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**FACTORS AFFECTING STUDENTS' ANXIETY IN SPEAKING FOR DAILY CONTEXT
(A STUDY OF THE SECOND SEMESTER ENGLISH STUDENTS AT THE ENGLISH
EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM OF FATMAWATI SUKARNO ISLAMIC STATE
UNIVERSITY IN ACADEMIC YEAR 2025/2026)**

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Abstract: This study investigated the factors affecting students' anxiety in speaking for daily context among second-semester students in an English Education Study Program. Speaking anxiety remains a common challenge in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, particularly in spontaneous communication. The study aimed to identify the level of students' speaking anxiety, determine the dominant contributing factors, and explore students' experiences in everyday communication situations. A mixed-method design with an explanatory sequential approach was employed. Quantitative data were collected through a Likert-scale questionnaire administered to 32 students selected using purposive sampling. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean scores and percentages. Qualitative data were obtained through semi-structured interviews and classroom observations and were analyzed using thematic analysis to provide deeper insights into students' experiences. The findings showed that most students experienced high levels of speaking anxiety in daily contexts. Fear of negative evaluation was identified as the most dominant factor, followed by lack of confidence and limited vocabulary. In contrast, classroom environment and test anxiety were found to have a lower influence. Qualitative results indicated that students' anxiety was closely related to fear of making mistakes, peer judgment, and difficulty expressing ideas. Observable behaviors such as hesitation, avoidance, and code-switching supported these findings. These results indicate that speaking anxiety in daily communication is primarily influenced by internal psychological and linguistic factors rather than external conditions, suggesting the need for greater attention to learners' confidence and language readiness.

Keywords: *Speaking Anxiety, English as a Foreign Language (EFL), Daily Context*

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is a central skill in English language learning, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts where learners have limited exposure to authentic communication outside the classroom. Among the four language skills, speaking is often considered the most demanding because it requires real-time language processing, fluency, accuracy, and confidence (Richards, 2008; Brown, 2007). However, many students experience significant anxiety when they are required to speak in English, even in simple, everyday communication situations. This study focused on students' anxiety in speaking for daily context, specifically examining the factors that influence such anxiety among second-semester students in an English Education Study Program.

From an academic perspective, the issue of speaking anxiety has been widely discussed within Applied Linguistics, particularly in relation to foreign language learning. Anxiety has been identified as a key affective factor that can influence learners' performance, motivation, and overall language acquisition process (Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994b; Gardner, 1985). Understanding speaking anxiety is essential because it directly impacts learners' ability to communicate effectively, which is a primary goal of language education. Practically, speaking anxiety presents a real challenge in classroom settings. Many students hesitate to participate in speaking activities, avoid communication, or experience nervousness when asked to speak. This situation can hinder the effectiveness of teaching and learning processes, as students may not fully engage in communicative tasks. Therefore, identifying the factors that contribute to speaking anxiety is crucial for designing teaching strategies that create a supportive and low-anxiety learning environment. It also helps students develop coping strategies to improve their confidence and speaking performance in real-life situations.

Numerous studies have examined foreign language anxiety and its effects on learners' performance. Earlier research has consistently shown that speaking anxiety is one of the most prominent forms of anxiety experienced by EFL learners.

It is often associated with factors such as communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986). These components have been widely used as a framework to understand language anxiety in classroom contexts. Previous studies have also identified several internal and external factors influencing speaking anxiety (Tanveer, 2007; Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, & Daley, 1999). Internal factors include lack of confidence, limited vocabulary, poor pronunciation, and fear of making mistakes. External factors, on the other hand, involve classroom environment, teaching methods, peer pressure, and limited opportunities for practice. Research findings have indicated that these factors can significantly affect students' willingness to communicate and their speaking performance (MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1998).

However, most of these studies have focused on formal speaking situations, such as classroom presentations, oral exams, or structured speaking tasks. While these contexts are important, they do not fully represent everyday communication, which tends to be more spontaneous and less structured. As a result, there is still a need to explore speaking anxiety in daily communication contexts, where students must use language more naturally and interactively (Woodrow, 2006). Despite the extensive research on foreign language anxiety, several gaps remain. First, there is limited focus on speaking anxiety in daily contexts, particularly among early-stage university students who are still developing their communicative competence (Ellis, 2008). Second, many studies rely heavily on quantitative data without providing deeper insights into students' personal experiences and perceptions. This creates a gap in understanding how and why anxiety occurs in specific situations.

Additionally, inconsistencies exist in previous findings regarding the dominant factors influencing speaking anxiety. Some studies emphasize internal factors, while others highlight the role of external classroom conditions (Jones, 2004; Zhang & Zhong, 2012). This variation suggests that the factors affecting speaking anxiety may differ depending on context, learner characteristics, and learning environment. To address these gaps, this study combined quantitative and

qualitative approaches to provide a more comprehensive understanding of speaking anxiety in daily contexts. The main contribution of this study was to identify and analyze the specific factors affecting students' anxiety in everyday communication situations, as well as to explore how these factors influence their speaking behavior. By focusing on second-semester students, this study also contributed to understanding anxiety at an early stage of language development. Based on the issues discussed above, the core research problem of this study was to investigate what factors affect students' anxiety in speaking for daily context and how these factors influence their ability to communicate in English.

The objectives of this study were to identify the level of students' speaking anxiety, analyze the contributing factors, determine the dominant factors, and explore students' experiences related to speaking anxiety in daily communication. This study was conducted in the context of an English Education Study Program at Fatmawati Sukarno Islamic State University during the academic year 2025/2026. The participants were second-semester students who were actively engaged in speaking activities as part of their coursework. The units of analysis were individual students, focusing on their levels of anxiety, perceptions, and experiences in speaking English in daily contexts. Each student's responses were analyzed to understand patterns and variations in speaking anxiety.

METHOD

This study employed a mixed-method research design using an explanatory sequential approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The design was selected because it allowed the researcher to first collect quantitative data to measure the level of students' speaking anxiety and identify its contributing factors, and then follow up with qualitative data to explain and deepen the quantitative findings. This approach was considered scientifically appropriate because speaking anxiety is a complex psychological construct that cannot be fully understood through numerical data alone. Therefore, combining quantitative and qualitative methods enhanced the validity and comprehensiveness of the findings.

The research was conducted at the English Education Study Program of Fatmawati Sukarno Islamic State University during the academic year 2025/2026. The target population of this study consisted of all second-semester students enrolled in the program. This population was chosen because second-semester students were still in the early stages of developing their speaking skills and were more likely to experience anxiety when speaking in English for daily communication contexts. The research context was an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom environment, where students used English primarily for academic purposes rather than daily communication.

The units of analysis in this study were individual students. Each student's level of speaking anxiety and their perceived factors contributing to anxiety were analyzed as independent cases. The respondents' demographic profile generally included students aged between 18 and 21 years old, with relatively similar educational backgrounds, as they were enrolled in the same study program. Behaviorally, the respondents were characterized as EFL learners who had limited exposure to English outside the classroom, which justified their relevance to the study of speaking anxiety in daily contexts (Dörnyei, 2005).

The sampling method used in this study was purposive sampling (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018). This technique was chosen because the researcher intentionally selected participants who met specific criteria, namely second-semester students who had experienced speaking activities in English classes. Purposive sampling was considered appropriate because it ensured that the participants were relevant to the research objectives. However, it was acknowledged that this method had limitations in terms of generalizability, as the findings could not be generalized to all EFL learners beyond the specific context of the study.

The target sample size was determined based on the number of students available in one or two intact classes, which typically ranged from 25 to 40 students. This range was considered sufficient for descriptive statistical analysis and feasible within the time constraints of the study. The researcher initially distributed

questionnaires to 33 students. Out of these, 32 questionnaires were returned and deemed valid for analysis, resulting in a response rate of approximately 91%. This response rate was considered acceptable and indicated a high level of participant engagement (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2019). The final sample size of 32 respondents was adequate for identifying trends and patterns in speaking anxiety among the participants.

In terms of data collection, this study used three main instruments: a questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, and classroom observation. The questionnaire served as the primary instrument for collecting quantitative data. It was adapted from established scales measuring foreign language anxiety and consisted of Likert-scale items designed to measure students' anxiety levels and the factors affecting their speaking anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986; Spielberger, 1983). The use of a questionnaire was appropriate because it allowed for efficient data collection from a relatively large number of participants and enabled statistical analysis of responses.

To complement the quantitative data, semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected participants representing different levels of anxiety (high, medium, and low). The purpose of the interviews was to explore students' experiences, perceptions, and feelings related to speaking anxiety in greater depth (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This qualitative method was considered scientifically sound because it provided rich, descriptive data that could explain the patterns observed in the questionnaire results.

In addition, classroom observation was conducted to capture students' actual behavior during speaking activities. The observation focused on indicators such as hesitation, avoidance, nervous gestures, and participation levels. This method was included to triangulate the data and increase the credibility of the findings, as it allowed the researcher to compare self-reported data with observable behavior (Yin, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The data analysis was conducted in two stages. First, quantitative data from the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean scores

and percentages. The mean score was calculated to determine the overall level of students' speaking anxiety, while percentage analysis was used to identify the most dominant factors affecting anxiety. This statistical approach was appropriate because the study aimed to describe and categorize anxiety levels rather than test complex causal relationships (Sugiyono, 2019).

Second, qualitative data from interviews and observations were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher followed the steps of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). The interview transcripts were coded to identify recurring themes related to students' anxiety and its contributing factors. This method was considered suitable because it allowed for systematic interpretation of qualitative data and provided deeper insights into students' experiences.

Overall, the chosen research design, sampling strategy, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques were appropriate and scientifically sound for achieving the objectives of the study. The combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches ensured that the findings were both reliable and meaningful, and that other researchers could replicate the study in similar contexts by following the same procedures.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Result

This section presents the main findings of the study on factors affecting students' anxiety in speaking for daily context among second-semester students. The findings are organized into three major parts: (1) the level of speaking anxiety, (2) the dominant factors affecting anxiety, and (3) qualitative insights explaining students' experiences. Only the most significant findings are presented to highlight the central contributions of the study.

1. Level of Students' Speaking Anxiety

The first analysis aimed to determine the overall level of students' speaking anxiety based on the questionnaire data. The responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics, particularly mean scores and percentage distribution.

Table 1. Overall Level of Speaking Anxiety

Category	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage
Very High Anxiety	80–100	6	18.75%
High Anxiety	60–79	14	43.75%
Moderate Anxiety	40–59	9	28.12%
Low Anxiety	20–39	3	9.38%
Total		32	100%

The results indicated that the majority of students (62.5%) experienced high to very high levels of speaking anxiety. The mean score of overall anxiety was 67.3, which falls into the “high anxiety” category. This finding confirmed that speaking anxiety remained a significant issue among second-semester students, even in daily communication contexts. Interestingly, only a small proportion of students (9.38%) reported low anxiety. This suggested that speaking anxiety was not limited to formal speaking situations but also extended to informal, everyday communication.

2. Factors Affecting Speaking Anxiety

The second analysis focused on identifying the most influential factors contributing to students' speaking anxiety. The mean scores for each factor were calculated and ranked.

Table 2. Mean Scores of Anxiety Factors

Factor	Mean Score	Category	Rank
Fear of Negative Evaluation	3.98	High	1
Lack of Confidence	3.85	High	2
Limited Vocabulary	3.72	High	3
Pronunciation Problems	3.65	Moderate-High	4

Classroom Environment	3.21	Moderate	5
Test Anxiety	3.10	Moderate	6

The analysis revealed that fear of negative evaluation was the most dominant factor influencing students' speaking anxiety, followed by lack of confidence and limited vocabulary. These findings suggested that psychological and internal factors played a more significant role than external factors. Unexpectedly, classroom environment and test anxiety were found to have relatively lower influence compared to previous studies. This contrasted with earlier research, which often emphasized the role of external classroom conditions as a major source of anxiety.

3. Detailed Behavioral Indicators of Anxiety

To support the questionnaire findings, classroom observations were conducted to identify observable indicators of anxiety (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993).

Figure 1. Observed Behavioral Indicators of Speaking Anxiety

Common Indicators Observed:

- Hesitation before speaking (78%)
- Avoiding eye contact (65%)
- Long pauses during speech (59%)
- Switching to native language (53%)
- Minimal participation (47%)

The observation data showed that hesitation was the most frequently observed behavior, followed by avoidance of eye contact. These indicators reinforced the quantitative findings that students experienced significant anxiety even in routine speaking activities.

Notably, many students preferred to switch to their native language when they felt anxious, indicating a lack of confidence and linguistic readiness (MacIntyre & Noels, 1996).

4. Unexpected Findings

One of the most interesting findings of this study was the relatively low impact of classroom environment on speaking anxiety. While previous studies often

highlighted teacher behavior and classroom atmosphere as major contributors, this study found that internal factors were more dominant. This discrepancy may be explained by the context of the study. The observed classes were relatively supportive, with lecturers encouraging participation and minimizing criticism. As a result, students' anxiety appeared to stem more from their internal psychological conditions rather than external pressures. Another unexpected finding was that test anxiety did not rank among the top factors. This suggested that students were more anxious during spontaneous speaking situations rather than formal assessments. In other words, daily communication posed a greater challenge than structured speaking tasks.

5. Qualitative Findings from Interviews

To deepen the understanding of these results, semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected students representing different anxiety levels. The qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis.

Table 3. Summary of Emerging Themes from Interviews

Theme	Description
Fear of Mistakes	Students worried about making grammatical or pronunciation errors
Self-Doubt	Students lacked confidence in their ability to express ideas
Vocabulary Limitation	Students struggled to find appropriate words
Peer Judgment	Students felt afraid of being laughed at by classmates
Coping Strategies	Some students used preparation or avoidance strategies

The interview results strongly supported the quantitative findings. Most students reported that they felt anxious because they were afraid of making mistakes and being judged by others. This confirmed that fear of negative evaluation was indeed the most dominant factor. Students also expressed that limited vocabulary made it difficult for them to express ideas, leading to hesitation and

anxiety. One student stated that they often knew what they wanted to say but could not find the right words, which caused frustration and nervousness.

6. Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

The integration of quantitative and qualitative data provided a more comprehensive understanding of speaking anxiety.

Table 4. Integrated Findings

Quantitative Result	Qualitative Support	Interpretation
Fear of negative evaluation (Rank 1)	Fear of being laughed at	Social judgment strongly affects anxiety
Lack of confidence (Rank 2)	Self-doubt and hesitation	Psychological readiness is critical
Limited vocabulary (Rank 3)	Difficulty expressing ideas	Linguistic competence influences anxiety
Low role of classroom environment	Supportive teaching reported	External factors less influential in this context

The results demonstrated strong consistency between the two types of data. The dominant factors identified quantitatively were clearly reflected in students' personal experiences.

Discussion

Part 1: Restatement of Purpose and Summary of Main Findings

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the factors affecting students' anxiety in speaking for daily context among second-semester students in an English Education Study Program. Specifically, the study aimed to identify the level of speaking anxiety, determine the dominant factors influencing this anxiety, and explore students' experiences in everyday communication situations. The findings of this study contribute to a more contextualized understanding of speaking anxiety by focusing not on formal academic speaking tasks, but on daily communication, which is often overlooked in previous research. The results revealed that the majority of students experienced high levels of speaking anxiety,

with a mean score indicating a generally high anxiety category. This finding suggests that anxiety remains a significant issue even at an early stage of university education and in relatively informal communication contexts. In relation to the factors influencing anxiety, fear of negative evaluation emerged as the most dominant factor, followed by lack of confidence and limited vocabulary. These findings indicate that internal psychological and linguistic factors play a more substantial role than external conditions.

Another important finding was that classroom environment and test anxiety were not among the most influential factors. This result differs from some earlier studies and suggests that, in this particular context, students' anxiety was not primarily driven by external pressures. The qualitative findings further supported these results by showing that students' anxiety was closely related to fear of making mistakes, being judged by peers, and difficulty expressing ideas due to limited vocabulary. Observable behaviors such as hesitation, avoidance of eye contact, and switching to the native language reinforced the presence of anxiety during speaking activities.

Part 2: Relationship Between Findings and Existing Literature

The findings of this study are generally consistent with previous research in Applied Linguistics, which has identified speaking anxiety as a common challenge among EFL learners. The high level of anxiety found in this study aligns with earlier findings that learners often experience nervousness and apprehension when required to speak in a foreign language, even in non-threatening situations. The identification of fear of negative evaluation as the most dominant factor also supports widely established frameworks of foreign language anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986; Aida, 1994). Previous studies have consistently highlighted that learners are highly sensitive to how they are perceived by others, particularly in classroom settings. The present study reinforces this view by demonstrating that students were concerned about being laughed at, criticized, or judged by their peers, which led to increased anxiety during speaking activities (Tsui, 1996; Price, 1991).

Similarly, the importance of internal factors such as lack of confidence and limited vocabulary is in line with earlier findings. Many studies have shown that learners who feel linguistically unprepared or uncertain about their abilities are more likely to experience anxiety (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994b; Tanveer, 2007). The current study confirms that when students struggle to find appropriate words or doubt their ability to construct sentences, their anxiety increases, leading to hesitation and reduced participation.

However, the findings of this study diverge from some previous research in relation to the role of external factors. While earlier studies often emphasized the influence of classroom environment and teacher behavior, this study found that these factors were less significant (Young, 1991; Effiong, 2016). This difference suggests that the impact of external factors may vary depending on the specific learning context. In this case, the relatively supportive classroom environment may have reduced the influence of external pressures, allowing internal factors to become more prominent. Another point of difference concerns test anxiety. Previous studies frequently identified test situations as a major source of anxiety (Salehi & Marefat, 2014). In contrast, this study found that test anxiety was not a dominant factor. This finding indicates that students may feel more comfortable in structured assessment situations, where they have time to prepare, compared to spontaneous daily communication, which requires immediate responses.

Part 3: Possible Explanations and Interpretation of Findings

The dominance of fear of negative evaluation can be explained by the social nature of speaking activities (Horwitz et al., 1986). Speaking in a foreign language often exposes learners to the possibility of making mistakes in front of others. In this study, students reported that they were particularly concerned about peer reactions, which suggests that social judgment played a crucial role in shaping their anxiety. This finding is consistent with the observed behaviors, such as avoiding eye contact and hesitating before speaking, which indicate an attempt to minimize social exposure. The strong influence of lack of confidence may be linked to students' limited experience in using English for real communication (Bandura, 1997;

MacIntyre, 1995). As second-semester students, the participants were still in the early stages of developing their speaking skills. This lack of experience likely contributed to feelings of uncertainty and self-doubt. When students were unsure about their ability to express ideas correctly, they tended to avoid speaking or relied on their native language, which further reinforced their anxiety. Limited vocabulary also emerged as a significant factor, and this can be explained by the demands of daily communication (Zhang & Zhong, 2012). Unlike structured speaking tasks, daily conversations often require spontaneous responses and flexible language use. Students who lacked sufficient vocabulary found it difficult to express their thoughts, which led to frustration and increased anxiety. This finding highlights the close relationship between linguistic competence and emotional response in language learning. The relatively low influence of classroom environment may be explained by the supportive conditions observed during the study (Young, 1991). The lecturer's approach appeared to encourage participation and reduce fear of criticism, which may have minimized the impact of external factors. As a result, students' anxiety was more closely related to their internal perceptions rather than external pressures. This finding suggests that when a positive classroom atmosphere is established, internal factors become more visible as the primary source of anxiety. The finding that test anxiety was less influential can be interpreted in relation to the nature of assessment. In formal test situations, students typically have time to prepare their responses, which may reduce uncertainty and increase confidence. In contrast, daily communication requires immediate and spontaneous responses, leaving little time for preparation. This difference may explain why students reported higher anxiety in everyday speaking situations than in formal assessments. The observed behavioral indicators further support these interpretations. Hesitation, avoidance of eye contact, and minimal participation reflect students' attempts to cope with anxiety by reducing their exposure to speaking situations. The tendency to switch to the native language also indicates a strategy to avoid linguistic difficulty. These behaviors provide concrete evidence

that anxiety not only affects students' feelings but also influences their actual performance.

Overall, the findings of this study suggest that speaking anxiety in daily contexts is primarily shaped by internal psychological and linguistic factors. While external factors are not irrelevant, their influence may be reduced in supportive learning environments. This highlights the importance of addressing students' confidence, vocabulary development, and fear of negative evaluation in order to reduce anxiety and improve speaking performance (MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1998). At the same time, it is important to note that these conclusions are limited to the specific context of this study. The participants were drawn from a single study program, and their experiences may not represent all EFL learners. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted within the context in which the study was conducted. Future research may explore similar issues in different contexts to determine whether these patterns are consistent across diverse learning environments (MacIntyre & Legatto, 2011).

CONCLUSION

This study examined the factors affecting students' anxiety in speaking for daily context among second-semester students in an English Education Study Program. The findings indicated that speaking anxiety was closely associated with internal factors, particularly fear of negative evaluation, lack of confidence, and limited vocabulary (Horwitz et al., 1986; Tanveer, 2007). These factors were consistently reflected in both the quantitative results and qualitative data, suggesting that students' perceptions of their own abilities and their sensitivity to social judgment played a central role in shaping their speaking behavior. External factors such as classroom environment and test-related conditions were found to have a comparatively smaller influence within the observed context.

The implications of these findings highlight the importance of addressing both psychological and linguistic dimensions in speaking instruction. Efforts to reduce speaking anxiety may need to focus on creating learning experiences that support students' confidence and encourage gradual risk-taking in communication (Oxford,

1999; Nunan, 2003). Providing opportunities for low-pressure speaking practice, promoting peer support, and allowing students to develop vocabulary in meaningful contexts may help reduce anxiety during everyday communication. At the same time, instructional strategies that emphasize process over correctness may contribute to lowering students' fear of negative evaluation.

This study was subject to several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the research was conducted within a single institutional context and involved a relatively small number of participants. As a result, the findings may not fully represent the experiences of students in different educational settings or at different levels of proficiency. Second, the study relied on self-reported data and observations within a limited timeframe, which may not capture changes in students' anxiety over time. Third, although the mixed-method design allowed for a more comprehensive analysis, the qualitative data were drawn from a limited number of participants, which may restrict the depth of interpretation.

These limitations suggest several opportunities for future research. Further studies may involve a larger and more diverse sample to explore whether similar patterns of speaking anxiety occur in different contexts, such as other universities or levels of study (von Wörde, 2003). Longitudinal research could also be conducted to examine how speaking anxiety develops or changes over time as students gain more experience in using English. In addition, future research may investigate the effectiveness of specific instructional strategies or interventions aimed at reducing speaking anxiety in daily communication contexts. Exploring the role of peer interaction and collaborative learning in shaping students' confidence may also provide additional insights.

Overall, this study contributes to a more context-specific understanding of speaking anxiety by focusing on daily communication rather than formal speaking situations. It highlights the need to consider learners' internal experiences as a key element in language learning processes and opens avenues for further investigation into how these experiences can be addressed in educational practice.

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