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### **EFL Male And Female Students' Perception On Speaking Anxiety In Class-Oral Presentations**

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#### **Abstract**

The study attempted to investigate the perceptions of EFL male and female students about speaking anxiety in class-oral presentations and the strategies of EFL male and female students do to handle their speaking anxiety in class-oral presentations. Afterwarrrds, the writer set forth two research questions: (1) What are the perceptions of EFL male and female students about speaking anxiety in class-oral presentations? (2) What are the strategies of EFL male and female students do to handle their speaking anxiety in class-oral presentations?. This study employed qualitative strategies by using case study. The participants were 30 second grade students which consists of 15 male and 15 female students from one of private university in Ciamis. The results for the first research question found that male and female students always felt anxiety if they should present a presentation at class and that anxiety was caused by some factors such as anxiety because of their selves, other students and their teachers. Moreover, the results for the second research question revealed that strategies used by students do to handle their speaking anxiety in class-oral presentations as follows. The first, trying to be confident. The second, making the atmosphere more cheerful. The third, well prepare. Finally, it is expected that class-oral presentations make the students feel anxious but still could handle their speaking anxiety with several strategies. Besides, it is suggested for further teachers to find out some technique to improve their ability in teaching English and must consider the aspect of students' psychology such as anxiety and motivation when they teach. .

**Keywords:** *speaking anxiety, gender, perception, class-oral presentations.*

## INTRODUCTION

Many of us have been in situations as language learners when teacher asked a question and our minds go blank or perhaps our heads follow a teacher around the class as we nervously await our turn to speak, barely listening to other students' output, our eyes trained on the teacher to see which "unfortunate victim" will be chosen to speak next. At other times we avoid communicative opportunities altogether. As matter of fact anxiety is still not easy to define in a simple sentence. Suleimenova (2012, p. 1860) defined "anxiety is distress or uneasiness of mind caused by fear of danger or misfortune". The definition shows that anxiety is a feeling that is closely related to psychological system of individuals who are experiencing feelings beyond what it would normally be. The fact is in line with what Melouah (2013, p. 65) states that speaking anxiety is one of the most important affective variables that influences foreign language learning, often has a detrimental effect on the students oral performance of English. Amini (2013, p. 71) noted that "public speaking anxiety is very common among both university. students and also the general population. It is a feeling of panic associated with physical sensations that are all too painfully familiar to those affected such as increased heart and breathing rates, increased adrenaline, over-rapid reactions, and a tension in the shoulder and neck area". It negatively influences the adaptation to the learning atmosphere of students and their achievement. It can be argued that many learners are afraid of using a foreign language orally. In order to be successful in language learning speaking anxiety must be overcome. Gender has been considered as a significant factor in foreign language learning. There are some discrepancies between men and women with regard to foreign language learning which cannot be fully erased through education. According to Connell (2009, p. 9) gender is a key dimension of personal life, social relations and culture.

### *Speaking Anxiety*

Speaking is one of the most significant parts of language learning. Due to the great influence on the process of language learning, speaking anxiety has played a crucial role in language learning. According to Melouah (2013, p. 65) speaking anxiety is one of the most important affective variables that influences foreign language learning, often has a detrimental effect on the students' oral performance of English. Amini (2013, p. 71) noted that "public speaking anxiety is very common among both university students and also the general population". It is a feeling of panic associated

with physical sensations that are all too painfully familiar to those affected such as increased heart and breathing rates, adrenaline, over-rapid reactions, and a tension in the shoulder and neck area.

### ***Gender***

Gender has been considered as a significant factor in foreign language learner. There are some discrepancies between men and women with regard to foreign language learning which cannot be fully erased through education. In-depth studies have found different levels of language anxiety between male and female learners. According to Connell (2009, p. 11) gender is a key dimension of personal life, social relations and culture. It is an arena in which we face difficult practical issues about justice, identity and even survival. Gender is also a topic on which there is a great deal of prejudice, myth and outright falsehood. Many people believe that men and women are psychologically opposites, that men are more intelligent than women, that men are naturally violent, or that gender patterns never change.

### ***Perceptions***

Perceptions are believed to first have been studied in philosophy by Locke and Hume at the beginning of the 18th century. Since then, the concept has been employed in a wide range of fields: sociology, anthropology, socio linguistics, social psychology, and so on. Just a brief glance at a face can give a wealth of information about the person's age, gender, race, mood, and attractiveness. In addition, Wang (2007, p. 67) states that perception is a set of internal sensational cognitive processes of the brain at on the cognitive processes of human perception with emotions, motivations, and attitudes, the subconscious cognitive function layer that detects, relates, interprets, and searches internal cognitive information in the mind. Perception may be considered as the sixth sense of human beings since almost all cognitive life functions rely on it. Perception is also an important cognitive function at the subconscious layers that determines personality.

### ***Class-oral presentations***

Oral presentations are becoming a more important part of language teaching, especially in the university environment. Often the purpose of these classes is to prepare students for being a prospective teacher who must be used to speak in front of his students. Based on King (2002, p. 413) oral presentations are used in L2 classrooms to assist students with varying English proficiency levels to reach fluent oral proficiency.

Few researchers have actually looked at the role or purpose of presentations in the language classroom. Those who have done so sometimes questioned the necessity of presentations. Taking into account the importance of developing EFL speaking skills, it is vital to determine the most useful techniques and activities which can help EFL learners improve their speaking skills.

## **METHOD**

This research method is designed based upon the problem analysis and the main purpose of the research that employs case study are in depth examination of people of groups of people. According to Creswell (2008, p. 465) a case study is an in depth exploration of a bounded system (e.g., activity, event, process or individuals) based on extensive data collection. Qualitative investigators have various chances for doing research on relevant issues and aspects as is the case with students' perception on English speaking anxiety. In this study, the writer used a case study to help to describe the perception of students' on English language speaking anxiety in class-oral presentations encountered by the 30 second grade students of English language program in the University .

As population, the writer involved 30 second grade students of English language program in the University which is 15 male and 15 female. There are several reason why the writer choose 30 second grade students of English language program. Firstly, because in this grade the students are very susceptible to have the anxieties in speaking during their presentations. Secondly, in this grade the students must begin adapt with the task to do like that. To determine the sample, the writer used purposive sampling and followed what Cresswell (2007, p. 125) suggested, "The concept of purposive sampling is used in qualitative research. This means that the inquirer selects individuals and sites for the study because they can purposive inform an understanding of the research problems". The research conducted in the University, especially for the second grade students of English language program. There are several reasons why the writer choose this University as the research site. Firstly, the familiarity of the university enable the writer to conduct the research in the University. Secondly, from the writer's view, this curriculum is relevant with the topic that the writer intends to investigate.

In this study, there are several instruments used by the writer to get the data from respondents, i.e, questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. Used to discover students' reported reasons, manifestations and coping strategies of speaking anxiety.

### ***Data collection of questionnaire***

The writer gave a questionnaire aims at to answer the first research question. It is about the perceptions of EFL male and female students about speaking anxiety in class-oral presentations, the writer used closed-ended items on questionnaire with statements to rate on a Likert scale will be employed to answer the research questions. The most well-known instrument for measuring FL classroom anxiety has been *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)* during the last decades due to its high validity and reliability. The writer adapted from Horwitz (2001) consist of 20 items. The five-point Likert Scale, in which the responses ranged from one "strongly disagree" to five "strongly agree".

### ***Data collection of interview***

The data collection technique employed in this investigation is interviewing. It consists of 5 items, Interview aims at to answer the second research question about the strategies of EFL male and female students do to handle their speaking anxiety in class-oral presentations. Semi-structured interviews is used to elicit students' perceptions of language anxiety in speaking classes. Therefore, the study offers diverse range of the participants' experiences. According to Creswell (2008, p. 217) qualitative interview occurs when the writer ask one or more participants general, open-ended questions and record the answers.

### ***Data analysis technique***

#### ***Data analysis of questionnaire***

In analyzing the data from the questionnaire of the students, the writer calculated the percentage of each responses to each questionnaire using the percentage of computation from Hatch and Lazaraton (1991, p. 136). The formula of the computation is:

$$\text{Proportion} = \frac{\text{Number of frequency} \times 100\%}{\text{Total}}$$

The writer also used some percentage categories in order to interpret the data obtained. They are:

0%	: None of the respondents
1%-25%	: Small number of respondents
26%-49%	: Almost half of respondents
50%	: Half of the respondents

51%-75%	: Most of the respondents
76%-99%	: Almost all of respondents
100%	: All of the respondents

### ***Data analysis interview***

The interviews take about 5-10 minutes and they are conducted in learners' mother tongue. Indonesian, to facilitate communication and to promote richness of response and access to the data in a less threatening medium. Then, the interview of the data are transcribed and analyzed according to basic categories developed from the interview questions.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

This section elaborated the interpretation results as well as answered the research questions upon the present study. The first research question dealt with the perceptions of EFL male and female students about speaking anxiety in class-oral presentations. The second research question dealt with the strategies of EFL male and female students do to handle their speaking anxiety in class-oral presentations. Furthermore, this study tried to relate the results to some previous studeis that had a similar topic.

**Table 4.1 The Calculation of Data from Questionnaire of Male Students of Second Grade in the University**

No.	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
1.	I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other students.	6,70%	60%	26,70%	6,70%	0
2.	It worries me when I know I need to give multiple presentations in the class.	13,30%	46,70%	40%	0	0
3.	I feel overwhelmed, because I have to learn the rules about how to give a good presentation in the class.	13,30%	40%	33,30%	13,30%	0
4.	I worry that I cannot make a good presentation in the class.	40%	33,30%	20%	0	6,70%
5.	I start to panic before the	6,70%	46,70%	26,70%	20%	0

	presentation even if I have a good preparation for it.					
6.	I start to panic when I give the presentation without enough preparation.	40%	46,70%	13%	0	0
7.	I tremble when I know that I will be the next one to give the presentation in EFL class.	0	33,30%	66,70%	0	0
8.	It scare when I know the in-class presentation will be judge by the teacher.	20%	40%	20%	13,30%	6,70%
9.	I'm afraid that my teachers tend to correct mistakes I make during the presentation.	26,70%	33,30%	26,70%	6,70%	6,70%
10.	I don't worry about making mistakes when I give the presentation in the EFL class.	6,70%	40%	33,30%	20%	0
11.	Sometimes I can't express my true feelings and thoughts in English after I make mistakes in my presentation, and this situation makes me uncomfortable	0	66,70%	33,30%	0	0
12.	In the class, when I give presentations, I feel like a different person.	26,70%	26,70%	20%	26,70%	0
13.	In the presentation, I may get so nervous that I forget what I know.	33,30%	46,70%	20%	0	0
14.	I can feel my heart beating when I give the presentation in the class.	6,70%	40%	40%	6,70%	0
15.	In the process of giving presentation, I often stutter or repeat words when the teacher and other classmates	6,70%	33,30%	60%	0	0

	look at me.					
16.	I keep thinking that the other students are better at giving presentations in English than I am.	13,30%	53,30%	26,70%	6,70%	0
17.	I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I give the presentation	6,70%	33,30%	40%	13,30%	6,70%
18.	I am usually at calm after finishing my presentation in the class.	26,70%	46,70%	20%	6,70%	0
19.	After giving the presentation, I feel relaxed and happy when the teacher praises my performance.	33,30%	53,30%	6,70%	6,70%	0
20.	I get nervous when the teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance after I finish the presentation.	13,30%	40%	33.3%	13,30%	0

**Table 4.3 The Calculation of Data from Questionnaire of Female Students of Second Grade in the University**

No.	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
1.	I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other students.	13.30%	53%	33,30%	0	0
2.	It worries me when I know I need to give multiple presentations in the class.	6.70%	60%	33.3%	0	0
3.	I feel overwhelmed, because I have to learn the rules about how to give a good presentation in the class.	33.30%	20%	46.70%	0	0
4.	I worry that I cannot make a	6.70%	46.70%	46.70%	0	0



	good presentation in the class.					
5.	I start to panic before the presentation even if I have a good preparation for it.	6,70%	46,70%	26,70%	20%	0
6.	I start to panic when I give the presentation without enough preparation.	53.30%	53.30%	13.30%	0	0
7.	I tremble when I know that I will be the next one to give the presentation in EFL class.	6.70%	13.30%	66,70%	13.30%	0
8.	It scare when I know the in-class presentation will be judge by the teacher.	26.70%	46.70%	26.70%	0	0
9.	I'm afraid that my teachers tend to correct mistakes I make during the presentation.	20%	6.70%	26,70%	60%	13.30%
10.	I don't worry about making mistakes when I give the presentation in the EFL class.	20%	0	40%	40%	0
11.	Sometimes I can't express my true feelings and thoughts in English after I make mistakes in my presentation, and this situation makes me uncomfortable	20%	40%	26.70%	0	0
12.	In the class, when I give presentations, I feel like a different person.	6.70%	26,70%	60%	0	6.70%
13.	In the presentation, I may get so nervous that I forget what I know.	20%	60%	6.70%	6.70%	0

14.	I can feel my heart beating when I give the presentation in the class.	20%	26.70%	53.30%	0	0
15.	In the process of giving presentation, I often stutter or repeat words when the teacher and other classmates look at me.	6,70%	26.70%	66.70%	0	0
16.	I keep thinking that the other students are better at giving presentations in English than I am.	6.70%	40%	46.70%	6,70%	0
17.	I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I give the presentation	26.70%	53.30%	20%	0	0
18.	I am usually at calm after finishing my presentation in the class.	20%	33.30%	33.30%	13.30%	0
19.	After giving the presentation, I feel relaxed and happy when the teacher praises my performance.	26.70%	40%	26.70%	6,70%	0
20.	I get nervous when the teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance after I finish the presentation.	26.70%	40%	33.3%	0	0

In conclusion, The writer found that male and female students always felt anxiety if they should present a presentation at class and that anxiety was caused by some factors such as anxiety because of their selves, other students and their teachers. While, there were three steps strategies used by students do to handle their speaking anxiety in class-oral presentations there were trying to be confident and comprehend the material as much as possible. making the atmosphere more cheerful in the presentation and well prepare.

The present study found that male and female students always felt anxiety if they should present a presentation at class and that anxiety was caused by some factors such as anxiety because of their selves, other students and their teachers. It was in line with the research that conducted by Dikilitas, G., & Tercan, K. (2015) and titled EFL students' speaking anxiety: a case from tertiary level students where the result of them were indicates that degrees of anxiety differ in terms of the mode and context of speaking. More specifically, students experience less anxiety in non-threatening contexts where they speak. Both of the studies investigated about the anxiety field unfortunately the previous study did not investigated about the students perception about anxiety. The limitation was found where the present study enrich the previous study.

Moreover, to answer the second research question, the writer looked at the data analysis from the third, fourth and fifth questions of interview. Then, the writer concluded that there were some students perception about the strategies do to handle their speaking anxiety in class-oral presentations as follows. The first, trying to be confident and comprehend the material as much as possible. The second, make the atmosphere more cheerful in the presentation does not make them saturated and if someone teased, reply with jokes but still polite. The third, prepare it more so we can comprehend the material for example by practicing in front of the mirror to be able to speak fluently in the public, slideshow is not monotonous and more interesting, and can arrange the time not too fast or long in the presentation. From all students' perceived the writer concluded that both male and female students felt anxiety in the presentation although male does not show directly their anxiety but can not be inferred that there is anxiety while or before the presentation.

It in line with the study of Mahmoodzadeh (2012) entitled "Investigating Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety within the EFL Learner's Interlanguage System: The Case of Iranian Learners" indicates that the participants were more likely to attribute their most FL speaking anxiety experienced in the classroom to their interlanguage meaning system as compare with the interlanguage phonology and interlanguage grammar, In terms of the gender differences, the results suggested that the female participants were found to be more prone to experiencing FL speaking anxiety within the framework of their interlanguage system. With respect to level differences, the results demonstrated

that gaining more FL knowledge may not necessarily lead to a substantial reduction in experiencing FL speaking anxiety, since more proficient participants were more subject to the anxiety-provoking factors within their interlanguage system than less proficient participants.

Meanwhile, Dikilitas, G., & Tercan, K. (2015) indicates that degrees of anxiety differ in terms of the mode and context of speaking. More specifically, students experience less anxiety in non-threatening contexts where they speak. Furthermore, Kamarulzaman, H.M et al. (2013) indicates that gifted learners have certain level of language anxiety in English language setting; that language anxiety negatively correlates with gifted learners' English language performance; and that female gifted learners indicate higher language anxiety than males.

The several mentioned above were speaking anxiety and language anxiety. Different from them, this current research focuses on male and female learners' perspectives about speaking anxiety in class-oral presentations. Furthermore, the data showed that there were some steps used by students to handle their speaking anxiety in class-oral presentations.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

In conclusion, The writer found that male and female students always felt anxiety if they should present a presentation at class and that anxiety was caused by some factors such as anxiety because of their selves, other students and their teachers. While, there were three steps strategies used by students do to handle their speaking anxiety in class-oral presentations there were trying to be confident and comprehend the material as much as possible. making the atmosphere more cheerful in the presentation and well prepare.

The further suggestion based on the findings of this study is the teachers should be able to find out some technique to improve their ability in teaching English and must consider the aspect of students' psychology such as anxiety and motivation when they teach. So, these aspects can be overcome early. Furthermore, based on the findings of this study considering the suggestions for the students should try to improve their ability in English. Moreover, their achievement will be better, should recognize and overcome their both anxiety and motivation to minimize them. The last, it is addressed to further

researchers. The writer suggests for the forthcoming researchers who are concerned with the study on the speaking anxiety, they are suggested to be able to be more expert in exploring and updating the research. However, the update research concerning with the speaking area is going to give more significant suggestions to the development of English education area.

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