, *et al.,* (2015) stated that motivation to learn a language influences attitudes towards a second language, its speakers, and its culture. Based on this theory, fear of negative evaluation may hinder students' participation and engagement in class, due to their concern about appearing inadequate. Therefore, increasing students' self-motivation is important to overcome speaking anxiety, because "motivation can connect current conditions with future desires, based on the interpretation of experience" Anne & Richard (2018).

Fear Negative evaluation was one of the contributing factors to anxiety According to Aliyu *et al.* (2019), speaking anxiety is caused by fear of negative evaluation and social environmental factors. This fear inhibits student participation because they worry about appearing incompetent in front of others.

Grieve (2021) states that fear of other people's judgment in public speaking is a common experience among students, which strengthens speaking anxiety. Understanding that peer and self-assessment were formative clouds encourages increased student performance. (Ross 2006 as cited in Ličen, *et al.,* 2018) emphasize the importance of formative assessment from peers and oneself to improve overall student performance.

Lack of practice in front speaking was identified can hindering students' abilities. Yuan *et al.* (2022) stated that many individuals have difficulty speaking confidently in front of an audience due to social phobia and practice failure. This fear makes students feel anxious and less confident when speaking in front of many people. Grieve (2021) states that fear of other people's judgment strengthens speaking anxiety among students. Continuous practice is important to help students become more confident, Nadia *et al*. (2019) found that students often showed deficiencies such as not making eye contact, speaking shakily, repeating words, moving around a lot, and stopping frequently. However, with consistent practice, this deficiency can be overcome, and your public speaking skills can improve.

Lack of mastery of the material affects the ability to speak effectively, as shown by Rahmadani *et al.* (2022) - Understanding poverty material inadequacy. Anxiety arises from students' fear of making mistakes, hampering their fluency. According to (Hamilton, 2012 as cited in Mahmoudi, 2015), public speaking involves conveying a message that is understood and believed, implies understanding the material, and anticipating challenges can reduce anxiety and improve performance. Understanding the material can increase self-confidence and reduce anxiety. Consistent practice and supportive feedback are important for strengthening mastery of the material and reducing anxiety, as shown in educational studies.

The second case discussed in these findings was the reduced strategy of students' speaking anxiety. In this research, there are six strategies offered to reduce student anxiety. Changing mindset from negative to positive is very important in overcoming public speaking anxiety. Chatton (2016) states that positive thinking means interpreting everything positively. Rahman, *et al*., (2023) that the higher the level of positive thinking of students, the lower their level of anxiety in speaking English. In other words, the more positive the student's thoughts are, the less likely the student is to feel confident when speaking English.

Physical techniques (distraction), such as hand movements or holding a pen, were effective in dealing with anxiety. (Beiling, 2009 as cited in Amiri *et al.* 2019) The distraction technique is a cognitive-behavioral approach that is used to control emotions. This suggests that incorporating physical techniques can help students manage anxiety by distracting them from anxious thoughts. Sari (2016) in the research found that avoiding eye contact and engaging in physical expression reactions were non-verbal strategies commonly used by students to reduce anxiety when speaking English in class. Making sure students practice these techniques could help increase their self- confidence and reduce anxiety. However, (Anderson *et al.* 2005 as cited in Chien, 2022) also state that cognitive therapy using progressive exposure therapy via virtual reality can reduce public speaking anxiety.

Self-motivation was very important in dealing with anxiety. Anne & Richard (2018) emphasize that motivation connects our current self with future goals based on past efforts (p. 54). Research shows motivated individuals actively reduce anxiety. However, Schutz (2019) discusses Krashen's theory of Second Language Acquisition, suggesting low motivation, low self-esteem, anxiety, introversion, and inhibition increase the affective filter, hindering comprehension and anxiety management. Although (Pandito, 2018 as cited in Sultana, *et al.,* 2021) notes that pronunciation errors can lower self-confidence and cause anxiety in speaking English, they are only one aspect of language learning. Motivation and effective teaching strategies reduce this problem.

Peer support was an effective strategy in language learning to reduce anxiety. Asnawi (2015) found that this reduces reliance on code-switching and improves English speaking skills, which is important in creating a supportive environment, especially for female students. Rahmanda, (2020)

highlights elements of peer social support such as empathy and cooperation which reduce feelings of loneliness, rejection, and frustration. MacIntyre (2017) identified mispronunciations and fear of embarrassment as the main triggers for anxiety during conversation and highlighted the role of peer support in overcoming these problems. However, (Carter, 2018 as cited in Farmer, et al., 2019) notes that complex peer interactions can influence effectiveness. Integrating peer support with confidence-building strategies further enhanced anxiety reduction in language learning.

Relaxation and spirituality were believed to be effective in reducing stress. Prayer provides happiness, spiritual support, and a deeper understanding of oneself. According to Taheri (2016) religion and spirituality play an important role in individual coping mechanisms, helping reduce stress and deal with challenging situations. In addition, Siagian (2017) emphasized that relaxation activities aim to relieve physical stress. While Anne & Richard (2018) suggested that meditation is effective in dealing with work-related mental health problems. Applying relaxation techniques, meditation, and breathing exercises can effectively reduce stress and improve communication skills. However, as mentioned previously, such anxiety tends to fragment students' attention resources (Pappamihiel, 2002 as cited in Charoensukmongkol, *et al.,* 2019), thus highlighting potential challenges in its implementation. Mastering the ability to overcome fear was essential to improving daily interactions and overall well-being.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this research, the 5th-semester students experienced moderately high levels of speaking anxiety. Specifically, were, 6.67% of students had very low anxiety, 8% had moderately low anxiety, 16% had moderate anxiety, 38.67% had moderately high anxiety, and 30.67% experienced very high anxiety. Then, from the results of the interview, various anxiety factors contributing to speaking anxiety and strategies for dealing, with the conclusion that the factors causing speaking anxiety included both internal and external elements, which could be summarized into five main points namely: Fear of making mistakes, Lack of self-confidence, Lack of Mastery of Material, Fear of Negative Evaluation, Lack of practice speaking. Meanwhile, strategies used by students include Positive Thinking, Physical Techniques (distractions), Breathing Techniques, Peer Support, Self-confidence, Self-motivation, Relaxation, and Spiritual.

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