

## Exploring Students' Speaking Anxiety and Its Impact on Oral Performance in an Extensive Speaking Class

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### Abstract

*This study explores students' speaking anxiety and its impact on their oral performance in an Extensive Speaking class. The research was motivated by the observation that many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners experience nervousness, fear of making mistakes, and lack of confidence when speaking English, which can hinder their fluency and classroom participation. The study aimed to identify the sources of speaking anxiety, its effects on oral performance, and the coping strategies used by students to manage it. The research employed a qualitative design using a semi-structured interview with open-ended questions, distributed through Google Forms due to the online implementation of the Extensive Speaking course. The participants consisted of eight students selected through purposive sampling, representing different English proficiency levels based on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR): two students each from levels A1, A2, B1, and B2. The data were analyzed thematically following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework. Thematic analysis revealed four major themes: (1) Emotional and Physical Manifestations of Speaking Anxiety, where students experienced nervousness, shaking, and mind blank during speaking tasks; (2) Sources of Anxiety: Fear of Evaluation and Linguistic Insecurity, in which fear of making mistakes and peer judgment were dominant causes; (3) Impact of Anxiety on Oral Performance, showing that anxiety disrupted fluency, pronunciation, and confidence; and (4) Coping Strategies and Pedagogical Support, where students reported using self-preparation, relaxation, and support from lecturers as effective means to reduce anxiety. The findings indicate that speaking anxiety is a common psychological barrier across all proficiency levels, though its intensity and control vary by level. Creating a supportive, low-pressure classroom environment and incorporating confidence-building activities are essential in helping students manage anxiety and enhance oral performance.*

**Keywords:** *Speaking Anxiety, Oral Performance, Extensive Speaking, EFL Students, Thematic Analysis.*

### INTRODUCTION

English speaking competence has always been considered one of the most essential yet challenging skills for EFL learners, especially in non-native contexts like Indonesia. For most students in English Education programs, being able to communicate effectively in English reflects not only their linguistic knowledge but also their confidence and psychological readiness to use the language in real-life contexts. However, despite years of formal instruction, many learners still experience considerable difficulty when asked to speak spontaneously in English. One major factor that hinders students from performing well in oral communication is speaking

anxiety, a psychological state that can negatively influence learners' willingness to speak, fluency, and overall oral performance.

Speaking anxiety is a common emotional response among second or foreign language learners, characterized by feelings of tension, apprehension, nervousness, or fear when required to speak in the target language (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986). In the classroom context, this anxiety can be triggered by various factors such as fear of making mistakes, negative evaluation from peers or teachers, low self-confidence, and lack of preparation. As a result, students may avoid participating in speaking activities, experience physiological symptoms (e.g., shaking, sweating, or forgetfulness), or produce speech with less fluency and accuracy. These reactions often lead to reduced oral performance and prevent learners from demonstrating their actual communicative competence.

In recent years, studies on language anxiety have gained increased attention, particularly within the scope of psycholinguistics, as anxiety directly affects language processing and performance. From a psycholinguistic perspective, anxiety interferes with cognitive processing, especially in working memory and retrieval of linguistic information. When learners are anxious, cognitive resources that should be used for organizing thoughts, recalling vocabulary, or constructing sentences are instead occupied by worry or self-consciousness (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). Consequently, students may experience speech disfluency, hesitations, or even silence. This cognitive interference explains why some learners, although linguistically competent, fail to perform effectively in oral tasks.

In the context of Extensive Speaking classes, where the main goal is to encourage learners to express ideas freely and fluently through extended speech, the presence of speaking anxiety can be particularly problematic. Unlike controlled speaking tasks, extensive speaking activities such as presentations, storytelling, or discussions require longer and more spontaneous output. Therefore, students' psychological readiness plays a crucial role in determining their performance. When anxiety dominates, even learners with good vocabulary and grammar knowledge might struggle to maintain coherence and confidence while speaking. This makes it important to explore how speaking anxiety manifests and affects learners in such communicative contexts.

Several previous studies have explored language anxiety in relation to speaking skills (Tercan & Dikilitas, 2015; Marwan, 2016; Subekti, 2018). Most of them indicate that speaking anxiety negatively correlates with students' oral performance. However, many of these studies rely heavily on quantitative surveys or scales, such as the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), which measure the general level of anxiety but do not capture the depth of learners' personal experiences. Moreover, there is still limited qualitative exploration focusing specifically on how students at different English proficiency levels perceive and cope with speaking anxiety within an Extensive Speaking course. Understanding this phenomenon qualitatively can provide deeper insight into the emotional, cognitive, and behavioral aspects of anxiety that cannot be captured through numbers alone.

In addition, English proficiency level appears to influence the way anxiety is experienced and managed. Learners at lower levels (A1–A2) tend to experience higher anxiety due to limited linguistic resources and fear of making mistakes, while those at higher levels (B1–B2) may experience moderate anxiety but possess better coping strategies. Thus, comparing learners' perspectives across different proficiency levels could reveal meaningful patterns in how speaking

anxiety manifests and impacts their oral performance. This understanding can further help lecturers design more supportive and anxiety-reducing classroom environments.

Given this background, this study aims to explore students' experiences, perceptions, and coping strategies related to speaking anxiety in an Extensive Speaking class. Using a qualitative approach through semi-structured interviews, the research seeks to uncover how anxiety affects students' oral performance across different English proficiency levels (A1–B2). The study also aims to identify key factors contributing to their anxiety and the strategies they employ to manage it.

Based on these objectives, the study is guided by the following research questions:

- a. What are the students' experiences and feelings when speaking English in an Extensive Speaking class?
- b. What are the main sources or causes of students' speaking anxiety?
- c. How does speaking anxiety affect students' oral performance?
- d. What coping strategies do students use to manage their speaking anxiety, and what suggestions do they offer for improvement?

By addressing these questions, the study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the relationship between speaking anxiety and oral performance in the EFL classroom, particularly from a psycholinguistic perspective. The findings are expected to provide useful implications for English lecturers and curriculum developers to foster more effective speaking environments that promote confidence, reduce anxiety, and enhance learners' communicative competence.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Speaking in EFL Contexts**

Speaking is one of the most essential yet demanding skills in learning English as a foreign language (EFL). It requires learners to produce language spontaneously, integrating grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and pragmatic competence while maintaining fluency and coherence (Brown, 2001; Luoma, 2004). Unlike reading and listening, speaking occurs in real time, which forces learners to process information quickly and respond immediately. This condition often leads to pressure and nervousness, particularly when the language is not used in daily life. For many EFL learners, including those in Indonesia, speaking English publicly represents a challenge not only of linguistic ability but also of psychological readiness and confidence. Consequently, speaking anxiety becomes one of the most influential affective variables that determine students' oral performance.

### **Concept of Foreign Language Anxiety**

Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) is a unique type of situational anxiety that specifically occurs in language learning and use (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986). It involves feelings of tension, fear, and apprehension that interfere with language learning processes. Horwitz et al. (1986) categorize FLA into three interrelated dimensions: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. Among these, communication apprehension is most directly linked to speaking anxiety, as it reflects the fear of communicating with others using the target language. Fear of negative evaluation also plays a significant role, as students often worry about being judged by teachers or peers. When learners feel unprepared or perceive their

proficiency as low, their anxiety tends to increase, particularly in speaking tasks that require performance in front of others.

Speaking anxiety manifests both psychologically and physically. Students may experience mental blocks, excessive self-consciousness, or avoidance behaviors, while physically they may tremble, sweat, or forget words. These symptoms can significantly hinder learners' participation and performance, making it difficult to demonstrate their actual communicative competence. In the context of higher education, where students are expected to deliver extended speech such as presentations or discussions, anxiety often becomes more evident and debilitating.

### **Psycholinguistic Perspectives on Anxiety and Speaking**

From a psycholinguistic point of view, anxiety interferes with the cognitive processes required for language production. According to Eysenck and Calvo's (1992) Processing Efficiency Theory, anxiety consumes cognitive resources particularly working memory that are necessary for performing complex cognitive tasks. In speaking, anxious learners divide their attention between constructing sentences and managing negative emotions such as fear or self-doubt. As a result, the efficiency of language processing decreases, leading to hesitation, repetition, or disfluency.

MacIntyre (1995) further explains that anxiety may disrupt all three stages of speech production conceptualization, formulation, and articulation. During conceptualization, learners struggle to organize their thoughts coherently; during formulation, they may fail to retrieve vocabulary or structure sentences accurately; and during articulation, their speech may become fragmented. This psycholinguistic interference explains why even students with adequate linguistic knowledge sometimes fail to perform effectively in oral tasks when under pressure.

### **Sources of Speaking Anxiety**

Speaking anxiety can stem from multiple interrelated sources. Tanveer (2007) classifies them into linguistic, psychological, and situational factors. Linguistic factors refer to insufficient language competence, such as limited vocabulary, weak grammar, or poor pronunciation. Psychological factors include fear of making mistakes, low self-confidence, and negative self-perception of ability. Situational factors relate to external conditions, such as the classroom atmosphere, type of speaking task, or the teacher's attitude.

In EFL classrooms, fear of negative evaluation is among the most common causes of anxiety. Learners often feel nervous when they think others will notice their errors or judge their competence. Similarly, lack of preparation and perfectionist tendencies can intensify feelings of inadequacy. When students compare themselves with more proficient classmates, their confidence further decreases. The interaction of these factors creates a self-reinforcing cycle fear leads to avoidance of speaking, which in turn limits practice opportunities and reinforces anxiety.

### **Effects of Speaking Anxiety on Oral Performance**

Anxiety can have significant consequences for oral performance. It affects fluency, accuracy, pronunciation, and confidence key components of speaking competence. Phillips (1992) noted that students with high anxiety tend to produce shorter utterances, commit more speech errors, and experience frequent pauses. According to Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis, anxiety acts as an emotional barrier that prevents learners from effectively

processing input and producing output. When anxiety increases, the affective filter rises, reducing the amount of language input that can be internalized and hindering communication.

In Extensive Speaking contexts, anxiety becomes particularly visible because learners are required to produce longer, more spontaneous speech. Students who experience anxiety often lose focus, forget prepared content, or avoid speaking altogether. They may rely on memorized sentences instead of expressing their own ideas. The fear of being wrong or misunderstood further restricts their linguistic creativity and fluency. Thus, even proficient learners may fail to show their true potential when anxiety interferes with cognitive processing.

### **Coping Strategies and Pedagogical Support**

Despite its negative effects, speaking anxiety can be managed through effective coping strategies. Kondo and Ying-Ling (2004) identified five common strategies that learners use: preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, peer seeking, and resignation. Among these, preparation such as practicing before class or rehearsing speech is the most widely used. Relaxation techniques, like deep breathing or mindfulness, help reduce physiological symptoms of anxiety. Positive self-talk and encouragement improve self-efficacy, while supportive classmates and teachers create a psychologically safe environment for speaking practice.

Teachers play a crucial role in helping students overcome anxiety. A supportive, friendly, and non-judgmental classroom environment can lower affective barriers and encourage participation. Activities emphasizing fluency over accuracy, such as storytelling, role play, or small-group discussion, reduce pressure and allow students to express ideas more freely. When learners perceive mistakes as natural parts of learning rather than failures, their anxiety decreases, and their communicative competence improves. Therefore, anxiety management should not only focus on individual learners but also on pedagogical strategies that create emotionally safe and confidence-building learning spaces.

## **METHOD**

### **Research Design**

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design utilizing thematic analysis to explore students' speaking anxiety and its impact on their oral performance in an Extensive Speaking class. The qualitative approach was chosen because it provides an in-depth understanding of participants' personal feelings, perceptions, and experiences elements that cannot be quantified or adequately represented through numerical data (Creswell, 2014).

Thematic analysis was used to identify, analyze, and interpret recurring patterns or themes related to the sources, effects, and coping strategies of speaking anxiety. Through this approach, the study sought to capture the authentic voices of students and provide a rich description of how anxiety manifests and influences oral performance in a natural classroom setting.

### **Research Participants**

The research was conducted at the English Education Department of Universitas Negeri Makassar, specifically involving students enrolled in the Extensive Speaking course. This course was chosen because it emphasizes continuous oral communication, presentations, and interactive

speaking activities situations that often trigger anxiety among learners of English as a foreign language.

The participants were selected through purposive sampling, as they were considered able to provide rich information relevant to the research topic. A total of eight students took part in the study, representing four levels of English proficiency according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR):

- a. A1 (Beginner): 2 students
- b. A2 (Elementary): 2 students
- c. B1 (Intermediate): 2 students
- d. B2 (Upper-Intermediate): 2 students

The selection was based on students' self-assessment of their English proficiency and supported by their lecturer's evaluation. This proportional representation made it possible to explore how anxiety and coping strategies differ across language proficiency levels.

To ensure ethical considerations, participants were informed of the study's purpose, the confidentiality of their responses, and their right to withdraw at any time. Each participant was identified by a pseudonym (P1–P8) to protect their privacy.

### **Research Instrument**

The main research instrument used in this study was a semi-structured interview with open-ended questions, administered through Google Forms. This instrument was designed to explore students' speaking anxiety and its impact on their oral performance in an Extensive Speaking class. The use of open-ended questions allowed participants to express their thoughts, experiences, and feelings freely, while the semi-structured format ensured that the questions remained aligned with the main research themes.

The interview questions were adapted from theoretical frameworks of language anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre, 1995) and designed to explore four key aspects:

- a. Students' experiences and feelings when speaking English.
- b. Sources or causes of speaking anxiety.
- c. Effects of anxiety on oral performance.
- d. Coping strategies and classroom support.

The decision to conduct the interview via Google Forms was based on the fact that the Extensive Speaking course was conducted online, making it difficult to conduct face-to-face interviews. This method was also chosen to provide flexibility for participants, allowing them to respond thoughtfully and comfortably in their own time and environment. Participants were instructed to answer honestly and in detail. They could respond in English or Indonesian, depending on which language made them more comfortable and expressive.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

After obtaining permission from the course lecturer and participants, the researcher distributed a Google Form link through WhatsApp. The online format was chosen to align with the virtual mode of learning during the ongoing online semester of the Extensive Speaking course.

Participants were given one week to complete their responses. This asynchronous method allowed them to reflect carefully on each question and provide thoughtful answers. When

clarification or elaboration was needed, the researcher followed up via chat to ensure the accuracy and depth of data.

The entire process from participant recruitment to final data submission was completed within two weeks.

### **Data Analysis Technique**

The data obtained from the semi-structured interview responses were analyzed using Thematic Analysis, following the six-step framework proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). This method was chosen because it allows for identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns (themes) within qualitative data, providing an in-depth understanding of students' speaking anxiety and its impact on oral performance. The six stages of analysis were carried out as follows:

- a. Familiarization with data: Reading and rereading all responses to understand emerging meanings.
- b. Generating initial codes: Highlighting key phrases and labeling them with descriptive codes (e.g., "fear of mistakes," "peer judgment," "teacher support").
- c. Searching for themes: Grouping related codes into potential themes.
- d. Reviewing themes: Refining and merging overlapping themes for coherence.
- e. Defining and naming themes: Assigning concise, meaningful names to finalized themes.
- f. Producing the report: Writing a thematic summary supported by representative quotations from participants.

This analytical approach enabled the researcher to explore not only the psychological aspects of speaking anxiety but also the pedagogical implications for improving classroom practices in Extensive Speaking courses.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

This section presents and discusses the findings of the study based on the responses of eight participants (two from each CEFR level: A1, A2, B1, and B2). Data were analyzed thematically following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase approach. Four major themes emerged: (1) Emotional and Physical Manifestations of Speaking Anxiety, (2) Sources of Anxiety: Fear of Evaluation and Linguistic Insecurity, (3) The Impact of Anxiety on Oral Performance, and (4) Coping Strategies and Pedagogical Support.

### **Theme 1: Emotional and Physical Manifestations of Speaking Anxiety**

All participants, regardless of their proficiency level, reported experiencing various emotional and physical reactions when speaking English in class. The most common emotions included nervousness, fear of making mistakes, and self-doubt. Physiological symptoms such as trembling, sweating, and increased heartbeat were also frequently mentioned.

Students at A1 and A2 levels tended to experience more intense anxiety, often describing panic-like reactions when asked to speak spontaneously. One A1 participant mentioned, "*When I have to speak suddenly, my hands shake, and I forget simple words.*"

Similarly, an A2 student said, "*I feel very nervous and afraid of using wrong grammar. My mind goes blank.*"

These findings align with Horwitz et al. (1986), who explained that language anxiety manifests not only cognitively but also physically, leading to avoidance or communication breakdowns.

Meanwhile, B1 and B2 students showed greater awareness and emotional control. Although they still felt nervous, they reported being able to manage it better. As one B2 student reflected, *“I still feel anxious before speaking, but I try to control it and focus on the message.”*

This supports MacIntyre and Gardner’s (1991) assertion that more proficient learners often have higher self-regulation, enabling them to reduce anxiety’s impact on performance.

Overall, this theme indicates that speaking anxiety operates as both an emotional and physical response, with intensity varying according to language proficiency. Emotional awareness and familiarity with communicative situations appear to mitigate anxiety’s effects.

### **Theme 2: Sources of Anxiety: Fear of Evaluation and Linguistic Insecurity**

The second theme centers on the main causes of students’ speaking anxiety, which were identified as fear of negative evaluation, fear of making linguistic errors, and lack of preparation. Across all CEFR levels, the fear of being judged by peers or lecturers was the most dominant factor.

An A2 participant expressed,  
*“I am afraid my grammar is wrong and my classmates will laugh at me.”*

Similarly, a B1 student noted,  
*“Sometimes I remember a bad experience when I forgot what to say in front of the class. It still makes me anxious.”*

These findings are consistent with Aida (1994), who emphasized that the fear of negative evaluation is a central component of foreign language anxiety. For lower-level students, linguistic insecurity such as limited vocabulary and grammatical uncertainty intensified the fear of failure.

Interestingly, B2 participants’ anxiety tended to arise from self-imposed pressure to perform well, rather than fear of external judgment. One student remarked,  
*“I worry about not meeting my own expectations, especially when I want to sound fluent.”*

This shift reflects what Liu and Jackson (2008) call *internalized anxiety*, where advanced learners feel stress not from external pressure but from personal standards of competence.

In summary, this theme shows that anxiety’s roots evolve along with proficiency: from external fear (peer or teacher judgment) at lower levels to internal expectations at higher ones. Yet, across all groups, perfectionism and fear of mistakes remain significant triggers.

### **Theme 3: The Impact of Anxiety on Oral Performance**

Anxiety was found to have a clear negative influence on students’ fluency, confidence, pronunciation, and ability to express ideas. All participants reported experiencing *mind blanks*, stuttering, or hesitating when anxious.

A B2 participant explained,

*“Even though I already know what to say, when I start speaking, everything disappears from my head.”*

An A1 participant similarly shared,  
*“I just stay quiet because I don’t want to embarrass myself.”*

Such experiences demonstrate the cognitive interference described by Eysenck et al. (2007), where anxiety consumes working memory resources, leading to performance disruption. Students’ self-perception of linguistic inadequacy often translated into behavioral avoidance, such as refusing to volunteer or limiting speech to short, simple sentences.

Moreover, the classroom atmosphere also played a crucial role. Several participants mentioned that formal or evaluative situations such as presentations or oral exams intensified their anxiety, while informal discussions or games helped them relax. This supports Toth’s (2010) view that task type and classroom environment significantly affect anxiety levels.

At the same time, not all effects were negative. Some participants acknowledged that a “moderate” level of anxiety could be motivating. As one B1 student noted,  
*“A little nervousness helps me prepare better and focus.”*

This aligns with the concept of *facilitating anxiety* (Scovel, 1978), suggesting that when managed appropriately, anxiety can encourage preparation and improve performance.

In conclusion, while excessive anxiety hindered oral performance, a manageable level could serve as a motivational factor.

#### **Theme 4: Coping Strategies and Pedagogical Support**

The final theme highlights how students cope with speaking anxiety and the types of pedagogical support they find helpful. The most common coping strategies included:

- a. Preparation and rehearsal: practicing in front of a mirror or recording themselves before class.
- b. Relaxation techniques: deep breathing and positive self-talk.
- c. Seeking comfort in supportive peers or teachers.

One A2 participant said,  
*“I practice in front of a mirror and tell myself to stay calm.”*

Another B1 student noted,  
*“When the teacher is friendly and supportive, I feel more confident.”*

These strategies reflect Oxford’s (1990) concept of *affective strategies*, where learners consciously manage their emotions to enhance performance.

Pedagogically, participants emphasized the importance of a relaxed and supportive classroom atmosphere. Many appreciated instructors who gave encouraging feedback and used communicative activities like role plays, group discussions, or games. Such findings reinforce Young’s (1991) argument that teacher behavior and classroom design strongly influence language anxiety.

For example, a B2 student shared,  
“*If the lecturer smiles and praises my effort, I feel less afraid to make mistakes.*”

This underlines the lecturer’s role in creating *psychological safety* (Edmondson, 1999), where students feel comfortable expressing themselves without fear of negative judgment.

### **Cross-Level Comparison**

A comparison across CEFR levels reveals consistent but gradually diminishing anxiety:

- a. A1–A2 students experienced the highest anxiety, dominated by fear of mistakes and peer judgment.
- b. B1 students showed growing awareness of emotional control and used simple coping strategies.
- c. B2 students experienced lower anxiety and focused more on self-improvement rather than avoidance.

This progression illustrates Dörnyei’s (2005) motivational theory, suggesting that language learning confidence grows with self-efficacy and experience. However, even higher-level learners continued to experience anxiety in high-stakes situations, indicating that speaking anxiety is universal but variable in intensity.

The findings collectively confirm that speaking anxiety is a multifaceted phenomenon influenced by emotional, cognitive, social, and pedagogical factors. It affects learners across all proficiency levels but manifests differently depending on individual self-awareness and learning context.

Anxiety’s roots particularly fear of judgment and linguistic insecurity mirror well-established theories of *Foreign Language Anxiety* (Horwitz et al., 1986). However, the study contributes to the understanding of how these patterns vary within a single speaking course containing diverse proficiency levels.

The study also highlights the pedagogical implications: lecturers play a central role in reducing anxiety by creating supportive environments, emphasizing communication over perfection, and encouraging reflective strategies.

Thus, the findings advocate for a shift from performance-oriented evaluation to process-oriented speaking instruction, where emotional well-being is prioritized alongside linguistic competence.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

The findings of this study reveal that speaking anxiety remains a significant barrier for students in the Extensive Speaking class, even across varying levels of English proficiency (A1–B2). Through thematic analysis of the participants’ responses, four major themes were identified: students’ experiences and feelings in speaking English, the sources or causes of anxiety, the effects of anxiety on oral performance, and the coping strategies and suggestions provided by students.

First, the findings show that most students regardless of their proficiency level experience nervousness, fear of making mistakes, and self-consciousness when speaking English. This emotional tension is often intensified by peer pressure, limited vocabulary, and fear of negative

evaluation from classmates or lecturers. Even students at the B2 level, who possess relatively strong linguistic competence, occasionally struggle with anxiety, particularly during graded or spontaneous speaking tasks. This emphasizes that speaking anxiety is not solely determined by language ability but also by affective and situational factors.

Second, the study identified several sources of speaking anxiety. The most common causes were fear of making grammatical errors, lack of confidence in pronunciation, and insufficient preparation. Environmental factors, such as a formal classroom atmosphere or unsupportive peers, also contributed to increased anxiety. Interestingly, online learning settings appeared to reduce anxiety for some students, as they felt less intimidated by the physical presence of others. However, for others, online settings made it more difficult to receive immediate feedback and emotional support from peers and instructors.

Third, speaking anxiety was found to have noticeable effects on oral performance. Many participants reported that anxiety led them to speak less fluently, forget ideas, and avoid participation in class discussions. Anxiety also affected their confidence, causing them to rely on memorized scripts rather than speaking naturally. This inhibited their ability to express ideas creatively and limited their communicative competence development, one of the key objectives of the Extensive Speaking course.

Lastly, in terms of coping strategies, students adopted both self-regulated and external approaches. Common strategies included practicing before speaking, self-encouragement, relaxation techniques, and seeking feedback from peers. Some students suggested that lecturers could help reduce anxiety by creating a more supportive learning environment such as using group activities, allowing more preparation time, and emphasizing communication over perfection. Encouraging peer collaboration and providing positive reinforcement were also viewed as effective strategies to build students' confidence.

In conclusion, this study underscores the importance of addressing speaking anxiety as a central component in English language teaching. Anxiety not only affects students' oral performance but also shapes their attitudes toward learning English as a whole. For educators, it is crucial to recognize the emotional dimension of language learning and to design pedagogical practices that foster both linguistic competence and emotional comfort. By promoting a positive and empathetic classroom environment, lecturers can help students transform their anxiety into motivation and ultimately enhance their oral communication skills.

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