

Psychological Issues Affecting Senior High School Students' Development in English-speaking Proficiency: A Case Study

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki masalah psikologis yang dihadapi oleh para siswa dalam mengembangkan kemampuan berbicara Bahasa Inggris mereka dan strategi apa yang mereka gunakan untuk mengatasi masalah tersebut. Studi ini dilakukan di sebuah sekolah menengah atas di Surabaya, Indonesia. Ini berasal dari sebuah studi kasus di mana peneliti melakukan praktek mengajar, para siswa mengeluh ketika diminta berbicara dalam Bahasa Inggris. semi-struktural *interview* dilakukan kepada sembilan partisipan untuk mengumpulkan data, dan data tersebut dianalisis menggunakan *thematic analysis*. Temuannya menunjukkan bahwa partisipan mengalami ketakutan membuat kesalahan, ketakutan salah mengucapkan kata-kata, ketakutan akan struktur bahasa, ketakutan berbicara di depan umum, ketakutan diejek, kurangnya rasa percaya diri, keraguan, motivasi rendah, gugup, rasa tidak aman, dan kekesalan atas evaluasi negatif. Juga ditemukan bahwa partisipan menggunakan strategi *relaxation*, *positive-thinking*, dan *peer-seeking* di antara yang lain (misalnya, *relaxation*, *preparation*, *positive-thinking*, *peer-seeking*, dan *resignation*) untuk mengatasi masalah tersebut.

Kata Kunci: Bahasa Inggris, berbicara, psikologis, strategi

Abstract

This research aims to investigate psychological issues students encounter in developing their English-speaking proficiency and what strategies they use to overcome those issues. This study was conducted in a high school in Surabaya, Indonesia. It was bottom lined from a case study where the researcher conducted a teaching practicum, the students were complaining when being asked to speak English. Semi-structured interviews for nine participants were applied to collect the data, and it was analyzed using thematic analysis. The finding shows that participants encountered fear of making mistakes, fear of mispronouncing words, fear of language structures, fear of public speaking, fear of being made fun of, lack of confidence, doubtfulness, low motivation, nervousness, insecurity, and annoyance of negative evaluation. It also finds that participants use preparation, positive-thinking, and peer-seeking strategies out of the others (e.g., relaxation, preparation, positive-thinking, peer-seeking, and resignation) to overcome the issues.

Keywords: English, speaking, psychological, strategy

INTRODUCTION

A productive skill that helps students communicate in spoken language is speaking. Haidara (2016) states speaking is the scope to speak with people by expressing each other's opinions and feelings in various contexts. The closest language component utilized in any real-life scenario is speaking, according to this statement. This study focuses on English because of the importance of speaking as one of the language development skills that learners should learn.

Students' psychological states can be one of the parts that affect their learning development in any learning situation, including learning English, especially in speaking. When it comes to speaking, psychological factors appear to be one of the key sources of affection for the students' outcomes. According to Hafis & Widya (2021), students' speaking abilities were primarily

impacted by anxiety. The related challenges that limited students' progress in learning to speak English were their shyness, lack of confidence, lack of enthusiasm, and fear of making mistakes. Students who are nervous about their English, for instance, might find it difficult to pass speaking tests since their performance is influenced. However, because they don't feel the pressure of language anxiety, relaxed students may perform better. Toubot et al. (2018).

Communication problems among English language learners are often caused by issues related to psychological conditions. Alternatively, students who feel they are "stupid," "worthless," and not as "bright" as their peers have low self-esteem and are unaware that they are probably not superior to others (Arifin, 2017). They may find it much more difficult to communicate when they are nervous about speaking English because they are afraid of being judged or made fun of. Students who are nervous

may also find it difficult to practice speaking English with others, which can prevent them from progressing. It is important to support students in learning English as well as improving their confidence by supporting their speaking practice and addressing psychological barriers in a nurturing environment.

Both teachers and students have issues in psychological, according to a study by Arifin (2017). Low self-esteem, speaking anxiety, and lack of confidence are regular classroom dilemmas that impact both teachers and students. Similar issues were found by Abda (2017), who discovered that students did not use speaking skills in or out of class due to a lack of support, fear, and anxiety about making mistakes, low self-confidence, poor grammar, a limited vocabulary, unclear English, and a lack of English familiarity.

To learn and understand how students deal with their psychological issues when speaking English, several studies have been organized. Seeing how these students overcame psychological problems to be able to develop their English speaking skills was crucial. Tati et al. (2016) study found that students were experiencing anxiety-related issues like shyness, public speaking anxiety, and speaking mistakes. The study also discovered that the students developed some strategies to deal with those issues, including avoiding eye contact, speaking quietly, learning by listening to English songs, watching English-language films with subtitles, practicing English with peers, learning to speak English in front of a mirror, and reading English-language books, magazines, and newspapers.

According to Nugroho & Hapsari (2024), Kondo and Ying-Ling (2004) suggested five methods for overcoming anxiety related to foreign languages. The initial strategy is preparation, which refers to making an effort to learn more in order to minimize the difficulties that students face (e.g., studying or practicing hard). These techniques give students a feeling that they understand the subject significance better, which may reduce their anxiety levels during language classes. The second method, relaxation, involves methods for lowering anxiety, like deep breathing and attempting to relax. The third method, known as positive thinking, emphasizes reducing anxious negative thoughts and maintaining a positive mindset, such as picturing success and making an effort to enjoy each step. It assists them in directing their focus from anxious situations to beneficial ideas, which could reduce anxiety. Peer-seeking, the fourth method, involves finding other students who experience anxiety or other challenges regarding the subject. By comparing their problems with those of others, they can find comfort in knowing that others are experiencing similar difficulties. Resignation is the last method, which occurs when students stop

attempting to manage their anxiety, such as by dozing off in class and giving up (Nugroho & Hapsari, 2024). Preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, peer-seeking, and resignation are the five strategies that this study modified to lessen speaking anxiety in English as a foreign language.

After conducting numerous self-observations, the researcher concluded that one of the major challenges faced by English-speaking people was psychological. The researcher also spoke with classmates, peers, and individuals from non-English speaking countries, and the majority of them agreed that psychological issues were a common problem in learning English. Similar issues were identified by the researcher while he was a teaching practicum student at a senior high school in Surabaya, Indonesia. These included low self-esteem, lack of motivation, and embarrassment, which made the students complain instead of using English. It summarized the research's objectives, which include investigating psychological issues students encounter in developing their English-speaking proficiency and what strategies they use to overcome those issues.

METHODS

During a teaching practicum at a senior high school in Surabaya, Indonesia, the researcher discovered the case lining for this study. Interestingly, the students refused to speak English when the researcher asked them to at that time, pointing to fear and a lack of confidence as excuses. When almost every student agreed on the same issues, it became even more fascinating. Additionally, a student spoke to the researcher that they were so discouraged and insecure after receiving such negative feedback from their teachers and peers causing them to no longer want to learn English.

One of Surabaya, Indonesia's senior high schools was used as the setting of this study. The reason for conducting this research was the school where the researcher discovered a case involving psychological issues and English-speaking ability. Nine of the school's eleventh graders were chosen to take part. With the teacher's assistance and the researcher's initial observations, three low-, middle-, and high-performing students were chosen in order to gather different types of data.

Qualitative research was used to collect a wide range of information, that finally led to a case study. Instead of concentrating on the what, where, and when of decision-making, the qualitative approach emphasizes the why and how ("Emphasizing Qualitative Study," 2010). Pseudonyms are also used in this study to protect privacy and confidentiality, allowing participants to communicate more openly without fear of being identified (Heaton, 2022).

Because semi-structured interviews are flexible and their implementation is dependent on the interviewee's response to the researcher's questions and topics, they were chosen as the instrument (Adhabi & Anozie, 2017). Three interviewing procedures were used in this study: the interviews were conducted in an empty room with just the researcher as the interviewer and the participant as the interviewee to prevent disruption, they lasted no less than five minutes or more than fifteen minutes for time-efficient reasons, and a voice recorder was used for each interview.

Table 1. Interview Questions

Definitions	Questions
In their study, Paramasivam & Zhiping (2013) directly questioned the participants' feelings about speaking English to investigate students' anxiety when speaking the language. Additionally, their participants discussed the poor rating they received for speaking English. To find out how the students manage their fear of speaking English in class, this study additionally brought up a set of questions. Additionally, the prepared interview questions are adapted from research by Mukminin et al. (2015). Major themes regarding students' psychological problems with speaking English were identified, including low speaking proficiency brought on by a lack of vocabulary and grammar, low self-esteem, fear of comments from teachers, and fear of negative comments. A number of interview questions were also adapted and modified from Ritonga et al.'s (2020) study on the effects of anxiety and motivation on students' speaking abilities.	1. How does having to speak English make you feel? 2. What problems or difficulties do you feel when speaking English? 3. What do you think are the reasons for these kinds of difficulties you feel when speaking English? 4. How do people react when you make mistakes in speaking English? Does it impact you? 5. What would you advise yourself or other students who had similar problems like yours to reduce these kinds of difficulties?

Thematic analysis was used in the study to support the data analysis. It includes a variety of techniques for the systematic analysis of a variety of texts, emphasizing not just the texts' noticeable content but also their main concepts and themes (Drisko & Maschi, 2015). Braun & Clarke (2006, as cited in Nugroho & Hapsari, 2024) stated that there are six approaches to applying a theme-based data analysis approach:

Step 1: Examining and understanding the findings. As previously mentioned, audio recordings of the interviews

were made. The researcher transcribed the audio recordings after analyzing the data.

Step 2: Coding. It denotes the labels developed for the data analysis and in context with the findings.

Step 3: Finding themes. The process of finding patterns connected to the research questions.

Step 4: Examining the themes. The study examined the relationship between the data and the themes or patterns discovered.

Step 5: Theme assignment. At this point, the researcher gives the data results themes. When assigning themes, the researcher might ask themselves, "How does this theme align with this data?"

Step 6: Reporting. The data analysis was used by the researcher to create a narrative report.

The researcher developed a scheme of codes for this study that could work as initials for the top layer of the other code in order to support the data analysis and themes.

Table 2. Initial Codes

Code	Meaning
S1	The number indicates the subject's count in order, with "S" indicating for subject (e.g., S1, S2, S3).
PIES	Psychological Issues in English-speaking
SOPI	Strategies to Overcome Psychological Issues

The psychological issues that students have when speaking English can be divided into several categories, according to this study: fear of committing mistakes, fear of incorrectly pronouncing words, fear of linguistic structures, fear of giving speeches, fear of mocking, not having confidence, dilemma, low enthusiasm, nervousness, insecurity, and annoyance at negative feedback. One of the objectives of this study was to find codes for methods that the students believed would assist them in overcoming their psychological issues when speaking English. Watching English-language films, practicing speaking the language, learning the language on smartphones, joining in private lessons, holding onto motivation, attempting to avoid nervousness, developing confidence, ignoring what other people say, and taking part in group learning were some more strategies. These techniques were intended to be divided into five categories: relaxation, preparation, positive thinking, peer seeking, and resignation. However, this study discovered that only preparation, positive thinking, and peer seeking were found among the participants. These are the set codes:

Table 3. Theme Codes

Category	Sub-category	Code	Meaning
Psychological Issues in English-speaking	N/A	PIES/FMM	Fear of making mistakes
		PIES/FMW	Fear of mispronouncing words
		PIES/FLS	Fear of language structures
		PIES/FPS	Fear of public speaking
		PIES/FMF	Fear of being made fun of
		PIES/LOC	Lack of confidence
		PIES/DBT	Doubtfulness
		PIES/LMT	Low motivation
		PIES/NRV	Nervousness
		PIES/INS	Insecurity
Strategies to Overcome Psychological Issues	Preparation	PIES/ANE	Annoyance of negative evaluation
		SOPI/PR/WF	Watching English films
		SOPI/PR/PS	Practicing English-speaking
		SOPI/PR/LS	Learning English with smartphones
	Positive-thinking	SOPI/PR/PL	Taking private lessons
		SOPI/PT/SM	Staying motivated
		SOPI/PT/NN	Trying not to be nervous
		SOPI/PT/MC	Being more confident
	Peer-seeking	SOPI/PT/IP	Ignoring what people say
		SOPI/PS/GL	Doing group learning

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings and discussion from interviews with students who had trouble speaking are presented in this section. Nine students participated, who were divided into three groups based on their English teacher's recommendation and the researcher's preliminary research: low-achievers, middle-achievers, and high-achievers. The findings line up with the research questions, which focus on learning the psychological issues high school students face when developing their English-speaking skills and the strategies they use to get past those challenges. To make it easier for readers, the researcher translated the results from Bahasa Indonesia, the participants' native language, into English.

Psychological Issues in English-speaking

The researcher started by asking the participants how they felt about speaking and using English in general. It was

discovered that because they had trouble learning how to speak English, seven out of nine participants did not name speaking as their favorite skill. Maji et al. (2022) supported this finding with their study that high school students faced both linguistic and non-linguistic challenges in learning to speak English. Lack of vocabulary, poor pronunciation, and poor grammar were linguistic factors; on the other hand, low motivation, shyness, anxiety, and language inexperience were non-linguistic factors.

"I like writing more than speaking because I am still kind of afraid of speaking and still get difficulties... The way of responding to others in communication is difficult for me." (S1/PIES/FMM)

"I feel less in speaking, sir. Hm... I can deal with listening, but in giving responses, I find it difficult to pronounce the words. So, I do understand in listening but can't give a response. I'm confused and afraid of giving wrong responses." (S2/PIES/FMW)

"Liking the speaking skill is not for me. It feels a little bit difficult because most of the time I feel like I'm not that fluent in it." (S3/PIES/LOC)

"Speaking English makes me afraid that there would be some words that couldn't be understood by others." (S4/PIES/FMW)

"I'm afraid that I will give wrong answers." (S5/PIES/FMM)

"I guess speaking English is the most difficult for me. It makes me afraid too." (S9/PIES/FMM)

"The problem is that speaking makes me stutter." (S7/PIES/NRV)

Participants who were asked about psychological issues they encountered while learning to speak English said they felt anxious, insecure, and unconfident. They also mentioned being afraid of making mistakes and not knowing the language. They also talked about feeling afraid of negative feedback.

Fear of Making Mistakes

The fear of making mistakes is one of the most psychological problems that students face when they are learning to speak English (Haidara, 2016). Six participants in this study said they felt fear, particularly the fear of making mistakes. The first thing they discussed when asked the questions was their fear of making a mistake. The previous causes of their anxieties were their lack of ability to speak English fluently and their limited vocabulary, which caused them to question whether the meaning and pronunciation of their words were correct. They clarified that they might become anxious as a result of this fear. It is in line with research by Nurmasadah et al. (2022), which found that poor grammar and vocabulary are major contributors to fear, which corresponds with anxiety, and nervousness.

"I'm afraid that the usage of the language would be incorrect." (S1/PIES/FMM)

"Wrong pronunciation could lead to wrong meaning in English, and it makes me afraid." (S2/PIES/FMM/FMW)

“Once, when I was doing a presentation. The first time reading the text out loud makes me shy... afraid of the wrong words and their pronunciation too.” (S6/PIES/FMM)

“I’m afraid of making mistakes as I’m not that fluent, I need to learn the language more.” (S3/PIES/FMM)

“It’s like the speaking makes me afraid of making mistakes. I’m afraid... nervous too.” (S7/PIES/FMM/NRV)

“What else... Perhaps, fear of making mistakes? Yes, I’m afraid of making mistakes, and too much being afraid and desperate probably could make me give up on learning English again.” (S8/PIES/FMM/LMT)

Fear of Being Unfamiliar with English

One participant expressed fear because they were not familiar with the differences between the structures in English and Bahasa Indonesia. As Yuliawati (2022) pointed out in their study, some patterns differ between Bahasa Indonesia and English. Even though it might be seen as a fear of making mistakes, the participant clarified that it is different and should be noted because it is caused by a lack of familiarity with the language. This conclusion is further supported by Nurmasadah et al. (2022), who found that one of the causes of anxiety and nervousness is a lack of grammar, which is also a language structure.

“Because I’m used to speaking Bahasa Indonesia and Javanese in school, and I rarely use English which makes me afraid of the usage of English itself. I’m afraid of the wrong usage. It’s about the formal and informal words, the verbs, and structuring the sentences.” (S1/PIES/FLS)

Lack of Confidence

Self-confidence is a person's belief in their ability to solve a variety of problems. According to the definition, having confidence helps one deal with problems (Shrauger and Schohn, 1995, as cited in Muqorrobin et al., 2022). The theory is supported by this study, which found that seven of the nine participants encountered a lack of confidence when speaking English. Their lack of confidence was formed by a lack of preparation, speaking in front of an audience, doubt, and fear of being made fun of. One of the main factors causing students to struggle with speaking English is a lack of confidence as it corresponds to Fitriani et al. (2015) study where they found that one of the main issues faced by their EFL students was a lack of confidence.

“To be honest, I’m not really that good at speaking English. I say I’m kind of, and I’m not that confident but not that bad though.” (S2/PIES/LOC)

“I feel like I don’t understand English that much. There are some vocabularies that I don’t know which makes me unconfident.” (S9/PIES/LOC)

“I’m lacking confidence. I fear mistakes too, and it’s because of my lack of confidence.” (S3/PIES/LOC/FMM)

“Sometimes, I feel there’s something... I doubt whether the words that I choose are the correct ones for them or not. It makes me not confident.” (S8/PIES/FMM/DBT)

“I can’t speak English all of a sudden. It makes me lack confidence. No, I can’t.” (S4/PIES/LOC)

“It’s like... as a vocalist who sings English, I, of course, face the audience. When I see their expression, it leads me to doubt my confidence.” (S6/PIES/LOC/FPS)

“I feel like I lack something. I lose belief in myself, and I’m afraid that my friends will make fun of me.” (S7/PIES/LOC/FMF)

Insecurity

One of the factors that influence how students improve their English-speaking skills is their feeling of insecurity (Marpaung & Fithriani, 2023). The study's results support the theory. Insecurity was found to be related to students' motivation to improve their English. Seven participants said that their insecurities sometimes led them to be more or less motivated. This finding also aligns with a study by Marhamah (2017) that found a significant relationship between students' motivation and their insecurities, including shyness.

“I’m insecure because sometimes when I had a look on others who speak English, I was like, wow their English is so fluent, while myself who kept learning English more and more but couldn’t be like them.” (S1/PIES/INS)

“People... uhm... people can do it, but I’m still kind of unable to. I feel insecure.” (S2/PIES/INS)

“I’m insecure with people who are smarter than me, especially when it’s about English.” (S3/PIES/INS)

“Being insecure... Yes, I have been.” (S6/PIES/INS)

“Insecure, yes, insecure. Some students can speak English. I’m amazed by them. They’re so smart at speaking English, but me... I was asked to speak in front of the class but couldn’t.” (S4/PIES/INS)

“When I was watching TikTok, I found many people who could do good public speaking in English. It made me feel, “How cool are they, I couldn’t do it.” (S8/PIES/INS)

“It’s more like when people talk more in English. “Wow, their vocabulary is so rich, and mine is still basic.” It makes me want to explore more, like how could my vocabulary be rich like theirs? Should I listen to more songs or watch more movies?” (S9/PIES/INS)

Nervousness

The results of this study correspond with earlier research by Daud et al. (2019), which found that anxiety is one of the issues that English speakers must deal with. It shows that over half of the five participants admitted to feeling anxious when speaking in English. It was found that their primary motivation for refusing to speak English was their fear of mispronouncing the words. They encountered tremors, stutters, lost confidence, and couldn't remember what to say as a result of this anxiety. It also supports the findings of a study by Daud et al. (2019), which showed that whenever students gave an English speech, they became nervous, anxious, and blanked out.

“Nervous, yes, nervous. I’m nervous because I’m afraid of wrong pronunciation.” (S2/PIES/NRV/FMW)

"I can't speak English. It's like... afraid... nervous, too. I'm like so nervous that whether I speak the language correctly or not." (S7/PIES/NRV/DBT)

"Nervous, and it makes me afraid and goes blank. I don't remember what to say. I don't have texts to read, which makes me forget what to say." (S4/PIES/NRV)

"I'm afraid that I can't say it. It gives me tremors of making mistakes. I'm nervous." (S8/PIES/NRV/FMM)

"Tremors and nervousness make me... When I start talking, I feel unconfident. It's like I'm so blank, "What should I say? What should I say?" like that. It's because I'm having that nervousness." (S9/PIES/NRV/LOC)

Negative Evaluation

According to Wardhani (2019), students who receive negative feedback are more likely to make assumptions and refuse to participate in English-speaking activities. It is consistent with this study, in which every participant provided an explanation of their feelings regarding evaluation. Three participants said they would ignore criticism, but one said it made them doubt and question themselves.

"Someone said to me, "You're so overblown." So I replied, "Watch your mouth!" But I don't care about it, it's me and myself, not theirs." (S1)

"They told me that my pronunciation was wrong. It made me motivated, though. They told me that, so that means I really did make a mistake. We have to accept it. But, though they only said that I'm exaggerated, that's fine, I just let it go." (S2)

"People's comments... I don't think about it, but it leaves me hanging with the question, "Is this correct or not?" (S6/PIES/DBT)

Six participants did, however, show that receiving negative feedback influences how they speak English. Negative evaluations caused students to become frustrated, unhappy, insecure, lose confidence, and fear being mocked according to this study.

"Because they criticize it, it makes me understand my flaws. So, I accept it, I accept that I have flaws. It makes me annoyed, but I'm always trying not to be. They said, "How come you couldn't do this easy?" (S3/PIES/ANE)

"They laughed at me, made fun of me. But I'm more motivated and shy at the same time. I won't be mad. I'll change and keep making progress to overcome them. Well, I feel kind of distempered, though, but with that, it makes me more motivated to keep progressing." (S7/PIES/ANE)

"I'm afraid of negative evaluations, I'm afraid people will make fun of me." (S5/PIES/FMF)

"Ew, is that how you speak English?" It sounds so annoying to me, makes me distempered, "Mind your business." Why? I was just trying, but I'll be motivated if they politely go like, "Hey, your English was wrong." It makes me realize and be like, "Oh really? What's the correct one?" (S8/PIES/ANE)

"At least I did my best, I've done my presentation then that's all. I've done trying my best, to deliver the materials. But sometimes, it makes me confident but sometimes not. Well, I'm more to that it makes me lose my confidence. It could drop my self-confidence." (S9/PIES/ANE/LOC)

"So I have a sister, my sister. She always pushed my English. When I told her, "My grade is falling, sis." She said, "Why so? You didn't

study? English isn't that difficult." It makes me insecure, but it's fine. Perhaps, that's my flaw and I need to study more." (S4/PIES/INS)

Students believed that receiving negative evaluations caused a threat (Paramasivam & Zhiping, 2013). However, the results also indicated that, depending on how positive the evaluations were, negative evaluations could have an impact on students' motivation to learn English. It is related to Umisara et al. (2021), who discovered that while good feedback could increase students' self-confidence, negative feedback would have an impact on how they feel psychologically, including anxiety.

Strategies for Overcoming Psychological Issues

This study also aims to understand how students overcome the language psychological problems they face during English-speaking development. Appropriate approaches could be used to minimize psychological problems in students, such as anxiety, emotional stress, and mental health impacts (Maquidato, 2021).

Every participant was asked relevant questions during the interview so they could add their responses to the results. The range of responses from participants regarding methods for resolving psychological problems was categorized. According to Kondo & Ling (2004, as cited in Aeni, 2020), students used five strategies—relaxation, preparation, positive thinking, peer seeking, and resignation—to get past their psychological problems when speaking English. However, the results showed that the strategies mentioned by the participants could only be divided into three categories: peer seeking, preparation, and positive thinking.

Preparation

According to Nurahman et al. (2023), preparation is a strategy used by students to increase their level of readiness for speaking English. Four participants in this study reported using smartphones to learn English, watching English-spoken movies with subtitles, practicing their English more, and taking private lessons as ways to improve their English-speaking abilities.

"Learn more, little by little. Especially when... you... like my friends and I, are used to watching films, trying with Bahasa Indonesia subtitles but the films are in English. There will be some words, try it, just try, and you will make it." (S1/SOPI/PR/WF)

"Perhaps, you could try to learn the basics in English, like what is what, yeah, just the basics. Then, try to watch English films, you could use the subtitles at the bottom though. You could hear the words too. It's helpful." (S2/SOPI/PR/WF)

"We have smartphones now, and there are some applications too. Probably, we can use smartphones to learn the language or do private lessons." (S4/SOPI/PR/LS/PL)

"Every night before going to school on the next day... you study. Learn and practice. Practice if possible." (S5/SOPI/PR/PS)

Positive-thinking

Students use positive thinking as a strategy to try to think positively and steer clear of stressful situations (Aeni, 2020). This strategy was present in the strategies that the participants had mentioned. Five participants reported that their methods for maintaining positive thoughts about learning English included remaining motivated, avoiding shyness and anxiety, increasing their confidence, and avoiding listening to what others say. It is in line with a study by Aeni (2020) that found that having confidence, attempting to avoid thinking about other people and having faith in themselves are some components of positive thinking.

“Keep learning, be more motivated.” (S3/SOPI/PT/SM)

“And don’t... don’t be nervous when it happens to speak in front of your friends, like in a presentation.” (S5/SOPI/PT/NN)

“My advice is that... be more confident, don’t be shy to learn. Expand your knowledge of English. Don’t listen to others, just say, “This is me, myself,” like that.” (S6/SOPI/PT/MC/IP)

“We have to be confident, I can say. Don’t try it on a bunch of people all of a sudden, try it with some people first, like close friends. Try to talk in English, little by little.” (S8/SOPI/PT/MC)

“Just do it. Quit thinking about what people say and keep learning.” (S9/SOPI/PT/IP)

As a positive thinking method, the participants would attempt to maintain their positive attitude and avoid listening to others' negative remarks because it could have an impact on their mental state, according to the study's findings, which were related to the negative evaluation. The strategy is similar to filtering feedback in that it involves choosing only positive feedback. It is related to Grundmann et al. (2021), who described how filtering and ignoring negative feedback worked.

Peer-seeking

According to this study, two participants would try to find other students who had similar psychological problems in an effort to learn English speaking together—a process known as group learning. According to a study by Nurahman et al. (2023), students who use this strategy claim to feel more confident because they have friends who have experienced similar issues. Peer seeking is the term for this type of strategy. One of the peer-seeking activities, according to Aeni (2020), is looking for people who are dealing with psychological problems like anxiety.

“Maybe we can also learn it together with somebody to be more enthusiastic.” (S4/SOPI/PS/GL)

“We could try to learn together. Yes, study together because we have the same problems. We study together until we can speak English.” (S7/SOPI/PS/GL)

CONCLUSION

This study focuses on a case where the researcher noticed during their preliminary practicum as teachers that their students complained instead of participating in English-speaking instruction. Additionally, a student who had given up on learning English ran into the researcher and began to cry. The researcher observed the students briefly and found that they pointed out fear of receiving negative feedback as the reason they chose not to speak. The researcher brought this situation to a case study using interviews as the instrument, and it was discovered that psychological issues had an impact on the students' behavior in terms of their ability in English-speaking.

The first research question focuses on psychological issues that students face when learning to speak English. This study found that students' emotions and anxieties affected their ability to speak English. Fears of making mistakes, mispronouncing words, language structures, speaking in front of an audience, and criticism were among these anxieties. They then feel anxious, unmotivated, insecure, and lack confidence, which causes them to tremble, stutter, and blank out. According to this study, students who receive negative evaluations may become annoyed, frustrated, insecure, lose confidence, and fear being made fun of. Sometimes, however, they may become more motivated because of the negative evaluations.

The second research question focuses on the methods students use to conquer the psychological issues they encounter while developing their English-speaking skills. Students come up with strategies that cover preparation, positive thinking, and peer seeking, according to the study's findings. Watching English-language films with subtitles, speaking English more, learning the language on smartphones, and taking private lessons are some preparation methods. They found that positive thinking strategies involve improving confidence, avoiding nervousness and shyness, staying motivated, and ignoring what other people say. Finally, their peer-seeking strategy involves finding others who have the same psychological issues and studying with them.

One major factor influencing students' English-speaking proficiency is psychological problems and language anxiety (Hafis & Widya, 2021). According to the researcher's preliminary observation, this is an interesting case that affects almost all English language learners, especially non-native speakers. This would enable future researchers to investigate each of the strategies found in this study and find the corresponding impact. More strategies from other studies could be implemented by future researchers to enhance the results. The intention is to educate English language learners and facilitate their

ability to identify the best approaches to improving their psychological problems.

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