EFL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS’ STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING SPEAKING ANXIETY

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Abstract

This research aims to investigate the strategies that EFL high school students use to overcome their speaking anxiety in the classroom context in the academic year 2022/2023. This study employed a qualitative method. The data were collected through interviews with three participants from a private secondary school in Yogyakarta and semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain strategies used by participants to cope with foreign language speaking anxiety. The data was analyzed using thematic analysis. The overall results show that the three participants experienced anxiety when carrying out learning activities in class, both when communicating, receiving evaluations, and when taking grades. In this study, it was also found that participants had strategies to overcome their EFL speaking anxiety (i.e., preparation, relaxation, peer seeking, and resignation), which could help them deal with EFL speaking anxiety in the classroom context. Therefore, with this strategy, students can have lower anxiety when carrying out learning activities in class. This research offers some ways to reduce anxiety and enhance classroom experiences. It emphasizes the need for further research on anxiety’s broader impact and suggests the role of teachers in supporting students with speaking anxiety.

Keywords: Foreign Language Classroom Speaking Anxiety, High School Students, English as a Foreign Language, Coping Strategies

Introduction

Speaking anxiety remains a common problem experienced by high school students, especially in English as a foreign language (EFL). This problem occurs not only for students with low English proficiency but also for students with high English proficiency. Foreign language anxiety is a complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, emotions, and behaviors related to language learning in the classroom that result from the uniqueness of the learning process (Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope, 1986). This refers to the argument of Baleghizadeh and Shahri (2014), that anyone who feels anxious can quickly lose confidence and panic. There is no denying that this phenomenon is happening all around us. These issues above should be investigated in English classes at school, students may encounter content that requires them to act or speak in English in front of their friends. Students may feel anxious in this situation. According to a study by Öztürk and Gürbüz (2014) students with low English proficiency are afraid to speak. Quantitative data shows that most students perceive speaking ability as a factor that causes anxiety. Pronunciation, off-the-cuff questions, fear of making mistakes, and negative evaluations were also found to be the main causes of fear of speaking in EFL (Öztürk and Gürbüz, 2014). Both previous studies found that EFL students found this speaking skill to be anxiety-provoking. Regarding the above issue, researchers would like to describe strategies to reduce speaking anxiety in English as a foreign language (EFL) among high school students.

Kondo and Ying-Ling (2004) suggest five strategies to overcome foreign language anxiety. The first strategy, preparation, refers to efforts to tame the upcoming threat by applying study and research methods (e.g., studying hard, and trying to get a reasonable summary from lectures). Using these strategies will expand students' subjective mastery of computable subject matter and thus reduce anxiety in the language course. The second strategy, relaxation, uses techniques aimed at reducing the physical symptoms of anxiety. Typical things are "I'm taking deep breaths" and "I'm trying to calm down". The third strategy is positive thinking, which is characterized by its mitigating function of suppressing problematic psychological processes that cause anxiety in students (e.g., imagining themselves performing well, trying to enjoy the
In the past five years, several studies have been conducted to discuss how students deal with foreign language anxiety (Rondonuwu, 2020; Saarahwati, 2020; Liu and Wang, 2023). In the EFL context, researchers have not found any studies that included high school students as participants in similar studies in Indonesia. Therefore, this study discusses coping strategies for Indonesian high school students to overcome EFL language anxiety in the context of foreign language learning. Based on previous research conducted by Saarahwati (2020), this study differs in its participant group, which comprises high school students. The current research primarily focuses on the performance and coping strategies of high school students concerning foreign language anxiety within a classroom context.

Method
Research Design
In this study, researchers used qualitative methods, specifically using the case study method. An important aspect but limitation of the case study method revolves around the question of the extent to which findings from a single social unit can be generalized to a wider population of similar units. As Yin (2009), a case study is an investigation that examines a real-world phenomenon and is not simply a means of data collection but also a research strategy or design rescue. This research was carried out on secondary school students from a private senior high school in Yogyakarta. The research question is “What and how are secondary school students’ coping strategies for reducing speaking anxiety?” To get the research purpose, this study was conducted in a few steps: collecting the data by conducting a guided semi-structured interview and recording the students’ responses; analysis by categorizing and coding the data and discussing them; and conclusion

Research Participants
Three students were selected for the study and were interviewed by the researchers. Both researchers and the English teacher played a role in choosing these students. The participants were deemed appropriate for the research and shared a common experience of feeling anxious when speaking English as a foreign language. This was because the first researcher had previously taught English at the school and had encountered the students who were now participating in the study. The participants in this study were high school students who took speaking material in English subjects at a private school in Yogyakarta. Students were given assignments by their teachers to create storytelling with topics that students could determine themselves. Students were also allowed to create presentation materials, which aimed to help them when they spoke in front of the class to present the storytelling assignment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name (Pseudonym)</th>
<th>Class/Age</th>
<th>What level of English proficiency the participants perceive themselves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jihan</td>
<td>X/15</td>
<td>Pre-Intermediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dimas</td>
<td>X/16</td>
<td>Beginner</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data Collection

In this study, semi-structured interviews were utilized as a research tool. Initially, the first author intended to observe English classes focusing on speaking skills and extracurricular English clubs to identify students who encountered anxiety while speaking English as a foreign language. However, due to an ongoing examination, the researchers couldn't observe the classes as planned and instead opted to meet the participants directly.

After the interview construct was validated by the second author, who was the first author’s research supervisor, the first author promptly conducted interviews with carefully selected three students. From these interviews, three specific data points were chosen for subsequent analysis. The selection criteria for these data points included: 1) students who had been required to present assignments in English classes, 2) participants who experienced anxiety when speaking in front of their peers, 3) individuals who felt comfortable speaking in front of the class, 4) students who had developed effective strategies to manage their anxiety when speaking in English, and 5) participants who lacked effective strategies to cope with their anxiety when speaking in English.

a. Written informed consent form

An essential ethical consideration in this study involved obtaining explicit consent from the research participants, as emphasized by Barkhuizen et al. (2014). In light of this requirement, the first author decided to craft an informed consent document, which was presented to the participants before the commencement of the interviews. This step ensured that the participants granted their approval for the utilization of their data in the subsequent analysis for this research. Furthermore, to conduct the interviews with the participants, an additional data collection permission letter issued by the university was employed as a supplementary document.

b. Data source

The interviews took place within the school setting, either in a vacant library, a designated interview room, or in classrooms, all with the intention of creating a comfortable setting for the participants. To support subsequent analysis and address the research inquiries, the complete interview procedure was recorded for audio analysis.

Research Instrument

Table 2. Matrix of interview question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Interview Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreign language speaking anxiety (FLSA) definition (Horwitz et al., 1986)</td>
<td>A distinct complex of self-discernments (the ability to understand the meaning or significance of something (or the knowledge gained as a result), self-knowledge, your goals, and your abilities.), conviction (Conviction means a firmly held belief or opinion.), feelings, and behaviours related to classroom speaking activity</td>
<td>1. Communication apprehension 2. Fear of negative evaluation 3. Test apprehension (Horwitz et al., 1986)</td>
<td>1. How is your speaking class so far? 2. How is your experience when you are speaking in class? 3. What happen when you are asked to speak in English? 4. What makes you feel anxious when speaking English? 5. How do you feel when you do not get a positive evaluation about your</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
emerging from the uniqueness of the dialect learning process. (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope, 1986).

There are five strategies for reduce language anxiety: a) Preparation, b) Relaxation, c) Positive thinking, d) Peer seeking, and e) Resignation (Kondo and Ying-Ling, 2004). Coping strategies for Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety (Kondo and Ying-Ling, 2004)

1. Preparation
2. Relaxation
3. Positive thinking
4. Peer seeking
5. Resignation

6. What are your coping strategies to deal with English communication apprehension?

5a. How do you prepare yourself to communicate in English in the classroom setting?  
5b. How do you maintain your English communication skill?  
5c. How do you manage your emotion and thinking to be positive during English communication session? 
5e. What if you are in a very difficult situation to communicate in English?

Data Analysis

The first author used a theme-based analysis method that used to identify, analyze, and create reports for this research and also help to categorize and describe the data better (Braun and Clarke, 2006). There are six stages in the thematic analysis, namely:

Stage 1: To get to know the data by looking at and reviewing the data that has been taken from the material. All the data taken in the interview was reviewed. Then the first author makes a copy of the interview results into a transcription and reads all the data sources listed in the transcription repeatedly until they can describe the transcript properly and correctly.

Stage 2: Generate code. Researchers produce several code initials based on research documents by dividing them into 5 code initials, namely: preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, peer seeking, and resignation which can be easily organized in the data set. I created the following coding system as evidence from data taken from interviews for this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coding sample</th>
<th>Mean</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SRESA/PR/MP/01</td>
<td>‘SRESA’ is for Strategies for Reducing EFL Speaking Anxiety construct. ‘PR’ is for Preparation category. ‘MP’ is for More Practice sub category. ‘01’ means that it’s from interview transcript line 01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EF</td>
<td>Emergent Finding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stage 3: Looking for a theme from the data that has been coded initials. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis serves as a technique for recognizing, examining, and conveying the underlying patterns (themes) within the dataset. In this research, the type of performance anxiety based on the theory of Horwitz et al., (1986) was also included in the theme to find out how it can be applied by students to reduce speaking anxiety. All the coding
that I have generated will appear in the data findings. I also divided the data in this research into several categories, each category of which has been confirmed as a category that is further divided into several more specific sub-categories. After reading all the transcriptions one by one based on the answers from the participants and compiling the codes into themes that have the potential to become themes that are relevant to this research. The complete theme can be found in the thematizing matrix table. This research found preparation: more practice, improved language skills, mastering vocabulary, reading English text, and memorizing text. Relaxation: avoid eye contact. Positive thinking: not afraid to make mistakes, increase self-confidence. Peer seeking: group study, finding a good support system, and the final resignation. As strategies used by participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4. Coding Matrix</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Construct</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Type of performance anxiety</td>
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<td>Strategies for Reducing EFL Speaking Anxiety</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resignation</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Emergent Findings**

EF

Stage 4: Reviewing the theme to select the most appropriate data to be included in the created theme.
Stage 5: Define the theme that has been created, and name it.
Stage 6: Making the output as a report in this research.

**Findings and Discussions**

In this section, the data found from data collection from interviews is categorized into themes and codes to support the findings and discussions in this research. To answer the research question that has been formulated “What and how are secondary school students’ coping strategies for reducing speaking anxiety?” In this research, the researcher utilized semi-structured interviews, which, according to According to Magaldi and Berler (2018), semi-
structured interviews are extensively favoured in qualitative research as a highly effective approach for collecting data during investigations. The face-to-face interviews were conducted with the participants at the same location but without other participants present, ensuring their privacy during the interview. The first author considered this method as the most appropriate because it allowed the participants to answer sensitive questions without feeling embarrassed, as their responses would not be heard by others. The interviews took place on Wednesday, May 31 2023, starting at 11:30 AM. Jihan (pseudonym), was interviewed for approximately 5 minutes and Fawwaz, were interviewed at 1:00 PM and 1:05 PM, respectively, with each interview lasting around 5 minutes. This time, the researcher aimed to explore how the participants’ coping strategies with the anxiety they experience when speaking in front of the class. The research questions were based on relevant theories concerning strategies to overcome the fear of speaking English as a foreign language among high school students. Jihan mentioned several anxieties she experiences when asked to speak in English, such as a racing heart due to lack of mastery over the subject, feeling inadequate in English language proficiency, and fear of making mistakes in front of classmates. She believed that more practice, improving her English skills, and trying not to be afraid of being the centre of attention were essential for her improvement. Dimas (pseudonym), on the other hand, mentioned that to overcome his anxiety, he needed more practice in speaking English correctly, increasing his vocabulary, and boosting his self-confidence. He had previously experienced anxiety symptoms such as trembling, feeling cold, and a lack of vocabulary. Fawwaz (pseudonym), the final participant in this study, disclosed experiencing symptoms like panic, fear of making mistakes, and difficulty focusing when observed by many people. Her coping strategies involved extensive reading in English, not being afraid to make mistakes, memorizing texts, and increasing self-confidence. It is evident that the strategies for coping with the fear of speaking vary for each individual, which may be influenced by the level of anxiety, thought patterns, environmental factors, and participant backgrounds.

To facilitate reading, a table has been included below to present how each participant copes with their speaking anxiety.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants (pseudonym)</th>
<th>Strategies for Reducing EFL Speaking Anxiety</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Jihan                    | - More practice  
|                           | - Improve English language skills  
|                           | - Be less afraid of being the center of attention |
| Dimas                    | - More practice speaking English  
|                           | - Expand vocabulary  
|                           | - Increase self-confidence |
| Fawwaz                   | - Extensive reading in English  
|                           | - Not afraid to make mistakes  
|                           | - Memorize texts  
|                           | - Increase self-confidence |

Strategies for Reducing EFL Speaking Anxiety
EFL speaking anxiety is a common thing that is usually experienced by students. This speaking anxiety can be one of the factors which, if not immediately addressed, can prevent students from progressing in learning English. In this study, researchers investigated how to reduce speaking anxiety using English as a Foreign Language from the perspective of high
school students. Based on the theory of Kondo and Yin-Ling (2004), there are five strategies for reducing anxiety, namely 1) Preparation, 2) Relaxation, 3) Positive Thinking, 4) Peer Seeking, and 5) Resignation.

**Preparation**

In this section, all participants were asked to mention several student strategies in preparing their appearance when asked to speak in front of the class. Based on the theory of Kondo and Yin-Ling (2004), preparation means the way or efforts of students to prepare their performance by improving their strategies and learning. According to the participants, using this strategy can minimize the possibility of anxiety when speaking in front of the class. This preparation must be prepared with good planning so that students do not feel burdened by what they choose so that they do not become more anxious when speaking in front of the class. Based on interviews conducted by researchers, three participants in this study had prepared their appearance even for a short time and they said that they became more confident when speaking in front of the class. Even so, they still feel inadequate because they don’t have long enough time to prepare it properly. All participants in this study also expressed ways to prepare for their performances, even though it sounds very general, here are some of their ways to reduce their anxiety when speaking; 1) more practice, 2) study hard, 3) improving language skills, 4) mastering vocabulary, 5) reading English text, 6) memorize text.

**Relaxation**

Jihan said that several ways to reduce EFL speaking anxiety are to try to relax, because if you are not calm it will make you more stressed so you usually experience “blankness”. This is also in line with Kondo and Yin-Ling (2004) that relaxation is a way to relieve the appearance of anxiety symptoms. There are many ways you can do this, such as taking a deep breath or avoiding eye contact. In this situation, the two participants have different methods, such as a) avoid eye contact and b) not being afraid of being the center of attention.

**Positive Thinking**

Positive thinking is divided into two types, namely focusing on situations where the speaker only thinks about good things. The second type is thinking about things that make you comfortable and not caring about anything else other than focusing on what you want to convey. These two types are in line with Kondo’s (1994) statement that the speaker will try to divert his mind from ideas that could hinder his performance. Meanwhile, Kondo and Yin-Ling (2004) said that positive thinking is a tactic to avoid bad things and also relieve anxiety, such as thinking about a successful appearance and enjoying one’s own appearance.

**Peer Seeking**

It cannot be denied that making friends is a necessity for every student, good friends will also have a good impact on each person’s self-development because they can also control the emotions of a student who has anxiety. This strategy can be a solution to establish good relationships between friends, students can exchange constructive opinions and experiences in learning, in this case the context is speaking in English. In reality, students prefer friends who also have the same problems as a student so that they can understand each other better and both find solutions to the problems they face. Kondo and Yin-Ling (2004) revealed in their study that this is a characteristic of students who see other students who have the same problems in dealing with their anxiety. There are some students who choose this strategy to reduce their anxiety by studying in groups and finding a good support system.

**Resignation**

This strategy should be avoided and should not be an option for someone who will speak in front of the class. Because resignation is a negative thing which, if chosen, will haunt students’ minds. However, in reality there are still students who think about withdrawing and do not solve the problem. This happened to Jihan and Dimas. Luckily, they only thought about doing this and didn’t actually do it.
Types of Performance Anxiety in EFL Speaking Anxiety

Based on Horwitz et al., (1986) states that there are three types of performance anxiety, namely 1) Communication Apprehension, 2) Fear of Negative Evaluation, and 3) Test Apprehension. For the three participants in this study who had varying levels of English language skills, from beginner, pre-intermediate, to intermediate (based on the participants’ perceptions), the researcher created a participant coping strategies profile table to find out how the participants performed when experiencing anxiety. The table contains 15 checklists each containing three types of performance anxiety in EFL speaking anxiety and 5 coping strategies based on Kondo and Yin-Ling (2004). From the data that has been obtained, the participants in this study have three different levels of English ability, namely Jihan with a pre-intermediate level, Dimas with a beginner level, and Fawwaz with an intermediate level.

The categorization in the table below is carried out by asking interview questions based on the constructs that have been created so that they can be adapted to the participant's condition at the time of the interview. As mentioned above, this table contains 15 checklists based on student performance in alleviating EFL speaking anxiety. Researchers categorized them based on what participants did when facing communication, fear of negative evaluation, test apprehension into five categories of strategies to relieve speaking anxiety: preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, peer seeking, resignation. Then a checklist was given based on the answers from the participants in this research. A table containing the findings from data collection is presented below.

Table 6. Jihan’s Coping Strategies Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coping Strategies to Reduce EFL Speaking Anxiety</th>
<th>Types of Performance Anxiety in EFL Speaking Anxiety</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication Apprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxation</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Thinking</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Seeking</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resignation</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fear of Negative Evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>v</td>
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<td>v</td>
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<td></td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Test Apprehension</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jihan perceived herself have English proficiency in pre-intermediate level of English proficiency, it was found that when communicating in class, she prepared before the start of communication, relaxed, tried to keep herself positive, and peer seeking. Meanwhile, when participants were faced with the Fear of Negative Evaluation, these participants only relaxed and tried to think positively during the commenting session. Then the Test Apprehension, Jihan implemented three strategies to face this test, namely preparation and relaxation.

Communication Apprehension
1) Preparation
   The preparation made by the Jihan was to study and find out more about the material that would be studied in class.
   “To prepare, I just studied as usual, the teacher usually tells us after this material what we want to study, so I studied the material that I wanted to study, that’s how it was”
   T02/P1/CA/14

   “Yes, browse the material about what it is. Just like that.”
   T02/P1/CA/16

2) Relaxation
   The second strategy used by the Jihan was a relaxation strategy, namely before starting to speak, usually taking a few deep breaths so that his body was more relaxed, and also watching films in his free time at home to help him increase his knowledge of English.
“Emmm..., before going forward, I usually take a deep breath to feel more relieved, so I don’t get more tense. At home, I also take lessons.”

3) Positive Thinking
   “Ohhh, I’m sure I’ll be able to do it. Just choose a light topic.”

By thinking about light conversation when asked to communicate using English, Jihan found it easier to believe that he would be able to participate in the ongoing activities. For example, asking light questions such as asking how you are doing can help.

4) Peer Seeking
   The presence of colleagues is also very helpful when in a state of anxiety, because it can make communication more unified and can ask questions about things that are not yet known and can be a good influence in increasing participant’s self-confidence.
   “Very helpful! The thing is, later I can ask him, for example, if I don’t know the vocabulary, I’m still confused. The same can also increase my self-confidence”

Fear of Negative Evaluation
   1) Relaxation
      By taking a deep breath before receiving comments, Jihan can feel more relaxed when he is in front and accepts all comments on his appearance, and also does not make eye contact.
      “With a long sigh and not looking directly at the teacher or friends.”

   2) Positive Thinking
      Because he felt that his performance was good and optimal, Jihan did not feel afraid when he was given negative comments from both teachers and friends because he was very confident in what was being conveyed.
      “Because I have prepared what I want to convey well, so I am sure of myself that I will accept all the comments that come in.”

Test Apprehension
   1) Preparation
      Jihan took part in additional learning activities to help him prepare to take the test, so he didn’t have to worry about the test he was going to take.
      “I prepared it by practicing hard, in the lesson I also told my tutor to teach him too.”

   2) Relaxation
      This may be very common for all students, but for Jihan, this was also very helpful when taking a test and feeling anxious. Jihan took a deep breath and prayed to be more relaxed and thought about what he wanted to say during the test.
      “Pray and take a deep breath before the test, then I also pay close attention to what you want to say”

Table 7. Dimas’s Coping Strategies Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coping Strategies to Reduce EFL Speaking Anxiety</th>
<th>Types of Performance Anxiety in EFL Speaking Anxiety</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Preparation</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Relaxation</td>
<td>Fear of Negative Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Test Apprehension</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

50
Then for Dimas perceived herself have English proficiency in beginner level, when the participant experienced anxiety when communicating in class, he had three strategies to relieve his speaking anxiety, namely positive thinking, peer seeking and even resigning when he was in a very difficult situation. When Dimas faced a negative evaluation, the participant had three strategies, namely relaxation, positive thinking, and also peer seeking, according to him this was effective in helping relieve his anxiety. And when Dimas faces the test, he will carry 4 out of 5 strategies ranging from preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, peer seeking as a way to relieve speaking anxiety when taking the speaking test.

Communication Apprehension

1) Positive Thinking

Dimas, when he feels anxious or afraid when communicating in class, he usually takes a deep breath and prays and hopes that he won’t make many mistakes which will result in the participant feeling embarrassed, but as long as he uses this strategy, he doesn’t feel anything bad. What he was afraid of all this time was actually experienced by Dimas, so this method was effective for him when he felt anxious.

“Usually, I pray and take a deep breath.”

T02/P2/CA/37

“I pray that I don’t make too many mistakes because then I’ll be embarrassed. So far, it’s been quite helpful for me because I’ve had positive thoughts.”

T02/P2/CA/39

2) Peer Seeking

According to Dimas, the presence of colleagues is something that helps when they feel anxious about communicating in class. The presence of friends will make it easier when I want to ask something that I don’t understand. Dimas was also not embarrassed when he had to ask female students who knew what he was going to ask.

“It’s helpful... so there’s someone to help me, right? If I’m having trouble saying something, I can ask him later.”

T02/P2/CA/42

3) Resignation

Dimas once chose this strategy when he was in difficulty and could no longer answer or communicate in class using English. For example, when asked, Dimas had no idea how to answer the question and finally Dimas chose to give the question to be answered by another friend.

“Yes, I chose to just withdraw or give it to another friend because if I can’t do it, then if I make a mistake, it will make me even more embarrassed.”

T02/P2/CA/48

However, if allowed to open a dictionary, Dimas will try first to find out what is being asked and how to answer it.

“Yes, usually if I can use Indonesian or look it up in the dictionary first, I’ll answer, but if not then I’ll just keep quiet and wait for it to change.”

T02/P2/CA/50

Fear of Negative Evaluation
1) Relaxation

“Ee... maybe by not looking directly at it, looking at the person making the comment, then sighing as usual, bring that, bring a pen or paper to play with so you don’t get too tense.”

The strategy used by Dimas was not to make eye contact with commenters when receiving positive or negative evaluations so as not to cause excessive anxiety. Dimas also took several deep breaths to remain in a calm position when in front of the class.

2) Positive Think

Dimas’s positive thinking strategy is quite unique, because he also believes that other male students in the same class have the same English language skills as him, so Dimas doesn’t think too much about what other friends think of him.

“By praying, maybe, I keep thinking that it’s not just me who’s like this, other friends too.”

“By praying, maybe, I keep thinking that it’s not just me who’s like this, other friends too.”

“By praying, maybe, I keep thinking that it’s not just me who’s like this, other friends too.”

3) Peer Seeking

According to him, the presence of a friend when Dimas felt anxious about negative comments could help because Dimas thought he was not receiving the comments for himself but for his friend too. Dimas can also occasionally hide behind his friend because he feels embarrassed when he receives negative comments.

“It can help because you can accept comments together, but usually I hide behind my friend’s back.”

Test Apprehension

1) Preparation

Dimas, based on the interview that was conducted, had a strategy to prepare for the English-speaking test, namely by practicing in front of the mirror to be more confident when presenting in front of the class.

“For this test, I did the exercises in front of the mirror so that I would be better when I progressed.”

According to him, this can help him when he is presenting in front of the class even though he is anxious.

2) Relaxation

Because he had prepared properly and tried his best, Dimas felt quite calm when taking the speaking test.

“Because I’ve been practicing, so that can make me calm and finish the presentation calmly too.”

3) Positive Think

To maintain positive thoughts, Dimas has a strategy of praying and sighing and convincing himself that he can do it by giving the best presentation he can.

“With confidence and prayer, before moving forward I also took a deep breath and convinced myself to give the best presentation I could.”

4) Peer Seeking
Taking the test together, according to him, can reduce anxiety when speaking because you can take turns speaking and presenting the tasks used for the test.

“I’d rather do it in a group, bro, because later I can change the vibe, so to speak, and if you’re with friends, you don’t need to be afraid because here I’m not alone.”

**Table 8. Fawwaz’s Coping Strategies Profile**

<table>
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Fawwaz is an active student and takes part in several activities at her school, one of which is English extracurricular activities. Fawwaz perceived herself as having English proficiency in intermediate level when she experienced fear of communicating. She carried out two strategies to reduce her speaking anxiety, namely relaxation, and also peer seeking. During the evaluation session in class from both the teacher and friends, Fawwaz experienced fear. She has a strategy to reduce it, namely by preparing, relaxation, and positive thinking. Finally, when Fawwaz experienced anxiety during the speaking test, she carried out preparation, relaxation, and positive thinking to reduce her anxiety.

**Communication Apprehension**

1) Relaxation

Fawwaz said that the extracurricular activities he participated in could help relax him so he could feel calmer.

“Mmm... maybe by taking extracurricular, I can relax now when I communicate in English. Maybe I read a lot too.”

**T02/P3/CA/23**

2) Peer Seeking

According to Fawwaz, the presence of colleagues is also important because it can make communication between them two-way, but the friend referred to in Fawwaz’s statement is a friend who has the same English skills as Fawwaz feels.

“Because if, for example, I want to ask him about the material, it will be more connected, you know, rather than asking a friend who isn’t nice.”

**T02/P3/CA/33**

**Fear of Negative Evaluation**

1) Preparation

“Maybe the preparation is in maximum performance, so I don’t need to be afraid of hearing comments from teachers or friends because the effort I put in is already maximum.”

**T02/P3/FNE/45**

Even though previously Fawwaz said that so far, he had never felt afraid when receiving negative comments from teachers or friends, Fawwaz still prepared carefully when giving a presentation, so he was not too afraid if he would receive negative comments.

2) Relaxation

In short, Fawwaz said that just feeling confident made him calm when he received comments from teachers or other friends.

“Just believe in yourself enough to relax”

**T02/P3/FNE/49**
Positive Think

With a lot of self-confidence, Fawwaz’s way of thinking positively when given comments from teachers or friends is to convince himself that he will not receive bad comments and there is no need to feel afraid.

“With my appearance, which I think is optimal, I assure myself that I won’t get bad comments.”

Test Apprehension

1) Preparation

Before carrying out the test, in order not to feel afraid or anxious, Fawwaz usually studies the material that will be tested, for example by memorizing the contents of the text or finding out more about the material that will be tested and not forgetting to also preparation in front of the mirror.

“If I want to take grades like that, I’ll study. Study the material for tomorrow’s test, for example by memorizing the contents of the text, then look for important points and preparation in front of the mirror to be more confident.”

2) Relaxation

Just like other participants in this study, Fawwaz also chose a strategy that could reduce anxiety when taking the English-speaking test, namely by taking a deep breath and praying before the test started so that he felt calmer and ready to take the test.

“With the preparations I mentioned earlier, I’m usually calm, especially before the test, I pray and take a deep breath.”

3) Positive Thinking

Self-confidence is the most important thing in Fawwaz, so by convincing himself to be able to pass this speaking test with good results, Fawwaz only needs to add a little spice to make him always think positively, namely with high self-confidence.

“I believe in myself that I can pass this test and get good grades. That’s how it is...”

Conclusion

Based on data obtained from interviews, researchers concluded that there were strategies used by participants to cope with foreign language speaking anxiety. Strategies based on Kondo and Yin-Ling (2004) to reduce speaking anxiety have been grouped. This research found a strategy. Firstly, preparation was carried out by doing a lot of preparation before carrying out activities in class, improving your English language skills by taking lessons, mastering a lot of vocabulary, reading a lot of English literature, and also remembering some
of the texts that will be presented which will help in preparation for advancing to the front of the class. The second is relaxation by avoiding eye contact with the person you are talking to or the listener. Positive thinking by not being afraid of making mistakes, as well as increasing self-confidence will help reduce speaking anxiety. Peer seeking, by studying with friends will certainly help in terms of communication as well as reducing speaking anxiety.

**Suggestion and Recommendation**

Because this research still has limitations. The researchers recommend that future studies investigate the emerging symptoms experienced by participants in a wider context, and can also investigate how teachers treat students who have anxiety about speaking English as a foreign language, the importance of taking additional classes to treat students who have anxiety, and other problems related to students’ ways of dealing with speaking anxiety and ways to make peace with their EFL speaking anxiety. For students, researchers recommend improving speaking skills and paying attention to lessons taking place in class. The strategies above are also recommended for use based on the findings and discussions in this research, especially on preparation, relaxation, and positive thinking.

**References**


