

Students' Anxiety in Speaking English

Adinda Fasya Putri Hakim
Universitas Brawijaya
adindafasya@student.ub.ac.id

Alies Poetri Lintangari
Universitas Brawijaya
alieslintang@ub.ac.id

Corresponding author: adindafasya@student.ub.ac.id

Abstract

Speaking anxiety is a common issue among students, especially when studying English. The researchers discovered that speaking English in the class makes students feel anxious, which causes anxiety. In the context of this background, the purpose of this study was to compare students' anxiety in speaking English during the pandemic to students' anxiety in speaking English after the pandemic era. During the pandemic, students studied at home via online platforms, while after the pandemic, students returned to study at school and studied face to face with other students. The quantitative method with survey questionnaire was applied in this study. The data analysis was carried out descriptively. Furthermore, the data was gathered through a closed-ended questionnaire. The population of this study was 131 senior high school students who participated in this study. The data was analyzed using the paired sample t-test. From the test, the result of Sig. (2- tailed) is 0,684 which indicates the insignificant difference of the students' level of anxiety in speaking English in both online and offline circumstances.

Keywords: anxiety, english education, pandemic, post-pandemic, speaking

A. Introduction

Due to COVID-19, the world may face an enormous global health and socioeconomic disaster in early 2020. Millions of children and their families appear to have died in Indonesia. Education, mental health, and access to essential health services are all impacted by social limitations and school closures. It includes educational institutions in their efforts to change how instructors, professional educators, and facilitators teach to better use technology. As a result, it opens the door to online or web-based learning (Radha et al., 2020). Therefore, to adjust to the new school environment, adopt remote learning, and continue online learning, the Indonesian government mentioned Circular number 4 of 2020 regarding The Implementation of Education Policy During the Emergency Period of Coronavirus Disease Spread (Sekretariat Kabinet Republik Indonesia, 2020), by referring to the modifications and policies, educational institutions and schools adopted distance learning as one of the methods to prevent the spreading of viruses. During a pandemic, the learning process turns to online learning. In addition to the presence of distance learning, Lee et al. (2014) said that internet-based learning

may be extensively used and is acknowledged as one of the instruments that can be used on a daily basis in education. The Internet is valuable for resolving academic challenges (Kammerer et al., 2018). The internet is easily accessible and provides information from a variety of sources. Not only can everyone look for and obtain information through the internet, but anyone can also readily and freely post academic information. The quality and quantity of information available on the internet vary greatly. As a result, critical internet users must justify the claims of information they have obtained on the internet, as do most learners, including EFL students.

For students and educators globally, learning and teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic have been an unusual and challenging experience. To adapt to the circumstances and preserve educational continuity while keeping students and teachers safe, multiple methods of learning were used. One of the methods was remote or online learning (Hodges et al., 2020). The use of digital technologies and platforms to offer educational information, allow interaction between students and educators, and analyze learning results can be defined as online learning (Allen & Seaman, 2017). Online learning has several weaknesses during teaching and learning activities, especially in speaking. Furthermore, it causes students foreign language anxiety, and one of the anxieties that students face is their speaking ability (Pichette, 2009).

According to Mufanti et al. (2018), speaking is described as the ability to communicate effectively. They enable us to communicate the required information in a way that the listeners can understand. Speaking is the process of communicating a person's ideas, thoughts, and emotions by pronouncing words in order to arrange them into sentences or phrases. Speaking is also used for a variety of purposes, each of which necessitates a specific skill set. Many people use speaking to offer instructions or to complete tasks in specific contexts (Chien et al., 2020). In short, the authors assign speaking as a behavior in which humans attempt to express cognition, feelings, opinions, and information through statements as a way of communicating (Andriani & Syarif, 2021).

As a nation that does not speak English, studying English as a second language has been a difficult subject for Indonesian students, who are only exposed to the advanced language at school. Regardless of its complexities, The Ministry of Education and Culture has included English courses in Indonesian government policies. The Indonesian educational curriculum has been designed to integrate all four skills (speaking, writing, reading, and listening) and language abilities in English subjects at senior high schools (Mukminin et al., 2015).

According to Beesdo-Baum and Knappe (2012), anxiety is a basic emotion that appears in both infancy and childhood, with expressions ranging from mild to extreme. Anxiety is not usually unhealthy but rather adaptive when it assists in the avoidance of danger. Anxiety in speaking a second or foreign language, particularly English, can be debilitating, affecting students' adaptability to the specific environment and their educational goals. There is also wide agreement about how anxiety is linked to individual performance and that anxiety has been proven to have a negative impact on learning and attainment (Ansari, 2015).

In 2022, the pandemic began to recede, allowing education in Indonesia to resume normally through offline learning. Offline learning implies learning activities that do not require an internet connection or electronic devices. Regular classroom-based learning, textbooks, printed materials, and other instruments that aren't dependent on an internet connection are all examples of offline learning (Pritchard, 2018). In addition, in this study, the researchers conducted the research on students' anxiety in speaking English after the pandemic era.

Previously, several studies were conducted by prior researchers to determine the amount of anxiety in the pandemic era. Previous research has looked into students' anxiety about speaking English. The goal of the first study from Pahargyan (2021) was to evaluate students' fear of speaking English during online learning as well as discover how they deal with anxiety during online learning. This research revealed that during COVID-19, online learning made students afraid of speaking English. Other research has found that students are anxious when speaking English because they are afraid of being criticized by others. The factors that cause students' anxiety when speaking English include a limited vocabulary, a fear of making mistakes, and a lack of preparation in speaking English (Sundari et al., 2020).

Since the form of learning has changed to offline, the researchers are willing to conduct research that will analyze and identify the level of students' anxiety in speaking English between online and offline environments. Based on the study's background, the researchers want to find out if there is any difference between anxiety in speaking English during the pandemic and after the pandemic. This research is expected to be beneficial both theoretically and practically. In theory, this study may assist future researchers who might need supporting data on students' anxiety about speaking English during and after the pandemic. Practically, researchers expect that this study will assist teachers and students in developing appropriate treatment approaches, particularly for reducing students' anxiety.

By conducting this research study, the researchers tried to discover the differences between students' anxiety during and after the pandemic era. Therefore, as an outcome, in order to achieve the study's aim, the researchers conducted research titled "Students' Anxiety in Speaking English in The Post-Pandemic Era".

B. Research Methodology

In the present study, a quantitative approach was used. This research invites students in senior high school. The study's subjects were 131 twelfth-grade students who had previously learned about speaking English in English class. The researchers delivered a closed-ended questionnaire to the students using a Google Form for the first phase of the study. The questionnaire was given out in Indonesian to ensure that students understood and answered the questions accurately. The results of the questionnaire could be examined in the data analysis to determine the differences between students' anxiety in speaking English during the pandemic and students' anxiety in speaking English after the pandemic.

Table 1. Participant Demography

Student's Demography				
Characterisctic	Notes	Frequency	Percentage	Total
Gender	Female	68	51.9%	131
	Male	63	48.1%	
Grade	5 classes of 12 th Grade Senior High School			131

The researchers used a Likert Scale. The Likert Scale is a multi-category psychometric scale on which participants can express their thoughts, ideas, views, and attitudes regarding a specific subject (Nemoto & Beglar, 2014). The questionnaire was adapted from Öztürk and Gürbüz (2014). The options for each item in the questionnaire were organized from (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Agree, and (4) Strongly Agree when the data was analyzed. The questionnaires were circulated in order to collect student responses. The questionnaires contained 30 questions divided into two sections: 15 questions about anxiety in online learning and 15 similar questions in offline learning. Therefore, there are two sections of anxiety in students: anxiety during pandemic-related questions and anxiety after pandemic-related questions.

Table 2. Validity Test Results of Online Class Questionnaire

Item	Sig.	Explanation	Item	Sig.	Explanation	Item	Sig.	Explanation
1	0,793	Valid	6	0,747	Valid	11	0,556	Valid
2	0,749	Valid	7	0,883	Valid	12	0,877	Valid
3	0,813	Valid	8	0,674	Valid	13	0,659	Valid
4	0,835	Valid	9	0,855	Valid	14	0,812	Valid
5	0,843	Valid	10	0,689	Valid	15	0,804	Valid

Table 3. Validity Test Results of Offline Class Questionnaire

Item	Sig.	Explanation	Item	Sig.	Explanation	Item	Sig.	Explanation
1	0,846	Valid	6	0,782	Valid	11	0,629	Valid
2	0,862	Valid	7	0,888	Valid	12	0,894	Valid
3	0,857	Valid	8	0,817	Valid	13	0,795	Valid
4	0,875	Valid	9	0,843	Valid	14	0,815	Valid
5	0,859	Valid	10	0,796	Valid	15	0,857	Valid

According to Sugiyono (2013), validity is the accuracy of data that actually occurs in objects with data or theories collected by researchers. As for decision-making validity, namely:

- a. If $r \text{ count} > r \text{ table}$, then the statement qualifies as valid.
- b. If $r \text{ count} < r \text{ table}$, then the statement qualifies as invalid.

Based on the data above, the $r \text{ table}$ value of 131 respondents is 0.185. When compared with the 15 items, it has an $r \text{ count} > 0.185$. Therefore, it can be concluded that all of these items are valid.

Table 4. Reliability Test of Online Class Questionnaire

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0,952	15

Table 5. Reliability Test of Offline Class Questionnaire

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0,968	15

According to Sugiyono (2013), reliability is the result of measurements using the same object and still producing the same data when tested many times and at different times. The basis for making the decision, namely

- a. If the Cronbach's Alpha value is > 0.6 , then it is reliable.
- b. If the Cronbach's Alpha value is < 0.6 , then it is not reliable.

Based on the results of the analysis above, it can be concluded that the Cronbach alpha value is 0.952 and 0.968 > 0.06 , which means the data is reliable.

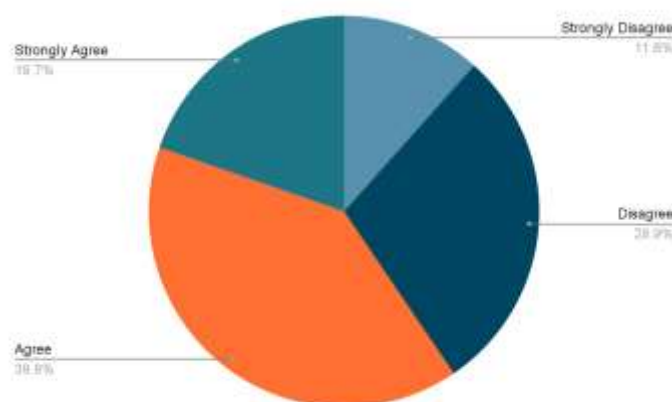
C. Results and Discussion

This section presents the result of the students' views toward their speaking anxiety during the pandemic and their speaking anxiety after the pandemic. The data is presented descriptively into two sub-section that are (1) the descriptive report of students' anxiety during and after the pandemic, and (2) the paired sample t-test reporting the difference in speaking anxiety of the students before and after the pandemic.

I. Descriptive Report

This part reports the descriptive result of the students' anxiety on speaking English during and after the pandemic. Based on chart number 1, most students are having anxiety about speaking English during the pandemic, which was confirmed by the responses from students to questions number 1-15.

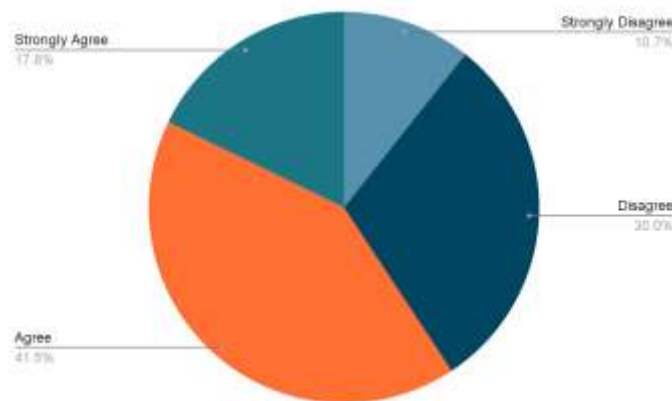
Chart 1. Students' Responses toward Speaking English Anxiety in Online Classroom



As seen in Chart 1, 39.8% of participants agree that they feel anxious about speaking English in an online context, followed by 19.7% who strongly agree. Meanwhile, the rest of

the responses confirm that they do not feel anxious, with a lesser percentage being 28.9% for the disagree response and 11.6% for the strongly disagree response. It concludes that slightly more participants are anxious (59.5%) to speak English in online classrooms, while others feel otherwise (40.5%).

Chart 2. Students' Responses toward Speaking English Anxiety in Offline Learning



Furthermore, chart number 2 explores the students' anxiety of speaking English in offline meetings after the pandemic. Most of the students (41.5%) agree that they also feel anxious when speaking in offline learning, followed by 17.8% strongly in agreement. Meanwhile, the rest of the responses confirm that they do not feel nervous, with a lower number of 30% disagree and 10.7% strongly disagreeing. It indicates that slightly more participants (59.3%) are anxious to speak English in an offline classroom, while others (40.7%) are not.

Table 5. Mean of Students Response per Item

No. Item	Questionnaire	Online Learning (M)	Offline Learning (M)
1	I am never quite sure of myself when I am speaking in English.	2.5	2.5
2	I am afraid of making mistakes in English classes.	2.6	2.6
3	I tremble when I know that I am going to be called on in English classes.	2.6	2.6
4	I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English classes.	2.9	2.8

5	I get embarrassed to volunteer answers in English classes.	2.7	2.6
6	I feel nervous while speaking English with native speakers.	2.7	2.8
7	I don't feel confident when I speak English in classes.	2.5	2.5
8	I am afraid that my English teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	2.4	2.5
9	I can feel my heart pounding when I am going to be called on in English classes.	2.5	2.7
10	I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do.	3.1	3
11	I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other students	2.7	2.8
12	I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in English classes.	2.6	2.7
13	I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules I have to learn to speak English.	2.6	2.7
14	I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak English.	2.5	2.5
15	I get nervous when the English teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.	2.9	2.9
Total Average		2.68	2.66

Additionally, this paper also presents the results of the survey based on each item to explore further what the most challenging experience is that makes the students feel anxious in speaking English. As seen in table 5, students are more anxious when they find other students speak English better than them (item number 10), both in online learning ($M = 3.1$) and offline learning ($M = 3$). Besides, being asked by the teacher when they have not prepared in advance is the second biggest anxiety cause (item number 15) in the offline and online classrooms ($M = 2.9$). However, students do not feel too anxious when being corrected by the teacher in the online classroom ($M = 2.4$).

II. Paired Sample T-Test Report

This section presents the result of a paired sample t-test to determine the difference between students' anxiety during and after the pandemic.

Table 6. Paired Sample Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	During Pandemi and After Pandemi	.19084	5.34806	.46726	-.73358	1.11526	.408	130	.684

Based on the result above, it can be interpreted that the significant value of Sig. (2-tailed) is 0,684. The value of Sig. (2-tailed) is $0.684 > 0.05$. It means that there is no significant difference between the variables during and after the pandemic.

Table 7. Descriptive Statistics

		Descriptive Statistics			
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Online Learning	40.1450	131	9.16525	.80077
	Offline Learning	39.9542	131	9.92035	.86674

Furthermore, to know the comparison of students' anxiety before and after the pandemic, this research provides the mean data as seen in Table 7. Table 7 shows the data from 131 students who participated in this study, showing that the mean score for anxiety during the pandemic was 40.1, and the mean score for anxiety after the pandemic was 39.9. This indicates that the student's anxiety is almost the same in both conditions, although they are more slightly anxious in online learning rather than in offline learning.

Discussion

Anxiety in speaking a second or foreign language, particularly English, can be debilitating, affecting students' adaptability to the specific environment and their educational goals (Ansari, 2015). The fear, apprehension, and anxiety felt by students while participating

through online or virtual educational activities is referred to as online learning anxiety (Lepp et al., 2015). Depending on those results, it can be concluded that speaking anxiety happened because students were afraid of making mistakes and also did not have much time to prepare what they wanted to say.

Tsiplakides and Keramida (2009) found that one of the causes of speaking anxiety is that learners are afraid their classmates will give them criticism when they speak in front of the class. Lack of preparation, fear of being left behind in understanding the material or what the teacher discusses, fear of making mistakes, fear of being laughed at by friends, and failing to spell, pronounce, and select words in English were the factors that made students feel anxious when speaking in English (Asysyfa et al., 2019).

This shows that students still feel unsure when they start speaking English during a pandemic or after a pandemic, and they are also still afraid of making mistakes during English classes during a pandemic or after a pandemic. Students tremble when their names are called, and even during online classes, students are still shaking even though learning is done online. Students start to panic when they have to speak English, even during a pandemic. This has not changed even after the pandemic because students are not confident.

Based on Table 5, the most stressful situation for students is when other students speak English better than them both in online and offline classrooms. In Table 5, students also feel anxiety when they are called to speak in front of other students. This fear can make it challenging for them to participate in speaking activities in both regular classrooms and online educational environments (Liu & Jackson, 2008). When the teacher called their names at random, the high school students were nervous and anxious because they had no idea whether they would be called next. The students' concerns about the teacher's and their friends' judgments might also contribute to their anxiety when speaking English. When the teacher instructed some students to go to the front of the class, researchers found that several of them were nervous and shaking.

Therefore, the researchers said that students' anxiety did not show significant changes during and after the pandemic. In addition to this, there are no big differences between their speaking anxiety in online classes and their speaking anxiety in offline classes, both of them were answered with strongly agreed terms and agreed terms.

D. Conclusion and Suggestion

Speaking anxiety can be described as mental distress or uneasiness produced by a fear of danger or a terrible event. Speaking anxiety may range from a mild sense of "nerves" to a practically overwhelming fear. The present study observed students' anxiety in speaking during and after the pandemic of COVID-19. The students' speaking anxiety level is measured via an online form. The results of this study revealed that students generally experience anxiety when they are forced to speak English in their classrooms. From this research, the researchers found that there was no significant contrast in participants' answers between their anxiety levels during the pandemic and after the pandemic. Finally, the researchers found that there is a way students feel anxiety when speaking English because they feel pressured and afraid to make mistakes if they do not have enough time to prepare or practice. Therefore, the teacher must give the students more chances for preparing and practicing their speaking skills in order to help them be more confident and boost their vocabulary knowledge for their speaking mastery.

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