



Levels of Speaking Anxiety Among English Education Students in Classroom Presentation Activities

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Article Info	Abstract
Received: 2026-05-31 Revised: 2026-05-31 Accepted: 2026-06-29 Keywords: <i>Classroom presentation; English Education students; speaking anxiety; speaking performance</i> DOI: 10.24256/ideas.v14i1.10934 Corresponding Author: Nova Herlianah novaherlianah36@students.unnes.ac.id Universitas Negeri Semarang	<i>Speaking anxiety is a common problem for students who learn English as a Foreign Language (EFL), especially when they have to give presentations in class. This study aims to find out the level of speaking anxiety among English Language Education students during classroom presentations and to identify the factors that cause their anxiety. This study used a descriptive quantitative method. The participants were 34 English Language Education students from the fourth, sixth, and eighth semesters at a state university in Indonesia. The data were collected through a questionnaire consisting of 30 statements based on Foreign Language Anxiety Theory, Communication Anxiety, and the Affective Filter Hypothesis. The data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 25 through validity and Reliability tests, as well as descriptive statistical analysis. The results showed that all questionnaire items were valid and highly reliable. The findings also showed that most students experienced a moderate level of speaking anxiety during classroom presentations. The main causes of anxiety were fear of making grammatical mistakes, forgetting vocabulary while presenting, fear of being judged by others, and feeling embarrassed when making mistakes in front of classmates. These findings show that speaking anxiety is still a major challenge for English Language Education students and may affect their confidence and presentation performance. Therefore, teachers should create a supportive classroom atmosphere and provide more opportunities for presentation practice to help students reduce anxiety and improve their speaking skills.</i>

1. Introduction

Speaking is one of the most important skills in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL), but it is also one of the most challenging skills for many students (Mustamir, 2024). In higher education settings, students are frequently required to communicate ideas, share knowledge, and demonstrate their understanding through oral presentations. For English Education students, the ability to speak clearly, accurately, and confidently in English is not only an important academic skill but also a professional competency that supports their future role as English teachers (Ati & Parmawati, 2022). Through oral presentations, students develop communication skills, critical thinking abilities, and self-confidence in using English in academic contexts.

Classroom presentation is one of the most common forms of academic speaking activities in higher education (Annur & Yunita, 2025; Ismail & Jaya, 2026). Unlike ordinary classroom interactions, presentations require students to organize information, deliver ideas coherently, respond to questions, and perform in front of an audience while being evaluated by lecturers and classmates. Such conditions often create additional psychological pressure because students must simultaneously manage language production, content delivery, and audience expectations (Ahmed, 2025; Marhum, 2025). Consequently, classroom presentations may generate higher levels of anxiety than other speaking activities, making them a particularly important context for investigating students' speaking anxiety (Hatiza & Sujiatmoko, 2025; Nuraida, 2025).

One of the most common psychological challenges experienced by EFL learners during oral presentations is speaking anxiety. Speaking anxiety can negatively affect students' participation, confidence, and overall language performance (Fauzi & Asi, 2023). According to Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope (1986), foreign language anxiety is a distinct set of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning that arises from the unique process of learning and using a foreign language. This anxiety tends to become more intense in situations involving public performance and evaluation, such as classroom presentations.

Speaking anxiety is also closely associated with Communication Apprehension, a concept introduced by McCroskey, (1977), which refers to the fear or anxiety associated with actual or anticipated communication with others. During classroom presentations, students are expected to present ideas to an audience and respond to questions immediately, which may increase their apprehension. Furthermore, Krashen's (1985) Affective Filter Hypothesis explains that emotional variables such as anxiety can act as psychological barriers that interfere with language acquisition and performance. When learners experience high anxiety, they may encounter difficulties in recalling vocabulary, organizing ideas, and communicating effectively in English.

Recent studies consistently indicate that speaking anxiety remains a significant challenge in both EFL and ESL learning contexts. Previous research has shown that students frequently experience anxiety due to fear of negative evaluation, limited language proficiency, insufficient preparation, and low self-confidence (Ati & Parmawati, 2022; Chong, Price, Irwin, Dowens, & Leong, 2025; Özdemir & Seçkin, 2025). These findings suggest that speaking anxiety is a multidimensional phenomenon influenced by cognitive, emotional, and social factors. In addition, studies have demonstrated that anxiety may reduce students' willingness to communicate and negatively affect their speaking performance and classroom participation (Bárkányi & Brash, 2025; Suratin & Sribayak, 2025).

Similar findings have been reported in the Indonesian EFL context. Several studies revealed that English Education students frequently experience speaking anxiety due to fear of making mistakes, fear of negative evaluation, low self-confidence, and communication apprehension (Gayatri, Tulaktondok, & Sallata, 2023; Siregar, 2022; Syahfutra & Wibowo, 2021). Other studies further highlighted that both internal factors, such as language proficiency and self-confidence, and external factors, such as classroom atmosphere and lecturer feedback, contribute to students' anxiety when speaking English (Arifin, Malihah, & Nabella, 2025; Fauzi & Asi, 2023). Collectively, these studies indicate that speaking anxiety remains a persistent issue among university students learning English as a foreign language.

Although previous studies have contributed significantly to understanding speaking anxiety in EFL settings, several gaps remain. Most studies have focused on general speaking activities, public speaking anxiety, or the relationship between anxiety and language performance. Limited research has specifically examined speaking anxiety experienced during classroom presentation activities among English Education students.

Moreover, previous studies often investigate anxiety levels or anxiety factors separately, whereas relatively few studies have examined the interaction of cognitive, emotional, social, and physiological factors within a single investigation. Considering that classroom presentations involve public performance, direct evaluation, and spontaneous interaction, further research is needed to understand how these factors contribute to students' speaking anxiety.

Based on Foreign Language Anxiety Theory (Horwitz et al., 1986), Communication Apprehension (McCroskey, 1977), and the Affective Filter Hypothesis (Krashen, 1985), this study assumes that classroom presentation activities may trigger speaking anxiety through several dimensions, including cognitive factors (fear of making mistakes and forgetting vocabulary), emotional factors (nervousness and embarrassment), social factors (fear of negative evaluation), and physiological factors (physical tension and nervous reactions). These dimensions collectively influence students' confidence and presentation performance in academic settings.

To address the identified gaps, this study focuses specifically on English Education students' speaking anxiety during classroom presentation activities. Unlike previous studies that primarily examined speaking anxiety in general communication contexts, this study investigates anxiety within the specific context of classroom presentations and examines cognitive, emotional, social, and physiological factors simultaneously. Therefore, this study aims to answer the following research questions: (1) What is the level of speaking anxiety among English Education students during classroom presentation activities? and (2) What are the main factors contributing to students' speaking anxiety during classroom presentations?

The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the growing body of research on foreign language anxiety by providing a more comprehensive understanding of students' speaking anxiety in academic presentation settings. Furthermore, the results may help lecturers and educators develop supportive classroom environments and effective instructional strategies that reduce speaking anxiety and enhance students' presentation performance.

2. Method

This study used a descriptive quantitative research design to measure the level of speaking anxiety among English Language Education students during classroom presentations and to identify the factors contributing to their anxiety. According to Creswell (2014.), quantitative research involves collecting numerical data and analyzing it using statistical procedures to describe trends and characteristics of a population. A descriptive quantitative approach is considered appropriate because this study aims to measure and describe students' speaking anxiety as it naturally occurs during classroom presentation activities without manipulating any variables.

The participants of this study were 34 students from the English Education Program at a state university in Indonesia. They were enrolled in the fourth, sixth, and eighth semesters and had prior experience delivering classroom presentations in English. The participants were selected using purposive sampling because the study required respondents who possessed specific characteristics relevant to the research objectives (Etikan, 2016). The inclusion criteria required participants to (1) be active students in the English Education Program, (2) have experience participating in classroom presentation activities conducted in English, and (3) be willing to participate voluntarily in the study.

The sample size of 34 participants was considered appropriate for this descriptive quantitative study because the primary objective was to obtain an initial understanding of speaking anxiety within a specific educational context rather than to make broad statistical generalizations (John W. Creswell & Cheryl N. Poth, 2018). By selecting participants who had direct experience with English

classroom presentations, the study was able to gather information that was highly relevant to the research questions.

Nevertheless, the findings should be interpreted with caution. The relatively small sample size and the use of non-probability purposive sampling may limit the generalizability of the results to other populations of English Education students. Furthermore, purposive sampling may introduce sampling bias because participants are selected based on predetermined criteria rather than through random selection (Etikan, 2016). Therefore, the findings should be viewed as representative of the participants involved in this study rather than of all English Education students in Indonesia.

The main instrument used in this study was a structured questionnaire consisting of 30 statements adapted from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) developed by (Horwitz et al., 1986) and modified to suit the context of classroom presentations. This questionnaire is also based on McCroskey's (1977) concept of Communication Anxiety and Krashen's (1985) Affective Filter Hypothesis. It measures four dimensions of speaking anxiety: cognitive, emotional, social, and physiological factors.

A five-point Likert scale was used, from Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1). Some positively worded items were reverse-scored to ensure consistency in score interpretation. To confirm the quality of the instrument, validity and Reliability tests were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 25. The results indicated that all questionnaire items were valid and the instrument demonstrated a high level of Reliability.

Data were collected using an online questionnaire distributed to the participants through Google Forms. Before filling out the questionnaire, the participants were informed about the purpose of the study and were assured that their responses would be kept anonymous and confidential. Participation in the study was voluntary, and the participants completed the questionnaire based on their own experiences during classroom presentation activities. After all responses were collected, the data were checked, organized, and prepared for analysis.

The data collected were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 25. A validity and Reliability test was required before the main analysis to ensure the quality of the instrument. Item validity was assessed using Pearson's product-moment correlation, while Reliability was measured using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Once the instrument was confirmed to be valid and reliable, descriptive statistical analysis was performed, including frequency, percentage, mean score, minimum and maximum scores, and standard deviation.

To determine the level of speaking anxiety, participants' total scores were classified into three categories based on the questionnaire's theoretical score range. The questionnaire consisted of 30 items with a minimum score of 30 and a maximum score of 150. The classification criteria are as follows:

- Low Anxiety: 30–70
- Moderate Anxiety: 71–110
- High Anxiety: 111–150

These categories were used to identify the overall level of speaking anxiety experienced by participants during classroom presentation activities. Furthermore, the mean scores for each questionnaire item were analyzed to identify the factors that most strongly contribute to students' speaking anxiety. The results were then interpreted to provide a comprehensive understanding of the levels and contributing factors of speaking anxiety among English Language Education students.

3. Results

Instrument Validity Test

Before the main analysis, a validity test was conducted to determine whether the questionnaire items were appropriate for measuring students' speaking anxiety during classroom presentations. The validity test was performed using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation. The results indicated that all 30 questionnaire items obtained significance values below 0.05, indicating that all items were valid and suitable for data collection.

Table 1. Validity Test Results

Item Range	Pearson Correlation Range	Sig. (2-tailed)	Result
Q1-Q30	0.504-0.878	<0.05	Valid

Table 1 shows that all 30 questionnaire items obtained significance values below 0.05. The Pearson correlation values ranged from 0.504 to 0.878, indicating that all items were valid and suitable for measuring speaking anxiety. Therefore, all questionnaire items were retained for further analysis.

Instrument Reliability Test

Following the validity test, a Reliability test was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha to examine the internal consistency of the instrument.

Table 2. Reliability Test Results

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items	Interpretation
0.966	30	Highly Reliable

The Reliability coefficient of 0.966 indicates excellent internal consistency. Therefore, the questionnaire was considered highly reliable for measuring speaking anxiety among English Education students.

Descriptive Statistics of Speaking Anxiety

Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to determine the overall level of speaking anxiety experienced by the participants during classroom presentation activities.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Speaking Anxiety

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation	Category
Speaking Anxiety	34	51	150	97.82	22.428	Moderate Anxiety

Table 3 shows that the mean score for speaking anxiety was 97.82, which is classified as moderate anxiety. These findings indicate that speaking anxiety remains a common challenge among English Language Education students during classroom presentations. The standard deviation of 22.428 indicates that students experience different levels of anxiety, ranging from low to high.

To provide a clearer picture of students' anxiety levels, the frequency distribution of anxiety categories was calculated based on predetermined classification criteria..

Table 4. Frequency Distribution of Speaking Anxiety Levels

Anxiety Level	Frequency	Percentage
Low Anxiety	4	11.8%
Moderate Anxiety	19	55.9%
High Anxiety	11	32.4%
Total	34	100%

Table 4 shows that more than half of the participants (55.9%) experienced a moderate level of speaking anxiety. In addition, 32.4% of the students experienced high anxiety, while only 11.8% experienced low anxiety. These results indicate that speaking anxiety is a common issue among English Education students, with most participants experiencing moderate to high levels of anxiety during classroom presentations.

To identify the strongest indicators of speaking anxiety, the mean scores of all questionnaire items were examined. The three items with the highest mean scores are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Highest Anxiety Indicators

Item	Mean	Category
I worry about making grammatical mistakes during my presentation.	3.82	Highly Anxiety
I feel nervous when I forget words during my presentation.	3.76	Highly Anxiety
I feel embarrassed when I make mistakes while presenting in English.	3.71	Highly Anxiety

Table 5 shows that concerns about grammatical mistakes, forgetting vocabulary, and embarrassment when making mistakes were the strongest indicators of speaking anxiety among the participants.

Factors Contributing to Speaking Anxiety

The questionnaire items were grouped according to the dimensions of speaking anxiety represented in the instrument. Four major factors were identified as contributing to students' speaking anxiety during classroom presentations.

Table 6. Major Factors Contributing to Speaking Anxiety

Factor	Evidence from Questionnaire Items
Cognitive	Fear of making grammatical mistakes, pronunciation concerns, and fear of forgetting vocabulary.
Emotional	Nervousness, stress, and embarrassment during presentations.
Social	Fear of negative evaluation and comparison with classmates.
Physiological	Increased nervousness and tension while presenting.

Table 6 shows that speaking anxiety was influenced by several factors. Cognitive factors appeared to be the most dominant because the highest-scoring questionnaire items were related to grammatical mistakes and forgetting vocabulary. Emotional factors also contributed substantially, as many students reported feeling nervous, worried, and embarrassed during presentations. Social factors were reflected in students' concerns about being evaluated by lecturers and classmates, while physiological factors appeared in feelings of tension and nervousness during presentations.

Overall, the findings indicate that English Education students experienced a moderate level of speaking anxiety during classroom presentation activities. The results also suggest that cognitive factors, particularly concerns about grammar

and vocabulary, were the strongest contributors to students' anxiety. These findings answer the research questions by identifying both the level of speaking anxiety and the main factors contributing to students' anxiety during classroom presentations.

4. Discussion

The findings showed that English Education students experienced a moderate level of speaking anxiety during classroom presentation activities. More than half of the participants were categorized as having moderate anxiety, while nearly one-third experienced high anxiety. This finding suggests that speaking anxiety remains a common challenge even among students who have experience presenting in English.

Similar findings have been reported by (Gayatri et al., 2023; Siregar, 2022; Syahfutra & Wibowo, 2021), who found that many EFL students continue to experience anxiety when speaking English in academic settings. However, the moderate level found in this study may indicate that students have developed some familiarity with presentation activities, although anxiety has not been completely reduced.

One important finding of this study is that cognitive factors were the strongest contributors to students' speaking anxiety. The highest-scoring items were related to fear of making grammatical mistakes, forgetting vocabulary, and feeling embarrassed when making mistakes during presentations. This finding suggests that students were more concerned about language accuracy than about the presentation content itself. Many participants appeared to focus on avoiding mistakes rather than communicating their ideas effectively. As a result, anxiety may increase when students feel uncertain about their grammar and vocabulary knowledge.

This finding supports Foreign Language Anxiety Theory, proposed by Horwitz et al. (1986), which explains that language learners often experience anxiety because they fear making mistakes and receiving negative evaluations from others. The result is also consistent with previous studies that identified grammatical concerns, limited vocabulary, and low self-confidence as important sources of speaking anxiety (Arifin et al., 2025; Fauzi & Asi, 2023). Furthermore, Krashen, (1985), Affective Filter Hypothesis, suggests that anxiety can create a psychological barrier that interferes with language performance. When students become overly worried about errors, they may find it more difficult to recall vocabulary, organize ideas, and express themselves confidently.

Although these findings support previous research, this study also highlights the unique nature of classroom presentation activities. Unlike ordinary classroom speaking tasks, presentations require students to organize information, deliver ideas clearly, maintain audience attention, and respond to questions from lecturers and classmates. At the same time, students are aware that their performance is

being evaluated. This combination of language use, public performance, and academic assessment may explain why presentations often trigger anxiety. Therefore, classroom presentations should be viewed as a specific communicative context that places additional demands on students beyond everyday classroom interaction.

The findings of this study are generally consistent with previous studies that reported fear of mistakes, fear of negative evaluation, and lack of confidence as major sources of speaking anxiety among EFL learners (Fauzi & Asi, n.d.; Gayatri et al., 2023). However, some studies have reported higher levels of anxiety, while others have found lower levels among university students. These differences may be influenced by several factors, including language proficiency, presentation experience, classroom atmosphere, teaching practices, and institutional context. This suggests that speaking anxiety is not experienced in the same way by all students and may vary across learning environments.

For example, some previous studies reported high levels of speaking anxiety among EFL learners because students had limited opportunities to use English and lacked confidence when speaking in front of others. In contrast, the participants in the present study experienced a moderate level of anxiety. This difference may be related to the participants' prior experience with classroom presentations and their academic background as English Education students. Since they are regularly exposed to English-speaking activities, they may have developed greater familiarity with speaking tasks, although anxiety remains present during presentation activities.

In addition to cognitive factors, emotional, social, and physiological factors also contributed to students' anxiety. Feelings of nervousness, embarrassment, fear of being judged, and physical tension during presentations indicate that speaking anxiety is a multidimensional phenomenon. These findings support *(Communication Apprehension (McCroskey, 1977))* concept of Communication Apprehension, which explains that anxiety often occurs when individuals anticipate communication situations involving public attention and evaluation. The results suggest that students' anxiety is influenced not only by their language ability but also by their emotional reactions and social concerns during presentations.

This study contributes to the existing literature by examining speaking anxiety specifically in classroom presentation activities among English Education students. While many previous studies have investigated speaking anxiety in general classroom communication, the present study demonstrates that presentation activities may trigger anxiety through a combination of cognitive, emotional, social, and physiological factors.

The findings also suggest that concerns about language accuracy remain more influential than concerns about content delivery, highlighting the important role of linguistic confidence in presentation performance.

From a pedagogical perspective, the findings indicate that lecturers should create a supportive learning environment that helps students feel more confident when presenting in English. Providing sufficient preparation time, offering constructive feedback, encouraging regular presentation practice, and emphasizing communication rather than perfect accuracy may help reduce students' anxiety. By addressing both linguistic and psychological factors, educators can better support students in developing their presentation skills and confidence in using English.

Suggestion

Based on the findings of this study, educators are encouraged to create a supportive classroom environment that helps students reduce speaking anxiety during classroom presentations. Since cognitive factors were found to be the strongest contributors to anxiety, lecturers should provide sufficient preparation time, encourage gradual presentation practice, and emphasize effective communication rather than perfect grammatical accuracy. Constructive feedback and positive peer support may also help students develop greater confidence when presenting in English.

For future research, it is recommended to involve a larger number of participants from different universities to improve the generalizability of the findings. Future studies may also employ qualitative or mixed-methods approaches, such as interviews or classroom observations, to gain a deeper understanding of students' experiences during classroom presentations. In addition, further research could explore how presentation experience, classroom environment, and other contextual factors influence students' speaking anxiety in different educational settings.

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