



## Factors Influencing Students' Speaking Anxiety in Class Presentation of Undergraduate English Majors at The University of Bengkulu

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### Abstract

Speaking anxiety refers to feelings of worry, tension, and nervousness related to one's ability to speak in front of an audience. Class presentations, a common speaking activity in academic settings, often trigger this anxiety among students. This research aims to investigate the levels and factors influencing students' speaking anxiety during class presentations. To achieve these aims, a mixed-method approach was used. Data were collected through a questionnaire adapted from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) by Horwitz et al. (1986), along with follow-up interviews. The participants were 178 students from the English Education Study Program at the University of Bengkulu. Additionally, five students were interviewed to gain deeper insights into the factors causing anxiety. The results showed that 19 students (10%) were in the "very relaxed" category, 46 students (26%) in the "relaxed," 65 students (37%) in the "mildly anxious," 25 students (14%) in the "anxious," and 23 students (13%) in the "very anxious" category. Most students experienced a mildly anxious level. The study also identified three main factors that significantly contribute to students' anxiety: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of evaluation. These findings highlight that speaking anxiety is common among students, especially during class presentations. Also, provide lecturers with valuable insights for developing strategies to help students improve their speaking confidence and performance.

**Keywords:** Anxiety levels; anxiety factors; class presentations; speaking anxiety

### Introduction

English is an international language used by many populations worldwide. its use is highly beneficial for meeting needs in both spoken and written forms across various areas of life. It is the most essential language used for communication today, and its existence can not be neglected. According to Vicontie et al. (2021) English is widely utilized in several fields, including commerce, education, diplomacy, and entertainment. Not only native speakers, but also people from around the world wit

different mother tongues, often use English to communicate with one another. In Indonesia, English is still considered a foreign language that is not used in daily conversations (Ajiza et al., 2024).

Speaking is an essential skill that English learners need to master. This is because it acts as a very efficient way of human communication to interact successfully with people and exchange their ideas in real-life circumstances. Rao (2019) stated that speaking is the most essential skill among the four abilities for effective communication in today's global world. It allows people to readily convey their feelings, views, and thoughts to others (Sari et al., 2023). Having strong speaking skills can make students confident to achieve their goals in either academic or work settings. It enables students to engage actively in class activities such as participating in group discussions, asking and answering questions to lecturers, and even delivering effective presentations.

Although English major students have learned communication skills since their first semester, they still have challenges in speaking, particularly during class presentations. The common issue that makes it difficult for them to speak is anxiety. Sam (2024) stated that anxiety negatively affects foreign language learning and is one of the elements leading to learners' poor or high achievement. It is a mental illness characterized by feelings of dread, worry, stress, and tension, which is also a natural thing when speaking (Budayanti et al., 2023). They tend to feel anxious because they must deliver material verbally, answer questions, and ask questions of other students or lecturers in English. The feeling of anxiety may contribute to their performance, resulting in poor results.

Many studies have discussed factors that influence students' speaking anxiety, such as Najihha & Sailun (2021) found "Communication Apprehension" as the primary cause of anxiety among almost 27 (79%) students. This study was conducted with the third-grade students of SMAN 2 Siak Hulu. The researchers used a quantitative study and obtained the data used questionnaires. Additionally, the level of anxiety experienced by the students was mild. Also, a study by Hayadi et al. (2024) investigated students' anxiety in class presentation activity at the University of Bengkulu, particularly in postgraduate English majors. The results revealed that communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of evaluations are the factors that influence students and most of them experienced "anxious" of anxiety. Similarly, with Rizkiya and Pratolo (2023) students had moderate anxiety levels. Lastly, Toubot

and Seng (2018) showed that the most common reasons were poor self-confidence, fear of unfavorable appraisal, and communication apprehension.

Based on the relevant studies mentioned above, several studies have observed factors affecting students' speaking anxiety. However, there are still limited studies investigated factors influencing students' speaking anxiety in class presentations at the University of Bengkulu. This study used a mixed method to answer two research questions with questionnaires and interviews as the tools to help the researcher. Additionally, this research was conducted among undergraduate English students at the University of Bengkulu by involving students in the 2022-2024 academic year, specifically in 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> semesters. The findings from this study are expected to help lecturers develop effective strategies that help students build confidence, improve their communication skills, and enhance their overall engagement in learning activities.

To achieve this objective, the research is guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the level of anxiety among undergraduate students of the English Program at the University of Bengkulu?
2. What factors influence students' speaking anxiety during class presentations?

This research provides detailed insights into the levels of anxiety and factors that influence speaking anxiety experienced by students in classroom presentations and informs future studies on anxiety in academic settings. In addition, this can aid instructors in creating effective strategies to manage speaking anxiety, thereby enhancing the effectiveness and engagement of the classroom. Furthermore, aids students in comprehending anxiety causes and provides strategies to boost confidence, enhance speaking abilities, and consequently, improve academic performance and participation.

### **Research Methodology**

A mixed-methods research design was employed in this research. It is a technique for gathering, evaluating, and combining quantitative and qualitative data. This strategy was utilized in a single study to understand the research difficulties (Creswell, 2014). The reason for choosing a mixed method in this research is to understand students' anxiety levels, although it may not reveal the personal reasons behind it. Qualitative methods, such as interviews or open-ended questions, were

utilized to acquire a deeper understanding of each student's experience and anxiety factors. Additionally, this method was used in this research since using both types of data together offers a fuller understanding of the research issue than relying on just one method (Creswell, 2014). Furthermore, this present research aimed to find out the levels of and factors influencing students' speaking anxiety in class presentations. Hence, to answer the research questions, the researcher collected the data by using questionnaires and interviews.

The subjects for this research were undergraduate students enrolled in the English Education Program at the University of Bengkulu. The participants included were students in semesters two, four, and six who had experience with speaking for class presentations. Each semester consisted of three classes (A, B, and C), resulting in a total number of 294 students across nine classes. This research applied Slovin's formula with a 5% margin of error to determine the sample size, resulting in a sample size of 178 students. The participants were chosen through simple random sampling by distributing the questionnaire to all students to ensure that each student had an equal chance of being selected.

Purposive sampling was used for the interview by selecting one student from each level, resulting in 5 students. For the very relaxed level, the researcher selected a student with the lowest score of anxiety, with a total score of 38. At a relaxed level, the researcher selected a student who had the lowest score, with a total score of 66. Moreover, for the mildly anxious level, the researcher selected a student who had the highest score at that level, with a total score of 107. Additionally, at an anxious level, the students with the highest score were chosen, with a total score of 123. Lastly, at a very anxious level, the researcher selected a student with the highest score in that level, with a total score of 162. The reason for selecting the second, fourth, and sixth-semester students because they had already conducted presentations for a significant portion of their coursework, and they also had participated in some other speaking classes, such as conversation, public speaking, and academic speaking courses. Thus, these students have enough experience presenting oral presentations in English.

The study utilized questionnaires and interviews to gather data on undergraduate English students' speaking anxiety during class presentations at the University of Bengkulu. Questionnaires were used to ask students about their anxiety levels, while interviews provided a deeper understanding of the specific anxiety

factors students experience.

#### *Questionnaire*

The questionnaire used in this research was to measure the level of undergraduate students' speaking anxiety in class presentations at the University of Bengkulu. The researcher adapted the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) questionnaire, drawing from the versions developed by Horwitz et al. (1986). This research employed a five-point Likert scale and used always, often, sometimes, rarely, and never. The researcher translated the questionnaire from English to Indonesian to minimize misunderstanding and make it easier for students to answer the questions. To obtain the data from students, the questionnaires were made using Google Forms. The researcher distributed the questionnaire to the respondents online via WhatsApp. The estimated time for completing the questionnaire is approximately 5 to 10 minutes.

#### *Interview*

In qualitative research, interviews were performed by asking open-ended questions to individuals and recording their responses. The interview used in this study aims to find in-depth information about anxiety factors influencing students' speaking anxiety during class presentations. The researcher conducted the interview utilizing purposive sampling, selecting one student from each level of anxiety, resulting in a total of five participants. The interview took about 15-20 minutes and was conducted in the Indonesian language to make it simpler for students to answer the questions and express their opinions. The researcher conducted interviews with students through online Zoom meetings, utilizing a tape recorder and field notes to ensure comprehensive data collection and minimize data loss. Documentation is also used to support the interview process.

#### **Validity and Reliability**

In this research, content validity was established by consulting an English lecturer from the University of Bengkulu to evaluate the questionnaire. After receiving feedback from the experts, the questionnaire was revised accordingly. A pilot test was conducted with students from Class B of the 8th semester, as they were not included in the main research population. The total number of respondents for the pilot test was 37 students. In addition, to ensure validity, the researcher used Corrected Item-Total Correlation in SPSS. Items were considered valid if the r-

calculated value exceeded the r-table value of 0.325. The results showed that all items were valid and suitable for measuring students' speaking anxiety. The researchers conducted the reliability test using SPSS, which resulted in a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.974. This very high score indicates that the items consistently measure the same underlying concept and confirms that the instrument is highly reliable for producing consistent results.

### **Data analysis**

After the researcher collected the data needed through questionnaires and interviews, the data were analyzed using Microsoft Excel to calculate the total score and percentage levels of students' speaking anxiety. To address the second research question, the researcher conducted interviews with several students to explore the factors influencing their speaking anxiety in class presentations. The thematic analysis was used to process the data from the interviews. Thematic analysis identifies themes and patterns of meaning in data sets (Braun and Clarke, 2013) as cited in (Sundari and Retnomurti, 2023).

## **Findings and Discussion**

### **Findings**

This chapter presents the results of data analysis from both a questionnaire and interviews. The questionnaire measured students' anxiety levels, while the interviews explored the factors influencing their speaking anxiety during class presentations. The interview findings also supported the questionnaire data. Additionally, the results were compared with previous related studies.

### **Students' Levels of Speaking Anxiety**

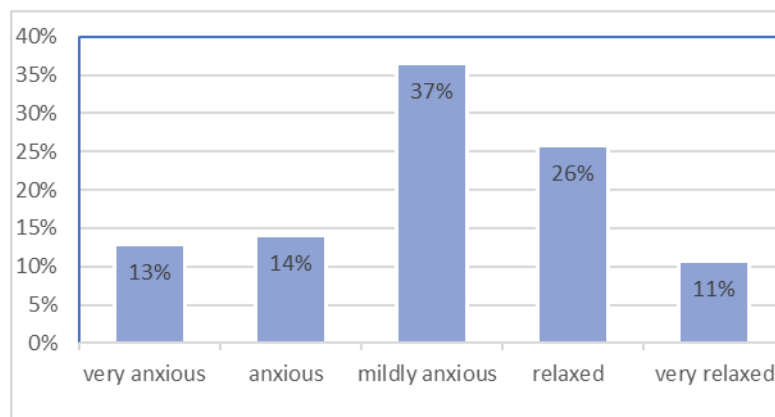
In this section, the researcher described the results of the anxiety levels among the second to sixth semester students of the English Department at the University of Bengkulu. The questionnaire, adapted from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), consisted of 33 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale: never, rarely, sometimes, often, and always.

**Table 1.** Scoring and Categorizing of Students' Anxiety

| <b>Level</b>   | <b>Range</b> | <b>Results</b>       |
|----------------|--------------|----------------------|
| Very Anxious   | 124–165      | 23 Respondents (13%) |
| Anxious        | 108–123      | 25 Respondents (14%) |
| Mildly Anxious | 87–107       | 65 Respondents (37%) |

|              |       |                      |
|--------------|-------|----------------------|
| Relaxed      | 66–86 | 46 Respondents (26%) |
| Very Relaxed | 33–65 | 19 Respondents (10%) |

**Figure 1.** Levels of Students' Speaking Anxiety in Class Presentations



Based on the represented data above, it shows that 19 students (10%) got scores between 33 to 65, which indicates in the "Very Relaxed" level. 46 students (26%) got scores between 66 to 86, which indicates that they are in the "Relaxed" level. Then, 65 students (37%) got scores between 87 to 107, which indicated that they are in the "Mildly anxious" level, 25 students (14%) got scores between 108 to 123, which indicated that they are in the "Anxious" level, and the last data showed 23 students (13%) got scores between 124 to 165 which indicated that they are in the "Very Anxious" level of anxiety. From the results, the majority of students are at a mildly anxious level of anxiety, with a total of 65 students (37%), which also can be concluded that the overall anxiety level of English major students at the University of Bengkulu, semester two to six, is at a mildly anxious level.

### **The Factors of Students' Speaking Anxiety**

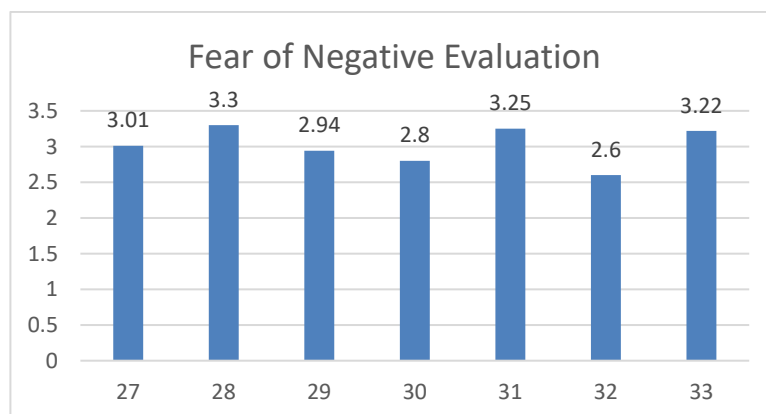
Speaking anxiety experienced by students during class presentations was caused by three primary factors: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. The questionnaire consisted of 33 items, comprising eleven related to communication apprehension with item numbers [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11]. Then, fifteen to test anxiety with item numbers [12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26], also seven to fear of negative evaluation with item numbers [27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33].

#### *Fear of Negative Evaluation*

Fear of negative evaluation is a feeling of anxiety where students feel worried about being assessed by other people. Horwitz et al. (1986) stated that the fear of

negative evaluation is characterized by apprehension about others' evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectation that others will evaluate oneself negatively. Based on the results of this research, four factors contributing to students' speaking anxiety in this category include thinking others are better at giving presentations, self-doubt about speaking proficiency, fear of being judged, and fear of making mistakes.

**Figure 2.** Average Scores Of Fear of Negative Evaluation Items



#### *Perceiving others as better at presenting*

Statement 28, "I keep thinking that other students are better at giving presentations than I am," had the highest mean (3.3) in the fear of negative evaluation category, with 39% of students selecting "often" or "always." which means that more than one-third of the students think that their friends are better than they are at giving material in English during class presentations. To explore a deeper understanding of why the majority of students feel this way, the results from the interview were examined below:

#### **Student 1.**

*["Yes, sometimes when I watch my classmates, I can see how good their performance is, when the lecturer asks them something spontaneously, and they can answer well in English with good grammar."]*

#### **Student 5.**

*["Yes, some of my friends speak English much better, especially in presentations or debates in Q&A sessions. Seeing those who are really good makes me feel scared, because I'm not confident yet and not brave enough to join debates in English."]*

#### *Self-doubt about speaking Proficiency*

Statement 31, "I always feel that other students speak English better than I do," had a mean of 3.25, with 34% of students selecting "often" or "always." Interview



responses revealed that students often feel insecure about their grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary compared to their peers. This self-doubt reduces their confidence and contributes to speaking anxiety during class presentations. The results from the interview were examined below:

**Student 2**

*["I think my friends are better because they speak more fluently, use fewer fillers, and their vocabulary is more advanced or uncommon."]*

**Student 3.**

*["I've felt that my friends are better, especially because their grammar and pronunciation are correct. But what makes me feel most insecure is when they speak with an accent."]*

*Fear of Being Judged*

Statement 33, "I get nervous when the English teacher asks questions I haven't prepared for," had a mean of 3.22, with 38% of students selecting "often" or "always." Interviews revealed that students felt anxious about making mistakes and being corrected by peers or lecturers, which led to embarrassment and loss of confidence. This fear of judgment contributes significantly to speaking anxiety. The results from the interview were examined below:

**Student 1.**

*["I worry about making mistakes, especially because I was once corrected for my pronunciation. I once said the wrong word, and then my friend corrected me. It made me feel embarrassed."]*

**Student 3.**

*["I was once corrected by a friend for a grammar mistake, and after that, I became more careful when speaking."]*

**Student 4.**

*["Sometimes I don't feel confident when presenting in English, especially because of my poor grammar and pronunciation. Comments from friends make me feel insecure."]*

**Student 5**

*["I'm afraid of being scolded because the lecturer already explained it, but I still don't understand and get corrected."]*

*Fear of Making Mistakes*

Statement 27, "I worry about making mistakes during English class presentations," had a mean of 3.01, with 28% selecting "often" or "always." Students expressed fear of grammar and pronunciation errors, especially when being watched or corrected. This fear made them hesitant to speak and negatively affected their performance during presentations. To explore a deeper understanding of why the

students feel this way, the results from the interview were examined below:

**Student 1.**

*["What makes me most afraid during speaking is my pronunciation and when I speak unclearly or stumble."]*

**Student 2.**

*["I feel afraid when my speaking is unclear or my grammar is wrong. Especially when the lecturer checks our grammar or pronunciation. That's what makes me hesitate to speak."]*

**Student 3.**

*["I struggle with grammar and pronunciation because when I speak, it often comes out unclear or mixed up. I was once laughed at for saying the past tense of 'send' was 'sended', when it should be 'sent'."]*

**Student 4.**

*["I'm so afraid of making grammar or pronunciation mistakes, and of getting comments from friends. But the lecturer usually calms us down and says it's okay to make mistakes because that's how we learn."]*

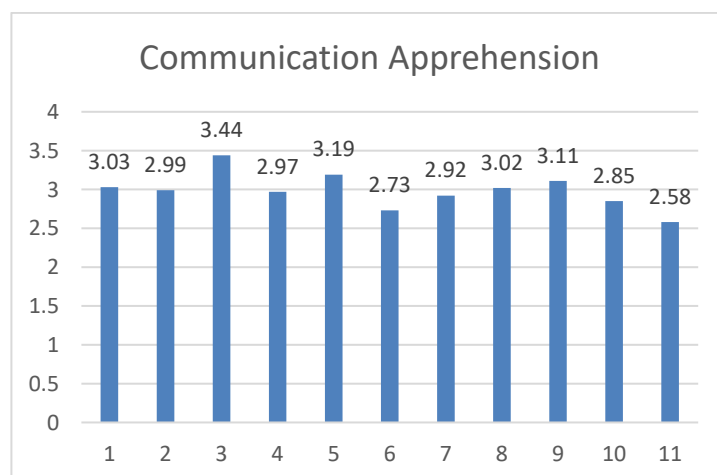
**Student 5.**

*["I'm afraid of making mistakes when presenting, especially in grammar. Sometimes I also pause a lot when speaking."]*

**Communication Apprehension**

Horwitz et al. (1986) defined communication apprehension as a type of shyness characterized by a fear of or anxiety about communicating with others, as well as difficulty in listening to or understanding spoken messages. Five factors contributing to students' speaking anxiety during class presentations, such as:

**Figure 3.** Average Scores Of The Communication Apprehension Items



*Feeling Nervous When Speaking Without Preparation*

Statement 3, "I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation," had the highest mean in the communication apprehension category (3.44), with 46% selecting "often" or "always." Interview data showed that students feel nervous when

suddenly asked to present, especially when unsure about the material. Even with preparation, being in front of the class causes anxiety and memory blanks. Sudden presentations increase panic due to fear of not knowing what to say. The results from the interview were examined below:

**Student 1.**

*["I feel nervous without preparation because I have to speak in front of the class, and I don't know what to say. Sometimes I go blank even with preparation, especially if the material is complex and I haven't fully mastered it. Sometimes I forget a few parts of the material because being in front of the class feels different from sitting down."]*

**Student 2.**

*["I often feel nervous when the lecturer randomly picks presentations because I don't know when it's my turn. The nervousness usually appears at the beginning. This is because I have to speak in front of my classmates, and I don't know what I should say."]*

**Student 3.**

*["I'm not too nervous during presentations because I can prepare in advance. What makes me nervous is when the presentation is sudden or when the lecturer suddenly asks me to speak in front of class, which makes my heart pound."]*

**Student 4.**

*["Spontaneous presentations also cause panic and fear."]*

**Student 5.**

*["I don't feel confident without preparation because I'm afraid that when I don't understand the material, and won't know how to answer questions, especially during sudden presentations."]*

### Anxiety Due to Not Understanding Corrections

Statement 5, "I get anxious when I don't understand the corrections from lecturers," had a mean of 3.19, with 34% selecting "often" or "always." Students shared that unclear or fast-paced feedback during presentations made them feel confused and worried. Difficult vocabulary or unclear instructions led to frustration and insecurity, especially when they didn't know how to fix their mistakes. The results from the interview were examined below:

**Student 1.**

*["I feel upset when I don't understand the correction from the lecturer, for instance, I was ever being corrected about my pronunciation, and the content about my material that was considered was not specific, but I'm confused about how I should fix it."]*

**Student 3.**

*["I don't get upset, but I do feel confused when I don't understand the lecturer's corrections. I usually ask the lecturer or a friend for clarification. During an individual presentation, I struggled because the corrections given used difficult or unfamiliar vocabulary."]*

*Nervousness When Answering Unexpected Questions*

Statement 9, "I get nervous when I have to answer unexpected questions," scored a mean of 3.11, with 32% choosing "often" or "always." Many students reported anxiety when asked spontaneous questions by lecturers or peers. They feared giving off-topic answers or not understanding the questions, especially if they were asked in English or involved unfamiliar material. The results from the interview were examined below:

**Student 1.**

*["Yes, I feel more nervous when a lecturer asks me a question without any preparation, because I'm afraid my answer won't match the question. I get more anxious compared to when I'm well prepared."]*

**Student 5.**

*["I feel very nervous when someone asks a question in class and no one can answer, then the lecturer suddenly points at me. I'm afraid because I don't know the answer. It's even more stressful in speaking class because the lecturer often asks for our opinions without warning."]*

*Hesitation in Delivering Material*

Statement 1, "I feel hesitant when delivering material in English," had a mean of 3.03, with 28% responding "often" or "always." Students expressed self-doubt, fearing their audience would not understand them. Even with preparation, they sometimes forgot key points or struggled with sentence structure, leading to unclear delivery. The results from the interview were examined below:

**Student 4.**

*["But when I'm not confident, I usually feel scared from the start. I'm worried that the audience won't understand what I'm explaining, because I might forget the words or get confused with the order of sentences. It can make my talk unclear; this sometimes happens even after I've prepared."]*

*Lack of Fluency During Presentations*

Statement 7, "I often pause and repeat my words when the audience looks at me," had a mean of 3.02, with 31% agreeing. Interviews revealed that nervousness caused students to speak too fast, pause frequently, or lose focus. Fear of being judged, especially on grammar or pronunciation, made it harder for them to organize their ideas and speak clearly. The results from the interview were examined below:

**Student 3.**

*["I still feel nervous when presenting, especially if I'm not well prepared. Even with preparation, I get nervous because I often stumble when speaking. Sometimes my explanation gets messy and goes off-topic."]*

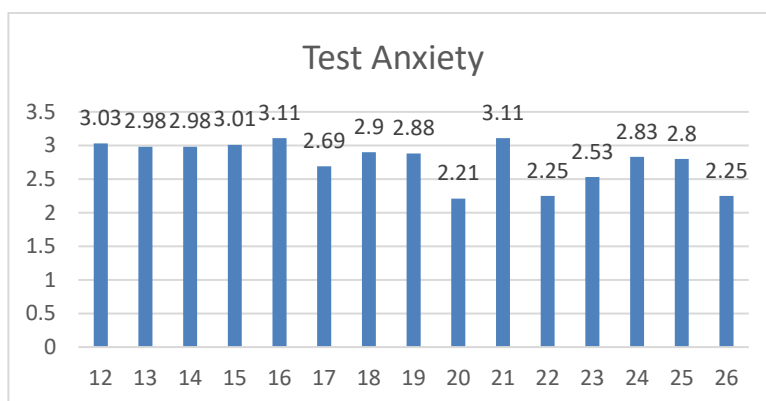
**Student 4.**

*"When I know I have to present, I feel nervous, my hands shake, my voice trembles, and I feel like everyone is watching me. If I make a mistake, it feels obvious. That makes it hard to focus, and sometimes I speak too fast and become unclear."*

**Test anxiety**

Test anxiety is characterized by a feeling of worry about failing when performing something also tends to show physical symptoms during or before the test, such as in class presentations. Horwitz et al (1986) defined test anxiety refers to a type of performance anxiety stemming from a fear of failure. Three factors of test anxiety contributing to students' speaking anxiety in class presentations, namely:

**Figure 4.** Average Scores of The Test Anxiety Items

**Worrying About Failure in Class Presentations**

Statement 16, "I worry about the consequences of failing my English class presentations," had a mean of 3.11, with 37% of students selecting "often" or "always." Interviews revealed that students feel anxious about their grades, particularly when comparing themselves to peers who perform or exhibit better creativity. Many feared their efforts wouldn't meet lecturers' expectations, affecting their scores and confidence. The results from the interview were examined below:

**Student 2.**

*["Yes, I've felt worried because it's hard to get a good score. There's a lecturer with high standards, so even if I prepare well, sometimes the score is still low."]*

**Student 3.**

*["Yes, I've felt worried about failing in class presentations. I felt that way after watching other groups do well. I started thinking, 'Is my presentation good enough?' I was afraid the lecturer would give high scores to them and see my group as less good."]*

**Experiencing Physical Symptoms**

Statement 21, "I can feel my heart pounding before presenting," had a mean of 3.11, and statement 12, "I get nervous knowing I will present next," scored 3.03.

Respectively, 37% and 30% of students reported these symptoms. Interview responses described trembling, fast heartbeats, and loss of focus—especially during sudden presentations or Q&A. These physical signs of anxiety often disrupt fluency and clarity during delivery. The results from the interview were examined below:

**Student 3.**

*["When I'm called on, I feel nervous and my heart is pounding. Without preparation, I tend to speak hesitantly and experience pauses, like speaking hesitantly."]*

**Student 4.**

*["When I know I have to do a presentation, I often feel my heart beating fast. My hands start shaking, and my voice trembles. I feel like everyone is looking at me, so if I make a mistake, it feels very obvious. That makes it hard for me to focus, and sometimes I speak too fast, and it becomes unclear."]*

*Feeling Tense During Presentations*

Statement 15, *"I usually feel tense during class presentations,"* had a mean of 3.01, with 30% choosing "often" or "always." Students explained that presentations felt more stressful than other tasks due to the need for preparation and being the center of attention. The pressure of being judged by both lecturers and classmates contributed to increased tension and reduced speaking confidence.. The results from the interview were examined below:

**Student 1.**

*["Yes, I feel tense because in presentations we have to deliver the results of our discussions, and compared to other types of learning, presentations require extra preparation."]*

**Student 4.**

*["For me, yes, giving presentations often feels more tense than other learning activities because I have to speak in front of many people, and everyone is paying attention".]*

**Student 5.**

*["Presentation makes me feel tense in class because I'm afraid of being corrected, scolded, or unable to answer questions."]*

**Discussion**

This research presented findings addressing two main objectives: identifying the levels of students' speaking anxiety and the factors influencing it during class presentations. The results revealed that most students in the undergraduate English department at the University of Bengkulu experienced a mildly anxious level. Additionally, three primary factors were found to contribute to their anxiety: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation.

The findings showed that most students were at a mildly anxious level,

indicating they felt nervous but could still manage their anxiety during class presentations. This aligns with previous studies (Sutarsyah, 2017; Asysyfa et al., 2019) showing that mild anxiety does not significantly hinder performance. However, it contrasts with Hayadi et al. (2024), who found higher anxiety among postgraduate students, likely due to more complex materials and academic expectations.

In addition, this study found that students' speaking anxiety was mainly influenced by three main factors: fear of negative evaluation, communication apprehension, and test anxiety, similar to the framework proposed by Horwitz et al. (1986).

Fear of negative evaluation includes perceiving that other students are better at giving presentations. Many students tend to compare themselves to their peers, especially those who are able to respond to questions during presentations or speak fluently without needing to mentally translate from Indonesian to English first. This is supported by Mitha et al. (2018), who found that students holding such perceptions tend to perform poorly in class and may even avoid speaking altogether. Then, students also experience self-doubt about their speaking proficiency. They feel that their skills are still lacking in terms of fluency, correct grammar usage, and proper pronunciation. In line with the statement from Taqwa et al. (2022), Low English proficiency levels can pose a significant language barrier for students, causing anxiety about speaking in a target language due to poor grammar, vocabulary, unclear pronunciation, and interlocutors' language deficiency, making them struggle to participate in speaking classroom activities. Furthermore, students feel worried when they are going to be evaluated by the lecturer about the mistakes they made during the class presentation. This is in line with Sulistyowati (2023), students' fear of failure during presentations affects their speaking performance. Anxiety and fear of criticism make them forget the material, feel guilty, and lose confidence, resulting in poor delivery and negative self-perception.

Communication apprehension is a type of shyness characterized by a fear of or anxiety about communicating with others, as well as difficulty in listening to or understanding spoken messages (Horwitz et al., 1986). Five factors contributing to students' speaking anxiety during class presentations, such as: First, students feel anxious when they have to speak in front of the class without prior preparation, especially during class presentations. Lack of preparation is the main cause of students' speaking anxiety, leading to panic, nervousness, and difficulty expressing

ideas. Some students even go blank. This aligns with Humaera & Pramustiara's (2022) findings, which show that impromptu speaking increases anxiety and hinders effective presentations. Secondly, nervousness due to not understanding the lecture's correction. This is supplemented by Anggraeny et al. (2020), who stated that students who are unable to understand what is being discussed or said in class causes them to suffer from language anxiety. Next, nervousness about unexpected questions. This nervousness arises from the pressure to answer questions spontaneously and a lack of understanding about the material. This supports Taqwa et al. (2022), who stated that anxiety can discourage students from participating in speaking activities, such as question-and-answer sessions. Their hesitation in classroom discussions may stem from factors like low self-confidence and an unsupportive classroom environment.

Fourthly, students frequently feel hesitant and not confident about their ability to deliver material in a class presentation. This is in line with the previous research by Amrina et al. (2023) found that students who lacked confidence experienced anxiety and had difficulty speaking, as they feared that their peers would not comprehend what they were trying to explain. Fifth, a lack of fluency in speaking during presentations is the inability to speak smoothly and clearly when delivering material and answering questions in class. This is in line with Sulistyowati (2023), Inadequate vocabulary makes students afraid of mispronouncing words. Also, weak grammar skills can affect speaking fluency and may cause misunderstandings during communication. Lastly, lack of comprehension due to the lecturer's explanation. This is in line with research from Azdillah (2018), who found that students expressed that they feel disturbed when they cannot comprehend the lesson, and they feel uncomfortable when they did not understand what the lecturer was saying. Some also shared that their fear of not being able to comprehend all the language input, which can simply raise the chance of failing.

Test anxiety is characterized by a feeling of worry about failing when performing something also tends to show physical symptoms during or before the test, such as in class presentations. Three factors of test anxiety contributing to students' speaking anxiety in class presentations such as:

First, Fear of making mistakes. It is a feeling that arises from the worry of doing something wrong while speaking during class presentations. Students mentioned that they are afraid of making mistakes, such as using incorrect grammar or mispronouncing words, which affects their speaking performance. This is supported by



Loan (2022). Secondly, Students were worried about failing their class presentations. Many felt that their performance did not meet their own expectations, which could result in receiving a low score. This is supplemented by research from Sulistyowati (2023), who found that students experience negative emotions and fear of failure during presentations, leading to guilt, nervousness, and difficulty recalling information. They focus on criticism and feel worthless after an unsuccessful presentation. Furthermore, Experiencing physical symptoms. This is proven by Horwitz et al. (1986) as cited in (Hayadi et al., 2024). Students who experience extreme anxiety often suffer from intense physical symptoms such as sweating, shaking, and excessive worrying. This condition is frequently accompanied by self-doubt and a fear of speaking, which leads to a strong fear of making mistakes. Eventually, students often feel more tense during class presentations compared to other classroom activities. This is supported by research from Koch and Terrell, cited in Oxford (1999, as cited in Azdillah, 2018), which found that oral presentations cause the most anxiety. They noted that being asked to respond orally often triggers nervousness.

### **Conclusion and Suggestion**

This study investigated the levels and factors influencing students' speaking anxiety during class presentations among undergraduate English majors at the University of Bengkulu. Out of 178 participants, most students (37%) were found to be mildly anxious, followed by relaxed (26%), anxious (14%), very anxious (13%), and very relaxed (10%). This suggests that while anxiety is present, most students are still able to manage it. The research also identified 13 specific factors contributing to speaking anxiety, grouped into three categories: Fear of Negative Evaluation (e.g., perceiving others as better at presenting, self-doubt about speaking Proficiency, fear of being judged, fear of mistakes), Communication Apprehension (e.g., feeling nervous due to speak without preparation, nervousness due to not understanding corrections. nervousness when responding to unexpected questions, feeling hesitant in delivering material, a lack of fluency during presentations and nervousness due to not understanding explanations. Test Anxiety (e.g., fear of failure, physical symptoms, feeling tense during presentations). These findings confirm that speaking anxiety is a common experience, even for English majors, and it can significantly affect students' confidence and classroom performance. Based on these findings, several suggestions are offered: teachers should create a supportive classroom environment and recognize

students' anxiety to implement helpful strategies; students are encouraged to prepare thoroughly and practice regularly to build confidence; and future researchers are advised to explore effective strategies for managing speaking anxiety through more in-depth interviews.

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