

EFL PUBLIC SPEAKING CLASS ANXIETY AT STKIP PGRI BANJARMASIN

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ABSTRACTS

Public speaking was a crucial activity that involved the act of making a speech in front of audience. When the students were required to deliver their speech in front of others, they may face a more difficult situation. This frequently results in anxiety where people experience the fear of giving public speeches. This research aimed to investigate the level of EFL students' public speaking anxiety (PSA) at STKIP PGRI Banjarmasin and how they used their individual efforts or strategy to reduce their PSA. This research was conducted with a mixed method design. There were 16 EFL students investigated using the Public Speaking Class Anxiety Scale (PSCAS) questionnaire and interview after they passed a Public Speaking course during a semester. The results of this research revealed some important findings. First, most EFL students have a high level of PSA. Next, most of them feel that they are afraid of making mistakes when they were performing public speaking in class. The third, the main factor causing them to have PSA was the feeling that they were afraid of having negative evaluations from the teachers and their classmates after performing the public speaking activity. Finally, they usually practice with friends beyond the class as one of their individual efforts to reduce their PSA. The conclusion of this research showed that the majority of EFL students' PSA at STKIP PGRI Banjarmasin was at a high level and working with friends was the most individual effort they usually made to reduce their PSA.

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INTRODUCTION

Speaking is one of the complex English language skills that require students to have intensive practice activities. This skill has always been thought to be the most difficult of the four skills that language learners should master. Along with writing which is considered a productive skill, speaking requires students to express themselves in spoken language (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). Although learners have the most difficulty producing written material in the target language, speaking ability is thought to be equally difficult to master. This is because students should gain the ability to transfer their own feelings, thoughts, or knowledge to others through the act of speaking (Darancik, 2018).

Practice of English speaking skills covers various activities that lead students to have communication competence. They are required to have speaking practice in various contexts. These speaking activities have the same goals as training students to perform in front of people and creating active interaction to achieve effective communication. Public speaking is one of the speaking actions that are considered vital. It is the act of delivering a speech in

front of audiences about a specific subject. As undergraduate students progress through their education and careers, public speaking is an important skill to learn and practice. As a result, public speaking is a common requirement in undergraduate courses, encouraging students to present their work and ideas in order to improve their enhanced competency. It is crucial that students are given the chance to develop their public speaking skills while attending a university since many employers now use graduate students' employment as a measure of success (Quinn & Goody, 2019).

Public speaking refers to a form of communication in which a speaker delivers messages to a group of people, and the audience is expected to comprehend the messages, which are made up of data. This activity is carried out usually in the form of a lecture or speech. Unlike a presentation, public speaking is usually a little opportunity for audience and speaker interaction where the speaker speaks and the audience listens. Because it necessitates the speaker remaining in front of an audience whose eyes and attention are fixed on him or her, the speaker may feel pressured before or during the speech. As a result of this pressure, the speaker feels as if they should not make any mistakes, which causes them to become tense and anxious (Sugiyati & Indriani, 2021). Specifically, when somebody is required to deliver their speech in front of others, they may face a more difficult situation. This frequently results in anxiety, which in this case is known as public speaking anxiety (PSA), where people experience the fear of giving public speeches. A common occurrence that an individual has encountered where they are afraid to make a speech is called as public speaking anxiety (PSA). Moreover, Coskun (2017) mentioned that the fear of speaking in public is known as glossophobia.

Li (2020) explains specifically that PSA has particular symptoms both physically and emotionally. Physically, speakers may experience a dry mouth, racing or irregular heartbeats, rapid breathing, and even a strong desire to vomit or pee. Besides that, the speaker's body flushes, sweats, or shakes uncontrollably, and their voice may fade or tremble. Similar symptoms also happen in speakers' minds when they should speak in front of people. Tension and anxiety continue to flow in and accumulate uncontrollably, making it difficult for the speakers to be rational and logical. The speakers' short-term memory may also be affected. As a result, they potentially forget and pause what they are going to say to the audience many times. That is why; they should recognize the level of their PSA and find a possible way to overcome it based on their needs.

Considering the importance of EFL students having public speaking skills, the English Department of STKIP PGRI Banjarmasin accommodates this issue by offering a Public Speaking course as one of the sixth semester compulsory subjects. The objectives of the course for students, *"be able to: (1) explain the types, uses, functions, and benefits of public speaking as additional skills that support students' competence as educators in the future, (2) identify the stages of doing public speaking, and (3) present the practice of several types of public speaking, which include: speech, master of ceremony (MC), moderator, speaker, and public debate.* At the end of the semester, it is expected that all English Department students at STKIP PGRI Banjarmasin have valuable experience practicing public speaking activities, which will enable them to have additional communication skills in the future. Connecting to the issue of PSA, this research tries to investigate the level of EFL students' PSA at the English Department of STKIP PGRI Banjarmasin batch 2019 that have passed the public speaking course as well as what kinds of individual effort they usually do to reduce their PSA.

Some previous researches have been conducted by previous researchers from different institutions to investigate the students' PSA. The first one is Sugiyati & Indriani (2021) who investigate the extent and primary causes of PSA in EFL students at Universitas Tidar. The researchers used the Public Speaking Class Anxiety Scale (PSCAS) proposed by Yaikhong

and Usaha to collect data on PSA levels. According to this research, 58.8% of students have a moderate level of PSA. Furthermore, the majority of the students agreed that fear of negative evaluation was the most anxiety-provoking factor, followed by communication apprehension and test anxiety. This research concluded that only nearly half of the students feel comfortable speaking English.

The second previous research that deals with the PSA was conducted by Fathikasari et al., (2022). They conducted a research to look into the level and the factors that most commonly occur in public speaking among EFL students at Universitas Brawijaya Malang. This research used the Public Speaking Anxiety (PSA) questionnaire and senior students from the English Department as respondents for this research. This research finding reveals that the PSA level of EFL students being investigated is high. Besides that, the general sense factor is the most frequently chosen factor that triggers their PSA. They are afraid of negative evaluation, the audience, and past of failures. This research showed that almost all students in this research have a high level of PSA.

Furthermore, the other similar research came from overseas researchers where the result of the research also showed the high level of EFL students' PSA. Kalra & Siribud (2020) from Thailand conducted a research on Thai EFL students at Assumption University of Thailand investigating their speaking anxiety level. Most of the Thai EFL students had a high level of anxiety towards speaking in English (75%). Five percent of the students experienced a low level of anxiety towards public speaking and 20 percent of them experienced a low level of anxiety towards speaking in English. It was indicated that speaking anxiety became the most common problem mostly faced by EFL students, particularly those who were practicing public speaking activities.

From the previous research above, it is known that PSA is almost always experienced by EFL students when they should perform speaking activities in front of people. Therefore, this research tried to investigate the EFL students' level of PSA at the STKIP PGRI Banjarmasin, which is measured by adapting the Public Speaking Class Anxiety Scale (PSCAS) constructed by Yaikhong & Usaha (2012) to help indicating EFL students' PSA level in an EFL public speaking class. Besides that, this research also investigates how the individual efforts of EFL students reduce this anxiety when they are required to have public speaking activities and practice during a course. It is expected that by knowing the result of this research, it can be references and information to be investigated deeply in the future to find some possible strategies that can be recommended to EFL students to reduce their PSA.

RESEARCH METHOD

This part consists of the design of this research, subject of the research, research instruments as the tools to collect the data, and data analysis.

Research Design

This research employed a mixed method design where both quantitative and qualitative approaches were integrated. There were 16 students of the English Department batch 2019 at STKIP PGRI Banjarmasin engaged in this research. They were sixth semester students taking public speaking course focusing on how to practice and demonstrate the five public speaking activities. They are: (1) delivering formal speech, (2) acting as master of ceremony (MC) in both formal and/or informal events, (3) acting as moderator in a specific discussion forum, (4) acting as speaker or presenter in a formal discussion forum, and (5) acting as a debater in public debate. This public speaking course was handled by the researcher herself as the official lecturer of the course during a semester. Moreover, this course was delivered in hybrid form due to the COVID-19 pandemic situation when this research was conducted. The course began with the concept, the purpose, and the overview of public speaking delivered by the lecturer. Before practicing in each session of public speaking activities, the students

should learn about the theory of becoming public speaker. After that, the lecturer assigned them to practice and to demonstrate those five public speaking activities in turns during a semester both in face-to-face class and virtual class.

This research used a convergent mixed method design where it was intended to collect both quantitative and qualitative data in one phase. The data were analyzed separately before being compared and/or combined. In this case, the researcher collected quantitative data through a survey and qualitative data through an interview at the same time. Then, these types of data were analyzed separately. The results were then compared to confirm the findings. This process followed the Cresswell method as mentioned in Pardede (2019).

Subjects

The subjects of this research were 16 EFL students in the sixth semester of the English Department of STKIP PGRI Banjarmasin batch 2019. They were selected as the subjects of this research since they have passed the Public Speaking course as one of the compulsory subjects within the semester.

Instruments

As this research employed mixed method design, there were two kinds of instruments used in this research. First of all, the researcher adapted the Public Speaking Class Anxiety Scale (PSCAS) questionnaire constructed by Yaikhong & Usaha (2012) to measure the level of EFL students' PSA in this research. This was the scale for anxiety measurement consisting of 17 items on which they were graded on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. EFL students' overall or mean scores reveal their level of anxiety. The results of this questionnaire became the quantitative data of this research. The detailed item adaptation of this PSCAS questionnaire was presented in table 1.

Table 1
Items Adaptation of PSCAS Questionnaire

No	Statement of items	Students' Opinion				
		SA (5)	A (4)	U (3)	D (2)	SD (1)
1	I never feel quite sure of myself while I am performing English public speaking in class					
2	I start to panic when I have to perform English public speaking in class without a preparation in advance					
3	In an English public speaking class, I can get very nervous of forgetting things I should speak					
4	I feel confident while I am performing English public speaking in class					
5	I get nervous and confused when I am performing English public speaking in class					
6	I am afraid that my classmates will laugh at me while I am performing English public speaking in class					
7	I get nervous when the lecturer asks me to perform an English public speaking in class which I have prepared in advance					
8	I have no fear of performing English public speaking in class					
9	I can feel my heart pounding when I am going to be called on by the lecturer to perform English public speaking in class					
10	I feel relaxed while I am performing English public speaking in class					
11	It embarrasses me to volunteer to go out first to perform English public speaking in class					

12	I face the prospect of performing English public speaking in class with confidence					
13	Certain parts of my body feel very tense and rigid while I am performing English public speaking in class					
14	I feel anxious while I am waiting for performing English public speaking in class					
15	I dislike using my voice and body expressively while I am performing English public speaking in class					
16	I have trouble to coordinate my movements while I am performing English public speaking in class					
17	Even if I am very well prepared, I feel anxious about performing English public speaking in class					

Note:

SA (5) = strongly agree with 5 point

A (4) = agree with 4 point

U (3) = undecided with 3 point

D (2) = disagree with 2 point

SD (1) = strongly disagree with 1 point

The PSCAS questionnaire presented in table 1 was filled by EFL students to see the level of their PSA. Based on the explanation of Yaikhong & Usaha (2012) who constructed this instrument, the total summed scores for this PSCAS questionnaire were 85. Specifically, the scores greater than 68 was considered high anxiety. Then, the scores between 68 and 51 were considered medium anxiety, and scores less than 51 were considered low anxiety.

Next, the second instrument used in this research was interview questions. When they were asked to complete the questionnaire, the researcher interviewed all of them at the same time in turns, to gain insight on what individual effort they usually made to reduce their PSA during a course. A semi-structured interview was conducted. Students were given an opportunity to respond to the questions and make comments. The goal of the interviews was to fill in any gaps that were not addressed by the PSCAS questionnaire items. The results of this interview became the qualitative data of this research. The item interview questions were presented in table 2.

Table 2
Interview Questions to EFL Students in this Research

No	Interview Questions
1	What kind of fear or anxiety do you have in public speaking class?
2	Based on your experience in performing public speaking in class, what kinds of factors contribute to your anxiety?
3	What strategy or effort do you usually implement to reduce your anxiety before giving a speech in public speaking class?

Adapted from Raja (2017) and Alwis (2020)

All the students in this research were interviewed using those questions to see their point of view on what individual effort or strategy they usually implement to reduce their PSA. They were given a chance to describe their feelings after passing the Public Speaking course that reflects their performances during a semester.

Data Analysis

Analyzing the data was the next step carried out by the researcher after gaining the data. The quantitative data obtained from the PSCAS questionnaire were analyzed in terms of percentages using the descriptive statistical operation. In this case, the researcher calculated all the scores of students' PSA level derived from the distributed PSCAS questionnaire. After

that, the researcher identified each score of students' PSA into high, medium, or low anxiety categories. The results then were presented in forms of chart.

Dealing with qualitative data analysis, the researcher analyzed the results of the interview using qualitative data analysis proposed by Miles et al., (2014). They consisted of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. During the process of data condensation, each item of interview questions was summarized and classified based on the frequency with which answers were given by the students. After that, the researcher continued to display the data. The results of the interview were presented in the form of charts to see the frequency of answers given by them to each item. These issues show the supporting information on what common fears the students have in public speaking class and the most contributing factor on their PSA that lead to the conclusion of what individual way or effort they have implemented to reduce their anxiety.

The last one is drawing a conclusion where the qualitative analysis was made to show the interpretation the finding got from the students' responses to the interview questions. Having analyzed the quantitative and qualitative data separately, the results were triangulated where the researcher compared and synthesized them. The final conclusion was made by identifying the PSA level of all students in this research. In addition, the conclusion also stated students' individual effort to reduce their anxiety.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This part consists of research findings presenting the results of EFL students' PSA levels at STKIP PGRI Banjarmasin as well as their individual effort or possible strategy to reduce their anxiety. These findings were discussed based on related literature. They are presented in the following part.

Research Findings

There were four findings derived from this research. They were: (1) the PSA level of EFL students at STKIP PGRI Banjarmasin in this research, (2) the most common fears or anxiety experienced by EFL students in public speaking classes, (3) the most factors contributing to the EFL students' anxiety, and (4) the individual efforts made by EFL students to reduce their anxiety. Each of them was presented in the following parts.

1. The PSA Level of EFL Students at STKIP PGRI Banjarmasin

The first finding of this research was the PSA level of EFL students at STKIP PGRI Banjarmasin derived from the distribution of the PSCAS questionnaire to them. The summed score of PSCAS questionnaire items showed this level. Figure 1 below presents the results of the questionnaire.

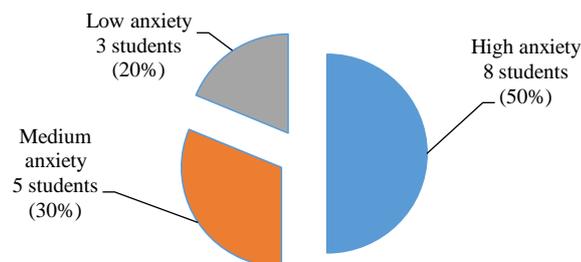


Figure 1. EFL students' public speaking anxiety level
(Source: Distributed questionnaire to students)

Based on figure 1, there are 8 students (50%) have a high level of anxiety in public speaking class, 5 students (30%) have medium anxiety, and the last 3 students (20%) have

low anxiety. It indicated that the majority of EFL students in the sixth semester of the English Department of STKIP PGRI Banjarmasin batch 2019 in this research have a high level of anxiety in public speaking class.

2. The Most Common Fears or Anxiety Experienced by EFL Students in Public Speaking Class

The next finding of this research is the most common fears or anxiety experienced by EFL students in public speaking classes. The results of this issue were presented in figure 2.

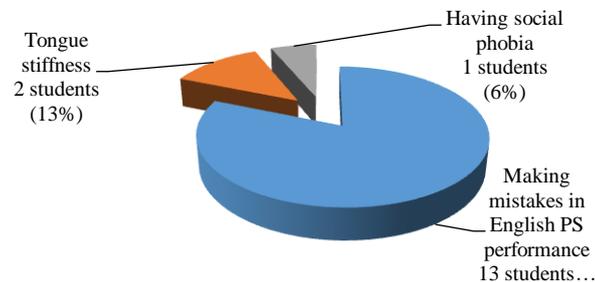


Figure 2. The Most Common Fears Experienced by EFL Students in Public Speaking Class
(Source: Answer of Interview Question)

Figure 2 shows that the EFL students in this research have various kinds of anxiety in public speaking class. The highest frequency of students' anxiety was the anxiety of making mistakes in English public speaking class (81%), the anxiety of having tongue stiffness (13%), and the anxiety of having social phobia (6%). These results revealed the fact that most EFL students in this research feel embarrassed when they were asked to perform English public speaking activities in class. The sample of students' answers related to this issue was as follows:

"Public speaking is not as easy as other speaking activities. I am worried that I will misrepresent the content of my speech in English. I am also worried that the content of my speech sounds weird and funny" (Student A)

"I am quite worried because this is the first time I learn English public speaking with specific content. I am quite worried because my tongue is stiff. It was very difficult speaking activities to act as a public speaker. Being a moderator and formal speaker are complicated for me" (Student D).

3. The Most Factors Contributing to the EFL Students' PSA

The next finding of this research was about the most factors contributing to EFL students' PSA. When the students were interviewed by the researcher, there were various opinions the students stated about this issue. The most factors derived from their responses to this issue was presented in figure 3.

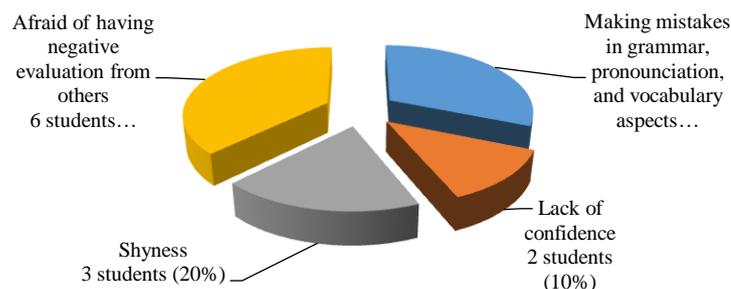


Figure 3. The factors contributing to EFL students' PSA
(Source: Answer of interview questions)

Figure 3 shows the various opinions of EFL students in this research when they were interviewed about factors contributing to their PSA. The researcher then classified the most common responses as being related to this issue. There were 6 students (37%) who stated that the main factor contributing to their PSA was that they felt afraid of having a negative evaluation from both the teacher and their classmates after they performed the public speaking activities in class. Then, the next factors contributing to the EFL students' PSA were that they feel afraid of making mistakes in grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation aspects (30%), they have shyness when they should perform the public speaking activities (20%), and they have a lack of confidence (10%). The sample of students' answers related to this issue was as follows:

"I realized my shortcomings when I should perform in public speaking class. What worries me a lot is that I get criticism or other negative comments from my friends outside the class. Even though they do not laugh at me, there is always concern, even though I try my best" (Student C)

"I realize that sometimes when performing speaking activities, I make mistakes in grammar. Even, some of my pronunciation sounds are still accented by my mother tongue, like the sounds /p/ and /f/ " (Student F)

4. The EFL Students' Individual Efforts to Reduce Their PSA

The last finding of this research was about the results of EFL students' individual efforts usually implement to reduce their anxiety. After the students stated that they have such anxiety in public speaking class, the researcher interviewed them about whether there is any individual effort they usually make to reduce their anxiety based on their needs. The results of this issue are presented in figure 4.

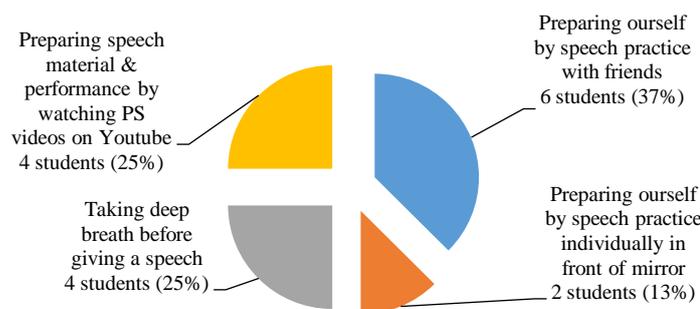


Figure 4. Students' individual efforts to reduce their PSA
(Source: Answer of interview questions)

Figure 4 shows that there are some common efforts that EFL students implement to reduce their anxiety. Six students (37%) mentioned that they prepared themselves by practicing speech with friends or in groups. Besides that, 4 students (25%) implemented their comfort strategy by watching public speaking videos on Youtube as the preparation to know how to deliver speech in front of audiences. Then, the same number of students prepared themselves by breathing deeply before giving a speech. The last one was 2 students (13%) tended to practice public speaking individually at home by practicing speech in front of a mirror. The sample of students' answers related to this issue was as follows:

"I am more comfortable practicing public speaking with my friends together at the boarding house. When I try to practice speaking, they correct me and help me improve the script of my speech. Besides that, the atmosphere in our boarding house is less tense, allowing us to practice speaking more freely" (Student J)

“I prefer to search for some examples of public speaking videos on Youtube as practice material. I play these videos several times and I try to practice it with my own script. Then, I make important notes to help me improve my public speaking scripts. After that, I try to practice performing it with my own style. (Student M)

Based on the findings presented in figure 1-4, this research revealed four issues related to the EFL students' PSA at STKIP PGRI Banjarmasin. First of all, most EFL students at STKIP PGRI Banjarmasin have a high level of PSA. Next, most of them feel that they are afraid of making mistakes when they are performing public speaking activities in class. The third, the finding also revealed that the most common factors causing them to have PSA were the feeling that they were afraid of having negative evaluations from the teacher and their classmates after performing the public speaking activity. Finally, the last finding showed that they usually practice with friends beyond the class as a part of individual efforts to reduce their PSA.

Discussion

As mentioned in the previous section that this research aims to investigate the level of EFL students' PSA at STKIP PGRI Banjarmasin and how they used their individual efforts or strategy to reduce their PSA. Public speaking is considered one of highly important skills to achieve for undergraduate students. Cheng & Kuek (2020) revealed the information that public speaking activities can be done in many ways. A student presents his views to his group members, a teacher lectures on his or her course, a researcher delivers an academic paper in a workshop, and a salesperson offers his items to buyers. All of these actions are considered public speaking. Due to its widespread use, public speaking is now regarded as a necessary skill for students' academic and professional success in the twenty-first century.

The results of this research show the findings that implementing public speaking activities is not easy for EFL students, especially for those who are investigated in this research. The first finding of this research shows that there are eight of 16 students have a high level of anxiety in the public speaking class. In other words, almost half of the classes have high levels of anxiety about practicing public speaking activities during a semester. It indicates that 50% of them feel that public speaking activities are hard speaking activities causing high anxiety for them. It seems that they struggle with it. This result is in line with the results of previous research, which are conducted by Kalra & Siribud (2020) and Fathikasari et al., (2022) that most EFL students tend to have a high level of PSA.

The degree of anxiety that each EFL student feels varies depending on the internal and external factors that influence it. The high level of anxiety in public speaking has specific criteria. Hasibuan et al., (2022) clearly mention that different levels of anxiety show different criteria. First, people with low levels of anxiety are those who have no dread or anxiety at all. Second, people who have moderate anxiety show that they have a small amount of performance anxiety. Third, anxiety is at an all-time high. High anxiety individuals will exhibit worry and fear regarding a particular public speaking performance. No matter how frightened an EFL student is about public speaking, the lecturer's job is to assist them to feel less anxious. If the lecturer does not know how anxious the EFL students are about public speaking, the course may be pointless. Furthermore, it is suggested that the ease with which EFL students speak in front of an audience influences when they enroll in a public speaking course. Depending on the degree of communication anxiety among their EFL students, public speaking lecturers may need to address students' difficulties in the learning process by simply being aware of their levels of PSA.

Next, the second finding of this research also strengthens the first result above. There are 13 students (81%) of 16 students feel that they are afraid of making mistakes when they

are performing public speaking activities. When they are interviewed by the researcher, the highest frequency of answers state that they are concerned they will be embarrassed if they speak about specific content to talk about in public speaking class. They claim that they are afraid of making a mistake or looking unsightly. Some of them said that when they consider how the lecturers and their classmates might be staring at them or focusing on them, they become nervous and agitated. Furthermore, some of them stated that when it comes to public speaking, they are afraid that they will not be able to perform optimally due to their lack of background knowledge on the subject. They are very conscious that the mistakes made during a public speaking performance are considered failures.

The afraid of making mistakes remains a fact that there are two possibilities faced by students related to their PSA. The first possibility is that the EFL students in this research face process anxiety. As mentioned in the research conducted by Hasibuan et al., (2022), process anxiety refers to the fear a student experiences as they work to prepare a speech, such as: composing an outline of their speech, planning the speech script, revising the rough speech script draft, reconstructing the better speech script draft after revision, practicing speech, etc. In contrast, the second possibility of EFL students feeling afraid of making mistakes is that they face performance anxiety. The concerns a student has when giving a speech, such as forgetting the topic and pausing the speech many times, are referred to as performance anxiety. Haryanto (2020) emphasizes that the greatest element that affects PSA in students is performance anxiety. Although advanced EFL students have mastered and memorized their public speaking material, anxiety causes them to forget it. It indicated that the reasons why there is a performance anxiety element are that people are normally tense before speaking.

The result of this finding emphasizes and underlines the next finding about the factors causing EFL students in this research to have PSA. There are six students (37%) who state that the main factor contributing to their PSA is that they feel afraid of having a negative evaluation from both the teacher and their classmates after they perform the public speaking activities in class. In addition, having this negative evaluation is mostly supported by the other factors contributing to the EFL students' PSA, as stated by other students in this research. Thirty percent of them are afraid of making mistakes in grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, while the rest are shy and lack confidence.

Grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation issues become the crucial elements in the success of someone speaking in front of people formally like in public speaking activities. Lack of vocabulary and grammar understanding will make it challenging for them to express themselves verbally because of the language's restrictive word choices and grammatical structures. For instance, if they run out of ideas in the middle of a public speaking presentation and are at a loss for words, it will reflect poorly on the speakers. Besides that, the pronunciation aspect also reflects the students' competence in producing the English sounds properly. Some of the students seem to have their mother tongue accent when they are speaking English. In this case, the students do regularly speak Banjarese, even speak in their local accents (*Banjar Hulu* and *Banjar Kuala* local accents). This issue makes it more difficult for the students to converse fluently in English, let alone in public. They need more practice in speaking English over and over again. This result is in line with the explanation given by Atas (2015) and Hidayah & Azmi (2019) that speaking anxiety affects EFL students for a variety of reasons. They are: (1) fear of speaking in front of people, (2) immature vocabulary, (3) fear of making pronunciation mistakes, (4) limited grammatical knowledge, (5) unpreparedness, (6) fear of being laughed at, (7) shyness, (8) low self-confidence and self-esteem, etc.

Referring to the students' anxiety of having negative evaluation from both the lecturers and their classmates in public speaking activities, Tresnawati & Musthafa (2015) mention

that fear of having negative evaluation has also been linked with PSA. This is one of the reasons for the fear of public speaking that is most frequently mentioned. Such emotions are normal because nobody wants to be thought poorly of. Everyone wants to be respected by those who are important to them. As a result, if someone is considering giving a speech, they are immediately struck with ideas about how to present a positive image in front of them. With this in mind, many of them allow themselves to be overcome by all kinds of possible worries rather than focusing on the task at hand. In this case, they worry that both the lecturers and their classmates might not like the presentation. Naturally, this condition in their minds causes anxiety.

Numerous researches agree that students' anxiety is caused by the worry of performing poorly in their presentations. Students were also afraid of making mistakes which led the anxious students to have a fear of negative evaluation. This finding can be interpreted as supporting Melouah's (2013) research, which indicates that fear of negative evaluation is the anxiety related to the learners' perspective of how their familiar audience may judge their language competence negatively. Many of the students were worried and anxious that their knowledge and performance of English speaking would be judged negatively by their teacher and their classmates. It seems that others' opinion appear to have a significant impact on students' confidence and self-esteem. This is understandable because all students have worked hard to prepare themselves to perform public speaking activities as well as they can.

Finally, the last finding of this research shows the common individual efforts EFL students make to reduce their PSA. Six students (37%) mentioned that they prepared themselves by practicing speech with friends. Practicing public speaking activities together with partners can be one way to reduce anxiety, instead of practicing individually. Before the students had to stand up to give their speech, it seems that their classmates helped them learn more about English vocabulary and corrected their speech scripts. This way is in accordance with the research conducted by Aulia et al., (2020) that showed working with partners like pair work successfully reduced students' speaking fears due to the consideration that their partners contributed to making them gain more knowledge about English words and give correction on how they pronounced words. Additionally, collaboration with others boosts the confidence of apprehensive, introverted, and less skilled students. This effort can create a sense of community among students and an atmosphere for group learning in the classroom (Samad et al., 2020).

Besides practicing with partners, this research also reveals the result that 25% of students tried to take deep breaths to reduce their nervousness before presenting the public speaking activities. Kimani et al., (2021) mention that it has been proven that slow and deep breathing might help someone feel more at ease in stressful circumstances. Many people employ deep breathing as a calming mindfulness exercise. Considering the importance of taking deep breaths as one of the effort to reduce the PSA, a research conducted by Larson et al., (2010) also found that deep breathing as one of the relaxation interventions had a significant effect in reducing anxiety. Further, they explain that deep breathing is slow, diaphragmatic breathing that evens out the body's levels of carbon dioxide and oxygen. When using this way, it is crucial to breathe in with the nose and to breathe out with the mouth. As a result, the body will respond to this condition with a milder reaction, which leads to a decrease in the panic level.

From the results of this research, it is important to note that PSA is a very common form of social phobia. Almost all people get nervous when they have to give a speech or a presentation, even experienced speakers. Actors, politicians, and public figures are among the many experienced speakers who struggle with PSA. Some of them may believe that a little anxiety before a performance or speaking engagement helps them do their finest work. But for some people, the anxiety is so bad that it makes it impossible to function at all. Students

may avoid classes or even majors that require oral presentations as a result of this, never speak in front of the class. Hence, every student needs to reflect upon themselves to find the appropriate way to deal with this situation. Increasing confidence and implementing possible efforts that would help them reduce their PSA are required.

The result of this research gives a pedagogical implication to consider. In the effort of reducing the students' public speaking anxiety, there is another important element to note that the existence of teachers is also needed as an instructor in class. There should be a reflection on what the teachers can do to help students overcome their fear of public speaking in class. Through her research, Inada (2021) recommended the strategy of decreasing students' anxiety in speaking activities. These suggestions are: (1) creating an unthreatening environment, (2) creating a situation where the students can practice speaking without focusing on making mistakes. If students can communicate with one another, they should not worry about making small errors. Making mistakes is inevitable when practicing English, so it should be acceptable for students to make them as long as they are trying their best. Students' speaking abilities will progressively advance if they are given more opportunities to speak English and hear what others have to say, (3) creating a group dynamic. The teacher designs the mixed-level classes. Advanced-level students are encouraged to function as student-teachers when paired with basic-level students to foster a positive relationship and help them develop their self-confidence. This is because to keep up with their peers, they should record each session, listen to it at home, practice self-talk, and review the material.

To sum up, the EFL teachers should also take part in the public speaking anxiety issue. Decreasing students' anxiety is a hard task for those who teach English speaking skills, particularly assisting students with their fear when speaking in front of audiences. It does not seem like there is a straightforward way to make students feel less anxious. Thus, the teachers should, therefore, endeavor to acquire the perspective of students in order to discover the underlying factors and causes of worry.

With regard to the limitations of this research, the use of one class in one batch of university students means that the findings may not be generalizable. The limitations may explain the differences between the results of this research and those of some of the others in the literature. Besides that, there are some different scales to measure PSA in other similar research, like the PSCAS scale proposed by Yaikhong and Usaha (2012), the Personal Report of PSA scale proposed by McCroskey (1970), and the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale proposed by Horwitz et al (1986). Further research is needed to identify the issues that fit with those types of scales enriching the insight and information related to PSA.

CONCLUSION

This research concludes that most EFL students at STKIP PGRI Banjarmasin have a high level of PSA. Besides that, the students were terrified of public speaking due to the fact that they are afraid of making mistakes and having negative evaluations from both the teachers as well as their classmates. In an individual effort to reduce their PSA, most of them usually practice with friends as an advanced preparation for the public speaking performance in class. The researcher in this research proposes some recommendations based on the findings. It was necessary for the EFL students to encourage themselves to increase their self-confidence and implement any individual effort that would help them reduce their PSA based on their needs. Therefore, EFL teachers should implement any possible strategies that can decrease students' speaking anxiety in class.

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