

Foreign Language Anxiety among 12th Grade Senior High School Students

Muhammad Taufiqur Rachman

Universitas Negeri Surabaya
muhammadtaufiqur.18065@mhs.unesa.ac.id

Abstrak

Kecemasan tampaknya menjadi tantangan signifikan bagi siswa yang sedang belajar Bahasa Inggris, karena dapat menyebabkan persepsi diri yang negatif dan memengaruhi faktor-faktor lain yang mendukung proses pembelajaran. Akibatnya, siswa mungkin gagal mencapai tingkat kemahiran Bahasa Inggris yang diharapkan, terutama dalam hal kelancaran berbicara. Siswa kelas 12 di sebuah sekolah menengah swasta di Surabaya mengalami rasa takut atau kecemasan saat berbicara Bahasa Inggris karena mereka merasa tertantang untuk berkomunikasi dengan guru dan teman sebaya selama proses pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menyelidiki tingkat kecemasan berbicara Bahasa Inggris yang dialami oleh siswa kelas 12 di sekolah menengah swasta tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kuantitatif dengan menggunakan kuesioner terstruktur untuk menjawab pertanyaan penelitian dan mengumpulkan data. Kuesioner yang digunakan adalah Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), yang terdiri dari 33 butir pertanyaan terkait kecemasan berbicara Bahasa Inggris. Sebanyak 173 siswa kelas 12 mengisi kuesioner tersebut melalui metode convenience sampling. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa 133 siswa mengalami tingkat kecemasan sedang, 29 siswa memiliki tingkat kecemasan rendah, dan 11 siswa mengalami tingkat kecemasan tinggi. Faktor-faktor yang memengaruhi kecemasan tersebut meliputi pemahaman komunikasi, kecemasan saat ujian, dan ketakutan terhadap penilaian negatif. Temuan penelitian ini memiliki implikasi penting bagi para pembelajar Bahasa Inggris yang mengalami kecemasan berbicara serta bagi para pengajarnya. Penelitian ini memberikan wawasan yang dapat digunakan untuk meningkatkan praktik pengajaran di masa depan dan membantu para pendidik memahami kecemasan yang dialami oleh siswa mereka.

Kata Kunci: Kecemasan, Pendidikan, Kelas, EFL

Abstract

Anxiety appears to be a significant barrier for students learning English, as it can lead to negative self-perceptions and impact various factors essential to the learning process. Consequently, students may fail to attain a high or expected level of English proficiency, particularly in terms of speaking fluency. Twelfth-grade students at a private senior high school in Surabaya report experiencing fear or anxiety when speaking English, largely due to the challenges involved in communicating with teachers and peers during the English learning process. The aim of this study is to examine the levels of English speaking anxiety among twelfth-grade students at this private high school. Employing a descriptive quantitative approach, the study utilized a structured questionnaire to address the research questions and gather data. The instrument used was the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), which comprises 33 items specifically designed to assess English speaking anxiety. A total of 173 students participated in the study, selected through convenience sampling. Findings revealed that 133 students exhibited moderate anxiety levels, 29 students demonstrated low anxiety, and 11 students experienced high anxiety. Key factors influencing anxiety included comprehension difficulties in communication, anxiety related to testing, and fear of negative evaluation. The results have important implications for English learners who experience speaking anxiety, as well as for their instructors. These insights may contribute to the development of more effective teaching strategies and improve educators' understanding of student anxiety in the language learning context.

Keywords: Anxiety, Education, Classroom, EFL

INTRODUCTION

Speaking represents a productive skill that, in addition to writing, makes use of oral production. Speaking represents the most crucial skill in the context of foreign language learning, as it is frequently the primary criterion for

assessment. Moreover, individuals with proficient English language skills are highly sought after by potential employers (Miskam & Saidalvi, 2018). Nonetheless, the act of speaking is indicative of an individual's communicative competence, which encompasses the

domains of pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary enhancement.(Bashori et al., 2022). It is indicative of an individual's capacity to engage in oral communication by means of utilizing language.

Anxiety is the primary factor that impedes students' acquisition of speaking when required to speak in front of the class. Anxiety is defined as an adverse emotional state. Anxiety is typified by a constellation of emotional states, including jitteriness, worry, and terror (Sari & Iswahyuni, 2019). In the context of teaching and learning, Anxiety in international postgraduate students is attributable to a number of factors, including self-related perceptions, learning challenges, cultural differences, inadequate language proficiency, and a fear of evaluation (Taly & Paramasivam, 2020). The majority of English Education students experienced high levels of anxiety, with 74.2% classified as highly anxious, 21.7% exhibiting moderate anxiety, and none reporting low anxiety as stated by Pattah et al.,(2022) . Research conducted by Suadnyana & Nova, (2021) examining student awareness of speaking anxiety, with a particular focus on vocational high school students in Denpasar. They have been asserted that anxiety can exert a deleterious effect on students who aspire to master a foreign language, particularly English. As the researcher noted during the initial classroom investigation, based on the teachers' description of the class, a significant number of students exhibited a tendency to stutter or refrain from speaking in English when prompted by the teacher. In some instances when their names were called for dialogue, the students were observed to utter only a few words before swiftly transitioning to their mother tongue, Bahasa Indonesia.

Several studies have been conducted to investigate the anxiety experienced by students in foreign language classrooms, particularly in English classes. The first of these studies was conducted by Sari & Iswahyuni, (2019) The study aims to examine the presence or absence of anxiety in students engaged in YouTube video projects, as well as the factors that influence this anxiety. The research conducted by Sari & Iswahyuni, (2019) reveals that anxiety is indeed a prevalent emotion among students engaged in YouTube video projects. Additionally, the findings indicate that a significant proportion of students experience anxiety regarding public speaking in English, particularly in the context of YouTube video projects. The second one is the one that followed by Taly & Paramasivam, (2020) A study was conducted that revealed the most common causes of speaking anxiety which is part of foreign language anxiety among international students to be a lack of sufficient language input and poor practice in classroom, particularly in contexts where English is not the native language. Research conducted by Suadnyana & Nova, (2021) examines student awareness of speaking

anxiety which is also part of foreign language anxiety, with a particular focus on vocational high school students in Denpasar. In a separate study, Pattah et al., (2022) investigated the prevalence of anxiety among English language education students at Unismuh Makassar. The findings revealed that the majority of participants 74.26% exhibited high levels of anxiety, while 21.73% demonstrated moderate anxiety and none reported low levels of anxiety. The subsequent study was conducted by Rizkiya & Pratolo, (2023), the findings of which indicated that third-semester students from Ahmad Dahlan University exhibited an average moderate level of foreign language anxiety.

In light of the limitations identified in prior studies on foreign language anxiety, this researcher posits that extant literature has predominantly focused on higher education levels, as evidenced by the following studies: (Sari & Iswahyuni, 2019); (Taly & Paramasivam, 2020); (Pattah et al., 2022) and (Rizkiya & Pratolo, 2023). These studies have centered on university students, whereas (Suadnyana & Nova, 2021), has focused on vocational high school students. A notable distinction of the present study is its substantially larger sample size, which is a departure from the relatively limited sample sizes employed in previous research. Specifically, the studies by Sari & Iswahyuni, (2019) (n = 124), Taly & Paramasivam, (2020) (n = 15), and Suadnyana & Nova, (2021) (n = 51), all had sample sizes that were much smaller than the present study. (Pattah et al., 2022) study involved 23 students, and (Rizkiya & Pratolo, 2023) study included 85 students. In contrast, the current study aims to investigate the anxiety experienced by 12th-grade private senior high school students in Surabaya. It employs a larger sample size to yield more comprehensive results. The objective of this study is to examine the prevalence and degree of students' anxiety in foreign language classrooms, with a particular focus on English classes.

METHODS

Research Design

As stated by Creswell & Crewell, (2018). This study utilized a quantitative approach with survey design. The quantitative approach is a methodological approach for the evaluation of objective theories, focused on the examination of the relationship among variables. The measurement of these variables is typically accomplished through the utilization of instruments, thereby yielding numerical data that can undergo analysis through the application of statistical procedures. Survey design involves the quantitative assessment of trends, attitudes, or

opinions within a population by examining a representative sample.

Research Subjects

The subjects of this research study were grade 12 students from one of the private schools in Surabaya. They were selected because they did not have an English-based curriculum. Therefore, the researcher was interested in gaining insight into how these students experience and express anxiety when engaging in English Class outside of an environment specifically designed to foster such proficiency. The sample consisted of 173 students drawn from a population of 315. Convenience sampling was employed as the sampling method. This approach involves selecting respondents based on their availability and accessibility, continuing the selection process until the predetermined sample size is achieved. (Cohen et al., 2007)

Source of Data

The data for this study consisted of students' experiences with different types of speaking anxiety, collected through a questionnaire. The instrument was adapted from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), a 33-item questionnaire developed by Horwitz et al. (1986). To ensure participant comprehension and facilitate data collection, the original English version of the FLCAS was translated and modified into Bahasa Indonesia by the researcher.

Research Instrument

Participants were provided with questionnaires to complete at their convenience. Their responses were used to classify anxiety levels into high, medium, or low categories. The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), developed by Horwitz et al. (1986), served as the instrument for measuring anxiety. This scale is well-established in the literature, demonstrating strong validity and reliability, and has been extensively applied in studies investigating language learning anxiety.

The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) comprises 33 items designed to assess various aspects of anxiety associated with language learning. Participants indicated their level of agreement with each statement using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from Strongly Agree (SA) to Strongly Disagree (SD). Given that the participants were Indonesian students, the questionnaire was translated into Indonesian to enhance clarity and ensure accurate comprehension.

Validity

The FLCAS instrument was employed in the form of a questionnaire to assess students' anxiety levels. Prior to its implementation, the questionnaire underwent a content validity assessment. Following its translation into Indonesian, the content of the questionnaire was validated by a one of the English Lectures. The FLCAS questionnaire used was considered valid due to its compatibility with the translated version.

Reliability

In reliability, the value of reliability is said to be reliable if the score is 0.70 or more (Cohen et al., 2007) as can be seen in the table below.

Table 1. Reliability score

Score	
>0,90	Very high reliable
0,80-0,90	High reliable
0,70-0,79	Reliable
0,60-0,69	Marginally/minimally reliable
<0,60	Unacceptable low reliability

In this context, the FLCAS questionnaire can be said to be reliable because it has a Cronbach alpha value of 0.891, which is in the high reliability category.

Table 2. The FLCAS questionnaire's reliability score

Reliability Statics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.891	25

Data Collection

The data for this study were collected by researchers through the administration of questionnaires, which consist of a series of questions that must be answered by respondents or measurement subjects. The questionnaire distributed is a GoogleForm, which aims to facilitate data entry and processing, given that the average high school student today certainly has a cell phone for communication. The questionnaire was distributed via a link sent through an instant messaging group. The measurement subjects were 173 12th grade high school students, and all of the distributed questionnaires were returned, with respondents providing answers.

Data Analysis

As outlined by Miles et al., (2014), The analysis process comprises three main components: data condensation, data

display, and the drawing and verification of conclusions. In this study, the researchers adopted the data analysis framework proposed by Miles and Huberman. The first stage, data condensation, involves refining and reducing the dataset to a more manageable and focused form. This includes summarizing the responses collected from the questionnaires. The second stage, data display, involves organizing, condensing, and presenting the information in a clear and accessible visual format to facilitate understanding. Finally, the third stage entails drawing and verifying conclusions by interpreting the summarized data in a straightforward manner. The results derived from the questionnaire will be used to address the research questions guiding this study.

Initially, it is necessary to report the number of participants who returned the completed questionnaires, as well as those who did not respond. Subsequently, the study should detail the procedures employed to assess potential response bias. This should be followed by a comprehensive explanation of the descriptive analytical methods used for examining both the independent and dependent variables. Additionally, the statistical methods and software tools selected for analyzing the primary inferential research questions or hypotheses must be clearly specified. The findings should be systematically presented in tabular or graphical form, accompanied by appropriate interpretation. Finally, the results should be subjected to a process of translation, thorough description, and critical comparison with the findings of prior research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results are obtained through the collection of data in the form of questionnaire responses that have been distributed previously. The results demonstrate significant findings that can serve as a benchmark or provide insight into the research question. The results indicate the extent to which students experience anxiety.

In accordance with the research question, this section will describe the results of the data obtained by researchers. Researchers utilized the FLCAS questionnaire, which was distributed to all respondents, to collect data.

The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) was employed to assess students' levels of anxiety in English language classes. This instrument comprises 33 items, each measured on a 5-point Likert scale. With response options ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), the total score for the scale ranges from 33 to 165. According to the scoring criteria, a total score exceeding 132 indicates a high level of anxiety, scores between 99 and 132 reflect a moderate

level of anxiety, and scores below 99 denote a low level of anxiety (Rizkiya & Pratolo, 2023).

Table 3. Percentage of students who have speaking anxiety

Category Score	Percentages	Number of Students
High Level	6%	11
Moderate Level	77%	133
Low Level	17%	29
Total	100%	173

As shown in Table 1, the majority of students reported a moderate level of anxiety. Specifically, 17% of the participants scored below 99, indicating a low level of anxiety. In contrast, 77% of the respondents fell within the moderate anxiety range, with scores between 99 and 132. A small proportion, representing only 6% of the sample, reported high levels of anxiety in the English classroom.

Communication Apprehension

The present study explores the relationship between communication apprehension and language anxiety in students. The results of the questionnaire indicate that communication anxiety can influence students' ability to manage foreign language classroom anxiety.

Table 4. Communication Apprehension Factor

No	Communication Apprehension			
	Statement	SD+D	NA	A+SA
1.	I never feel pretty sure of myself when speaking in my English class.	19,6%	42,8%	37,6%
2.	I start to panic when I speak without preparation in English class.	18,5%	28,9%	52,6%
3.	I would not be nervous speaking English with a native speaker.	36,4%	40,5%	23,1%
4.	I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other students.	33,5%	31,2%	35,3%
5.	I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my English class.	28,3%	30,6%	41,0%
6.	I get upset when I do not understand what the teacher is correcting.	28,4%	37,6%	34,2%
7.	It frightens me when I do not understand what the teacher is saying in the English class.	28,3%	24,9%	46,8%
X (Mean)		27,6%	33,8%	38,7%

As indicated by the findings of the present study, communication anxiety has been demonstrated to be associated with speaking anxiety. The results of the questionnaire demonstrate that 38.7% of students expressed approval of the statements regarding communication fear (see Table 2). Furthermore, 38.7% of

students reported experiencing fear regarding communication factors that influence their anxiety (see Table 2).

As demonstrated in Table 2, 38.7% of students expressed agreement with the existing statements. The percentages of students who strongly agreed (SA) and agreed (A) were higher than the percentages for other responses. 33.8% of students indicated a neutral stance (N), while 27.6% of students expressed disagreement, as indicated by their responses to the disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD) options.

Test Anxiety

Test anxiety has been identified as a second factor contributing to students' foreign languages classroom anxiety.

Table 5. Test Anxiety Factors

No	Test Anxiety			
	Statement	SD+D	NA	A+SA
1.	I tremble when I know I will be called on in English Class.	43,3%	30,1%	26,6%
2	I feel confident when I speak in English class.	35,8%	38,7%	25,5%
3	I can feel my heart pounding; why will I be called on in English class?	26,6%	35,3%	38,1%
4	Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious.	27,1%	36,4%	36,4%
5	I often feel like not going to my English class.	61,3%	28,9%	9,8%
6	I can get so nervous in English class that I forget things I know.	36,5%	34,7%	28,9%
7	When I am on my way to English class, I feel very sure and relaxed.	24,8%	38,7%	36,4%
8	The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.	56,1%	23,1%	20,9%
9	I do not feel pressure to prepare very well for English class.	9,8%	38,2%	52,0%
10	I try to make a habit of studying English frequently.	6,9%	23,7%	69,4%
11	I try to relax when I am in my English class.	5,2%	22,5%	72,3%
12	I always think positively that I can speak English in the classroom.	9,3%	30,1%	60,7%
13	I tell myself I am OK when I feel anxious in my English class.	13,5%	39,3%	47,4%
14	I never tell myself that a complex problem for me is also tricky for others.	22,0%	42,2%	35,8%
15	I do not want to participate in the speaking English class.	63,0%	29,5%	7,5%
16	I study hard the day before I give a performance that requires me to speak English.	7,0%	37,0%	56,1%

17	I take a deep breath when I feel anxious in my English class.	16,8%	39,9%	43,4%
18	I avoid getting involved in a situation which can make me feel anxious when speaking English in the classroom.	21,9%	42,8%	35,3%
19	I worry about the consequences of failing my English class.	24,8%	31,8%	43,4%
20	I do not worry about making mistakes in English class.	20,8%	26,6%	52,6%
X (Mean)		26,6%	33,5%	39,9%

As illustrated in Table 3, the results indicate that approximately 40% of students expressed approval of the statements in the test anxiety factor. The data in the table indicates that 39.9% of students selected strongly agree (SA) or agree (A), which exceeds the neutral (N) option, which accounted for 33.5%, and is followed by disagree (D) and strongly disagree, which accounted for 26.6%.

Fear of Negative Evaluation

The third of the factors discussed earlier that affect students' foreign language classroom anxiety is the fear of negative evaluation.

Table 6. Fear of Negative Evaluation Factors

No	Fear of Negative Evaluation			
	Statement	SD+D	NA	A+SA
1.	I keep thinking that other students are better than I am in speaking English.	14,4%	27,7%	57,8%
2	It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my English class.	28,9%	35,8%	35,2%
3	I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do.	11,6%	24,9%	63,6%
4	I fear other students will laugh at me when I speak English.	25,5%	30,6%	43,9%
5	I get nervous when the teacher asks questions that I have not prepared in advance.	12,7%	29,5%	57,8%
6	I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	39,4%	35,8%	24,8%
X (Mean)		22,1%	30,7%	47,2%

As illustrated in Table 4, students appear to be influenced by a fear of negative judgment, which can manifest in symptoms such as speech anxiety. The data in the table reveals that a significant proportion of students, approximately 50%, exhibit a strong agreement with the statements presented. This includes both "strongly agree"

(SA) and "agree" (A) responses. Additionally, the data indicates that 47.2% of students strongly agree (SA) and agree (A) with the statements. This figure surpasses those of other options, including neutral (N) at 30.7%, as well as disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD), which accounted for 22.1% of classroom.

The primary objective of this research is to investigate or discover how much the level of anxiety of 12th grade senior high school students in Surabaya in English, especially in the subject of speaking. It is anticipated that the findings of this study will have a significant impact on future initiatives, benefiting students, teacher, and researchers alike.

In this study, 12th grade senior high school students in Surabaya, Indonesia, were found to have moderate levels of anxiety in foreign language classroom especially in English. This finding was supported by the data obtained through the administration of questionnaires, which were subsequently displayed or interpreted in tabular form and described by the researcher in the previous paragraph. The students' anxiety may be attributed to their perception of receiving negative feedback from others based on the results of the fear of negative evaluation questionnaire.

According to Suadnyana & Nova (2021), anxiety has the potential to affect students who are learning foreign languages, especially English. In the absence of effective management and control of anxiety, its impact can be damaging. Specifically, anxiety can interfere with English language acquisition, resulting in poor performance.

According to Rizkiya & Pratolo (2023), their study posits that the predominant anxiety exhibited by students regarding English language proficiency is attributable to their perception of English as a second or third language. In their study, these students reported feeling at ease during English tests and even volunteered answers during their English class. However, the study also identified a subset of students who exhibited elevated anxiety levels. These students demonstrated a correlation between high anxiety and diminished academic performance, a phenomenon that, in turn, exacerbated their anxiety.

According to Pattah et al., (2022) it has been posited that high levels of anxiety affect classroom speaking motivation and classroom performance, resulting in students being unable to articulate their opinions when the lecture requires them to speak without preparation.

A significant factor that frequently contributes to students' experience of anxiety is the absence of effective

mechanisms for managing and regulating anxiety. Suadnyana & Nova, (2021) their perception of English as a second or third language and lower academic achievement. Rizkiya & Pratolo, (2023) and the lecturer or other individuals posed questions about which they had never been anxious before (Pattah et al., 2022).

CONCLUSION

This study explores the anxiety levels of 12th grade students in Surabaya, Indonesia, as they engage in foreign language classroom activities. The findings suggest that the majority of students exhibit moderate levels of anxiety which aligns with results from other studies. The descriptive results indicate that 17 % of the participants exhibited a low level of anxiety, scoring less than 99. Conversely, 77 % demonstrated a moderate level of anxiety, scoring between 99 and 132. Notably, only 6 % of the participants exhibited a high level of anxiety when in English classroom.

REFERENCES

- Bashori, M., van Hout, R., Strik, H., & Cucchiaroni, C. (2022). Web-based language learning and speaking anxiety. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 35(5–6), 1058–1089. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2020.1770293>
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research Methods in Education* (6th ed.). Routledge.
- Creswell, J. W., & Crewell, J. D. (2018). *Research Design : qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, J. (2014). *Qualitative Data Analysis_ A Methods Sourcebook (PDFDrive)* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Miskam, N. N., & Saidalvi, A. (2018). Investigating English Language Speaking Anxiety among Malaysian Undergraduate Learners. *Asian Social Science*, 15(1), 1. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v15n1p1>
- Pattah, A. S., Mahmud, M., & Noni, N. (2022). Students' English Speaking Anxiety in Classroom Context. *BATARA DIDI : English Language Journal*, 1(2), 68–77. <https://doi.org/10.56209/badi.v1i2.46>
- Rizkiya, A., & Pratolo, B. W. (2023). STUDENTS' STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME ENGLISH SPEAKING ANXIETY. *Premise: Journal of English Education*, 12(2), 660. <https://doi.org/10.24127/pj.v12i2.7417>
- Sari, A. B. P., & Iswahyuni, D. (2019). THE STUDENTS' SPEAKING ANXIETY ON THE YOUTUBE VIDEO PROJECT IN EFL

LEARNING IN INDONESIA by. *Premise :
Jpurnal of Englsih Education and Applied
Linguistics*, 8(2), 176–192.
[https://fkip.ummetro.ac.id/journal/index.php/
english](https://fkip.ummetro.ac.id/journal/index.php/english)

Suadnyana, W., & Nova, M. (2021). STUDENTS' AWARENESS ON SPEAKING ANXIETY IN ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSE SPEAKING PROJECT. *Linguistic and Art Journal*, 2(1).

Taly, B. C., & Paramasivam, S. (2020). Speaking Anxiety Among Postgraduate International Students in the Academic Context of a University in Malaysia. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 12(1), 198.
<https://doi.org/10.5296/ijl.v12i1.16053>