

ANXIETY AMONG VIETNAMESE EFL STUDENTS IN ENGLISH-SPEAKING CLASSROOMS

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the rate of speaking anxiety among Vietnamese EFL students and the factors that lead the students to experience such anxiety in an English-speaking classroom environment and how these learners deal with the anxiety. This study employs a mixed-method research design where it conduct face-to-face interviews with the participants and survey using structured questionnaires with the second-year non-English majors at a Vietnamese University. The studies show that the large number of students has moderate and high levels of anxiety due to confidence, fears for critical evaluation, and cultural imposition of restrain. A study of qualitative data reveals signs of anxiety and studying avoidance behaviors. Quantitative findings revealed more than 56% of the participants expressed moderate level of anxiety during speaking activities. Available coping strategies include planning, support from peers and/or teachers, as well as various mindfulness exercises that work best in decreasing anxiety and increasing positive student performance. Based on the results, it can be determined that, eradicating speaking anxiety can only be done comprehensively and in the inclusive of creating acceptable classroom environment, culturally sensitive factors as well to the frequent speaking practice. The following proposals can be useful recommendations for educators to remove the learners' barriers and enhance their language learning process since they would actively participate making them have efficient English language use.

Keywords: *anxiety, speaking, classroom, causes of anxiety*

INTRODUCTION

English speaking classrooms being an important feature of globalized education have become a critical space where young people develop language practices for academic and occupational interactions (McKay & Bokhorst-Heng, 2017). Furthermore, these classrooms are not only class for students in terms of language development but also play major role in providing social interaction and cultural diversity among the student (DeCapua, & Wintergerst, 2016). The interactions that occur in English speaking class can either enhance or hinder

learners' participation and learning interest (Al Nakhalah, 2016), thus should be seen as key sites for identifying the social and interactional processes of learning especially for foreign language learners. One such concern is anxiety which is known to affect most of the Vietnamese EFL learners especially when learning in English classrooms. Such anxiety was attributed to different factors such as; fear of making a wrong word/decision, poor language proficiency and the compulsion of being in front of our classmates (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017).

In the course of their learning processes, the quantity and quality of students' interactions with others in classroom discussions may be minimised or disrupted due to language anxiety this hinders their learning processes and performance (Zheng & Cheng, 2018). It is, therefore, important to gain insight into the sometimes subtler forms that anxiety takes in Vietnamese students so that particular methods can be applied and used to improve the learning environment that students find themselves in.

Vietnamese EFL learners' anxiety in English speaking classroom has the reverse effects of what is intended; it limits the ways in which the learners can interact and engage in classroom learning and other relevant activities (Chen & Hwang, 2020). However, while there has been an increasing interest in language anxiety research, still there is limited practical knowledge about the origins and forms of such anxiety in this population. Pronounced variations in anxiety depend on basic factors including cultural norms, language, and class settings, although, these relations have not been fleshed out. The study's goal is to learn more about speaking anxiety and anxiety-inducing elements in speaking courses among second-year students at a Vietnamese university who are not majoring in English. The following three objectives were established in order to accomplish this goal::

- To measure the degree of speaking anxiety among second-year non-English major students at a Vietnamese university.
- To investigate the factors influencing the students' anxiety when speaking in class.
- To offer recommendations to manage anxiety among Vietnamese EFL students in English-speaking classrooms

The significance of this study lies in the ability of its findings to indicate the challenges which Vietnamese EFL students experience in the English speaking subject environments, which can be relevant to educators, policymakers, and curriculum developers. In doing so, this present study aims at establishing the contributions of anxiety sources and implications to the improvement of students' confidence and communication skills through developing accurate interventions. Finally, developing more accepting and encouraging

classroom environment helps students achieve better educational results and have a better language learning process as Vietnamese EFL learners.

1. Literature Review

2.1 Anxiety and causes of anxiety in speaking lessons

2.1.1 Anxiety

Many academics have investigated and characterized anxiety in various ways since the 1970s. However, the majority of them conclude that it might be challenging to comprehend and articulate it in simple phrases (Brown, 2007). It encompasses physiological and psychological responses like emotions of anxiety, annoyance, dissatisfaction, self-apprehension and low confidence (Brown, 1994). According to Spielberg et al. (2005), anxiety is described as the terror experienced by a student while learning a second or a foreign language. To put it another way, students have anxiety anytime they pick up a new or foreign language. As a result, the worried students are less able to participate in class activities and they eventually perform worse than their less anxious peers.

2.1.1.1 Anxiety in English-Speaking Classrooms

Given that anxiety is a worldwide phenomenon which also influences ability of students speaking English in classrooms this phenomenon is widely researched. The study shows that language anxiety can be measured by Communication Apprehension, Fear of Negative Evaluation, and Test Anxiety (Javid et al., 2014). Such concerns can tame the spirit of students to express understood materials and lead a vicious cycle of learner inactivity compounded with less fluency in the targeted language.

In English speaking environment, interaction is important, learners with anxiety are prone to having difficulties in presenting their ideas coherently. Fallah, (2014) have established that anxiety reduces motivation and confidence and complicates the student's ability to communicate effectively. This is specially observed among ESL learners, who have extra pressure of fawning over native like speaking fluency.

Current researches also highlight the importance of classroom settings in relation to anxiety management. To ensure participation of students making a favorable environment, risk taking and collaborative activities must be followed (Shernoff, 2013). The practical strategies like group activities, peer feedback, positive reinforcement practices have been found to be helpful in reducing students' anxiety levels and fostering more interest. (Zhang & Hyland, 2022). It is equally important for all educators interested in delivering effective practices of modifying an English-speaking classroom with less anxiety for all participants and the consequent improved foundation for student learning (Li, 2016).

2.1.2 Causes of anxiety in speaking classes

2.1.2.1 Communication apprehension

Different names have been used to describe communication anxiety: timidity, reluctance, or social anxiety. Since 1970, numerous scholars have been concentrating on communication reluctance. A worry or concern around existing or prospective contact with another person is known as communication apprehension (The Hindu, 2019). People with communication fears are more hesitant to engage in social interactions. Anxious students prefer to avoid communicating in foreign language lessons, hoping that other classmates would ask questions or provide answers instead of them. Some students who experience severe communication anxiety are unable to participate in class activities because they are too afraid to speak up.

2.2.2 Lack of confidence

One of the important personality traits that strongly coincides with anxiety is a lack of self-assurance. According to Gultom, & Oktaviani, (2022), confidence and oral performance are positively correlated. Students with high confidence are daring and have the ability to strike up discussions in a foreign language, which gradually makes them gain greater self-confidence and enhanced communication abilities. Thus, learners having high levels of self-confidence and a positive view of themselves are believed to succeed more often (Jabor et al., 2017). Instead, students without confidence avoid using the target language because

they are fearful of making errors and experiencing humiliation (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017).

2.2.3 Fear of negative assessment

Assessments of a student's performance and proficiency in the target language are used to determine both educational and individual evaluations (Purpura, 2016). Ishrat et al. (2024) claim that fear of being evaluated negatively includes anxiety over peers' criticism, retreat from assessed settings, and anticipation that other friends will adversely evaluate them.

2.2.4 Cultural Factors

The cultural trends of the society have a large impact on the learners' attitude to speaking in a foreign language (DeCapua, & Wintergerst, 2016). Vietnam is a collectivist culture that stresses group consensus and the avoidance of shame selectively increases anxiety. Fear of interrupting others and attracting the attention of the lecturer, are some of the reasons that restricts learners to speak (Tuan & Anh, (2023). This way cultural factors can hinder communication and participation in speaking classes.

2.2.5 Classroom Environment

The classroom environment itself can either mitigate or exacerbate anxiety levels (Khajavy et al., 2018). A supportive and encouraging atmosphere can help reduce anxiety, while a competitive or critical environment can increase stress. Dörnyei & Muir (2019) emphasizes the importance of creating a positive classroom climate where students feel safe to express themselves without fear of ridicule. In this regard, teachers can play a crucial role in fostering this environment through their feedback and interaction styles.

2.3 Empirical Review

Ozturk and Gurbuz (2014) looked into students' opinions of the severity and root causes of anxiety related to speaking a foreign language. The study involved 383 students who were enrolled in the English preparation course at a government institution in Turkey. Students were given questionnaires using the Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Scale (FLSA) to gauge their degree of anxiety. Interviews with 19 randomly

chosen students were performed after this. The data was analysed using thematic analysis and descriptive statistics. The quantitative data revealed that students had less worry while speaking in English as a foreign language, but it also revealed that most students thought speaking to be a source of anxiety. The Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Scale was modified for the current research in order to assess the severity and root causes of anxiety among students of the research institution.

Incontrast, Huang's (2004) investigation produced contradicting findings. In a Taiwanese environment, this study investigated the relationship between gender and foreign language speaking anxiety, along with the time when learners started learning English and their inclination to study beyond class timings. Questionnaires using the Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Scale were used to gather the data. All the 522 EFL students who took part in the study showed signs of extreme speaking anxiety.

Liu (2007) also conducted research on the factors that contribute to performance anxiety in students as well as their coping mechanisms. Twenty-seven learners took part in the investigation and surveys and reflective journals were the main sources for data collection. Multiple students were observed to be anxious while speaking English in class. Making presentations in front of the class or speaking in English in class made them feel the most apprehensive, whereas teamwork made them feel the least uneasy. A limited vocabulary, poor English competence, and memory disconnectedness were some of the causes of anxiety.

Subasi (2010) conducted the study in Turkey in an effort to observe the main causes of speaking anxiety among EFL students. The study included fifty-five first-year students enrolled in the ELT Department. The participants were given a survey with 55 multiple-choice questions categorised into five sections: The poll was divided into five sections, , self-evaluation for the present level of study, self-evaluation for the can-do scale self-evaluation for self-perception by the English speakers, the fright of adverse evaluation and foreign language classroom anxiety scale. Additionally, a random selection of fifteen students was done to engage in interviews to determine the causes of their anxiety while speaking in English.

The study findings showed a link between people's anxiety level and their apprehension of being judged negatively. Additionally, the research results showed considerably strong negative correlations between anxiety and three of the self-rating items: self-rating for the present level of study, self-rating for the can-do scale, and self-rating perception by the English language. Additionally, it was established that the three self-reported English proficiency levels formed the best model for predicting the degree of anxiety in this population. Ultimately, the examination of interview data revealed important details regarding the primary causes of the students' nervousness during oral practice sessions, including individual factors, instructors' demeanour, instructional strategies, and prior experiences.

Akkakoson (2016) revealed an additional discovery about language challenges and communication anxiety. Their research examined the conceptualisation of speaking anxiety during English classes, people's feelings about speaking English in class, self-rating for speaking English, and the causes of speaking anxiety. There were 282 Thai students participated in the research. The study tools included questionnaires modified from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale and interviews. Similar to the aforesaid research researches of Kayaoglu and Saglamel (2013) and Liu (2007) the students felt that an inadequate vocabulary was the biggest reason for their speaking anxiety. Additionally, examination anxiety and worry about receiving a bad grade were more common causes of speaking anxiety in contrast to communication apprehension. Additionally, Zia and Norrihan's (2015) research in Afghanistan indicated that speaking anxiety among learners was mostly caused by the concern of receiving a poor grade. The study measured the classroom performance concerns (Communication Apprehension, Test Anxiety, and Fear of Negative Evaluation) of EFL learners to assess their speaking anxiety in language courses. Additionally, they identified the causes of language classroom students' anxiousness when speaking a foreign language. The study was performed on one hundred and fifteen first-year EFL undergraduate students. The study collected data using Horwitz et al.'s

(1986) modified model of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). The findings indicated extreme levels of three types of performance anxiety symptoms among students. Additionally, the respondents were concerned about other people's opinions regarding them in various assessment circumstances in the language classroom. The majority of them were worried about how their teacher and classmates would judge their comprehension and proficiency in English. Due to the fear of loss of self-respect and expected humiliation for committing errors, they were particularly anxious about the teacher correcting their errors, speaking in front of the class, and volunteering to respond to questions.

Abdalaziz et al. (2018) carried out an investigation in Libya to evaluate the levels and causes of speaking anxiety. The modified Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Scale (FLSAS) was used to measure the frequency of speaking anxiety in students and gather quantitative data. The research participants included 300 students of fourth-year English majors from three institutions. The results of this study showed mild to severe degrees of speaking anxiety among students. The findings also revealed that communication anxiety and fear of a bad appraisal were followed by poor confidence, which gained the greatest average agreement.

Since 2010, all students in Vietnam have had to take English as a mandatory subject from grade-three onwards. Speaking is, though, still challenging for students because the educational system is heavily exam-focused, overburdened with course material, and teacher-centred. As a result, students seldom get the opportunity to talk outside of the classroom, and speaking is not usually assessed in examinations. Anxiety in speaking lessons has been the subject of merely a few research works. Research regarding the elements affecting students' oral performance was conducted by Nguyen and Tran (2015) at a high school with a sample of 233 students studying in the eleventh grade and 10 English instructors. The study tools included questionnaires and classroom observations. Almost 50% of these students claimed that anxiety impacts their speaking effectiveness.

2.4 Research gap

Although many research works have looked into language anxiety, only a few have looked into the fear of speaking a foreign language (Suleimenova, 2013; Melouah, 2013). This study extends the growing body of research on speaking anxiety. Additionally, there are several published and unpublished research on the subject of speaking anxiety in classrooms, but none have looked at speaking anxiety among non-English-speaking Vietnamese university students majoring in EFL. The current study is the preliminary initiative to close this gap and provide additional light on the relationship between speaking performance and anxiety.

2. Methodology

3.1 Research Method

A mixed methods approach, which is crucial for social science research (Bouma & Atkinson, 1995) and aids in obtaining complete and deeper information, along with multiple other benefits proposed by Creswell & Plano-Clark (2011), has been used in this research. The study design is of the descriptive, sequential kind, meaning that the processes driving the quantitative results are ascertained using qualitative data. In this study, the qualitative analysis uses the quantitative component's findings to explain the outputs of the quantitative data analysis by linking it to the environment in which the quantitative results are generated. Using quantitative data for the deliberate selection of the best participants for the qualitative study is another goal of the explanatory sequential format of the study.

This research is based on the historical and philosophical school of pragmatism, which is concerned more with what can be done with knowledge (Morgan, 2014). Pragmatism enables the incorporation from various paradigms or approaches into one study (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019); there cannot be a situation where quantitative data and qualitative data are not required to capture aspects of reality such as anxiety. This approach recognizes the context and narratives of students and hence the research can respond to the objective as well as offer qualitative analysis. Thus, the choice of

pragmatic type of philosophy of the study is meant to contribute meaningful findings that may be useful for educational practices and facilitation for EFL students.

3.2 Data collection and Analysis

Considering the data collection, the researcher used primary data collection for this study so that real and up to date information can be attained. Specifically, the researcher collected both the qualitative and quantitative data, so that robust specific findings can be supported by the detail experience or perspective of people. For quantitative data, the survey questionnaire was used, whereas for qualitative data, the interview was conducted from EFL students in Vietnam. Structured questionnaires using survey enable accumulation of numbers (Nardi, 2018), hence measurement of anxiety levels across a larger group in order to gather statistics that will be of essence in pattern identification and trend analysis. The results of this data make it easy to determine the rates of anxiety levels in students and determine the causes that are relatable to patients in general population.

On the other hand, qualitative data gathered from interviews supplement the quantitative results by providing depth and details of people's lived experiences of anxiety that might be masked by standardized scores. Therefore, it is stated that the combination of qualitative and quantitative data leads to higher validity and reliability of the findings due to the strengths of both approaches to construct a comprehensive conception (Zohrabi, 2013). Such broader view of anxiety is critical when it comes to decisions in education and assistance of learners in language learning context. The usage of both questionnaires and hermeneutical interviews gives the mixture of data collection procedures not only holistic view of Anxiety factors among Vietnamese EFL students but also a more elaborate discussion on their experiences in English speaking classrooms.

Discussing the method of collecting data, First, a structured questionnaire was administered to 95 second year non-English major students, 81 of them are men and 14 are women from five classes in a Vietnamese university. The participants' age ranged from 18 to 22 years, and convenience sampling

technique was used to recruit the participants because it was easy to use and effective in data collection. The convenience sampling technique was used, as it allow to recruit the respondents who are readily available for the researcher, thus saves time and was convenient. Applying the questionnaire the author sought to determine students' anxiety, the nature and causes associated with speaking English. The survey data collection was followed by the selection of nine students for interviews on the basis of their anxiety levels. They belonged to three groups that were typical speaking anxiety levels rated as high, medium, and low. The Vietnamese language was used for conducting in-depth interviews. Each in-person interview lasted between five and ten minutes and was captured on tape to be transcribed later. 95 second-year non-English major students (81 men and 14 women) studying at a Vietnamese university participated in the present study. They were enrolled in five classes and fell under 18 to 22 years of age. Convenience sampling was used for the selection of these participants.

Since it is a mixed methods study, both quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis were used in the analysis of the collected data. Descriptive quantitative data in form of questionnaires were analyzed using statistical software called SPSS. The data collected from the administrations of the questionnaires were then described statistically with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). In the first research question, a 16-item Likert-type response scale survey is applied to quantify the students' speaking-in-class anxiety levels. The participants' perceptions of English-speaking anxiety are indicated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from (5) strongly agree to (1) strongly disagree. The following standards were set in order to comprehend the studied data:

- The extreme level of anxiety is represented by a mean score of 4.21–5.00
- A mean score of 3.41-4.20 represent high level of anxiety.
- A mean score of 2.61 – 3.40 suggests moderate anxiety.
- A mean score of 1.81 – 2.60 refers to low anxiety level.
- A mean score of 1.00 – 1.80 mean low anxiety.

The responses to the in-depth interviews were described and noted in English and later transcribed. After that, the collected data were subjected to qualitative analysis based on thematic analyzes. Hsieh and Shannon (2005, p. 1278) described thematic analysis as “a qualitative method for making sense of text data, the processes of coding and identifying themes or patterns”. The findings were then presented in the English language. Dörnyei (2007) recommended four phases of the analytical procedure, four steps of data analysis were undertaken, including 1) transcription of data, 2) pre-coding and coding, 3) creation of a data presentation, and 4) analysis of data yielding conclusions. Additionally, the advice from Rubin and Rubin (2005) and Seidman (2006) about the analysis of coded data was considered

3.3 Research instruments

3.3.1 Questionnaire

The purpose of the survey is to learn more about how nervous the students feel during speaking courses, as well as how anxious they are and what stimulates their anxiety during in-class speaking. The questionnaire created by Ozturk and Gurbuz (2014) was modified into the 16-item Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Scale (FLSAS). Horwitz et al. (1986) created the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) comprising 33 questions, out of which 18 items were picked in this study. Item 7 was removed from the study because

it was determined that it was inappropriate for the learning environment being investigated since speaking sessions rarely allow the students to converse with native speakers of the target language. Additionally, Items 3 and 11 had identical connotations; hence, just one item (Item 11) was chosen. Thus, finally, a sixteen-item survey questionnaire was decided upon.

The validity of the questionnaire was validated through Cronbach's alpha tool. Alike the FLSAS developed by Oztuk and Guzbuz (2014), with a reliability coefficient of .91, this study's total Cronbach's alpha is 0.90, larger than 0.6, indicating the reliability of the scale. The "Corrected Item-Total Correlation" value for each of the 16 items is more than 0.3, which indicates that the measuring scale is accurate and that all of the constituent parts are inter-associated.

3.3.2 In-depth interviews

As stated by Caloryn & Palena, (2006), researchers can investigate new topics thoroughly with the help of interviews . The ability to "choose, reconstruct, and reflect" (Ohata, 2005, pp. 140-141) on the participants' experiences is another fundamental benefit of interviews. This study employed in-depth interviews and the interview questions were prepared in the Vietnamese language. The aims of the detailed interview questions are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Interview questions and their purpose

Interview Questions	Purpose
1. Please tell me about your background of English learning?	To know the background of participant
2. Do you having feeling of nervousness or stressed while your lessons?	To assess the experience in speaking lessons.
3. How this anxiety impact your learning ability in classroom	To assess the impact of anxiety
4. What are the causes or factors that impact your speaking anxiety?	To assess perception of reasons of anxiety
5. Elaborate a bit about situations which triggers anxiety for you during your lessons?	To assess instances of anxiety-causing situations

6. How you cope with anxiety? Or how others can manage this anxiety?	To observe the coping mechanism
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3.4 Ethical Consideration

Several ethical considerations were intervened in this process, foremost of which are the issues of informed consent and anonymity. Prior to data collection consent was sought from all participants before the commencement of the study, in addition to explaining the aim of the research and that the participant can leave study at any one time without any explanations. Participant or subject identification information was removed and replaced with unique codes in survey response and interview transcription. Besides, the study also followed institutional ethical considerations and apply to the appropriate Ethics Committee. Respondents were ensured that the author of the questionnaire only intends to use the results of the survey for research that does not violate the rights of patients, which made the atmosphere of the survey very comfortable and safe.

3. Results

4.1 Quantitative Analysis

4.1.1 Anxiety level during speaking lessons

The firstmost research question of this research explores the degree of anxiety experienced during speaking sessions by second-year students studying non-English majors at the university under investigation. The mean score was calculated using descriptive statistics to assess the degree of anxiety usually experienced by the students in the speaking courses. With a range of 2.6 to 3.40, the total average mean of 3.35 denotes a medium level of anxiety.

Table 2: speaking anxiety level of Participants

Mean	Level of speaking anxiety	Number of respondents	Percentage
1.81–2.60	Low	26	27.4
2.61–3.40	Moderate	54	56.8
3.41–4.20	High	15	15.8

Figure 1: speaking anxiety level of Participants

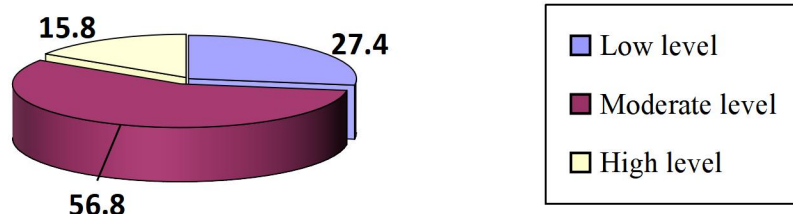


Table 2 and Figure 1 depict the anxiety levels of students ranging from lower to high degrees. The numerical findings indicate moderate speaking anxiety among 56.8% of the participants accounting for more than half of the study sample population, with a mean item response score ranging from 2.61 to 3.40. It is remarkable to note that the proportion of students who reported having low levels of speaking anxiety (27.4%) is about twice that of students who reported having high levels of anxiety (15.8%). The students at a Vietnamese university

reported a modest degree of anxiety during speaking sessions, according to the overall average mean and the percentage of participants.

4.1.2 Reasons or factors of anxiety in speaking lessons

The study questions also looks into the causes that make second-year non-English major students in a Vietnamese university anxious during speaking classes. The elements that lead to speech anxiety in these learners are listed in Table 3 below.

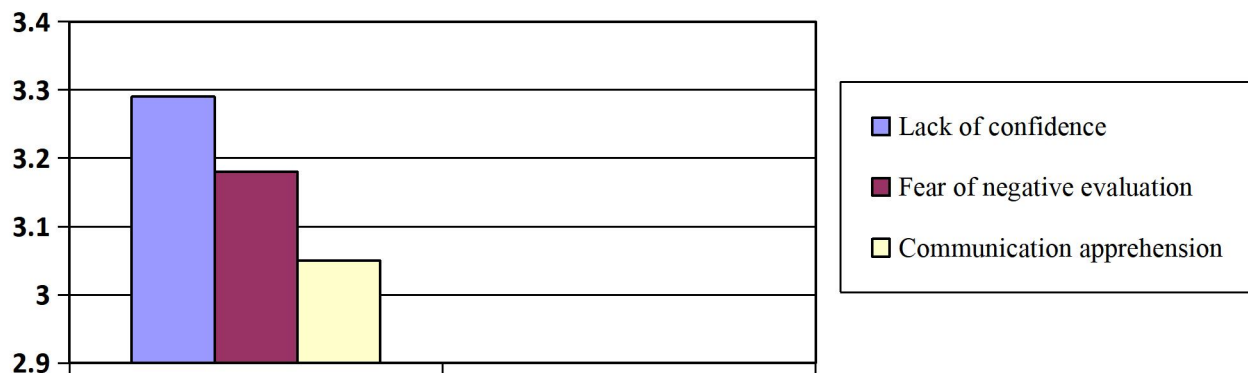
Table 3: Causes of speaking anxiety

Causes of speaking anxiety	Items	Mean
Lack of confidence	1, 4, 7, 10, 11	3.29
Fear of negative evaluation	2, 5, 8, 15, 16	3.18
Communication apprehension	3, 6, 9, 12, 13, 14	3.05

The table shows that communication anxiety ($M = 3.05$), fear of negative assessment ($M = 3.18$) and lack of confidence ($M = 3.29$) have the greatest means, respectively. Hence, the main cause of

nervousness in speaking courses is a lack of confidence. In Figure 2, given below, the underlying reasons for speaking anxiety are illustrated in further depth.

Figure 2: Causes of speaking anxiety



4.1.3 Lack of confidence (LC)

The findings of the learners' replies to queries based on lack of confidence are shown in Table 4 below. A five-point Likert scale spanning "1: Strongly disagree" to "5: Strongly agree" was used to

organise the questionnaire statements. Standard deviations, mean scores, and percentages reflect the results.

Table 4: Descriptive statistics of students' lack of confidence

Items	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Not sure		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	Std. deviation
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%		
I always feel that other students speak English better than me.	5	5.3%	9	9.5%	21	21.1%	47	49.5%	12	12.6%	3.51	.688
I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my speaking class.	8	8.4%	15	15.8%	26	27.4%	29	30.5%	17	17.9%	3.33	.636
I start feeling anxious when I have to speak without preparation in speaking lessons.	5	5.3%	19	20%	31	32.6%	25	26.3%	15	15.8%	3.27	.820
I get very self-conscious while speaking English in front of other students.	9	9.5%	17	17.9%	24	25.3%	34	35.6%	11	11.6%	3.22	.726
I don't feel confident when I speak English in speaking lessons.	15	15.8%	9	9.5%	32	33.7%	26	27.4%	13	13.7%	3.13	.689

The table indicates speaking anxiety among students as a result of their lack of

confidence when presenting their oral skills in front of the class without preparing earlier. The students

experiencing anxiety agreed with the statement, "I constantly feel that the other students speak English better than me" (62.1%; $M = 3.51$) and frequently compared themselves against their peers, worrying about their perceptions. These learners undervalued their capacity and lost confidence as a result of making implicit comparisons with others. Additionally, these students' poor self-confidence prohibited them from speaking up in front of the class. Nearly half of the participants (48.4%; $M = 3.33$) supported Item 1: "I am never entirely sure of myself when I am speaking in English." Item 4, "I do not feel confident when I speak in speaking class," received positive answers from the students, with 27.4% agreeing and 13.7% strongly agreeing,

thus endorsing their replies to Item 1. Item 7 showed the same pattern, with 35.6% agreeing and 11.6% strongly agreeing with the statement, "I feel very self-conscious while speaking in English in front of other students."

In addition, "received support from almost half of the respondents (42.1%). This outcome also demonstrates the professors' shortcomings in not providing their learners with early notice of the speaking subjects. The learners' confidence was undermined and their anxiety increased due to a lack of knowledge about the speaking subjects.

4.1.4 Fear of Negative Assessment

Table 5: Descriptive statistics of students' fear of negative assessment

Items	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Not sure		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	Std. deviation
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%		
I am afraid of making mistakes in speaking lessons.	6	6.3%	12	12.6%	20	21.1%	40	42.1%	17	17.9%	3.58	.635
I am afraid that my English teacher will correct every mistake I make.	6	6.3%	20	21.1%	21	22.1%	35	36.8%	13	13.7%	3.30	.618
I get nervous when the English teacher asks questions that I have not studied in advance.	8	8.4%	19	20%	25	26.3%	29	30.5%	14	14.8%	3.23	.718
I am afraid that the other students will make fun of me when I speak in English.	5	5.3%	23	24.2%	26	27.4%	29	30.5%	12	12.6%	3.21	.724
I get embarrassed while answering during speaking lessons.	20	21.1%	27	28.4%	23	24.2%	21	22.1%	4	4.2%	2.6	.793

Table 5 depicts the values reflecting the presence of learners' fear of failing as well as their anxiety about making errors and receiving negative feedback. It is

argued that the fear of making mistakes is the primary cause of the dread of receiving unfavourable feedback. Item 2 of the table reveals

anxiety regarding the repercussions of making errors experienced by over 60% of students (two-thirds of participants). The answer to Item 8, stating, "I am afraid that my English teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make", endorses the response to Item 2. 36.8% of respondents supported this item, while 13.7% of them strongly supported it. Students get anxious about speaking, lose confidence in their abilities, and worry about being judged negatively by others due to their concern about making mistakes. Students who are anxious worry about their peers' opinions as well as their professors' evaluations. The statement "I am afraid that the other students will make fun of me when I speak in English" scored agreement from almost 30.5% of respondents, and 12.6% strongly agreed

with it. Additionally, Table 5 shows that Item 16—"I get nervous when the English teacher asks questions that I have not prepared in advance," was supported by nearly half of the participants (45.3%). A similar number of participants also mentioned their embarrassment of volunteering to answer questions during speaking classes since they make errors. The learners' inability to speak the target language fluently is the source of this embarrassment rather than a lack of knowledge of the right response. Before responding, they need some time to deliberate. These learners believed that rehearsed responses were their greatest option for avoiding errors and facing ridicule from their peers.

4.1.5 Communication apprehension (CA)

Table 6: Descriptive statistics of students' communication apprehension

Table 6 demonstrates that respondents agree with all of the communication-anxiety-related topics. Almost half of the respondents (43.2%) could not comprehend their professors' corrections and hence became angry (Item 6). This outcome can be a result of poor communication between the professors and their students during speaking classes. It could be awkward for students to discuss their uncertainties with their lecturers. Additionally, professors might not care if their students have comprehended their errors or not.

Additionally, students' answers to Item 3—"I get frightened when I fail to understand what the teacher is saying in English", endorse their answers to Item 6 ", I get upset when I fail to understand what the teacher is correcting." The percentages of respondents who supported each item were 43.1% and 43.2%, respectively. These findings demonstrate that the teachers' methods of instruction are ineffective because they confuse and frighten the students.

Additionally, a third of the students reported feeling anxiety while speaking English in class as a result of the multiple rules they need to learn to speak the language fluently, the professors' instructions delivered in English, and their personal speaking performance. Items 3, 12, 14, and 9 received

responses from these students with agreement rates of 43.1%, 38.9%, 36.9%, and 26.3%, respectively. The students' concerns about the multitude of grammatical conventions that prevent them from speaking freely are reflected in their responses to Item 14.

Even though worried students exhibited communication anxiety, most of them refused to have fully understood all that was presented in class. Item 13: "I get nervous when I do not understand every word my English teacher says" received a total of 42.1% in disagreement, with 15.8% strongly disagreeing with it. The participants think that grasping a message in the target language does not necessarily require understanding everything that is mentioned.

4.2 Qualitative Analysis

Theme 01: Students' experience of speaking anxiety Communication apprehension is a big problem to EFL students especially when in an English speaking environment. Speaking anxiety is the focus of this theme, which explores how Vietnamese EFL students confront this issue. Sharing his anxiety experience, one of the student shared:

High Anxiety Levels As a result, I get extremely stressed up during speaking lessons, especially when the proctor decides to call me to give an answer.

From the above response the nervously observed that this nervously in parallel with the results obtained by MacIntyre (2017) in that anxiety can negatively affect language acquisition. This fear corresponds to Russ, (2013) theory of communication apprehension by assuming that failure to contribute is triggered by the wish to escape unfavorable scrutiny. Consequently, appearance of a favorable classroom climate could substantially reduce this anxiety.

One of the respondent also shared:

Ah it's very difficult for me. I started to get sweating and shaking when assigned with speaking tasks. It just worsened my level of anxiety.

These physical signs highlighted by the responses make the circle of anxiety formed as pointed out in the previous response go rounder and rounder. Ogundiwin., (2013) also corroborates this premise noting that responses can interfere with the student's learning process, and compound on their suffering. Therefore, relaxation as a treatment on these physical symptoms might improve students' comfort in speaking environments.

Another respondent shared

I stop participating in class discussions because it makes me nervous and although I know it does not aid my learning.

In the case of the earlier response, this avoidance behavior makes the problem of anxiety even more complex. Ledoux et al., (2017) explains that this type of behavior reduces practice capability, which is vital in acquisition of language. As evidence, Dörnyei & Muir (2019) builds on this concept by arguing that avoidance is not only the enemy of proficiency but it also fostresses inferiority feelings. Therefore, growing acceptance of risk taking is essential in order to overcome these barriers or obstacles.

One participant further added:

It concerns me when my classmates and the teacher will start laughing at my English consequently making me more anxious during speaking activities. Again, these perceptions relate back to the previous response as the key component of students'

experience of anxiety. According to Dörnyei & Muir (2019), this gives the negative self-fulfilling prophecy of decreased participation due to self-perception. When these perception are changed through positive reinforcement, students are likely to come out of their shells and will no longer feel the same anxiety making their language experience a positive one.

Theme 02: Causes or Factors that impact speaking anxiety of students

This theme looks at the different causes of anxiety among Vietnamese EFL students. On exploration many causes and factors has been observed. Such as one of the student said:

I always get paranoid about what other people think about me especially my classmates and teachers hence speaking tasks makes me very anxious.

The response mentioned fear as a major barrier in the earlier response. This fear contributes to a reduced participation. Saneka & de Witt (2019) agree that the fear of stigma begins to present a host of barriers to learning languages. This means that creating a classroom climate where student support is essential for reducing this anxiety is very important.

One participant further added:

In my culture people are expected to be humble and this is why every time I find myself struggling to speak out in front of a class.

With regards to the response to the previous question, cultural influences greatly explain student's level of participation. Culturally relevant values can either be a help or a hindrance to the learning of another language according to Byrd (2016). Knowledge of these cultural factors can assist any teacher in developing culturally sensitized teaching behaviors that enhance free and student culture interaction.

One of the respondent also shared:

Many a times there are chances where I am not able to speak English apart from the class room hence I get easily caught unaware for speaking activities.

Reviewing from the previous response, feeling of inadequacy as learner has been highlighted. According to Al Hosni (2014), writing and speaking can only be developed if performed routinely or practiced. On this regard, the educators should

include those activities whereby students practice their speaking skills though it may be through role modeling so as to increase the exposure.

Another respondent shared

I can refer to a number of times when I got stocked because my English isn't as good as I wanted it to be, especially while speaking.

Pursuant to the prior reply, such perceptions develop cyclical anxiety that may interfere with the participation process. Stibi (2017) has emphasizing that theoretically social self-organization prescribes positive self-images within learners. In return, the educators should avoid practices that emphasise on students' performances so that students will not feel anxious to participate in the speaking activities.

Theme 03: Strategies to cope with speaking anxiety of students

It is important to look for better ways that students can use to cope with their speaking anxiety. This themes examines different strategies that students use to manage their stress level in the context of speaking activities. In this regard one participants added:

The only thing I attempt to do is to step up for the speaking tasks, and this makes me feel ready when I need to speak.

Looking at the earlier response, one realizes that preparation is always a way of minimizing anxiety. Vietnam (2015), asserts that, students who are prepared are most likely to contribute with confidence. Thus they suggest that in offering specific practice sessions educators can guide students to improve experiences when speaking.

Another respondent shared:

I get to practice speaking with classmates as we form groups for study and this makes me overcome the anxiety I have.

Relating this back to the prior response, peers also play an important role to enhance a feeling of an association towards language learning. According to Vygotsky (1978) on social constructivists view it is all easy to know that learning in group reduces anxiety and increases confidence. Implementation of group work and peer should be encouraged to make the environment conducive for practice of speaking for all the student.

One participant further added:

The main strategies I have incorporated into my practice include using deep breathing before speaking to help me get rid of anxiety.

In connection with the earlier response, the consequent of practice of mindfulness reduced anxiety in school. In the study by Wisner (2014) says that its main potential benefit of practicing mindfulness for students is the ability to control their emotions and thus improve a classroom atmosphere. Such conditions can help inoculate students with the experience and coping techniques that can be instrumentalized into a class context.

One of the respondent also shared:

I have been changing for the better and making correct decisions even though sometimes I screw up a lot is okay since it is the process of learning.'

When relating to the previous response, positive self-talk is an effective style of cognitive method. Myhre (2018) learned that the reattribution of negative emotions lead to an optimistic resolution. By helping students focus on positive self-talk, more can be done to build awareness and coping strategies to common excitement when it comes to speaking-related events.

4. Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion

This study investigate the anxiety among Vietnamese EFL students in English-speaking classrooms. To assess the student perception, both the quantitative and qualitative methods were applied. The findings of this paper have contributed considerable information to elucidate the occurrence of speaking anxiety among Vietnamese EFL students where several complexities are found out. Both the qualitative and quantitative data studies suggest that communication apprehension is widespread among students, especially in the English-speaking learning contexts. Self-reported anxiety was found to lie in moderate to high range and the possible reasons are low self-esteem, fear of negative evaluation and communication apprehension.

Consumers described speaking anxiety and expressed symptoms of sweating and shaking while they had speaking tasks. This is consistent with research done in the current literature indicating that such anxiety can come in the way of language

learning and create avoidance behaviors that only worsen the problem. The study enumerated the following causes of speaking anxiety: culture that does not allow assertiveness, peer and teacher's pressure, and insufficient speaking practice in other situations apart from classes. Altogether, these factors condense an enormously pressurizing context for students especially to engage in speaking activities.

Turning to more positive aspects of the students' accounts of their anxiety, students reported several methods that allow them to cope with their stress. This study concluded that preparation, peer support, mindfulness practices and positive self-talk were some of the methods that help in the reduction of anxiety level and improvement of confidence. These strategies highlight the benefit of ensuring the classroom constructivism in that the formation motivates students to think out of the norm and work in groups. Since speaking anxiety is such a strong predictor of language achievement, it is important for teachers to avoid bothersome stimuli and create learning conducive environment.

It is the role of the teachers to ensure that children embrace a cultural value of practices where every child is able to express his or her ideas freely before the entire class. Speaking practice, simulated interactions and group discussions will help students speaking fluency and lessen anxiety stemming from unfamiliarity of the activity. Teachers might also incorporate some types of coping strategies, such as mindfulness classes as part of educational process to cope with the anxiety. Summarizing this, enhancement of how cultural context is understood by teachers and incorporated into teaching practices can afford students more comfort in the classroom when handling discussions. Therefore, teaching speaking anxiety among Vietnamese EFL students appears to be complex involving experiencing self as well as culture, and students' teaching approach. In this case, educators can reduce those fears so that students do not hinder their language learning, but rather improve the stay in the classroom.

5.2 Recommendation

Based on the findings, the following recommendations have been made to manage speaking anxiety among Vietnamese EFL students.

- First, the educators should cultivate an environment of comfort that encourages the students to come out and be active (Doyle, 2023). This can be done through making respect and acceptance as hallmarks of experiencing failure as learning rather than shameful. This shows that through creating an environment where students will not feel constrained in their Classroom dispositions, this will help to reduce anxiety levels to a very large extent.
- Second, there is a great need to add direct, patterned speaking practice into the learning-teaching activities (Setianingsih, 2020). Many and varied possibilities for practice should be offered, including those as role plays, group discussions, peer presentations and others. Some of the apprehension students may develop regarding these activities may well be eased when there are obvious direction and assistance in the provision of these activities.
- Third, the programs teaching mindfulness and relaxation techniques for the participants may prove useful. Some proposed solutions are bringing in techniques like deep breathing exercises or, for example, brief mindfulness exercises that can be used to teach students to calm down before speaking tasks. This not only provides students with ability to solve conflicts, learnt behavior patterns, but also make the classroom environment less tense (Navarro-Haro et al., 2017).
- Further, the teachers should be culturally receptive, and have an understanding of various causes of the student's conduct (Gay, 2015). Understanding cultural background will enable teachers to differentiate on individual bases thus being in a position to address students who do not volunteer answers due to cultural values.
- Last but not the least; peer support which is a result of integrated learning approach can complement student speaking performance (Philp et al., 2013). Grouping students should be made to work in pairs or small groups because this will help them to reduce cases of isolation. In this way, the

effectiveness of the suggested strategies can be used by educators in creating favorable learning conditions which help Vietnamese EFL students eradicate speaking anxiety and develop higher level of English speaking skills.

5.3 Future Implication

The present study on speaking anxiety of the Vietnamese EFL students has some theoretical and practical implications for the. First, it highlights the importance of carrying further studies on the psychological variables in sl and especially those from non-western country international students. Future studies could therefore investigate additional demographical factors asking how age, gender or education level influence speaking anxiety in order to get a better insight into the issue in question.

Additionally, the current study offers a rationale for intervention programs palliative to address speaking anxiety in specific contexts. Teachers themselves, parents and learners themselves, who are stakeholders in the above mentioned education facilities could benefit from activeness of implementing and incorporating the experimental training seminar sessions such as; assertive communication skills, coping with stress and cultural sensitivity to the tutors. These would contribute to enabling the educators to encourage their learners on how to overcome the speaking in a new language as a communication endeavour.

Furthermore, the theoretical perspectives have consequences for patterns of curriculum and the selection of assessment sort. They said replacing some of the formal assessments with more frequent quizzes and arranging speaking activities which do not have to be given grades can help students to alleviate stress due to the formal tests. And finally; the support through integration of collaborative learning can improve students' interaction in speaking activities. Other future works could thus aim at attempts to evaluate different peer mentoring or group counselling and its effects on the symptoms of anxiety as well as language fluency. Therefore, it is not only the Vietnamese EFL, but all the people in the global educational society who will be benefited from the erasing of the speaking anxiety sources and the promotion of the constructive educational climate.

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