

STUDENTS SPEAKING ENGLISH ANXIETY IN ONLINE LEARNING

Susana Grace Jasmine^{1*}, Stanislaus Guna², Dewi Hidayati³

¹⁻²Universitas Katolik Indonesia Santu Paulus Ruteng

³STAI Diponegoro Tulungagung

*gracejasmine1999@gmail.com

stanislausguna@gmail.com

dewiaansugianto@gmail.com

***Corresponding author**

Abstract: This research aimed to investigate the factors of students' speaking anxiety during online learning and how they overcome it. This research used a descriptive quantitative method with 46 participants majoring in English language teaching. The data were taken using questionnaire through the link Google Form. SPSS 24 was used to measure data to analyze mean, frequency, and percentage. The result showed that the most factors which affected students in speaking English were vocabulary knowledge and classmates. In terms of vocabulary knowledge, students had a lot of English vocabulary but had problems practicing the words and rarely used them. In classmates, many anxious learners felt nervous when they had to speak in front of their other friends when the teacher was appointing them to answer a question. Moreover, they feared their friends would laugh at them when speaking English. Moreover, they were not confident because other students spoke English better than them. Then, students overcame anxiety with preparation, peer-seeking, and relaxation. Teachers are recommended to emphasize the vocabulary on the topic they are discussing and create a comfortable classroom atmosphere to make students feel confident.

Keywords: Anxiety, Online learning, Speaking Anxiety

INTRODUCTION

Online learning is technology-based learning, making it easier for students to follow distance learning. According to Alzamil (2021), online learning has risen to be a significant aspect of the world's supply of education material. Teachers provide materials and interact with students on the web via the internet using various technological devices. Students conducted the learning online through Zoom apps, Google Classroom, Google Meet, Schoology, Moodle, and support devices such as smartphones, laptops, and computers. Teachers and learners communicate using printed, electronic, or mechanical tools. Online learning is an alternative option to traditional teaching practice. It gives students some advantages, such as studying everywhere and anytime, communicating efficiently, spending less time and money, choosing, and earning while learning (Sadeghi, 2019). Online learning allows students to study smoothly and not feel left behind despite being carried out from home.

Besides its practicality, online learning can bring psychological effect on students moreover if it is their first experience. One of the psychological effects is anxiety. Anxiety is a feeling of fear about what will happen. It is an emotional feeling without a specific object. The signs of anxiety can be detected through body language, such as feeling nervous, panicky, shyness, stammering, or tension. Most signs of anxiety can be founded on test anxiety or approach, especially in teaching-learning English as a foreign language (Stuart & Sundeen, 2016). Anxiety also has been a problem of academic research in foreign language learning. Although English learning is conducted online, students still have a problem in understanding or performing their English skills. Learning anxiety can be formed from two sources; they are

linguistic and non-linguistic aspects (Badrasawi, 2020). Students usually feel anxious when they make errors in speaking.

The study of Nunan (2020) showed that students are generally at a moderate level of anxiety. Even though online English classes can relieve students' anxiety, they are still nervous when speaking or answering questions. They are also objectively aware of the weaknesses of online English classes, such as poor interaction, unsuitable listening and speaking classes, lack of professional equipment, and difficulty concentrating. Second, a study was conducted by Putri (2020) about students' anxiety in speaking. The study's result showed that three factors cause students' anxiety in speaking English: self-perception, performance and fear of making mistakes. Then, there are three strategies that students use to cope with anxiety; they are preparation, positive thinking, and relaxation. The study by Ali (2021) reveals that students' fear of negative anxiety was associated with a higher degree of anxiety when it came to learning a language. In contrast, students' test anxiety was associated with a lower value among other variables.

In this study, the writer not only focuses on the factors but also on students' solutions to overcome the problem of anxiety. Research on students' anxiety in learning English during online learning in the context of remote area such as in east part of Indonesia is still significant to uncover what causes students' anxiety and how they overcome English speaking anxiety in online class.

METHOD

This research employed a descriptive quantitative method. The research data were obtained from 46 semester students majoring in English language teaching at one university in Indonesia by using a web questionnaire. The writers applied the Likert Scale in scoring the data. The options for each question in the questionnaire were arranged on a scale of 1-4, as (1) Strongly

Agree, (2) Agree, (3) Disagree, and (4) Strongly Disagree. There were 17 items about students' anxiety and five about how the students overcame the anxiety. The questionnaire was taken from Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986), Chowdhury, and Kaiser (2020).

The data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed using SPSS 24 to view statistics in terms of mean, frequency, and percentage of students speaking English anxiety during online learning.

RESULT

In this section, the writer presents the data related to the results of factors of students' anxiety and strategies for overcoming the anxiety.

Factors of Students' Anxiety

Table 1. Vocabulary Knowledge

Options	Frequency	Percentage	Vp	Cp
SA	7	15.2	15.2	15.2
A	35	76.1	76.1	91.3
D	-	-	-	-
SD	4	8.7	8.7	100.0
Total	46	100.0	100.0	

Table 1. shows the frequency of having vocabulary. The result shows most of the students (91.3%) have a lot of vocabulary. Only four or 8.7% of the students do not have a lot of vocabulary. This data indicate that students do not have problems from vocabulary aspects.

Table 2. Vocabulary practice and use

Options	Frequency	Percentage	Vp	Cp
SA	-	-	-	-
A	11	23.9	23.9	23.9
D	30	65.2	65.2	89.1
SD	5	10.9	10.9	100.0
Total	46	100.0	100.0	

Table 2 shows the frequency of practicing and using new vocabulary. The data showed that only 11 or 23.9% students practicing and using new vocabulary, whereas most of the students (76,1%) do not practice and use the new vocabulary that they get. Clearly, the students lack practice with their newly acquired vocabulary, causing them to experience anxiety when speaking English.

Table 3. Classmates laughing

Options	Frequency	Percentage	Vp	Cp
SA	2	4.3	4.3	4.3
A	27	58.7	58.7	63.0
D	15	32.6	32.6	95.7
SD	2	4.3	4.3	100.0
Total	46	100.0	100.0	

Table 3 shows the frequency of being afraid that other students would laugh when speaking English. The result showed that 63% of the students were afraid being laughed when they are speaking. Meanwhile, only 17 or 37.6% of the students were not affected by their friends laughing.

Table 4. Other students speak English better than I do

Options	Frequency	Percentage	Vp	Cp
SA	14	30.4	30.4	30.4
A	32	69.6	69.6	100.0
D	-	-	-	-
SD	-	-	-	-
Total	46	100.0	100.0	

Based on Table 4 all of the students felt not confident to speak because they thought others were better than them.

Students' Strategy to Cope with the Anxiety

Table 5. Preparation before online learning

Options	Frequency	Percentage	Vp	Cp
SA	4	8.7	8.7	8.7
A	33	71.7	71.7	80.4
D	6	17.4	17.4	97.8
SD	1	2.2	2.2	100.0
Total	46	100.0	100.0	

Table 5 indicates that the major of students (80.4%) had preparation before online learning. only 19.6 did not have preparation before online learning.

Table 6. Do pleasant activities

Options	Frequency	Percentage	Vp	Cp
SA	6	13.0	13.0	13.0
A	26	56.5	56.5	69.6
D	12	26.1	26.1	95.7
SD	2	4.1	4.1	100.0
Total	25	100.0	100.0	

Table 6 explains the frequency of relaxation to overcome anxiety. 69.5% of the students do pleasant activities to get calm and relax, whereas, 30.2% did not do it.

Table 7. Find out partner

Options	Frequency	Percentage	Vp	Cp
SA	6	13.0	13.0	13.0
A	30	65.2	65.2	78.3
D	9	19.6	19.6	97.8
SD	1	2.2	2.2	100.0
Total	46	100.0	100.0	

Table 7 shows that 78.2% of the respondent found out someone that they feel comfortable to discuss with. However, 21.8% of the students choose to learn independently without asking help from others.

DISCUSSION

Factors of Students' Anxiety

Those statements showed that students have a lot of English vocabulary. However, they have difficulty memorizing the words and rarely use them. They can speak English fluently if they consistently use vocabulary and apply it daily.

Many anxious learners feel nervous when they have to speak in front of their other friends when the teacher is appointing them to answer a question. They must be calm when speaking English and have more courage. Classmate also has an essential role in learning English, especially speaking. The classmates also create tense situations; therefore, learners feel nervous and uncomfortable when they want to speak English. It is also caused by being stared at by other students when they try to speak.

According to Tsilapkides, as cited in Rayani (2016), fear of negative evaluation from classmates is a common factor that appears in language learning. The classmate becomes a factor in contributing to students' anxiety in the speaking learning process.

Another result of factors of students' anxiety from the previous study was done by Putri (2020) showed that students' anxiety influenced by 48% of self-confidence, 28% of classmates, and 19% of fear of making mistakes. She explained that related to students' self-confidence, they feel that English is difficult to learn and speak. Grammar is also one aspect that make students difficult to speak. So, students have to learn it repeatedly. After that, the class condition, especially their classmates, makes students anxious when they want to speak. Students feel nervous and anxious when they speak English while being stared at them. Then, in fear of making mistakes, students worried if their grammar was wrong. They are afraid if making mistakes and think other learners might laughed at and make a wrong assumption about their speaking English.

Another result is from Nan (2020), who has different factors of students' anxiety in speaking English. Those factors were the fear of speaking English and asking questions, especially when students were unprepared. They are afraid of being criticized by the teacher or mocked by classmates when the grammar is inappropriate. They are also nervous when their teacher asks them without preparation in advance. Last, another result from Rayani (2016) is that students' speaking anxiety can be influenced by speaking inaccurately, fear of negative evaluation, and students have low speech skills. In this research, she explained that students were less familiar with the vocabulary; therefore, they could not understand and feel difficult to speak English.

Students' Strategy to Overcome the Anxiety

In this section, the writer discussed how students overcome their anxiety in speaking English during online learning. Firstly, students overcome their anxiety with prepared themselves for online learning. There were 33 students (72%) agreed to do some preparation before the class began. The learners wished that they get a good mark or master English well by using good preparation. They could control their anxiety and increase their self-esteem. The preparation refers to the student's efforts in overcoming the feeling of anxiety, and it can improve through learning strategies. There are several ways to prepare, such as reading the materials before joining the class, asking friends or teachers for help, and focusing on factors that cause speaking anxiety. According to Argaman and Abu Rabi (2002), the right amount of speaking anxiety and students' effort to maintain their self-esteem lead to higher academic achievement. Those efforts include preparing and practising tasks before class, even online learning. Good preparation, which results in a good performance, shows that feeling anxious is normal. Therefore, they should not be too anxious about their speaking anxiety.

Secondly, relaxation. Twenty-six students (57%) chose this solution to cope with their anxiety. They did some pleasant activities to relax. Relaxation is aimed at reducing anxiety feeling when students still struggle with feelings of wrong grammar. Grasha, as cited in Rayani (2016) suggested that breathing deeply in and out for three to five minutes effectively reduces anxiety in speaking English. If one is well prepared and still struggling with anxiety and fear, relaxation, which involves tactics that aim at reducing anxiety, is offered.

Lastly, peer-seeking. In this questionnaire item, 30 students (65%) chose peer-seeking to overcome their speaking English anxiety. Most of them agreed and looked for a suitable learning partner. These students found a suitable learning partner to talk to

whom experienced the same thing. This is a good solution because they can share their experiences and learn from each other. Peer-seeking is how to consult other students who are also anxious about learning to speak.

Another result from Putri (2020) found that students cope with their anxiety through 40% of preparation, 35% of positive thinking and 25% of relaxation. In this research, she stated that students are prepared to overcome anxiety. Preparation before speaking and learning English making feel better than I ever did preparation. Students also think positively; preparation and positive thinking were the exact strategies to cope with the anxiety because of those related to the student's self-esteem. In positive thinking, they tried to reduce their anxiety when speaking English. Then, Rayani's research (2016) found that students cope with anxiety by thinking positively (47.5%). She said that by thinking positively, students could feel easier to speak and learn English and solve the nervous feeling while speaking.

CONCLUSION

Speaking becomes a problematic skill, and students frequently experience anxiety. Therefore, students still have problems with anxiety while learning English online. The writer found that most of the factors which caused students' anxiety in speaking English during online learning were vocabulary knowledge (71%) and classmates (64%). Then, students overcome anxiety with preparation (72%), relaxation (57%), and peer-seeking (57%). In learning to speak, students must be confident when they want to speak and must always motivate themselves to learn more new vocabulary. Therefore they are sure to speak without feeling hesitant about making mistakes or others judging their grammar.

Regarding the result of the research, the suggestions are proposed first, for the teachers. In overcoming the students' lack of

vocabulary, the teacher should ask students to read more English books to add new vocabulary. Furthermore, to prevent students from worrying about their friends in class, the teachers should have a role in creating a comfortable classroom atmosphere that does not discriminate between students' abilities; therefore, they are comfortable and confident when speaking English among classmates.

Then, for the students themselves in learning to speak English, students need to add new vocabulary. They can watch, read, and listen to songs related to English to increase their vocabulary knowledge. It is also essential to have confidence when speaking English among classmates.

Last, the subsequent researchers should explore more research on anxiety, but in a different field and use this writer's research as a reference.

REFERENCES

- Ali, B. J., Anwar, G. (2021). Anxiety and Foreign Language Learning: Analysis of Students' Anxiety Towards Foreign Language Learning. *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*, 6(3), 234-244. <https://dx.doi.org/10.22161/ijels.63.32>.
- Alzamil, A. (2021). Teaching English Speaking Online versus Face-to-Face: Saudi Students' Experience during the Covid-19 Pandemic. *Arab World English Journal*, 12(1), 19-27.
- Argaman, O., Rabia, S. A. (2002). The Influence of Language Anxiety on English Reading and Writing Tasks Among Native Hebrew Speakers, *Language, Culture, and Curriculum*, 15(2).
- Badrasawi, K. J. (2020). Second Language Speaking Anxiety among Malaysian Postgraduate Students at a Faculty of Education. *International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies*, 8(2), 54-61. <https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijels.v.8n.2p.54>.
- Chowdhury, S. Y., Kaisar, M. T. (2020). Foreign Language Virtual Classroom: Anxiety Creator or Healer. *English Language teaching*, 13(11), 130-139. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v13n11p130>.
- Cope, J., Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B. (1986). Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 70(2), 125-132.
- Nan, J. (2020). Research on Students' Anxiety in Online English Classes during the Epidemic. *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*, pp. 496, 627-633. <https://doi.org/10.299/assehr.k.201214.575>.
- Nunan, D. (1991). *Research Methods in Language Learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Putri, A. R. (2020). A Study of Students' Anxiety in Speaking. *Journal of Education, Linguistics, Literature and Language Teaching*, 3(1).
- Rayani, R. (2016). Students' Anxiety in English Learning (A Study at the Eight Grade of SMPN 1 Tambusai). *Jurnal Mahasiswa Prodi Bahasa Inggris UPP*, 2(1).
- Sadeghi, M. (2019). A Shift from Classroom to Distance Learning: Advantages and Limitations. *International Journal of Research in English Education*, 4(1), 80-88.
- Stuart, G. W., Sundeen. (2016). *Principle and Practice Psychiatric Nursing*, (1 ed). Elsevier.