

## Factors Leading to Speaking Anxiety in EFL Classes

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### Abstract

In this study, 30 English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' speaking anxiety is examined in relation to its contributing elements. Students were chosen in this situation by using the Stratified Sampling Method. The study employed two research instruments. The students were subjected to a structured interview after completing a Likert-scale questionnaire. The study's findings showed that educational reasons, which have a rate of 71%, personal factors, which have a rate of 66%, and environmental factors, which have a rate of 56%, are the three elements that have the most impact on students' speaking anxiety. The analysis of interviews also revealed comparable factors. The students indicated that they encountered speaking anxiety due to deficiencies in grammar and vocabulary, as well as feelings of shyness while addressing a group. Additionally, they expressed apprehension regarding the articulation of their thoughts into coherent phrases and the potential for making errors.

*Keywords: Anxiety, Speaking Anxiety, EFL classes*

### Introduction

The issue of anxiety in foreign language learning has become a very thought-provoking issue among researchers (Zhang et al., 2020; Daud et al., 2020; Grieve et al., 2021). The reason why it has become such an important and thought-provoking issue is that it has been accepted as an important factor that affects students' academic success positively and negatively in foreign language learning (Doyma & Yumru, 2020). The first studies in this field were conducted by Horwitz et al. (1986), and it was claimed that students' language anxiety emerged from negative emotions. MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) explained this anxiety as the anxiety, tension, and emotional state felt towards learning a second language

and argued that it occurs especially in speaking, writing, and general learning. Similarly, Zhang et al. (2019) stated in their studies that this anxiety is a psychological situation that occurs when learning a second language. Doyman and Yumru (2020) stated that foreign language anxiety and speaking anxiety will occur in different forms, and it was determined that they are more common when writing, listening, and reading while speaking in the target language. In addition, they stated that the most commonly observed anxiety was speaking anxiety.

While learning a foreign language brings many conveniences to people's lives, it also brings problematic situations. One of these is the anxiety that occurs when learning a foreign language. We encounter various definitions of anxiety in different studies (Duman et al., 2017; Doyma & Yumru, 2020). Considering the information obtained from these studies, anxiety is defined as subjective, and, at the same time, widespread emotions related to the stimulation of the autonomic nervous system, such as tension, fear, irritability, and anxiety in daily and academic life. In another study, it was stated that anxiety is a feeling of fatigue and uneasiness that occurs because of fear (Of laz, 2019). As a result of this process, it has been observed that the body sweats, becomes anxious and anxious, and the heartbeat speed increases. It is further emphasised that anxiety can be seen in many stages of life. It may occur before an unprepared job interview or an important exam. While people who can keep their anxiety under control can concentrate on their work better, it has been suggested in different studies that undesirable results may occur if left uncontrolled.

Anxiety that occurs for various reasons in all areas of human life should be evaluated as a normal process. Anxiety that occurs in the field of education should be evaluated as normal, like other concerns, because students are subject to evaluation after any academic study they do (Damayanti & Listyani, 2020). It is believed that in such situations, students' anxiety levels increase and will cause adverse reactions to their exam and evaluation performances. In these cases, it is observed that the level of anxiety of students who experience anxiety about their academic performance increases regarding certain academic tasks.

Anxiety, which is one of the important psychological conditions that deeply affects people's lives, can be experienced at almost every stage and lesson in an individual's educational life. Bashori et al. (2022) report that there is a connection between anxiety and effective language learning. The damaging effect of anxiety is especially evident in speaking and writing lessons that require productivity in the classroom (Duman et al., (2017). It has been written in the relevant literature that students in speaking lessons are generally reluctant to speak the target language and are afraid of making mistakes (Zhang et al., 2020; Daud et al., 2019). Duman et al. (2017) stated that one reason for this is that some of the students are afraid of losing their peers and friends when they talk about a subject, they have no knowledge of in front of their friends because they are not good at verbal expression.

In terms of foreign language anxiety, it is stated that performance in academic and social contexts is directly related to anxiety (Of laz, 2019). These performance concerns can be divided into groups, such

as communication anxiety, test anxiety, and negative evaluation anxiety experienced by students (Horwitz et al., 1986). In addition, students who have problems speaking in groups have greater problems speaking in a foreign language class, where they know that they do not have control while speaking and their performance is constantly checked (Duman et al., (2017).

The primary objective of this study is to examine the fundamental causes and classifications of anxiety, as well as to explore the impact of anxiety on speech-related apprehension. Upon acquiring the data mentioned above, the objective was to identify and examine the impacts of speaking anxiety, the factors contributing to speaking anxiety among students, and, ultimately, the correlations between anxiety and performance in speaking classes. Based on the data above, the subsequent study questions are posed:

What is anxiety and speaking anxiety?

What are the causes and effects of EFL Students' speaking anxiety?

What is the relationship between anxiety and speaking classes?

## **Literature Review**

### ***What is Speaking Anxiety?***

Anxiety is described as an increase in body temperature due to worry and stress, and a state of tension that people are in, and speech anxiety is described as a similar state of anxiety that occurs due to embarrassment, facial flushing due to embarrassment, tension, and fear of evaluation (Rajitha & Alamelu, 2020; Damayanti & Listyani, 2020). Speech anxiety is a psychological state of tension that people generally experience due to the worry of making mistakes. Speech anxiety is an important factor that reduces people's self-confidence because it causes them to be unable to express what they think and know. Changes in heart rhythm, sweating, loss of balance, and inability to move are the main symptoms of speech anxiety (Altun, 2023). Students who generally make mistakes due to speaking anxiety lose their self-confidence and do not want to use this chance when the next chance comes (Küçük, 2023). This situation makes them have a silent identity in the classroom, and overcoming this fear is a very difficult and troublesome process.

### ***Types of Anxiety***

According to MacIntyre (1991), there are various types of anxiety.

#### ***Trait Anxiety***

This concern is a concern that needs to be taken and evaluated more seriously than others. Trait anxiety refers to the manifestation of anxiety experienced by an individual across various situations and time periods. According to Knowles and Olatunji (2020), individuals characterized by high-trait anxiety are prone to experiencing heightened levels of anxiety, which may have detrimental effects on their cognitive abilities.

### ***State Anxiety***

According to the research conducted by Saviola et al., 2020, state anxiety is a temporary state of anxiety that occurs in some situations. An example of this anxiety can be the situation of a student before an important test or the situation people are in before an important job interview. It has been stated that this anxiety can be overcome or minimised with various methods.

### ***Specific Anxiety***

MacIntyre & Gardner (1994) explained in their study that specific anxiety is the next stage of state anxiety. This anxiety is a condition that people who deal with the same tasks or problems acquire over time. MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) gave examples of this anxiety, such as speaking in a crowd and a student's behaviour during an exam.

### ***The Impacts of Speaking Anxiety***

Speaking anxiety is a factor that generally affects students negatively and causes them to fail academically. Lightbown and Spada (2013) wrote in their research that speaking anxiety negatively affects students' learning processes. In addition, they argued that speech anxiety should be considered separately from anxiety and stress because anxiety is permanent, but anxiety and stress are temporary.

There have been numerous studies on speaking anxiety in different parts of the world. Ying (1993) conducted one of these studies among senior high school students in Taiwan. According to this study, it was revealed that any test whose difficulty was slightly increased caused anxiety in students and reduced their language proficiency. Related to this study, Horwitz (2001), who was one of the first to investigate speaking anxiety, revealed in a study he conducted on French and Spanish students that students experiencing speaking anxiety received lower course grades than students who did not experience this anxiety.

In another research, Djigunović (2006) examined the effects of language anxiety on students' language learning in a study he conducted on undergraduate EFL students in Croatia. According to the results of the study, the speeches of students with language anxiety are shorter and contain pauses than those of others. According to the results of a study conducted by Liu and Jackson (2008) on 547 EFL students to reveal the seriousness of the issue, the language anxiety experienced by the students is the most important reason that leads them to reluctance to speak in the target language. In a different study, Dalkilic (2001) made the following conclusions as a result of his study with 126 EFL students in Turkey. There is a direct relationship between the level of anxiety of students with foreign language anxiety and their success in speaking lessons.

### ***The Reasons for Speaking Anxiety Among Students***

Damayanti and Listyani (2020) expressed the factors that cause students' speaking anxiety under 5 basic headings in their study. Lack of knowledge of English. It is very difficult for students who consider themselves inadequate in English to express what they think when they speak. According to the

research of Wahyuningsih and Afandi (2020), a lack of English proficiency is one of the factors that causes anxiety in the language. In other words, because they think others are better than themselves, they always remain in the background and cannot get out of their shadow. Being unfamiliar with the task they do. Being familiar with a subject means that people have knowledge about it and have seen it before. People like to create a product about a subject they love and know about. Therefore, if they feel distant from the subject, anxiety will arise within them, and the desired result will not be achieved (Hilliard et al., 2020). Lack of self-confidence. Self-confidence means standing firm, being confident, not giving up no matter what the consequences, and not being afraid of the consequences. Since some students do not have this self-confidence, anxiety arises, and they do not want to talk (Labrague et al., 2019). The fear of making mistakes. Some students are afraid of making mistakes while speaking in front of their friends, the opposite sex, and their teachers, and for these reasons, they prefer to remain silent and not take any action until someone tells them that they have to speak. The last factor is incomprehensible inputs. Students learn from their teachers, peers, movies, and visual media. If this information entry is incorrect, it will be reflected in their speech, and this is another factor of speech anxiety (Damayanti & Listyani, 2020)

When a general literature review is made, the factors that cause speech anxiety are very diverse (Rajitha & Alamelu, 2020; Damayanti & Listyani, 2020; Aziz & Kashinathan, 2021). One of the most common fears of students and one of the leading causes of speaking anxiety is the fear of criticism. People worry about making mistakes, feeling stupid, and being negatively criticised by others, which causes them to have speaking anxiety (Grieve et al., 2021). From these statements, we can reach the following conclusion: not all students like their performance to be criticised. Another factor that causes speech anxiety is people's past experiences. According to Abdullah et al. (2019), prior instances of mistakes or embarrassment while public speaking can diminish individuals' confidence and contribute to the development of speaking anxiety in subsequent stages of their lives. These concerns can be deliberated and substantiated with the involvement of professional help and those who possess expertise in this particular domain.

The speaking anxiety of students and people in daily life also arises from unprepared speeches. Damayanti and Listyani (2020) discussed in their study the necessity of quality and planned speech preparation to produce a good speech. In this context, preparing the necessary materials before the speech, controlling the environment in which the conversation will be held, and preparing a speech according to the level of the people to be addressed will reduce speaking anxiety or are the reasons that will otherwise cause anxiety.

Due to the fact of creation and nature of humans, they may feel anxiety when speaking in front of the public, or this may be a phobia they have (Grieve et al., 2021). When students are given the task of speaking in front of a crowd, this fear automatically arises, and unexpected results may occur. For this reason, it would be more appropriate not to give such tasks to students who have such problems and anxiety from birth. In addition, symptoms such as sweating, shaking, dry mouth, and excitement that occur involuntarily when people are anxious are natural causes that make speech anxiety worse (Terlizzi & Villarroel, 2020). Finally, peer pressure and social comparison are other factors that cause students'

speaking anxiety (Kucuk, 2023). No matter how wrong it is, speaking anxiety arises because parents, teachers, and students compare themselves with other students, which creates a feeling of inadequacy and pressure on them (Orji et al., 2019). In line with these statements, although comparing students with others may give positive results to a small extent, it is better to avoid it as it generally gives negative results.

### ***The Relationship Between Anxiety and Speaking Classes***

Generally, students with anxiety are less likely to participate in speaking lessons and answer the questions asked by teachers than others, and they often pacify themselves (Zhang et al., 2019). The reason for this anxiety is the thought that they are being followed by others when they talk. Therefore, they are worried about making grammatical and vocabulary mistakes when they speak and being corrected by their peers. In addition, if they are unprepared, this is another factor that increases anxiety (Küçük, 2023; Damayanti & Listyani, 2020). Again, in this context, Rajitha and Alamelu (2020) stated that students get excited, tremble, and anxious when they are invited to give a speech in front of their friends. In addition to this information, MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) stated that speaking in a second language is the biggest source of anxiety, and this anxiety increases. They emphasised the need to acquire speaking skills to minimise it. Students who experience speaking anxiety sometimes attempt to alleviate their anxiety by not attending classes and avoiding speaking completely (Damayanti & Listyani, 2020; Oflaz, 2019; Kucuk, 2023). In light of this information, individual, educational, and environmental factors underlie the speaking anxiety experienced by students in the classroom environment.

### **Methodology**

This research was carried out on a sample of 30 English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students enrolled at Tishk International University, a privately owned institution located in Iraq. The main aim of this study was to examine the fundamental components that contribute to students' experience of speaking anxiety. This study employed mixed-method research by employing a quantitative approach by utilising a Likert-scale questionnaire on Google Forms to ascertain the factors contributing to students' speaking anxiety. Additionally, a qualitative approach was employed through individual interviews further to explore the underlying reasons behind students' speaking anxiety. The integration of quantitative and qualitative methodologies allows for a more comprehensive analysis, leading to enhanced clarity in research outcomes. By comparing the findings gained from students, evaluating the collected data, and transforming it into meaningful information, researchers can achieve more accessible and clearer conclusions (Jensen, 2020).

### ***Participants***

This study was conducted on 30 EFL students at Tishk International University in the 2022-2023 academic year. Since Tishk University's EFL classes are large in number, the stratified sampling method was used when selecting students. The students were selected based on volunteering, including 20 girls

and 10 boys from the university's undergraduate and English preparatory students. 90% of the students are Kurdish, and 10% are Arabic, Iranian, and Turkish. Freshman students take a total of 10 hours of English lessons, 2 hours every morning, 5 days a week, and preparatory students take 30 hours of English lessons, 5 hours each day, 6 hours 5 days a week.

Table 1. *Gender, Level of Education, and Nationality of Participants*

Gender	Items	F	%
	Male	10	33
	Female	20	67
Level of Education	Freshman	12	40
	Prep-Students	18	60
Nationality of Students	Kurdish	27	90
	Others	3	10

### ***Research Instrument***

In this study, a mixed method was used to collect and analyse both qualitative and quantitative data. Two main research instruments were used in this study. In the first stage of the study, a Likert-scale questionnaire was used, consisting of 9 questions, and the statements used by Hadi et al. (2020) in their study were adapted to our students by expert teams. The statements were delivered to the students via Google Forms through their supervisors, and the answers given by the students were recorded. The nine questions asked in the Questionnaire were designed to determine whether students' speaking concerns consist of individual, educational, or environmental factors.

In the second stage of the study, a structured interview was conducted with the students to reveal the main reasons why the students had speaking anxiety. Students were again selected based on volunteering, and students who were shy or did not want to talk were replaced with other volunteer students. The objective of this study is to ascertain precise and diverse rationales and assess the data acquired, as articulated by Husband (2020), through the utilisation of a structured interview.

### **Findings**

The findings in this section are collected under two main sections. The first part will include Likert-scale questionnaire data and analysis, and the second part will include the results obtained from the structured interview.

Table 2. *Students' Opinions on Speaking Anxiety in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes*

ITEMS	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1. I feel anxious when I lack practice in English.	8	27	12	40	6	20	4	13
2. I feel anxious when I speak because I don't have a good English education.	3	10	12	40	12	40	3	10
3. When speaking in English, I worry about my grammar and vocabulary.	8	27	16	53	5	17	1	3
4. When speaking in English, I am afraid of making mistakes.	5	17	15	50	3	10	7	23
5. When I speak about a topic that I don't know why I feel anxious.	10	33	10	33	8	27	2	7
6. Sometimes, I cannot say what I think.	6	20	18	60	5	17	1	3
7. When I speak in English, I worry about the teacher's comments.	8	27	8	27	11	37	3	10
8. When I speak in English, I worry about friends' comments.	3	10	13	43	7	23	7	23
9. I feel anxious when I speak in front of others.	7	23	12	40	6	20	5	17

Students were given 9 statements about speaking anxiety in English as a Foreign Language classes, and the data were collected. The detailed analysis of students' responses is as follows.

In item one, it was investigated whether the reason for students' speaking anxiety was a lack of practice or not. Eight of the students who participated in the study chose the 27% strongly agree option. Twelve students chose the "agree" option. According to the results of these two sections, 67% of the students who participated in the study stated that lack of practice was a factor in their speaking anxiety. Six students chose the 20% "disagree" option, and four students chose the 13% strongly disagree option.

When the data obtained were examined, it was seen that the anxiety level of the students increased, and negative results occurred in speeches given without preparation and practice.

In item two, it was investigated whether the education received in their former schools or their previous education was a factor in speaking anxiety. The second item of the study focused on examining the potential influence of the education acquired in participants' previous schools or prior educational experiences on their levels of speech anxiety. Based on the data gathered from the student population, it was found that 15 out of 50% of students reported experiencing speaking anxiety because of not attaining the expected quality of education in their prior educational experiences. The other half of the students marked the “disagree” and “strongly disagree” options. Based on this information, we determine that half of the students studying in EFL classes have received a good education and do not have speaking anxiety. We learn from the survey results that the other half have speaking anxiety because they received insufficient education.

In question three, participants were asked if they thought speaking with proper grammar and vocabulary was important. Twenty-four (80%) out of the 30 participants selected the “agree” and “strongly agree” checkboxes. Six (20%) people selected the strongly disagree and disagree alternatives. These findings lead us to the conclusion that grammar and vocabulary are important to students studying foreign languages, and they desire to utilise them correctly when speaking.

In item four, it was tried to determine whether the personal reasons of the participants were a factor causing speech anxiety. According to the results, 67% of the students chose the “agree” and “strongly agree” options. These results show us that the majority of the students experience speaking anxiety due to personal reasons. I may make a mistake when talking about the reason for this fear; it triggers the instinct. The remaining ten students did not state that they were not afraid of making mistakes while speaking. The rate of students in this group is 37%.

In item five, a question was asked whether students' speech anxiety emerged automatically, without any reason. Ten of the participants chose the option "agree", and the other ten chose the option "strongly agree". According to the data obtained from these results, it was revealed that 66% of the students experienced speaking anxiety for no reason. The remaining 34% of the students stated that they were not exposed to such concern with the “disagree” and “strongly disagree” options.

In item six, it was determined whether EFL students had the issue of not being able to express their thoughts, which is a problem that many students have. Approximately 80% of the students chose the agree and strongly agree options. This high rate provides us with the information that students need help to convey what they think in words. The remaining six 20% of students reported that they did not experience such a problem.

In items seven and eight, it was investigated if comments made by teachers and students, which are a common source of concern, have an impact on speaking anxiety. With a score of 54%, more than half of the students selected the options for agree and strongly agree. The information gathered from

these findings indicates that remarks made by students and teachers play a significant role in speaking anxiety. Forty-seven per cent of the students said they did not feel this kind of anxiousness.

In the ninth item, students are requested to indicate their level of anxiety experienced when engaging in public speaking. A statement was put forth. Based on the acquired data, it was demonstrated that a majority of 63% of the students experienced speech anxiety when delivering presentations or speaking in public settings. A total of 37% of the participants indicated their disagreement by selecting either the "disagree" or "strongly disagree" options. Upon examining the overall rates, it becomes apparent that a significant proportion of individuals encounter speech anxiety when delivering a presentation to an audience.

### **Interview Analysis**

In this part of the study, face-to-face interviews were conducted with EFL students studying at the university's preparatory school and English Language Teaching (ELT) department, using the stratified sample method. "What do you find most challenging about speaking English" to students? The question was posed. Five of the answers given by the students are given below as examples.

When I speak English, I often worry about my grammar and vocabulary. This is partly my fault as I only sometimes talk and utilise English. I'm making an effort to do so in order to improve my speaking. (*Student 7*)

The two things that worry me the most are that I say the wrong things and that it will take me too long to make a sentence. It will be an awkward chat. Additionally, I feel uneasy about using the wrong syntax and forming awkward phrases when I speak in front of a group of people in English. (*Student 11*)

I only have trouble with English because I can't say it well. It's easy for me to read and write. I need a lot of time to put words together and make sentences when I talk. And there are words I don't know in some topics. I'm trying to learn as many words as I can. Now, I've taken the time to speak up. From now on, I'll read a lot of English books. (*Student 17*)

The hardest thing for me is stress because when I speak English, I don't say everything correctly, but after a few minutes of not being stressed, I remember the words and lines I wanted to say and feel very sad because I can't fix it. But I can understand what people say when they talk to me. (*Student 23*)

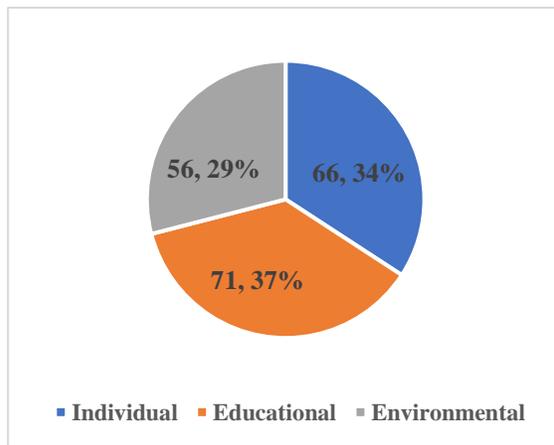
There are times when I want to say something in English but can't find the right word or line to express how I feel or what I want to say. It worries me. And it's hard for me when I can't speak English quickly but can write it without any problems. (*Student 29*)

Upon analysis of the interview data, it was found that certain participants expressed experiencing anxiety related to their speaking abilities. Specifically, some individuals reported feeling anxious about their grammar and vocabulary skills. Additionally, the questionnaire responses revealed that certain participants experienced anxiety when speaking in front of a large audience and constructing coherent sentences. Furthermore, a subset of participants indicated that their limited vocabulary knowledge

contributed to their speaking anxiety. Several students reported experiencing anxiety as a result of stress, which hindered their ability to structure their sentences effectively. Once more, a portion of the individuals expressed that they encountered speech anxiety when delivering a presentation before an audience.

## Discussion

Figure 1. The main reasons for students' speaking anxiety.



In the study conducted by Öztürk and Gürbüz (2014), it was concluded that individual factors are the most important cause of foreign language anxiety. In this study, a different result emerged. A large 71% of the students claimed that educational problems caused their speaking anxiety. In order to reach these results, statements such as "I feel anxious when I lack practice in English" and "I feel anxious when I speak because I don't have a good English education" were given to the students, and the results and data were collected.

The second place is individual factors. Students experience problems such as getting excited for no reason while speaking, being afraid of making mistakes and not being able to convey what they think in words. These data reveal common results with the data of Syahfutra (2021) that students in private universities are afraid of making mistakes and experience anxiety.

The factor that least affects students' speaking anxiety is environmental factors. Wullenkord et al. (2021) examined the results of environmental factors on anxiety in their study. Both studies have common results. Speaking in front of others and avoiding people's comments are the most important factors.

When we examine the questionnaire results, we see that the students experience speaking anxiety due to lack of practice. These data revealed similar results to the results of Alnahidh and Altalhab's (2020) study on Saudi EFL students. "I feel anxious when I speak because I don't have a good English education" is a separate factor that causes students to talk and which we evaluated in the educational reasons

category. Ozdemir and Papi (2022) U.S. They conducted a study on speaking anxiety at their university with 92 international participants. In both studies, the fact that students' insufficient educational background caused the answers given by the students proved speech anxiety.

Today's students attach great importance to grammar and vocabulary when speaking. The reason for this is that involuntary speech anxiety occurs when they think that they are inadequate in grammar and vocabulary knowledge (Küçük, 2023). Lack of grammar and vocabulary, which is an important factor of 80% in our study, is the leading and biggest factor that triggers students' speech anxiety. Grammar and Vocabulary knowledge are some of the factors that cause speaking anxiety not only for students but also for teachers. Daud et al. (2020) found similar results in their study with 30 teachers in Indonesia. In both studies, both students and teachers had difficulty with vocabulary. It has been determined through studies that they experience anxiety while speaking due to their lack of language and grammar.

The fourth, fifth, and sixth questions of this study were designed to determine whether students experienced speaking anxiety for personal reasons. When the results obtained from the students were analysed, it was discovered that personal factors caused 66% of cases of speech anxiety. These personal factors include fear of making errors, feeling anxious for no apparent reason, and inability to articulate one's thoughts. Numerous academicians have incorporated this circumstance into their research. Although personal factors were the second cause of speech anxiety in our study, they were found to be the most influential in the majority of studies (Damayanti & Listyani, 2020; Rajitha & Alamelu, 2020; Ozdemir & Papi, 2022).

Environmental variables can play a significant role in contributing to pupils' speech anxiety. In their study conducted in Indonesia, Damayanti and Listyani (2020) examined the factors contributing to speech anxiety. Consequently, it was deduced that the inclusion of student and instructor feedback holds significant importance in addressing and mitigating this particular issue. The present study aimed to ascertain the primary component contributing to speech anxiety, revealing that environmental influences accounted for 56% of the variance. According to the study conducted by Daud et al. (2019), it was shown that students exhibit a high level of sensitivity towards feedback provided by their teachers. Furthermore, the absence of constructive feedback from teachers was observed to result in the development of speaking anxiety among students. Based on the findings derived from the final inquiry of this investigation, it is evident that students experience speech anxiety when delivering presentations in the presence of their peers. The identical condition was described by Putri et al. (2020). In their study, it was seen that pupils had heightened levels of anxiety when speaking in front of their peers and educators, leading to an increased rate of speech compared to alternative contexts.

## **Conclusion**

The present study was centred on examining the factors contributing to students' experience of anxiety in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes. This study included Likert-scale questionnaires

and interviews as research instruments to investigate the underlying factors contributing to students' speaking fear.

According to the findings of the study, a significant number of students had symptoms of anxiety when faced with social situations involving others. The results indicated that the anxiety experienced by pupils in foreign language classes can be attributed to three primary reasons for worry. The percentages for the factors are as follows: educational factors account for 71%, individual factors account for 66%, and environmental factors account for 56%.

Educational considerations encompass a deficient educational foundation, deficiencies in grammar and vocabulary, and inadequate proficiency in the English language. The research findings revealed that the second element was classified as personal factors.

The present section addresses a matter that emerges as a result of personal factors affecting students. When examining the questions and analyses of the Questionnaire, instances of this situation can be illustrated, such as experiencing unexplained uneasiness, difficulty articulating thoughts, and concerns about committing errors during verbal communication.

While it may appear to be of lesser significance compared to the other two components, environmental circumstances also contribute to the occurrence of speech anxiety, with a prevalence rate of 56%. One of the most significant variables is the prevalence of speaking anxiety among students, with 63% reporting experiencing this phenomenon when presenting in front of their peers and educators. One further aspect contributing to students' experience of speaking anxiety is the feedback they receive and anticipate receiving from their instructors and peers. The receipt of this feedback induces anxiety in individuals before engaging in verbal communication, thereby leading to the occurrence of errors.

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