

# INVESTIGATING SPEAKING ANXIETY OF THE TENTH GRADE STUDENTS AT SMA NEGERI 4 SINGARAJA

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## ABSTRACT

This present study was aimed at investigating the levels of students' speaking anxiety and the most dominant factor influencing students' speaking anxiety. This study was a cross sectional survey with quantitative method. The population of this study was the tenth grade students of SMA Negeri 4 Singaraja in academic year 2017/2018. Simple random sampling was used as the sampling technique. The total number of the sample was 110 students who were chosen randomly from 11 classes. The data was gathered by using questionnaire. Then, it was analyzed by finding out the percentage of the students' speaking anxiety level and mean score for the most dominant factor influencing students' speaking anxiety. The result of this study showed that most of the students were in mildly anxious level with the percentage 51%. It followed by 24% students felt anxious and 24% of them felt relaxed. Additionally, 1% student was categorised as very anxious level and only 1% of was in very relaxed level. Finally, in this present study, it was found that cognitive factor was the most dominant factor influencing students speaking anxiety.

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## 1. Introduction

Speaking is one of language skills that should be mastered by students in learning language especially English. Speaking itself is seen as a process of constructing meaning interactively which includes producing and receiving information (Brown, 2001). It means that speaking is one type of communication in form of oral communication in which the speaker transfers the message directly to the interlocutor. In other words, the message that is trying to communicate is directly interpreted by the interlocutor. This activity includes the process of generating meaning by the interlocutor on what the speaker has been saying. According to Nunan (2003) speaking is depicted as a productive skill which consists of producing systematic verbal utterances to convey meaning. Whilst, speaking is an activity that requires both speaker and interlocutor to interact or communicate to each other using language as the verbal utterances.

In learning speaking skills, affective factors are greatly influence students' performance. In line with this, the importance of affective factors is revealed by Brown (2001), who states that the fundamental side of human behavior will be omitted if learning language only based on cognitive process. Moreover, when teaching and learning process ignoring the importance of affective factors, it will create a negative impact such as; feel nervousness, stress, and anxious. This impedes students to have 'mental block' which greatly affects their performance ability.

There are some variables of affective factors that will influence the process of learning speaking. This supported by the affective filter hypotheses which was proposed by Krashen (2009), that affective variable can either help or prevents the process of second language acquisition. It is said that the lower the affective filter, the more effective language input will be obtained. However, strong filter will restrict the input that should be obtained by the learners. Further he also claims that language acquisition will be best acquired in the environments where anxiety is low and defensiveness is absent.

In learning speaking skill, an EFL/ESL student usually has a feeling of anxiety. Speaking anxiety itself is considered as the difficulty in vary cases such as prepared-speeches, oral presentations, answering questions, or simple presentation among others (Hadziosmanovic, 2012). These difficulties seem as the fear or failure in individual's performance.

In addition, speaking anxiety that is often shown by students are irregular heartbeat, nervous, inability to act, and many more. This shows that speaking anxiety affects the self-confidence in students. In line with this, Basic (2011) proposes that speaking anxiety drags students to have a low self-confidence in expressing the idea even when they have enough capacity to speak and a worth knowledge to be listened. It can be due to the students' experience of failure which becomes the reminder for them when the same opportunity to speak arises again. The students tend to keep quite rather than take a risk of fail again. Additionally, students are hesitant in using the target language with the native speaker or in public. It indicates that student feels anxiety when they have to use the language in a real situation and without any preparation. In line with this, a study conducted by Abdulah and Rahman (2010) found that students experience a moderate level of anxiety when they got an opportunity to speak without preparation. The students seemed to feel nervous and very conscious about speaking in the classroom. Consequently, they experienced a communication apprehension during speaking in front of people or a group of people. Therefore, students had to avoid confusion in speaking as well as decreasing their speaking anxiety. If this happens continuously, it will give a bad impact for them in applying their speaking skill. Likewise, as the central of communication, students have to apply this skill everywhere and with everyone.

Furthermore, the study conducted by Hadziosmanovic (2012) shows that there were three factors of students speaking anxiety namely, behavioural, emotional, and cognitive. This reveals that in speaking students experience some physical symptom, feeling of negativity like fright, embarrassment, discomfort, as well as students' perception of the self which is related to the class environment that usually becomes a big barrier for them to say words in front of many people. Regarding the problems arose, the researcher was proposed a survey study which was focusing on investigating the speaking anxiety of the tenth grade students at SMA Negeri 4 Singaraja in academic year 2017/2018 in order to know the level of students' speaking anxiety and the most dominant factor that influence students to experience the feeling of anxiousness in their speaking.

## 2. Methods

In this present study, the sample was the tenth grade students at SMA Negeri 4 Singaraja. Regarding to big population, 110 students were drawn as the sample of this study by using simple random sampling technique. This study was categorized as survey study which was used cross sectional survey as the design. This research was designed to investigate the level of students' speaking anxiety and the most dominant factor influencing students' speaking anxiety in using English. In this present study, the data were collected by using questionnaire. The instrument was then developed based on the techniques of collecting data in this study. Before the instrument was distributed, it was firstly validated in order to ensure that the instrument was able to measured what should be measured. Moreover, a reliability test was also done in order to know wether the instrument was appropriate or not to gather the data. Based on the validity and reliability test all of the items in the questionnaire were valid and reliable to be used.

The instrument which was used in this study was consist of both positive and negative statement which was range from one to five for positive statements and vice versa for the negative statement. There were three variables include in the questionnaire namely, behavioural, emotional, and cognitive. The behavioural factor have two descriptors they are, physical symptom and avoidance behaviour to speak. Meanwhile, emotional factor was about students' feeling in dealing with speaking activity. Then, cognitive factor was dealt with students' self-perception about their speaking and fear of negative evaluation. The data gathered from this study was analysed descriptively by finding percentage and mean score. In order to measure the students' speaking anxiety level, a scale adapted from Liu and Jackson (2008) was followed.

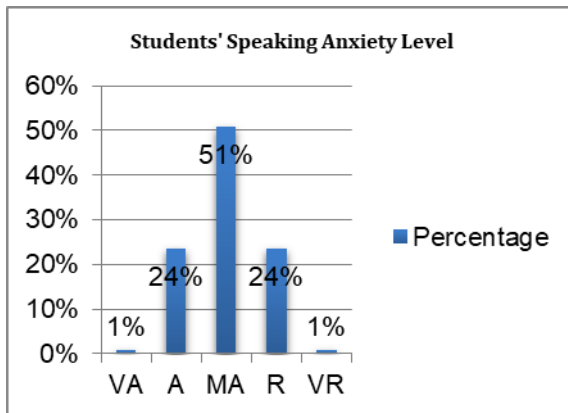
**Table 1.** Speaking Anxiety Scale

Range	Level
127 - 150	Very Anxious
103 - 126	Anxious
79 - 102	Mildly Anxious
55 - 78	Relaxed
30 - 54	Very Relaxed

Moreover, the most dominant factor influencing students' speaking anxiety was analysed by finding the mean score of each variables.

### 3. Findings and Discussion

In this present study, it was found five level of students' speaking anxiety namely, very anxious, anxious, mildly anxious, relaxed, and very relaxed. Below is the students' speaking anxiety level found in this study.



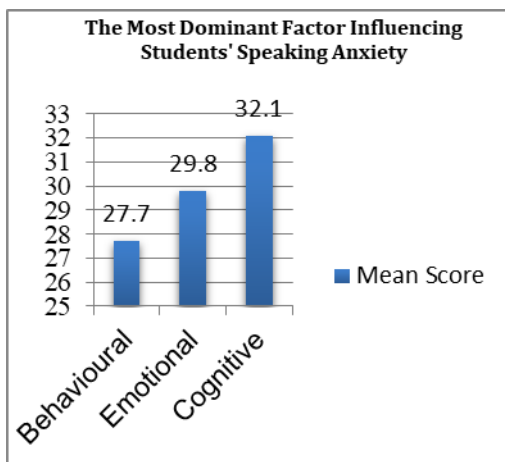
**Figure 1.** Students' Speaking Anxiety Level

Notes:

- VA : Very Anxious
- A : Anxious
- MA : Mildly Anxious
- R : Relaxed
- VR : Very Relaxed

It was shown that most of the students were in mildly anxious level which were fifty one percent of the students. Next, there were twenty four percent students in anxious level and twenty one percent of them were in relaxed level. Besides, one percent of the student was categorised as very anxious student and one percent of them was in very relaxed level.

In this study, the most dominant factor was gained by comparing the mean score of each variable. Below is the diagram showed the comparison among the factors.



**Figure 2.** The most dominant factor influencing students' speaking anxiety

Based on the result of this study, the the mean score of behavioural factor was 27,7. In the second factor, which was emotional, the mean score was 29,8. Besides, the last factor which was cognitive had the mean score 32,1. Therefore, the mean score of cognitive factor was the highest among others.

#### ***Students' Speaking Anxiety Level***

Based on the result of the questionnaire, it was shown that most of the students felt mildly anxious in speaking. It was fifty one percent of them were in that level. It showed that, there were still many students who experienced anxiety in dealing with speaking activity. The result of this study was also supported by the empirical study that was mentioned in Chapter II. A study conducted by Mahpudilah (2016) revealed that most of the students or fifty five percent out of 29 students were feeling mildly anxious.

In this study it was found that most students were not fluent in using the language. Meanwhile, based on the theory of Syakur in Mulasari (2010) fluency is one of the language aspect that should be mastered by the students. Besides, the theory of Harmer (2001), stated that accuracy and fluency are important in order to convey a meaningful message in speaking. Both of the theory seen that fluency is important in order to create a communicative competence. However, the result of this study showed that many students were felt rigidity when they were dealing with speaking activity. Consequently, students cannot maximize their speaking skill.

In addition, it was also found that students were not confident in using the target language. This situation caused the students to feel anxious in speaking. This proven the theory of Witt, *et.all* (2008), who stated that speaking anxiety affected students' self-confidence which was built on someone personality. Besides, Taylor (2011) also provoked that speaking anxiety give a bad impact to students' self-confidence. Since students, think that themselves are inferior than their peer, it prevent them to speak which cause them cannot acquire their communicative competence effectively. Moreover, in this study also found that students were not having the intention to skip the speaking class even they experience such a speaking anxiety.

### ***The Most Dominant Factor Influencing Students' Speaking Anxiety***

As stated by Hadsiozmanovic (2010), there were three factors that influence students' speaking anxiety, namely behavioral, emotional, and cognitive. The three factors dealing with physical symptoms, avoidance behavior to speak, feeling when speaking, self-perception, and fear of negative evaluation. Based on the results of this study, cognitive was the most dominant factor that influencing students' speaking anxiety.

Moreover, cognitive factor which was dealt to students' self-perception and fear of negative evaluation became the strong barrier by the students in speaking. In dealing with self-perception, most of the time students were not believe with their ability in speaking. The students were feeling low when they were did a mistake. They also judged themselves were bad than their friend in speaking. Moreover, the students were not believed with knowledge that they had. The result of this study was supported by the study conducted from Hadziosmanovic (2012), Luo (2014), and Zhipping and Paramashivam (2013). These studies revealed that students were feeling worry for the anticipated negative reaction of others. The source of this was exclusively related to their classmates. Moreover, students also felt disappointed when they were making mistake in speaking English. This was led them to prefer not to speak rather than speaking the language. Therefore, students were felt inferior to their friends and fear in speaking the language inaccurately.

Further, it found that students were experienced fear in speaking in front of their peers. Their peers' reaction was becoming the concern of the students in speaking. One of them was the fear of being laughed by others. Besides, students were also afraid of the comment from the other students about their performance. In line with this, the research conducted by Zhipping and Paramashivam (2013) stated that students suffer more from anxiety in speaking as a result of fear in negative evaluation. This study revealed that students were afraid in speaking the foreign language since sometimes their peers were being laughed at them and feared humiliation when they are being corrected in front of public. Moreover, they were also overly concerned with other people's opinion and evaluation. This was proven the theory of Horwitz (1986) who proposed that students felt anxiety as the resul of fear of negative evaluation. In this case, students felt apprehension about others' evaluation. Students expect that their peer will evaluate them negatively. This make students prefer to keep silent rather than losing their face.

## **4. Conclusion**

Based on the findings and discussion that had been described previously, it can be concluded that there was five level of student speaking anxiety. It was found that most of the students or fifty one percent of them were in mildly anxious level. Second, twenty four percent of students were in anxious level and twenty four percent of them in very relaxed level. Thirdly, one percent of them were in very anxious level,

and one of them found in very relaxed level. Furthermore, it was also found that when students were getting enough preparation before speech, their anxiety was reduced.

Among three factors that influence students' speaking anxiety, such as behavioral, emotional, and cognitive, it was found that cognitive factor was the most dominant. Most of the students were feel anxious because they were fear of "losing face". They were afraid of being laughed at. Besides, most of them also getting anxious because of their self-perception. Students usually felt inferior to their peers in speaking. Therefore, fear of negative evaluation and self-perception were became two important factors that prevent students to speak which then cause them to experience speaking anxiety.

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