



## The Correlation Between Students' Anxiety and Their Speaking Ability in EFL Classroom

Nur Rahma Kasim; Sukarno

English Language Education Study Program, Faculty of Languages, Arts, and Culture, Yogyakarta State University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

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### **Abstract**

The objectives of this study were to identify students' anxiety levels and to investigate the relationship between students' speaking anxiety and their speaking ability in EFL classes. This study is quantitative research in the form of correlation research. The participants were 30 eleventh-grade students at one of senior high school in Yogyakarta. The data were collected using a questionnaire and a speaking test. The questionnaire was employed to assess the student's level of anxiety, while the speaking test was utilized to gauge the extent of their speaking proficiency in the EFL lesson. In addition, the researcher employed SPSS 27 to examine the correlation between students' anxiety levels and speaking proficiency. The results of the questionnaire showed that most students have a high level of anxiety when speaking in the EFL Classroom. Some factors that cause students' anxiety when speaking English in EFL classes are lack of confidence, shyness, fear of speaking inaccurately and fear of negative evaluation. Furthermore, the result of the hypothesis test showed that the significant value is 0.025. It showed that the significance value is lower than 0.05. It can be said that  $H_a$  is accepted where there is a relationship between students' anxiety level and their speaking ability. The relationship between the two variables is a negative relationship with a Pearson Correlation coefficient value of -0.409. It indicated that when students have a high speaking score, their anxiety level will be low. Conversely, if students have a low speaking score, it shows that they have a high level of anxiety. Moreover, the strength of the relationship between variable  $x$  and variable  $y$  is a moderate correlation because it has a coefficient value of 0.409, which is between 0.40 - 0.59.

**Keywords:** *EFL Classroom; Speaking Ability; Speaking Anxiety*

### **Introduction**

The ability to communicate in English is essential in this age of globalization. One of the most crucial English skills that students must learn is how to speak the language, especially English students. It is supported by Parmawati (2018), since speaking is the primary means of communication in daily life, she claimed that speaking represents the most crucial English language skill. In actual life, speaking is the most critical ability on which educators would be evaluated. Most people base their first impressions of others on their ability to speak clearly and fluently, making it an essential component of daily communication.

Speaking is a valuable skill for communicating, sharing information, conveying messages, and expressing ideas through words. The act of speaking is the inventive compression of lingual cords by the speaker, who also selects the discourse's lexicon, formation, and discursive. Amalia & Husna (2020) state that speaking is a crucial competence because language learning progress relies on the learner's capacity to engage in oral activities. Speaking in a language requires words to develop into sentences and structure in language, and the information provided by the speaker must be acceptable and comprehended by the listener. According to Haryudin and Jamilah (2018), mastering speaking skills is the most challenging component for learners. Speaking requires an understanding of when, why, and how to use specific linguistic features, such as grammar and pronunciation, as well as when not to use them.

It is challenging for students to speak English in an English Foreign Language setting because they must do so with self-belief. Abdurrahman (2013) mentions that every student has challenges in learning English. Some students struggle to come up with anything to say or only have a short time to speak because they worry about making mistakes. It is not uncommon for people to use their mother tongue as a form of communication. It can be a problem for students if they are unwilling to speak the foreign language they are learning.

On the other hand, Al Nakhalah (2016) discovers that there are physical issues that prevent learners from speaking. They misjudge motivation, fear, anxiety, shyness, and lack of confidence. Fitri (2019) discovers that many students struggle with oral performance and cannot speak in front of large crowds. When asked to speak, students became frightened, anxious, and panicked. They spoke haltingly and frequently refused if the teacher or someone else asked them to talk in English. The author claims that learners' challenges can arise from intrinsic and extrinsic causes. The author sought to examine the potential impact of a specific component associated with the motivational dimension, namely anxiety.

Anxiety is one of the negative emotions that might detract from students' efforts to learn English. Mauludiyah (2014) indicates that anxiety lowers involvement and leads to a firm rejection of the language, which has a negative impact on language learners' accomplishment both directly and indirectly through worry and timorousness. It undermines students' faith, strain, and anxiousness, negatively impacting their educational process. Students will undoubtedly face a number of challenges when attempting to communicate in a foreign language. Speaking anxiety has a significant impact on students' self-esteem since it typically leads to emotions of defeat when students are unable to explain and convey what they understand.

Moreover, Chen (2015) states that anxiety is a term for interpretive emotions like strain, wariness, anxiousness, and worry that link to a stimulation of the subconscious nervous system. Speaking anxiety causes learners to lack confidence when performing in front of others. As a result, the learners cannot fully comprehend the teacher's explanations. Anxious EFL students believe they will feel embarrassed if they make an error and are afraid of producing things. When a teacher asks a question, the student becomes nervous and fears that the reply is incorrect. It will have a negative impact on the students if they keep their anxiety under control. Students will not be able to master English if they cannot master speaking skills. When they get a concept, they remain silent and refuse to reply or respond due to their nervousness. They are embarrassed when they are incorrect, and other students chuckle at them. Therefore, educators should create an approach to decrease students' classroom speaking anxiety when speaking with their friends or teachers.

Furthermore, Christy et al. (2020) found that anxiety affects students' performance on speaking tests. Anxiety is one of so many factors that have a significant impact on students speaking performance. Additionally, Hasibuan and Irzawati (2020) state that anxious students may suffer from low self-confidence, difficulty retaining information, excessive perspiration, and irregular heartbeats, leading them to skip classes and delay their assignments. Essentially, this behavior will impact competency as students with elevated levels of anxiety will achieve inferior outcomes compared to students with lower levels of

anxiety in their class. If students experience significant levels of language anxiety, their performance in class is likely to be poor. In front of the class, they frequently experience a lapse in their train of thought, resulting in imprecise speaking performance.

However, despite evidence of a negative relationship between anxiety and speaking ability, there has been a lack of research concentrating on the relationship between anxiety and specific characteristics of the capacity to speak. More research is needed to explore the specific aspects of speaking ability that are affected by anxiety, simply put fluency, accuracy, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Furthermore, there has been little research on the association between speaking anxiety and academic success. Nevertheless, this research specifically targets students from flagship high schools, which have different characteristics and educational dynamics compared to regular schools. As a result, it offers valuable insights into anxiety levels and speaking proficiency within a competitive academic setting. The emphasis on the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) setting underscores the unique difficulties encountered by students acquiring a foreign language, which is different from learning it as a native or second language.

Moreover, it is crucial to conduct research on the correlation between students' anxiety and their speaking ability in EFL classes. Identifying these correlations allows educators to understand how speaking anxiety affects students' speaking ability. By understanding this relationship, educators can create tailored interventions and teaching strategies to reduce anxiety-related barriers, thereby creating a more supportive learning environment. Grieve et al. (2021) state that more research is needed regarding specific fears and the strategies students use to overcome them. Further evidence is needed on how fears of public speaking, oral presentations, and presenting affect students' experiences. This information will assist educators in planning scalable oral presentations so that they can gain a deeper understanding of students' fears and support their needs (Grieve et al. 2021). Additionally, this research helps in providing support to students who are struggling with anxiety, which ultimately impacts their ability to communicate effectively in real-world scenarios. Furthermore, researching this case provides insight into how psychological factors affect learning and how curriculum can be developed with aspects of speaking anxiety in mind. Therefore, investigating these correlations is necessary to improve language learning outcomes, ensure holistic student development, and refine teaching practices to address the challenges posed by anxiety in language acquisition.

## **Method**

This study employed quantitative research in the form of correlation research to know the relationship between two variable that is independent variable or variable (x) and the dependent variable or variable (y). Creswell (2012) claims that correlation research is a quantitative strategy used by researchers to characterize and quantify the amount of connection between two or more variables or sets of assessment results. Moreover, Vogt & Johnson (2015) state that correlation research is a type of bivariate study that quantifies the degree of relationship between two variables. The coefficient of correlation indicates the degree of relationship. The relationship between students' nervousness and their speaking abilities was investigated in this study. The participants were 30 eleventh-grade students at one of senior high school in Yogyakarta. This study used simple random sampling. According to Sugiyono (2018), simple random sampling is the taking of sample members from a population that is carried out randomly without considering to the strata within the population. Priadana & Sunarsi, (2021) also state that a probability sampling strategy known as "simple random sampling" is one element where each population has the same opportunity and independence to be used as a sample, the sample is selected by randomization method. The data were collected using a questionnaire and a speaking test. The questionnaire was employed to assess the student's level of anxiety. The researcher used Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) by Horwitz et.al. While the speaking test was utilized to gauge the extent of their speaking proficiency in the EFL lesson. In addition, the researcher employed SPSS 27 to examine the correlation between students' anxiety levels and speaking proficiency.

## Data Analysis

In this study, there were two types of data that were processed. The first was made up of the FLCAS questionnaire's data. The following calculation rubric from Horwitz was used to calculate the questionnaire that students completed.

Tabel 1. FLCAS Scoring

Scale	Positive question	Negative question
Strongly Agree	1	5
Agree	2	4
Neutral	3	3
Disagree	4	2
Strongly Disagree	5	1

According to the table above, students received a score of 1 if they respond to questions in a positive context with "Strongly Agree," a score of 2 if they respond with "Agree," a score of 3 if they respond with "Neutral," a score of 4 if they respond with "Disagree," and a score of 5" if they respond with "Strongly Disagree." In contrast, students who chose "Strongly Agree" in response to questions with a negative context received a score of 5, while those who chose "Agree" received a score of 4, while those who chose "Neutral" received a score of 3, while those who choose "Disagree" received a score of 2, and those who choose "Strongly Disagree" received a score of 1. After all student responses had been converted into numerical sums, the researcher conducted an analysis to determine the students' anxiety levels by putting the data through an anxiety-level scale by Alrabai (2014).

Table 2. Anxiety-Level Scale

Scale	Level of Anxiety
33 – 82	Very low anxiety
83 – 89	Moderately low anxiety
90 – 98	Moderate anxiety
99 – 108	Moderately high anxiety
109 – 165	High anxiety

The students' speaking abilities next were evaluated using a scoring rubric developed by H. Douglas Brown (2004, p.172). The proportion of each student's score is calculated using the formula below.

$$P = \frac{\text{Students score}}{\text{Students Maximum Score}} \times 100\%$$

After both data were taken, the data were statistically evaluated to see whether there was a significant correlation between students' nervousness and their ability to talk. The survey score was used for variable x, while the test score will be used for variable y. The researcher examined the data using the product-moment correlation coefficient (r) produced by SPSS 27.

The Pearson product moment is a statistical measure that quantifies the magnitude and direction of a linear association between two variables.

The statistic hypotheses are below:

$$H_a: \text{sig } 2 \text{ tailed} < 0.05$$

Ho: sig 2 tailed >0.05

a. Ha is accepted if sig 2 tailed < 0.05 or there is a significant correlation between students' anxiety and their speaking ability.

b. Ho is accepted if sig 2 tailed > 0.05 or there is no significant correlation between students' anxiety and their speaking ability.

To determine the extent of the linear relationship between two variables, the intensity of the relationship was interpreted by considering the correlation coefficient in the table below:

Table 3. Interpretation of Correlation Coefficient

Coefficient range	Strength of correlation
0,80 – 1,00	Very high
0,60 – 0,79	High
0,40 – 0,59	Sufficient (Moderate)
0,20 – 0,39	Low
0 – 0,19	Very low

## Result and Discussion

### Result

#### Students' Learning Anxiety

The first research objective of this study was to ascertain the magnitude of students' anxiety towards learning. The researcher employed a Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) questionnaire to assess the degree of speaking anxiety among the learners. The table below displays the results of students' FLCAS scores.

Table 4. Recapitulation of FLCAS Results score and category

Scale	Frequency	Percentage	Level of Anxiety
33 – 82	4	13.33%	Very low anxiety
83 – 89	3	10%	Moderately low anxiety
90 – 98	6	20%	Moderate anxiety
99 – 108	6	20%	Moderately high anxiety
109 – 165	11	36.67%	High anxiety
Total	30		

Based on the data presented, it indicates that 13.33% of students exhibit a significantly low degree of anxiety. Students at this level exhibit a high level of self-confidence when it comes to oral communication. They do not perceive speaking as something intimidating; rather, they derive great pleasure from it. They possess a greater capacity to articulate their thoughts and emotions fluently. Similar to moderately low anxiety, 10% of students were classified in this category. Students at this level seldom experience uneasiness or concern when speaking. Occasionally, they may encounter nervousness, although it is not overly often. They can feel confident when speaking in front of classmates or the teacher.

Furthermore, 20% of students exhibit a moderate level of anxiety, indicating that it is neither excessively high nor excessively low. This can be described as normal anxiety in speaking. Students with normal anxiety experience uncertainty, but it does not hinder their speaking ability. They realize the possibility of making mistakes, but it does not overwhelm them. Moreover, 20% of pupils exhibit a moderately high level of anxiety. Students at this proficiency level may encounter heightened levels of nervousness when speaking, particularly in situations where they are required to speak in front of a large audience. They tend to worry about making mistakes or doing something that doesn't go as expected.

Lastly, 36.67% of students exhibit a significantly high level of anxiousness. Students at this level experience an abundance of concerns and possess a deficiency in self-assurance. They view speaking as a challenging and intimidating task, often struggling to regulate and handle the fear they feel. In addition, they struggle to articulate their thoughts and ideas verbally. They tend to be obsessed with the possibility of making a mistake and feel very overwhelmed by it. High academic anxiety can affect students' working memory. Anxious students may have difficulty processing information and remembering subject matter. Therefore, the result of the questionnaire revealed that the majority of learners exhibit a high level of anxiety. However, only a few learners have low levels of anxiety.

### Students' Speaking Performance

The researcher collected data on students' speaking ability through oral presentations to measure their proficiency in English speaking. The learners were instructed to provide concise facts concerning a particular subject within a specific amount of time. The table below displays the outcomes of students' speaking performance.

Table 5. Frequency table of students' speaking score

		Speaking skill			Cumulative
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Percent
Valid	76	5	16.7	16.7	16.7
	80	14	46.7	46.7	63.3
	84	6	20.0	20.0	83.3
	88	1	3.3	3.3	86.7
	92	2	6.7	6.7	93.3
	96	2	6.7	6.7	100.0
Total		30	100.0	100.0	

Based on the table above, it can be seen that there are 5 students (16.7%) received a score of 76, 14 students (46.7%) received a score of 80, 6 students (20%) received a score of 84, 1 student (3.3%) received a score of 88, 2 students (6.7%) received a score of 92 and 2 students (6.7%) received a score of 96.

### The Correlation between Students' Learning Anxiety and Their Speaking Ability

The third research question in this study pertains to the association between students' anxiety and their speaking ability in the EFL Classroom. Before testing the correlation analysis, the researcher conducted a prerequisite test in this study to ensure that the data met the basic assumptions necessary for hypothesis testing to be carried out appropriately.

## Normality test

Table 6. Normality test  
**One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test**

		Unstandardi zed Residual	
N		30	
Normal Parameters <sup>a,b</sup>	Mean	.0000000	
	Std. Deviation	5.04386969	
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.113	
	Positive	.113	
	Negative	-.061	
Test Statistic		.113	
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) <sup>c</sup>		.200 <sup>d</sup>	
Monte Carlo Sig. (2- tailed) <sup>e</sup>	Sig.	.418	
	99% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	.405
		Upper Bound	.430

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.

d. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

e. Lilliefors' method based on 10000 Monte Carlo samples with starting seed 1314643744.

The table of One-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was obtained probability A symp Sig. (2-tailed). The percentage was compared to a significance level of 0.05 ( $\alpha=5\%$ ) in order to make a choice based on:

- If the significance (Sig.) or probability is greater than 0.05, it indicates that the distribution data is normal.
- If the significance (Sig.) or probability is less than 0.05, it indicates that the distribution of the data is not normal.

The table above displays a normality test result with a significant value of 0.200. Compared to the probability value of 0.05, the significance value (0.200) was higher than the probability value (0.05). Thus, the data distribution can be inferred to be normal.

## Linearity Test

The linearity test was applied to ascertain the presence of a linear correlation between the independent variable and the dependent variable. A relationship between variables is considered linear when the divergence from linearity exceeds a value of 0.05. The linearity test in this study was conducted using SPSS 27, employing the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) table to examine the significance level of the deviation from linearity value.

Table 7. Linearity Test  
ANOVA Table

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Speaking skill * Students' anxiety	Between Groups	(Combined) 741.867	23	32.255	1.344	.380
		Linearity 148.089	1	148.089	6.170	.048
		Deviation from Linearity 593.778	22	26.990	1.125	.480
Within Groups		144.000	6	24.000		
Total		885.867	29			

According to the linearity test findings, it is evident that the significant deviation from linearity value is 0.480, which exceeds the threshold of 0.05. There is a clear substantial linear relationship between the independent variable (x) and the dependent variable (y).

### Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis will be tested after the results of the normality and linearity tests show that both are normally distributed and the data variance is linear. In this part, the investigator examined the hypothesis that was designed to analyze the second research question regarding the relationship between students' learning anxiety and their speaking proficiency in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. The purpose of this hypothesis test was to figure out whether there is a statistically significant association between the two variables. Thus, the Pearson Correlation Moment was employed to examine this test. The outcome is shown in the table below.

Table 8. The result of hypothesis testing

Correlations		Students' anxiety	Speaking skill
Students' anxiety	Pearson Correlation	1	-.409*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.025
	N	30	30
Speaking skill	Pearson Correlation	-.409*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.025	
	N	30	30

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

From the table above, it can be seen that the Sig. (2-tailed) is 0.025.

Hypothesis testing:

- a. Ha is accepted if sig 2 tailed < 0.05 or there is a significant correlation between students' anxiety and their speaking ability.
- b. Ho is accepted if sig 2 tailed > 0.05 or there is no significant correlation between students' anxiety and their speaking ability.

Based on the result, it can be said that  $0.025 < 0.05$ . It can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between learners' anxiety and their speaking proficiency. Based on the table provided, the Pearson Correlation coefficient has a value of -.409. This indicates a negative relationship between the two



variables, implying that as one variable rises, the other variable decreases. Higher levels of anxiousness in learners are associated with lower levels of speaking performance. In contrast, when students experience reduced levels of anxiety, their speaking skills will be higher. Furthermore, the strength of the relationship between variable x and variable y can be said to be moderate correlation because it has a coefficient value of 0.409 which is between 0.40 - 0.59.

## ***Discussion***

Based on the research data collected, the questionnaire results indicate that the majority of students (36.67%) experience a high level of anxiety. It was indicated that the majority of students experience a high degree of anxiety. Students at this stage encounter an abundance of stress and a deficiency of self-confidence. They experience difficulty and fear when it comes to speaking, and they have difficulty controlling or handling their anxiousness. In addition, they struggle to articulate their thoughts and ideas in words. Furthermore, the result of data analysis normality and linearity tests revealed that the data were normally distributed and the association between students' speaking proficiency and their speaking anxiety was linear. In addition, the outcome of the students' speaking performance indicated an average mean of 82.27. The correlation coefficient between students' anxiety and their speaking test was calculated to be -0.409, with a sig. level of 0.025, where the significance was less than 0.05. It indicates a statistically significant relationship between anxiety and speaking ability. Consequently, the alternative hypothesis was accepted due to a significant relationship between two variables that is deemed sufficient. It was implied that students' nervousness about learning is related to their ability to speak in the learning process.

This study is in line with the theory of anxiety in language learning, which said that students who have low speaking skills were influenced by anxiety (Megawati, 2019). Christy et al. (2020) also point out that anxiety has an impact on learners' academic performance. They discover that students' anxiety primarily stemmed from internal issues, such as the fear of ridicule and a lack of confidence. Likewise, Hasibuan and Irzawati (2020) contend that a high level of foreign language anxiety has a direct impact on communication apprehension, leading learners to be reluctant to engage in conversation.

It is assumed that there are several possible factors that caused students anxiety in speaking classroom. Lack of confidence is one of the primary factors of students speaking anxiety. According to Rajitha and Alamelu (2019), students with low confidence may have a negative self-perception, doubt their abilities and feel inadequate. They may believe that their ideas or opinions are not valuable, leading them to hesitate or become anxious when speaking up. Another factor that causes students speaking anxiety is shyness. Shyness is another key anxiety-causing element that affects students anytime they are required to use the target language. Rajitha and Alamelu (2019) assert that shy students tend to be highly self-aware and self-conscious in social situations. When it comes to speaking in front of others, their self-consciousness can intensify, leading to increased anxiety. In addition, shy students may struggle with assertiveness, finding it difficult to assert themselves and speak confidently.

Moreover, fear of speaking inaccurately is also one of the factors that caused the students' speaking anxiety. Students' negative perceptions of speaking the language improperly, making mistakes, and having difficulty finding the right word have been highlighted as a potential component of classroom anxiety. Sultana & Jamin (2021) argue that students' fear of making mistakes prevents them from speaking in English in front of their classmates and teachers. They prefer not to talk because they believe they lack this, and being wrong would disappoint them.

It can be said that language anxiety is a negative emotional response that many language learners have while learning a foreign language. This frequently occurs in specific contexts, particularly when

students are engaged in speaking activities in a new language. It is critical to overcome and manage this anxiety in order to create a more positive and beneficial learning environments for language learners.

Based on the problem of students' speaking proficiency, Fang & Tang (2021) state that students must adequately prepare in order to alleviate their anxiety associated with public speaking, interpersonal communication, and the fear of making errors. When individuals are well prepared, their confidence will grow, resulting in a decrease in their fear. Furthermore, educators can also foster a sense of confidence in students when it comes to stating in the English language, particularly in the context of their educational pursuits. Teachers can cultivate a conducive learning environment to ensure students' comfort and ease during the process of learning English.

Another way to overcome the students' learning anxiety is positive thinking. Students can reduce their anxiety when speaking English by using positive thinking. It is distinguished by slowing down cognitive processes related to the underlying stress of students' anxiety and making them believe everything will be okay. Ariska (2019) argues that positive thinking distracts students from unpleasant situations in the learning environment with rewarding and pleasant stimuli, offering peace to anxious students. By shifting the focus of anxious language learners away from difficult situations and towards pleasant and uplifting situations, this technique can help calm students.

The next strategy to reduce the students' anxiety is relaxation. When students are well prepared but still struggle with feelings of fear or anxiety, relaxation is offered that includes tactics to reduce anxiety symptoms. Students should take a deep breath or relax before speaking in English. When a person relaxes, his or her anxiety level drops. Darmawati (2021) states that relaxation restores balance to the system, lowers stress and anxiety chemicals, and enhances blood flow to the brain. This tactic aims to assist students in getting over their fear of speaking English in class.

Furthermore, seeking support from peers is an additional method that can effectively alleviate student anxiety. According to Liu (2018), engaging in pair work enhances spoken English proficiency and reduces anxiety levels by creating a more relaxed environment for students in order to minimize their nervousness. Additionally, it improves communication by utilizing non-verbal cues such as gestures and facial expressions when students struggle to articulate their ideas. Anxious students can effectively manage their emotions by engaging in social comparison, allowing them to recognize that their peers are also facing similar challenges. Essentially, discovering that fellow students share the same issue enhances their emotional state. Collaborating on an issue between two students leads to a decrease in anxiety, as compared to before when students work individually.

Therefore, from the discussion of the research above, it can be inferred that anxiety has a negative impact on students speaking proficiency at one of senior high school in Yogyakarta. Moreover, the correlation between two variables is a negative correlation where an increase in one is accompanied by a decrease in the other. If students' anxiety is higher, their speaking performance will be lower. Conversely, when students experience a decreased level of anxiety, their speaking performance will be higher.

## **Conclusion**

Speaking anxiety in the EFL classroom is the apprehension, uneasiness, or unease that students feel when they are expected to communicate in English during language lessons. Comprehending and dealing with speaking anxiety in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms is crucial for fostering proficient language acquisition and motivating students to express themselves with assurance in English. Based on the research findings of this study, the results of the questionnaire showed that most students had a high level of anxiety. Furthermore, the outcome of the hypothesis testing revealed a substantial correlation between students' level of speaking anxiety and their proficiency in speaking. The students'

anxiousness impacts their speaking performance. The hypothesis testing showed that the significant correlation value was 0.025, lower than 0.05. Therefore, the finding could conclude that  $H_a$  was accepted. The correlation analysis of the two variables had a negative correlation. It indicates that students achieve a higher score in speaking performance when they exhibit lower anxiety levels. In comparison, students obtain a worse score in speaking performance when they exhibit higher levels of anxiety. Therefore, there are several possible factors that cause the students' speaking anxiety in EFL classrooms. Some of these factors are lack of confidence, shyness, fear of speaking inaccurately and fear of negative evaluation. Moreover, there are several strategies that can be done to reduce students' speaking anxiety in EFL classes, namely preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, seeking peers, and surrender.

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