

EDU REKHA INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF EDUCATION, HUMANITIES AND LITERATURE



Journal Homepage: <https://edurekhapublisher.com/erijehl/>

Volume- 1 Issue- 1 (January-February) 2026

Frequency: Bimonthly



PAGES: 12-18

ARTICLE TITLE:

EDU REKHA INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF
EDUCATION, HUMANITIES AND LITERATURE



Our Scope

- Education
- Literature
- Languages
- Social Welfare



EDU REKHA INTERNATIONAL PUBLISHER (ERIP)

+91 8638576262 submit.erijehl@gmail.com

ARTICLE HISTORY

RECEIVED
25-12-2025

ACCEPTED
18-01-2026

PUBLISHED
21-01-2026

Corresponding author:

Hanafi

English Language Education
Program, 5th Semester, UIN
Raden Mas Said Surakarta



STUDENTS' SPEAKING ANXIETY IN ENGLISH LEARNING:

A Case Study of Third-Semester Islamic Counseling Students at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta

Hanafi^{1*}, Sujito²

¹ English Language Education Program, 5th Semester, UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta,

² Departement of English Language Education, UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta.

Abstract

This study investigates the level of speaking anxiety among third-semester students of the Islamic Counseling Department at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta. The research aims to identify the degree and dominant aspects of anxiety experienced by students when speaking English. A quantitative descriptive method was used, and data were collected from 15 respondents through a questionnaire adapted from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) developed by Horwitz et al. (1986). The findings reveal that the majority of students (60%) experience a moderate level of speaking anxiety, while 26.7% experience high anxiety and 13.3% low anxiety. Among the three aspects, communication apprehension was the most dominant, followed by fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety. These results indicate that students feel most nervous in spontaneous speaking situations. The study highlights the importance of addressing affective factors in language learning to promote confidence and oral fluency.

Keywords: Speaking Anxiety, Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), Communication Apprehension, Fear of Negative Evaluation

Introduction

Language is an essential medium of human communication and a vital tool for expressing ideas, emotions, and thoughts. Among the four fundamental skills in language learning listening, speaking, reading, and writing speaking plays the most direct role in interpersonal communication. It is the skill that visibly reflects learners' language proficiency, as it requires both linguistic competence and psychological readiness. However, in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), especially in Indonesia, speaking is often considered the most difficult skill to master. This is not merely because of linguistic limitations such as vocabulary or grammar but also due to psychological barriers that hinder learners from expressing themselves confidently.

English is taught in almost all levels of education in Indonesia, from primary schools to universities, as part of the national curriculum. Despite this extensive exposure, many students still struggle to speak English fluently or confidently. For non-English majors such as students from Islamic Counseling or social science departments English is often regarded as a secondary subject, resulting in limited practice opportunities. Consequently, when students are required to speak in front of their lecturers or peers, they frequently experience feelings of nervousness, embarrassment, or fear. This phenomenon is commonly known as foreign language anxiety, a psychological reaction that interferes with communication performance in language classrooms.

Speaking anxiety in EFL settings has been widely recognized as one of the most significant affective factors influencing language learning outcomes. According to Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986), language anxiety is a distinct type of anxiety specific to second or foreign language learning situations. It manifests as worry, tension, or fear when learners attempt to use the target language. They conceptualized language anxiety as comprising three dimensions: communication apprehension (fear of speaking in front of others), fear of negative evaluation (worry about being judged or criticized), and test anxiety (fear of failing or performing poorly during evaluation). These dimensions are particularly relevant in speaking contexts, where learners must produce language spontaneously and are immediately evaluated by listeners.

The importance of addressing speaking anxiety extends beyond the linguistic aspect it also involves the emotional and cognitive domains of learners. Krashen (1982) proposed the Affective Filter Hypothesis, which suggests that emotional variables such as anxiety, motivation, and self-confidence can either facilitate or hinder second language acquisition. When anxiety levels are high, learners' affective filters rise, preventing them from processing and retaining linguistic input effectively. In contrast, low anxiety lowers the affective filter, enabling better comprehension and communication. Therefore, teachers who can create low-anxiety classrooms foster not only linguistic growth but also emotional resilience in their learners.

In the context of Islamic higher education, particularly within the Islamic Counseling Department (Bimbingan Konseling Islam-BKI), English is included as a general subject that supports students' academic development and future professional needs. Although BKI students are not English majors, they are expected to possess basic communication skills in English for academic and global engagement. However, anecdotal observations and preliminary classroom experiences indicate that many students in this department still exhibit

visible signs of anxiety during English-speaking tasks such as avoiding eye contact, speaking softly, or remaining silent when asked to participate. Some report physical symptoms such as rapid heartbeat, trembling, or forgetting words during presentations. These signs suggest that their anxiety may be moderate to high, particularly when required to speak spontaneously. The persistence of speaking anxiety among university students highlights a deeper pedagogical issue: emotional readiness is often neglected in language teaching. Traditional approaches in Indonesia have focused primarily on grammar and written exercises, giving little attention to affective dimensions such as confidence, motivation, and classroom atmosphere. As a result, students may perform well in written tests but fail to communicate effectively in oral situations. Recognizing the emotional side of language learning is therefore crucial to achieving communicative competence.

This study aims to describe the level of speaking anxiety among third-semester students of the Islamic Counseling Department at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta. It seeks to identify which component of anxiety communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, or test anxiety is the most dominant. Understanding these aspects will provide valuable insights for English educators, particularly those teaching non-English majors, to design learning environments that support psychological comfort and promote active participation. Furthermore, this study contributes to the broader understanding of affective factors in foreign language learning, emphasizing that mastering English speaking skills requires not only linguistic competence but also emotional stability and confidence.

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

Foreign language anxiety (FLA) has been one of the most discussed affective factors in second language acquisition research. It refers to the feeling of tension, fear, or nervousness associated specifically with the process of learning or using a foreign language. Unlike general anxiety, which may arise in various life situations, FLA is situational and context-dependent it emerges particularly in classroom interactions or language performance tasks. The concept of FLA was formally introduced and theorized by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986), who developed the **Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)** to measure its dimensions systematically.

According to Horwitz et al. (1986), FLA consists of **three major components: communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety**.

1. **Communication Apprehension (CA)** refers to the fear or anxiety associated with real or anticipated communication with others. It manifests in the classroom when learners are required to speak, especially in front of peers or teachers. Students with high CA tend to avoid speaking opportunities, hesitate before answering questions, or use short and incomplete sentences. They may even display physical symptoms such as shaking hands or sweating. CA is particularly relevant in speaking activities, where students must express ideas spontaneously and often fear being misunderstood or ridiculed.
2. **Fear of Negative Evaluation (FNE)** is the apprehension about others' judgments. Learners who are overly concerned about how they are perceived may become excessively self-conscious during language performance. They fear making mistakes, mispronouncing words, or receiving critical

comments from teachers or classmates. In collectivist cultures such as Indonesia, where maintaining social harmony and “saving face” are highly valued, this fear can be more intense, leading students to prefer silence rather than risk embarrassment.

3. **Test Anxiety (TA)** involves the fear of failure in evaluative situations, including oral exams, speaking presentations, or any performance that may influence grades. Students with high TA often equate their language performance with self-worth, so even minor errors may cause severe nervousness or self-doubt.

These three dimensions interact dynamically. For instance, a student who is afraid of being judged (FNE) may also experience communication apprehension, which then worsens test anxiety. The combination can significantly disrupt speaking performance, as learners’ attention is diverted from content to self-monitoring or error avoidance.

In addition to Horwitz’s model, **Krashen’s (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis** provides another theoretical explanation for the relationship between emotion and language acquisition. Krashen posited that learners’ affective states such as motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety act as a “filter” that can facilitate or hinder language input. When anxiety is high, the affective filter rises, preventing learners from absorbing language input effectively. When anxiety is low, the filter drops, allowing more linguistic information to pass through and be internalized. Thus, reducing anxiety is not merely about comfort; it directly influences the efficiency of learning and communication.

From a psychological perspective, anxiety is often described as an **emotional reaction involving cognitive, behavioral, and physiological components** (Spielberger, 1983). In language classrooms, cognitive anxiety appears as negative self-evaluation (“I can’t speak well”), behavioral anxiety as avoidance (refusing to speak), and physiological anxiety as physical discomfort (trembling, dry mouth, or rapid heartbeat). These responses can severely affect performance. For example, a student who fears speaking may recall fewer words, forget grammatical rules, or lose focus. The psychological mechanisms behind anxiety thus connect deeply with linguistic performance.

Several studies have validated and extended these theoretical frameworks. Liu and Jackson (2008) explored Chinese EFL learners and found that the majority experienced moderate to high speaking anxiety, primarily caused by communication apprehension. Similarly, Tóth (2010) investigated Hungarian university students and reported that even advanced learners struggled with anxiety when speaking English. In the Indonesian context, Elpena (2023) found that students’ anxiety was largely influenced by low self-confidence and fear of judgment, particularly among non-English majors. Her study highlighted that learners who perceive English as a difficult subject are more likely to avoid communication, even when they have sufficient knowledge.

Moreover, emotional and cultural dimensions play a role. Studies in Southeast Asia (Trang, 2012; Yamat & Bidin, 2017) suggest that Asian learners tend to exhibit higher levels of language anxiety than Western learners due to social norms emphasizing modesty, perfection, and avoidance of failure. In these contexts, making mistakes publicly is often equated with losing dignity, which reinforces silence in the

classroom. This cultural factor helps explain why Indonesian students, including those in Islamic universities, often appear reluctant to speak in English even when they understand the content.

The **relationship between anxiety and language performance** has been consistently negative across research. High anxiety correlates with lower speaking fluency, reduced vocabulary use, and weaker pronunciation accuracy. However, some scholars, such as MacIntyre (1995), have noted that a moderate level of anxiety may actually be beneficial by motivating students to prepare and focus more carefully. Therefore, the goal of teaching should not be to eliminate anxiety entirely but to keep it at a manageable level that stimulates learning without causing emotional paralysis.

In this study, the frameworks of Horwitz et al. (1986) and Krashen (1982) are adopted as the theoretical foundation to examine speaking anxiety among third-semester students in the Islamic Counseling Department at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta. These theories provide an integrated understanding of how affective factors interact with cognitive processes in foreign language learning. They also offer a practical framework for interpreting the results of this research, particularly in identifying which aspects of anxiety are most dominant and how they manifest among non-English major students. The ultimate aim is to contribute to the ongoing academic discussion on affective variables and to encourage pedagogical strategies that foster psychological comfort in English language classrooms.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative descriptive research design aimed at identifying and describing the level of speaking anxiety among third-semester students of the Islamic Counseling Department (Bimbingan Konseling Islam-BKI) at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta. A quantitative approach was considered suitable because it allows for systematic measurement and statistical analysis of variables related to language anxiety. The purpose of this method is not to establish causation but to provide a detailed picture of the phenomenon based on numerical data.

Participants

The participants consisted of 15 students enrolled in the third semester of the BKI Department during the 2025 academic year. All participants had taken a compulsory English course in the previous semester, giving them some basic experience in speaking English. The total population of active third-semester students in the department was 15, therefore a total sampling technique was applied, meaning that every member of the population participated in the research. This approach ensured complete representativeness and minimized sampling bias.

The participants were aged between 19 and 21 years old and represented a mix of male and female students. They were non-English majors, and their exposure to English was limited to one or two general English courses in the university curriculum. This group was chosen because they represent typical EFL learners who experience anxiety due to limited linguistic confidence and infrequent use of English in everyday contexts.

Research Instrument

The data were collected using a questionnaire adapted from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) developed by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986). The questionnaire consisted of 15 items, selected and modified to focus specifically on speaking anxiety

rather than general classroom anxiety. Each item was designed to measure one of three dimensions:

1. **Communication Apprehension** (e.g., "I feel nervous when I have to speak English in front of my classmates"),
2. **Fear of Negative Evaluation** (e.g., "I am afraid that my classmates will laugh at me when I make mistakes"), and
3. **Test Anxiety** (e.g., "I feel very anxious before English-speaking tests or presentations").

Each item used a **five-point Likert scale**, where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree. The total score for each participant was obtained by summing all item responses, resulting in a possible range of **15-75 points**. Higher scores indicate higher levels of speaking anxiety.

Before distributing the questionnaire, the instrument underwent a **content validation process**. Two English language lecturers from the English Education Department reviewed the questionnaire to ensure that the items were clear, relevant, and aligned with the study objectives. Based on their feedback, several wording adjustments were made to improve readability and contextual appropriateness for BKI students. The reliability of the adapted questionnaire was assessed using **Cronbach's Alpha** from a pilot test conducted with a small group of similar students from another department. The reliability coefficient was $\alpha = 0.84$, indicating high internal consistency according to the standard threshold proposed by George and Mallory (2003). This ensured that the questionnaire reliably measured the construct of speaking anxiety.

Data Collection Procedure

The data collection process took place during the second half of the semester. After obtaining permission from the lecturer of Psycholinguistics, the researcher distributed the questionnaire using **Google Forms** for convenience and accessibility. A short introduction was provided at the beginning of the form to explain the purpose of the study, assure confidentiality, and emphasize voluntary participation. Respondents were asked to read each statement carefully and choose the answer that best reflected their feelings. The completion time was approximately **10-15 minutes**. To maintain ethical standards, participants' identities were kept anonymous, and their responses were used solely for academic purposes. No personal or sensitive information was collected. Participants were informed that there were no right or wrong answers and that honest responses would help improve English learning practices in the department.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using **descriptive statistics**, focusing on frequencies, percentages, and mean scores. Each respondent's total score was categorized into one of three levels of anxiety:

- **Low Anxiety:** 15–40
- **Moderate Anxiety:** 41–60
- **High Anxiety:** 61–75

Additionally, the mean scores for each of the three anxiety dimensions (communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety) were calculated to determine which aspect was most dominant among the participants. Results were presented in the form of tables and supported with narrative interpretation. To ensure accuracy, the data were rechecked for completeness and consistency before analysis.

Statistical calculations were performed manually and verified using spreadsheet software. The findings were then compared with theoretical expectations and previous research results in order to provide deeper insights into the speaking anxiety levels of BKI students.

RESULT

The purpose of this section is to present and describe the data collected from 15 respondents through the speaking anxiety questionnaire. The analysis was conducted to determine the overall level of speaking anxiety and to identify which component of anxiety communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, or test anxiety was the most dominant among the students. The quantitative results are summarized in the following tables.

1. Overall Speaking Anxiety Levels

The total scores of each respondent were categorized into three levels: low, moderate, and high anxiety. The categorization was based on the total score ranges described in the method section (15–40 = low, 41–60 = moderate, and 61–75 = high). The distribution of the students' anxiety levels is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of Students' Speaking Anxiety Levels

Anxiety Level	Score	Range	Number of Student Percentage
Low Anxiety	15-40	2	13.3%
Moderate Anxiety	41-60	9	60.0%
High Anxiety	61-75	4	26.7%
Total		15	100%

As shown in Table 1, the majority of students (9 out of 15, or 60%) fall within the moderate anxiety category. This suggests that most of the BKI students experience a balanced level of speaking anxiety they are somewhat nervous when speaking English but not to the extent that it completely prevents them from participating. Meanwhile, 26.7% of students reported high anxiety levels, indicating that a smaller portion of the class experiences strong nervousness, fear, or avoidance when speaking English. Only 13.3% of students, or two respondents, demonstrated low anxiety, meaning they are relatively comfortable speaking in English despite minor mistakes or social pressure. These findings reflect a typical pattern in EFL classrooms, where most learners experience moderate anxiety. This level can be considered both a challenge and a motivator: while some nervousness is present, it does not entirely hinder learning. However, the existence of a considerable proportion of highly anxious students should not be ignored, as their learning participation and progress might be negatively affected.

2. Mean Scores by Anxiety Dimensions

To identify which aspect of anxiety most strongly influenced students' speaking performance, the mean scores for each dimension communication apprehension (CA), fear of negative evaluation (FNE), and test anxiety (TA) were calculated. The results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Mean Scores of Speaking Anxiety Dimensions

Aspect of Anxiety	Number of Item	Mean	Category

Communication Apprehension	5	3.97	High
Fear of Negative Evaluation	5	3.67	Moderate-High
Test Anxiety	5	3.63	Moderate-High
Overall Mean	15	3.76	Moderate-High

As illustrated in Table 2, communication apprehension recorded the highest mean score of 3.97. This means that the students' greatest difficulty lies in their fear or discomfort when speaking English in front of others. They tend to become anxious in spontaneous speaking situations, such as answering a question in class or presenting without preparation. Fear of negative evaluation was the second most influential factor, with a mean score of 3.67. This indicates that students are also worried about how others perceive their speaking performance, particularly when they make mistakes in pronunciation or grammar. Many students reported feeling embarrassed when corrected in public or when peers reacted to their errors.

Finally, test anxiety obtained a mean score of 3.63, slightly lower than the other two components. Although it is the least dominant, it still indicates a moderate to high level of anxiety during formal assessments, such as oral tests, presentations, or graded speaking tasks. The overall mean score of 3.76 places the students' general speaking anxiety level within the moderate-to-high range. This finding suggests that while most students are capable of participating in English-speaking activities, they still experience substantial emotional discomfort that may interfere with fluency, spontaneity, and confidence.

3. Detailed Observations

During the data collection process, several qualitative notes were also recorded from students' open-ended comments. Although the study primarily used quantitative data, these comments provide useful insights that complement the statistical results. Some students mentioned that they felt "worried about making mistakes," "nervous when asked to speak suddenly," or "afraid of being laughed at." Others expressed that they "felt shy because English is not used daily" and "preferred to speak in smaller groups rather than in front of the whole class."

These responses correspond closely with the numerical findings. Students' anxiety mainly stemmed from communication apprehension, particularly spontaneous oral interaction. The sense of fear of negative evaluation was also visible through their reluctance to speak when others were watching. Interestingly, several students expressed that they felt more comfortable speaking when the teacher provided encouragement or used group discussions instead of individual questioning, suggesting that classroom environment and teaching style significantly influence anxiety levels.

4. Interpretation of Findings

The dominance of communication apprehension implies that students' speaking anxiety is primarily situational rather than purely linguistic. Most students know basic vocabulary and grammar but feel inhibited by the psychological pressure of speaking publicly. This supports Horwitz et al.'s (1986) claim that anxiety often originates from perceived communication incompetence rather than actual lack of ability. The relatively high score for fear of negative evaluation reflects the social dimension of learning in collectivist cultures like Indonesia,

where maintaining face and avoiding embarrassment are deeply ingrained. Students fear being judged by both teachers and classmates, which can make them hesitant to take risks in speaking. Test anxiety, while not the strongest factor, still plays an important role especially in formal evaluation settings where grades and performance expectations are explicit.

Overall, the findings portray a clear picture: most BKI students are moderately anxious English speakers. While they are not entirely paralyzed by fear, their emotional unease may reduce willingness to communicate, lower fluency, and cause avoidance behaviors. This underscores the importance of addressing affective aspects in English teaching, particularly for students whose academic background is outside English education.

Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that speaking anxiety remains a significant psychological barrier in English language learning, particularly among non-English major students. The majority of BKI students at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta were found to experience moderate to high levels of speaking anxiety, with communication apprehension emerging as the most dominant factor. This section discusses the implications of these results in relation to existing theories and previous studies, while also reflecting on the pedagogical context of Islamic higher education in Indonesia.

1. Speaking Anxiety in EFL Contexts

The overall moderate level of anxiety found among the participants aligns with numerous previous studies in EFL settings worldwide. Horwitz et al. (1986) emphasized that speaking anxiety is a common phenomenon even among capable learners. The classroom, as a social and evaluative environment, naturally induces anxiety because students are simultaneously performing and being judged. For non-English majors, this feeling is often intensified due to their limited exposure to English outside of the classroom.

Similar patterns have been reported in other Asian contexts. Liu and Jackson (2008) found that Chinese university students frequently experienced anxiety when communicating in English, even though they had been learning the language for several years. Likewise, Trang (2012) noted that Vietnamese students exhibited moderate anxiety levels that affected their fluency and willingness to communicate. These parallels suggest that speaking anxiety among EFL learners in Asia is a persistent and cross-cultural issue, influenced by both linguistic and socio-cultural factors.

2. Dominance of Communication Apprehension

The fact that communication apprehension (CA) was the most dominant factor in this study highlights the emotional pressure students feel during spontaneous oral communication. When required to speak without preparation, learners often experience cognitive overload: they must simultaneously think of the right words, apply correct grammar, and manage pronunciation all while being aware of their audience. According to Horwitz et al. (1986), this type of performance anxiety is similar to stage fright and can significantly reduce oral fluency.

In the context of BKI students, communication apprehension may also stem from a mismatch between their academic background and language demands. Unlike English majors, these students do not receive intensive language practice; thus, their linguistic confidence remains underdeveloped. When asked to speak in front of peers or

lecturers, their awareness of linguistic limitations triggers nervousness and fear of embarrassment. Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis provides a strong theoretical explanation for this phenomenon. When anxiety rises, the affective filter becomes higher, blocking input processing and inhibiting spontaneous language production. This theory explains why even students who understand English may remain silent in class their emotional state prevents them from expressing knowledge effectively.

3. Fear of Negative Evaluation and Cultural Factors

The second most influential component, fear of negative evaluation (FNE), reflects the deep social dimension of learning in Indonesia. In collectivist cultures, students tend to value social harmony and fear public embarrassment. Making mistakes in front of others is not only a linguistic issue but also a threat to one's self-image. This explains why students often choose silence over risk-taking in communication.

The data and students' comments in this study revealed that many were afraid of being laughed at or corrected by peers. This aligns with the findings of Elpina (2023), who discovered that Indonesian students often equate language mistakes with personal failure. Similarly, Yamat and Bidin (2017) found that Malaysian learners avoided speaking English because they feared social judgment. These cultural patterns suggest that affective barriers are deeply embedded in learners' social environments and cannot be addressed solely through linguistic training. Teachers, therefore, need to foster classroom atmospheres that encourage risk-taking and view mistakes as a natural part of learning.

4. Role of Test Anxiety

Although test anxiety (TA) scored the lowest among the three dimensions, it still played a meaningful role in shaping students' attitudes toward English-speaking activities. Many respondents reported feeling tense during oral presentations or examinations where grades were involved. According to MacIntyre and Gardner (1991), test anxiety can trigger physiological symptoms such as rapid heartbeat, mental blocks, or difficulty recalling vocabulary during evaluation. While test anxiety is less visible than communication apprehension, its cumulative effects may reduce overall classroom participation.

Interestingly, some students expressed that they felt less anxious during group discussions or ungraded activities, suggesting that the formal evaluation context is the key trigger rather than speaking itself. This observation reinforces the argument made by Krashen (1982) that affective conditions, including the learning environment and teacher behavior, can either exacerbate or alleviate anxiety. When students perceive the classroom as supportive and non-threatening, their affective filter lowers, enabling more active participation.

5. Pedagogical Implications

The results of this study carry important implications for English language teaching, particularly for non-English majors in Islamic universities. The presence of moderate to high anxiety levels indicates that many students are emotionally unprepared to engage in communicative activities. Therefore, teachers must play a dual role not only as linguistic instructors but also as emotional facilitators.

Several strategies can be implemented to reduce speaking anxiety:

1. **Creating a supportive learning environment.** Teachers should encourage participation without penalizing mistakes and provide positive feedback that builds confidence.

2. **Using group and pair work.** Collaborative learning activities reduce pressure by shifting focus away from individual performance.
3. **Gradual exposure to public speaking.** Starting from small-group discussions before moving to whole-class presentations helps students adjust progressively.
4. **Integrating affective training.** Short mindfulness or relaxation techniques before speaking tasks can lower physiological anxiety.
5. **Encouraging self-reflection.** Helping students recognize their emotional responses to speaking can foster self-awareness and resilience.

By adopting these approaches, teachers can help students perceive English communication as an achievable and enjoyable process rather than an intimidating challenge.

6. Reflection on the Learning Context

In the specific context of UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta, where the BKI Department focuses on counseling and human development, the ability to communicate effectively including in English is valuable for students' future professional roles. Counselors are expected to convey empathy, confidence, and clarity skills that overlap with communicative competence. Therefore, helping students overcome speaking anxiety not only benefits their English learning but also strengthens their interpersonal and professional capacities.

Furthermore, incorporating discussions about psychological aspects of learning within the curriculum can raise awareness about anxiety as a natural and manageable part of education. When students understand that their fear is shared and normal, they are more likely to confront it constructively.

CONCLUSION

The present study set out to investigate the levels and dominant sources of speaking anxiety among third-semester students of the Islamic Counseling Department (BKI) at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta. Using a quantitative descriptive design with a questionnaire adapted from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), the study revealed that most students experience moderate to high levels of speaking anxiety, with communication apprehension identified as the most dominant dimension. The findings confirm that anxiety remains one of the key affective variables influencing students' ability to speak English confidently and effectively.

The results clearly demonstrate that communication apprehension—the fear of speaking in front of others—is the most significant barrier to oral performance. Many students reported feeling nervous, hesitant, or self-conscious during spontaneous speaking tasks, such as answering questions or giving oral presentations. This finding supports Horwitz et al.'s (1986) concept that communication apprehension is the central component of foreign language anxiety. The data also reflect Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis, emphasizing that high anxiety impedes input processing and reduces communicative output.

The second dominant factor, fear of negative evaluation, highlights the social dimension of learning in the Indonesian classroom context. The cultural tendency to avoid mistakes and maintain a positive self-image contributes to students' reluctance to speak. The influence of test anxiety was less pronounced but still relevant in formal assessment situations, where the pressure of evaluation heightened nervousness

and performance tension. Together, these dimensions form an emotional framework that shapes how students perceive and engage in English-speaking activities.

From a pedagogical perspective, these findings underscore the necessity of addressing affective factors alongside linguistic instruction. Teachers must recognize that building students' emotional confidence is as crucial as teaching grammar or pronunciation. Anxiety cannot be entirely eliminated, but it can be reduced through intentional classroom design. Teachers can foster a supportive environment by promoting cooperative learning, offering positive feedback, and designing low-pressure speaking activities. By shifting focus from accuracy to communication, educators can help students view speaking as a learning process rather than a test of competence.

For the students themselves, self-awareness and self-regulation are key. Understanding that anxiety is a normal and shared experience can help them manage it constructively. Developing consistent practice habits, engaging in peer discussions, and reframing mistakes as part of progress can gradually improve confidence. Moreover, because BKI students' future professional roles involve communication and counseling, overcoming speaking anxiety in English may also strengthen their interpersonal communication skills more broadly.

This research also contributes theoretically by reaffirming the applicability of FLCAS and the Affective Filter Hypothesis to non-English majors in Islamic university contexts. It provides empirical support for the idea that foreign language anxiety is a universal affective phenomenon that affects learners regardless of discipline. The findings extend the discussion of speaking anxiety beyond English departments, highlighting the emotional realities of students in interdisciplinary academic settings.

However, this study is not without limitations. The sample size was relatively small ($n = 15$) and drawn from a single department, which restricts the generalizability of results. Future studies are encouraged to include larger and more diverse populations, possibly incorporating qualitative interviews or classroom observations to gain a deeper understanding of students' emotional experiences. Further exploration into coping strategies, teacher feedback styles, and cross-cultural differences in language anxiety could provide valuable insights for both research and practice.

In conclusion, speaking anxiety among BKI students is a multifaceted emotional challenge that intertwines cognitive, social, and cultural elements. Recognizing and addressing this affective dimension is essential for promoting not only linguistic competence but also psychological well-being. A supportive, empathetic, and communicative classroom environment will enable students to transform anxiety into confidence, ultimately fostering more effective English language learning and more empowered future communicators.

REFERENCE

1. Ali, A. S., & Hamzah, E. H. B. (2025). The Effect of Anxiety on English Speaking Performance Among Second Language Learners: A Psycholinguistic Study.
2. Asterina, V., Tahir, M., & Bakri, F. (2025). Strategies for Alleviating Language Anxiety in Students' Academic Speaking Performance.
3. Cahyaningtiyas, Y., Hatip, M., & Oktarini, W. (2025). Learning Anxiety in Speaking Activities Among Senior High School Students in Indonesia.
4. Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. (1986). Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 70(2), 125–132.
5. Jannah, M. (2025). The Level of Students' Anxiety in Speaking English at SMA Negeri 1 Pinrang. *Mappakalebbi: Jurnal Tadris Bahasa Inggris*.
6. Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*. Pergamon Press.
7. Sari, D. (2017). Speaking Anxiety as a Factor in Studying EFL. *English Education Journal*, 8(2), 121–134.
8. Sarnilawati, A., Azami, M. I., & Ni'mah, D. (2024). Analyzing Students' Anxiety in Learning English Speaking. *Jurnal Penelitian, Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran*.
9. Susidamaiyanti, S. (2018). Reducing Students' Foreign Language Anxiety in Speaking Class Through Cooperative Learning.