

ENGLISH-SPEAKING ANXIETY AMONG PRESERVICE EFL TEACHERS DURING TEACHING PRACTICUM: A QUANTITATIVE SURVEY STUDY

Deni Asrida^{1*}, Siska Febriyanti²
Universitas Islam Negeri Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar, Batusangkar, Indonesia

deniasrida@uinmybatusangkar.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Speaking anxiety is widely recognised as one psychological obstacle to learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). It has a substantial effect on pre-service teachers since they are expected to utilize English while they are learning how to teach. Although ample of research has examined speaking anxiety among EFL learners, empirical studies focusing on preservice EFL teachers during the teaching practicum phase remain limited particularly within Indonesian Islamic education teacher context. This research investigated the speaking anxiety of pre-service EFL teachers at UIN Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar who had completed their teaching practice. A quantitative survey design was employed, and data were collected using a speaking anxiety questionnaire. The data were analysed using descriptive statistic through SPSS version 26. The data findings revealed that the majority of participants experienced speaking anxiety (72.3%) were classified as moderate level of anxiety. Additionally, 13.9 % of participants fell into the high anxiety category while another 13.9% were categorized as having low anxiety. These results indicate that speaking anxiety is common and tangible experience although it generally remains manageable level. The findings suggest important pedagogical implications for EFL teacher education suggesting that the integration of positive teaching models, inclusive teaching simulations and helpful feedback may help reduce anxiety and help pre-service teachers to speak better. This study offers practical recommendation to strengthen preservice teachers in their language skills and better prepare them for classroom practice.

Keywords: Preservice EFL Teachers, Speaking Anxiety, Teaching Practicum

INTRODUCTION

The ability to speak English fluently and confidently is widely recognized as one of the most essential competencies in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, particularly for students enrolled in English Education programs. For preservice English teachers, speaking proficiency is not only an academic requirement but also a professional necessity, as they are expected to use English actively during their teaching practicum. In practicum settings, preservice teachers must deliver lessons, manage

classrooms, interact with students, and communicate with supervising teachers, all of which require effective use of English. However, research consistently shows that many EFL learners, including those preparing to be teachers, struggle with speaking anxiety a psychological barrier that negatively affects speech production, confidence, and classroom performance (Huang et al., 2024; Kusumawat & Fauzia, 2019; Lian et al., 2025).

Foreign language anxiety is conceptualized as a situation-specific affective response characterized by feelings of tension, apprehension, and worry experienced when learning or using a foreign language (Horwitz et al., 1986). Among the different forms of language anxiety, speaking anxiety is often identified as the most debilitating because speaking requires real-time processing, spontaneous language production, and performance in front of an audience or authority figure. These conditions tend to increase psychological pressure, making speaking tasks more threatening than receptive skills like reading or listening. In EFL contexts such as Indonesia, where opportunities for authentic English communication are limited, speaking activities often evoke higher levels of discomfort than other language skills (Aizawa et al., 2023).

In the Indonesian EFL context, several studies indicate that speaking anxiety is widespread among university students, including those majoring in English Education. Students typically report feeling nervous, afraid of making mistakes, insecure about their vocabulary or pronunciation, and anxious about being judged by lecturers or peers (Abrar et al., 2018; Damayanti & Listyani, 2020). For preservice teachers, the challenge is increased during the teaching practicum (Praktek Pengalaman Lapangan/PPL), where they must use English as the medium of instruction while simultaneously being evaluated by mentor teachers and university supervisors. This dual role, being both a learner and a teacher, creates a unique emotional pressure that may elevate anxiety, especially when preservice teachers perceive themselves as lacking sufficient linguistic competence (Aizawa et al., 2023; Alhasan et al., 2024; Cai et al., 2024; Li et al., 2023).

The theoretical foundation of this study is grounded in the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) developed by Horwitz et al. (1986). This framework categorizes anxiety into three main components: (1) communication apprehension, referring to difficulty in oral communication and public speaking; (2) test anxiety, related to fear of assessment; and (3) fear of negative evaluation, which refers to concern about being judged unfavourably by others. These dimensions are highly relevant for preservice teachers undergoing practicum since they frequently encounter evaluative situations such as teaching observations, feedback sessions, and assessments from mentor teachers and students.

Teaching practicum is considered a crucial component of teacher education programs because it provides authentic teaching experience in real classroom environments. However, it is also one of the most stressful stages, particularly for EFL preservice teachers who must speak English continuously while teaching. Research suggests that during practicum, speaking anxiety can manifest in various forms, such as hesitation, avoidance of speaking, reduced classroom participation, reliance on memorized scripts, and decreased teaching clarity (Chen, 2024; Derbani et al., 2025b; Dhema, 2023; Kuluşaklı & Genç, 2024). High anxiety levels may impair preservice teachers' ability to deliver lessons effectively and may lower their confidence, which in turn can hinder their professional development and teaching performance (Arifin et al., 2024; Derbani et al., 2025b).

The measurement of speaking anxiety through quantitative approaches provides valuable insights into the intensity and distribution of anxiety among learners. Descriptive statistical analysis allows researchers to categorize the severity of anxiety

into low, moderate, and high levels, providing a clear portrait of students' affective states. Previous quantitative studies typically show that most preservice teachers experience moderate levels of anxiety, while a smaller percentage experiences high anxiety that may severely affect their speaking performance (Anandari, 2015; Atifnigar, 2024; Haroud et al., 2025).

Despite existing research on speaking anxiety in Indonesia, studies that focus specifically on preservice EFL teachers during teaching practicum particularly those conducted in Islamic higher education institutions remain limited. Most existing studies investigate causes of anxiety or use qualitative approaches, while fewer studies quantitatively determine anxiety levels using standardized scales. Considering the critical role of practicum in shaping teacher readiness and professional competence, further quantitative investigation is needed to understand the extent of speaking anxiety experienced by preservice teachers.

The present study addresses this gap by quantitatively assessing the level of English-speaking anxiety among preservice EFL teachers at UIN Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar who had completed their teaching practicum. Unlike studies that explore sources or strategies, this study focuses purely on numerical measurement through descriptive statistics, aiming to determine the minimum and maximum anxiety scores, mean score, standard deviation, and distribution of anxiety categories. Measuring anxiety levels quantitatively provides an empirical basis for institutions to design interventions, improve curriculum, and enhance support systems for preservice teachers.

The findings of this study contribute to a deeper understanding of affective factors influencing preservice teachers' performance during practicum and offer important implications for English language education programs seeking to strengthen students' speaking competence and pedagogical readiness.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative descriptive survey design to measure the level of English-speaking anxiety among preservice EFL teachers. This design was selected because the primary objective was to obtain numerical representations of anxiety level rather than to investigate causal relationships or explore students' subjective experiences. Descriptive quantitative research enables the identification of patterns, distribution, and prevalence of psychological constructs within a specific population, making it suitable for studies that aim to classify learners according to anxiety categories such as low, moderate, and high (Creswell et al., 2011). Through the use of a structured questionnaire, this design ensures systematic data collection, reliability, and comparability with previous foreign language anxiety studies.

The research was conducted at UIN Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar, specifically within the English Education Study Program, after the students had completed their teaching practicum (PPL). This setting offered a relevant context for investigating speaking anxiety because practicum activities require sustained use of English for classroom instruction, interaction, and professional communication. Conducting the survey after the practicum allowed participants to reflect accurately on their anxiety levels during authentic teaching situations, thereby enhancing the ecological validity of the findings. The university's structured practicum program, which places students in partner schools for supervised teaching experience, created a natural environment where speaking anxiety may manifest more intensely than in typical classroom-based learning.

The participants of this study consisted of all 101 preservice EFL teachers who met the inclusion criteria, selected through total sampling. This technique was adopted to

ensure that every student who had completed the practicum and was accessible during the study period contributed to the dataset, thus maximizing representativeness. The participants were predominantly female (79.2%, $n = 80$), while male students accounted for 20.8% ($n = 21$). Most participants were in their seventh or eighth semester, which corresponds to the practicum stage in the curriculum. These demographic characteristics reflect common trends in English Education programs across Indonesia, where female enrolment is typically higher. The use of total sampling allows the findings to accurately describe the anxiety levels of the entire cohort without sampling error.

The instrument used in this research was a structured questionnaire adapted from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) developed by Horwitz, Horwitz et al. (1986). The adaptation focused specifically on items related to speaking anxiety to align the instrument with the context of teaching practicum, where oral performance is a central requirement. The questionnaire employed a Likert-scale format, enabling participants to indicate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with statements reflecting anxiety-related behaviours and feelings. The total possible scores ranged from 51 to 113, where higher scores indicated higher anxiety levels. Although the FLCAS has been widely validated, the adapted version underwent expert judgment by specialists in English language teaching and educational psychology to ensure content relevance. A pilot test conducted with 20 students from another cohort demonstrated high reliability, with Cronbach's Alpha values exceeding 0.80, confirming strong internal consistency.

Data collection took place online using Google Forms to facilitate efficient administration and accessibility. Prior to completing the questionnaire, participants were provided with clear information regarding the purpose of the study, voluntary nature of participation, and measures taken to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. Only students who provided informed consent proceeded to complete the questionnaire. The online format allowed students to respond independently and reduced potential bias associated with face-to-face data collection. Once responses were collected, they were screened for completeness. A high response rate of 98% was achieved, and all 101 valid responses were included in the final analysis.

Data were analysed using SPSS Version 26. The analysis focused on descriptive statistics, which included calculating minimum and maximum scores, the mean, the standard deviation, and frequency distributions. These statistical measures provided a comprehensive overview of students' anxiety levels and the degree of variation within the sample. To categorize anxiety levels into low, moderate, and high, the study employed the interval width method recommended by Sudjana (2005) and Arikunto (2010). Anxiety scores between 51 and 72 were classified as low, those between 73 and 94 as moderate, and those between 95 and 116 as high. This categorization allowed for clear interpretation of the severity of anxiety experienced by preservice teachers and facilitated meaningful comparison across groups.

The study strictly adhered to ethical guidelines throughout the research process. Participation was entirely voluntary, and students were informed that they could withdraw at any time without penalty. Confidentiality was guaranteed by ensuring that no identifying information was collected and that all responses were stored securely. The research posed no risk to participants, as it involved only self-reflection on emotional states commonly experienced in educational settings. Ethical compliance strengthens the credibility and integrity of the findings and aligns with the professional standards expected in educational research.

RESULTS

After distributing the questionnaire to 101 respondents, the following data tabulation results were obtained:

Table 1: Tabulation result

Resp	Total Score	Resp	Total Score	Resp	Total Score	Resp	Total Score	Resp	Total Score
1	83	21	80	41	95	61	82	81	90
2	88	22	80	42	98	62	99	82	87
3	75	23	87	43	86	63	68	83	78
4	64	24	78	44	74	64	72	84	79
5	66	25	91	45	72	65	76	85	92
6	77	26	95	46	79	66	90	86	82
7	85	27	90	47	95	67	92	87	89
8	80	28	88	48	85	68	81	88	103
9	99	29	82	49	70	69	87	89	91
10	92	30	78	50	88	70	68	90	91
11	79	31	113	51	75	71	79	91	82
12	95	32	79	52	85	72	99	92	89
13	96	33	74	53	62	73	88	93	83
14	96	34	60	54	76	74	66	94	77
15	63	35	90	55	77	75	84	95	85
16	109	36	86	56	92	76	83	96	82
17	73	37	85	57	79	77	57	97	93
18	91	38	94	58	86	78	94	98	85
19	87	39	89	59	74	79	51	99	67
20	88	40	78	60	85	80	84	100	103
								101	74

After tabulating the data, descriptive data processing was carried out using SPSS 26. Based on the results of the data analysis, the following results were obtained:

Tabel 2. Descriptive data

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
VAR00034	101	51.00	113.00	83.3465	10.88984
Valid N (listwise)	101				

The analysis of the speaking anxiety scores obtained from 101 preservice EFL teachers provides a comprehensive picture of the emotional challenges they experienced during their teaching practicum. The initial descriptive statistics reveal meaningful insights into the range and distribution of anxiety levels within the sample. The lowest anxiety score recorded was 51, which suggests that at least one participant reported minimal emotional tension or apprehension when speaking English in real teaching contexts. A score at this level indicates a student who likely felt comfortable and confident while communicating with learners, supervisors, and peers. On the opposite end of the spectrum, the highest score reached 113, reflecting intense anxiety and emotional

discomfort related to speaking English during practicum activities. Students scoring in this range may have struggled significantly with nervousness, fear of negative evaluation, and difficulty maintaining fluency under pressure. These extreme scores illustrate the diverse spectrum of emotional experiences among preservice teachers, confirming that speaking anxiety affects individuals differently based on their linguistic background, psychological disposition, and practicum performance experiences.

The mean anxiety score of 83.34 indicates that most participants clustered around a moderate level of speaking anxiety. Students within this central range likely experienced noticeable tension and worry about language performance, especially during teaching tasks that required spontaneous speaking. While they may have worried about pronunciation errors, vocabulary limitations, or the reactions of students and supervising teachers, their anxiety was still manageable and did not completely inhibit their ability to speak or teach effectively. The standard deviation of 10.88 further illustrates the degree of variability within the data. With an SD of nearly eleven points, the results suggest that although a large number of preservice teachers reported anxiety around the mean, considerable individual differences were also present. Some students experienced significantly lower levels of anxiety than the average, while others felt substantially more anxious than the typical respondent.

To visually illustrate the quantitative patterns emerging from the speaking anxiety data, the chart was generated to represent the distribution and comparative proportions of anxiety levels among the 101 preservice EFL teachers. The chart presents the overall distribution of students across three anxiety categories (low, moderate, and high), offering a clear view of how speaking anxiety was dispersed within the cohort. This visualization highlights the predominance of moderate anxiety and the symmetrical distribution between the low and high categories.

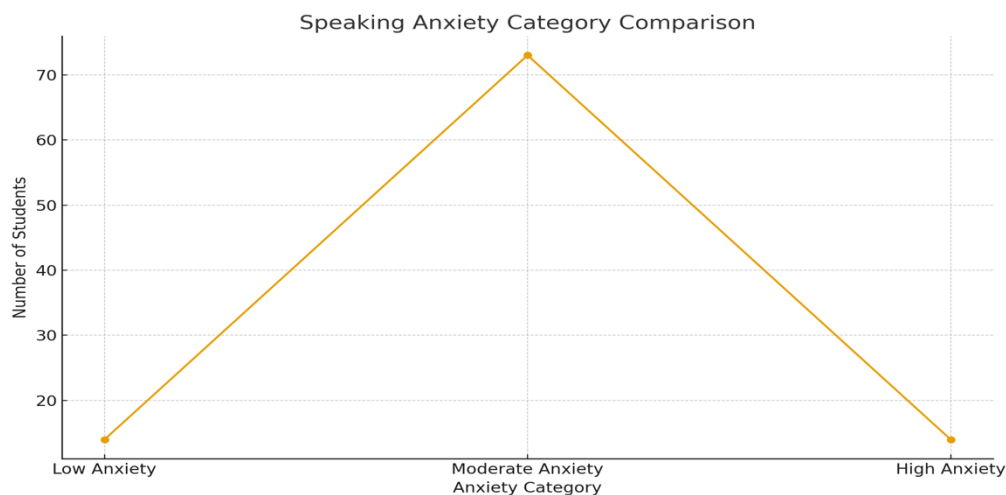


Figure 1. Speaking anxiety comparison

To provide a clearer understanding of how anxiety levels were distributed across participants, the scores were divided into three categories: low, moderate, and high. These categories were established using an interval-based approach, ensuring that classifications reflected meaningful distinctions in emotional intensity. The majority of participants (72.3 percent, or 73 students) fell within the moderate anxiety range. This finding aligns with trends in EFL research, where moderate speaking anxiety is often the most commonly reported level. The dominance of moderate anxiety suggests that speaking English during teaching practicum presented challenges for most preservice

teachers, but not to the extent that they felt completely overwhelmed. Students in this range may have entered the classroom with slight nervousness, hesitated when answering students' questions, or worried about being evaluated, yet they were still able to fulfill their teaching responsibilities effectively. Their anxiety likely surfaced most strongly during teaching observations, spontaneous questioning moments, or when required to give detailed explanations in English, but it did not prevent them from functioning as novice teachers.

In addition to the large moderate group, an equal proportion of participants 13.9 percent or 14 students fell into the low anxiety category. These individuals reported minimal anxiety while speaking English and appeared to be relatively comfortable in their practicum environments. They may have possessed stronger English proficiency, greater public speaking experience, or a more resilient psychological disposition that allowed them to withstand the pressures of teaching. These students likely approached practicum with confidence and viewed English speaking tasks not as sources of fear but as opportunities to apply their skills. Their calmness in the face of evaluative teaching moments suggests a more robust linguistic foundation and greater familiarity with communicative demands. This subgroup, though small, reflects the presence of preservice teachers who are already linguistically and emotionally prepared for classroom communication, making them well-positioned to excel in the teaching profession.

Furthermore, 13.9 percent of participants demonstrated high speaking anxiety often feeling distressed when speaking English in teaching practicum. Their anxiety scores indicate that speaking English triggered significant apprehension, often accompanied by physical symptoms such as trembling, rapid heartbeat, or voice shaking. Such students may have struggled with spontaneous speaking, experienced difficulty maintaining fluency, or hesitated excessively before responding to classroom interactions. During teaching observations, their anxiety likely intensified, as the presence of supervising teachers and peers may have heightened their fear of negative evaluation. High-anxiety preservice teachers may also have exhibited avoidance behavior, such as reducing the amount of English they used, relying on memorized scripts instead of natural communication, or skipping opportunities for spontaneous classroom interaction. This subgroup is particularly vulnerable to performance breakdowns, and without targeted support, their anxiety may hinder their development as English teachers.

Beyond these categorical distributions, deeper narrative patterns emerge from the score ranges. The clustering of many students near the lower end of the moderate range suggests that a considerable portion of the sample experiences only mild fluctuations in anxiety. These individuals may become nervous at specific moments such as the start of a lesson or when being observed but adapt over time as their confidence grows during the practicum. Fewer students were found near the upper boundary of the moderate range, indicating that although anxiety increases for some, many students are able to prevent their nervousness from escalating into more severe forms. The distribution thus reflects a population in which most preservice teachers experience manageable levels of anxiety, with only a minority feeling overwhelmed.

The presence of high anxiety scores above 100, although limited, is clearly meaningful. These students represent those who may require additional preparation before entering full-time teaching roles. Their emotional responses may stem from insufficient linguistic proficiency, low confidence, negative past language learning experiences, or heightened fear of making mistakes in front of students. Such factors can

intensify the stress of teaching and reduce the clarity and effectiveness of instructional delivery. If left unaddressed, high anxiety may lead to avoidance of communicative tasks, poor classroom management, or reduced engagement with learners.

The timing of data collection after the completion of teaching practicum further enriches the interpretation of the results. These scores represent students' reflections on their actual experiences in real classrooms rather than hypothetical feelings about speaking. As a result, the findings likely reflect the genuine affective challenges encountered in professional teaching settings. The mean score in the moderate range suggests that the practicum period is emotionally demanding and places preservice teachers in situations requiring constant communication in English, often under evaluative pressure. Even students who previously felt confident in speaking classes may find the practicum more stressful because the stakes are higher, the audience is real, and the feedback is immediate and consequential.

These results also reveal that while many preservice teachers adapt reasonably well to the communicative demands of practicum, anxiety remains a significant emotional factor. It is likely influenced by factors such as linguistic self-confidence, teacher-learner interactions, the presence of supervising teachers, and perceptions of English proficiency. Students who fall into the high anxiety category may require greater emotional and pedagogical support, as their anxiety has the potential to impede professional development. Meanwhile, students with low anxiety may serve as peer models, given their greater ease in managing classroom communication. Their presence indicates that anxiety is not uniform across the cohort but varies significantly from one individual to another.

Overall, the results paint a detailed quantitative portrait of preservice teachers' speaking anxiety during teaching practicum. While the average anxiety score indicates a typical emotional tension associated with speaking English in professional contexts, the distribution across categories highlights the diversity of emotional responses within the participant group. Most preservice teachers experience manageable anxiety, a smaller group experiences minimal anxiety, and an equally small group experiences high levels of anxiety that may hinder their teaching abilities. These findings emphasize the need for continued support in teacher education programs, particularly in areas that strengthen oral communication skills, promote confidence, and reduce performance-related stress.

The data also underscore the importance of viewing speaking anxiety not merely as an individual psychological trait but as an emotional outcome influenced by environmental, linguistic, and pedagogical factors. Teaching practicum, by its nature, exposes preservice teachers to authentic communication responsibilities, making anxiety an expected but manageable aspect of learning. The numerical variations and the distribution across categories highlight that teacher education programs must recognize anxiety as a natural part of becoming a teacher, while also identifying and supporting students whose anxiety may hinder their ability to succeed.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of English-speaking anxiety among preservice EFL teachers during their teaching practicum. With a sample of 101 participants, the results show that the majority experienced moderate levels of anxiety, while the remaining participants were evenly divided between low and high anxiety categories. These findings highlight the widespread presence of speaking anxiety even among individuals who have undergone linguistic training and pedagogical coursework. The results also reveal that emotional

reactions to speaking in English during professional teaching assignments are varied and shaped by individual and contextual factors. This section discusses the implications of these findings in relation to current theoretical models, existing empirical studies, and observed anomalies within the data.

The dominance of moderate anxiety among preservice teachers aligns closely with established theories of foreign language anxiety, particularly the seminal framework proposed by (Horwitz et al., 1986). According to the FLCAS model, speaking anxiety originates from fears of negative evaluation, communication apprehension, and test-like pressures factors that are inherently embedded in teaching practicum environments. Preservice teachers must deliver lessons in English while simultaneously being observed, assessed, and evaluated by supervisors and mentor teachers. This situation amplifies apprehension and heightens self-consciousness, thus activating the psychological mechanisms described by Horwitz et al. The results of this study therefore reinforce the validity of the FLCAS framework in capturing the emotional realities of teacher trainees.

A closer inspection of the mean anxiety score further supports the cognitive interference theory described by Diep et al. (2022) which suggests that anxiety disrupts cognitive processing during language use. Teaching practicum demands rapid decision-making, spontaneous speaking, and continuous linguistic output. Moderate anxiety, as demonstrated in this study, likely interferes with working memory, causing hesitation, reduced fluency, or increased self-monitoring. These cognitive disruptions, while not severe, can influence the clarity and spontaneity of preservice teachers' English use. The current findings thus confirm that even intermediate levels of anxiety can influence real-time classroom communication, aligning with prior research that identifies anxiety as a significant impediment to oral language performance (Lian et al., 2025; Luo, 2025; Maharyadin et al., 2022).

The presence of a substantial group of high-anxiety preservice teachers is particularly noteworthy. Approximately 13.9% of participants reported anxiety levels severe enough to potentially undermine their teaching performance. High anxiety is associated with pronounced fear of making mistakes, anticipation of negative evaluation, and physiological symptoms such as sweating, trembling, or increased heart rate (Woodrow, 2006). Preservice teachers experiencing such symptoms may struggle to maintain professional composure, articulate explanations clearly, or respond confidently to student questions. This subgroup may also exhibit avoidance tendencies avoiding spontaneous explanations, minimizing speaking turns, or relying heavily on memorized scripts. These tendencies align with findings from (Tóth, 2011) who argues that excessive speaking anxiety often manifests in weakened communication strategies and diminished instructional clarity. The presence of high-anxiety individuals among future English teachers underscores the urgent need for structured anxiety-reduction interventions within teacher education programs.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, the study identified another 13.9% of participants with low anxiety levels. These individuals demonstrate considerable emotional resilience and communicative confidence in the practicum context. Their low anxiety scores mirror results from studies showing that high proficiency, prior speaking experiences, and strong self-efficacy contribute significantly to reduced anxiety (Dewaele et al., 2023; Karatas et al., 2016). Preservice teachers in this category likely possess more advanced oral skills, stronger command of English structures, and greater familiarity with classroom communication. Their affective stability enables them to handle unpredictable classroom situations with confidence, supporting the idea that communicative competence can buffer individuals against anxiety-inducing conditions.

The distribution between low and high anxiety groups is a notable anomaly that diverges from patterns commonly found in foreign language anxiety literature. Many studies report disproportionately larger high-anxiety groups among EFL learners (Liu & Jackson, 2008) especially in contexts where English is not extensively used outside educational settings. However, the current study reveals an unexpected balance. This may indicate that preservice teachers in this context have had relatively diverse linguistic experiences prior to practicum, with some having received additional English exposure through tutoring, informal speaking practice, or digital media. Alternatively, the practicum environment itself may have reduced anxiety in certain individuals by offering authentic speaking opportunities that build confidence. This anomaly also highlights the possibility that some preservice teachers enter practicum with strong self-efficacy beliefs and robust emotional regulation skills, enabling them to remain calm under evaluative pressure.

Another important anomaly lies in the wide range of anxiety scores (51–113), which highlights considerable emotional variability within a cohort of students who share similar academic backgrounds. Theoretically, students who experience the same curriculum, practicum structures, and learning environment might be expected to demonstrate more uniform affective responses. However, the variability revealed in this study supports more dynamic conceptualizations of language anxiety, such as Dewaele et al. (2023) perspective that emotional responses are influenced by personality traits, previous life experiences, classroom interactions, and moment-to-moment fluctuations. The wide score range underscores that anxiety is deeply personal and shaped by complex psychological and contextual determinants, reinforcing the argument that teacher education must adopt differentiated approaches to emotional support.

The teaching practicum environment itself contributes significantly to anxiety formation and regulation. Practicum is a high-stake setting requiring preservice teachers to integrate linguistic competence, content knowledge, and classroom management skills simultaneously. As Derbani et al. (2025a) argue that environments where learners feel judged or evaluated heighten anxiety. Yet the practicum also provides opportunities for authentic communication, meaningful interaction, and increased linguistic exposure factors that can mitigate anxiety for some. This dual function explains why anxiety levels varied among participants: for some, practicum intensified apprehension; for others, it provided confidence-building experiences.

The results also resonate with the dynamic systems theory of second language emotions proposed by Gregersen et al. (2014) which emphasizes that emotions such as anxiety fluctuate depending on social interaction, task demands, and individual psychological states. The presence of students across all three anxiety categories reinforces the idea that emotions are not static traits, but dynamic responses shaped by evolving situations. Teaching practicum is inherently variable, involving different school settings, student populations, supervisory styles, and classroom challenges. The emotional responses of preservice teachers are therefore shaped by the specific ecological micro-contexts in which they teach.

Another critical theoretical connection emerges from Willingness to Communicate (WTC) theory (MacIntyre et al., 1998) which identifies anxiety as a central determinant of whether individuals choose to engage in communication. According to WTC theory, anxiety reduces communicative readiness and willingness, especially in unpredictable or high-pressure environments. The characteristics of the high-anxiety group in this study align directly with reduced WTC, as individuals experiencing elevated anxiety are less likely to initiate communication, respond spontaneously, or elaborate explanations

during teaching. Conversely, those in the low anxiety category likely exhibit high levels of WTC, enabling them to maximize communicative opportunities and engage confidently with learners. These findings thus support the predictive role of anxiety in communication behavior, extending WTC theory into practicum-based teaching contexts.

Taken together, the results reveal that speaking anxiety among preservice teachers is a complex, multilayered emotional construct shaped by personal characteristics, linguistic ability, practicum context, and theoretical principles of affective psychology. The coexistence of low, moderate, and high anxiety levels indicates that teacher preparation programs must adopt multi-tiered support systems. Those with low anxiety may benefit from leadership or peer mentoring roles; those with moderate anxiety may require continuous speaking practice integrated into practicum preparation; and those with high anxiety need explicit interventions such as counseling, targeted speaking workshops, anxiety management training, and supervised microteaching practice. In sum, this expanded discussion demonstrates that while speaking anxiety is common among preservice teachers, its intensity varies significantly, carrying important pedagogical and theoretical implications. Understanding this variation is essential for developing effective teacher education programs that not only build linguistic competence but also support the emotional well-being of future educators.

CONCLUSION

This study focused on examining the English-speaking anxiety experienced by preservice EFL teachers during teaching practicum. Most preservice teachers reported moderate levels of anxiety, whereas a smaller but equally significant number of participants reported high and low anxiety levels. These results indicate that preservice teachers are still susceptible to anxiety when they are required to use English in evaluative classroom situations. The range of variability in anxiety levels reinforces the notion that speaking anxiety is a dynamic response phenomenon not attributed to the practicum context, but due to individual differences and prior experience. The results significantly support the concepts of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale, cognitive interference theory, dynamic systems theory, and Willingness to Communicate theory, which emphasize the interaction of emotional, cognitive, and behavioral elements. Moderate to high levels of anxiety are likely to impede language processing, reduce willingness to communicate, and obscure clarity of instruction, while low anxiety seems to confer a protective impact by enhancing confidence and engagement in classroom activities.

The high anxiety subgroup is concerning as this type of overwhelming anxiety can compromise the effectiveness of teaching, confidence in profession, and the overall long-term construction of one's identity as a teacher, indicating the importance of the need for support from the institution at this level systematically. Accordingly, speaking anxiety should be addressed systematically within teacher education institutions as part of professional socialization. Programs may benefit from integrating explicit anxiety focused preparation such as psychoeducation and coping strategies, sequenced speaking task and supportive feedback. A more structured system at varying levels is also suggested, whereby teacher trainees with high anxiety receive counseling, training in anxiety control, and micro-teaching under supervision as high anxiety whereas, moderate anxiety teacher trainees receive mentoring and practice at varying levels of difficulty, and low anxiety teacher trainees are encouraged to practice peer mentoring and leadership. Establishing a practice of reflective and collaborative learning

communities can help to normalize anxiety and also to build emotional resilience throughout the practicum period.

Future research is suggested to use mixed methods design to capture both measurable pattern and the lived, situational nature of speaking anxiety. It would also be beneficial to conduct studies multiple years in order to clarify developmental trajectories. Finally, examining the effectiveness of specific teaching methods and psychological support, as well as cross-institutional and cross-cultural studies, would enrich understanding of contextual influences and improve the ability to generalize findings.

REFERENCES

- Abrar, M., Mukminin, A., Habibi, A., Asyraf, F., Makmur, M., & Marzulina, L. (2018). If our English isn't a language, what is it? Indonesian EFL student teachers' challenges speaking English. *The Qualitative Report*, 23(1), 129-145.
<https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2018.3013>
- Aizawa, I., Rose, H., Thompson, G., & Curle, S. (2023). Beyond the threshold: Exploring English language proficiency, linguistic challenges, and academic language skills of Japanese students in an English medium instruction programme. *Language Teaching Research*, 27(4), 837-861.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168820965510>
- Alhasan, R. F., Huwari, I. F., Alkhalidi, A. A., Abushaaban, H., & Al-Khasawneh, F. M. (2024). Investigating English Speaking Anxiety Among Undergraduate Students at Zarqa University. In R. Khamis & A. Buallay (Eds.), *AI in Business: Opportunities and Limitations: Volume 2* (pp. 359-368). Springer Nature Switzerland.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-49544-1_33
- Anandari, C. L. (2015). Indonesian EFL Students' anxiety in Speech Production: Possible caused and Remedy. *TEFLIN Journal*, 26(1), 1.
<https://doi.org/10.15639/teflinjournal.v26i1/1-16>
- Arifin, S., Nurkamto, J., & Rochsantiningsih, D. (2024). Investigating Pre-Service EFL Teachers' Strategies to Overcome Speaking Anxiety during the Shift from Online to Offline Learning in the Post-COVID-19 Era. *REFlections*, 31(2), 766-790.
- Atifnigar, H. (2024). Teachers' and students' roles in reducing foreign language anxiety. *European journal of contemporary education and E-learning*, 2(3), 90-106.
[https://doi.org/10.59324/ejceel.2024.2\(3\).08](https://doi.org/10.59324/ejceel.2024.2(3).08)
- Cai, S., Jin, Y., Lan, X., & Liu, Y. (2024). The cognitive psychology of learning anxiety: Effects on academic performance. In *Addressing Global Challenges-Exploring Socio-Cultural Dynamics and Sustainable Solutions in a Changing World* (pp. 929-935). Routledge.
- Chen, Z. (2024). A Study of Chinese Undergraduate Students' English Language Speaking Anxiety, Expectancy-Value Beliefs and Spoken English Proficiency. *SAGE Open*, 14(1), 21582440231219312. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440231219312>
- Creswell, J. W., Clark, P., & Vicki, L. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (2nd ed.). SAGE.
- Damayanti, M. E., & Listyani, L. (2020). An Analysis of Students' Speaking Anxiety in Academic Speaking Class. *Eltr Journal*, 4(2), 152-170.
<https://doi.org/10.37147/eltr.v4i2.70>

- Derbani, A., Islam, S., Adawiyah, W. R., Naik, A. R., Gomes, R. F., & Fauzi, D. R. (2025a). Overcoming public speaking anxiety: the role of personality traits self-confidence, and personal resources among Indonesian and Bangladeshi students. *Current Psychology*, 44(24), 19194-19206. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-025-08433-3>
- Derbani, A., Islam, S., Adawiyah, W. R., Naik, A. R., Gomes, R. F., & Fauzi, D. R. (2025b). Overcoming public speaking anxiety: the role of personality traits self-confidence, and personal resources among Indonesian and Bangladeshi students. *Current Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-025-08433-3>
- Dewaele, J.-M., Botes, E., & Meftah, R. (2023). A Three-Body Problem: The Effects of Foreign Language Anxiety, Enjoyment, and Boredom on Academic Achievement. *Annual review of applied linguistics*. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190523000016>
- Dhema, A. M. (2023). Konsep diri dengan kecenderungan kecemasan berbicara di depan umum pada mahasiswa Self-concept with the tendency of public speaking anxiety in college students. *Journal of Indonesian Psychological Science Volume*, 3(1), 299. <https://doi.org/10.18860/jips.v3i1.21072>
- Diep, L. T. N., Zainal, A. G., Hassan, I., Sunarti, Al-Sudani, A. Q. A. S., & Assefa, Y. (2022). Cultural familiarity, foreign language speaking skill, and foreign language anxiety: The case of Indonesian EFL learners. *Education Research International*, 2022(1), 3910411. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2022/3910411>
- Gregersen, T., MacIntyre, P. D., & Meza, M. D. (2014). The motion of emotion: Idiodynamic case studies of learners' foreign language anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 98(2), 574-588. <https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12084>
- Haroud, S., Ouchauouka, L., & Saqri, N. (2025). Investigating the causes of language anxiety among future primary school teachers in foreign language classes. *Frontiers in Education*,
- Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. (1986). Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 70(2), 125-132. <https://doi.org/10.2307/327317>
- Huang, H., Grant, S., & Yan, J. (2024). 'How anxious I am': The effect of different online modalities on Chinese language beginners' classroom anxiety. *The Language Learning Journal*, 52(5), 539-555. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2024.2365375>
- Karatas, H., Alci, B., Bademcioglu, M., & Ergin, A. (2016). An Investigation into University Students Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 232, 382-388. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2016.10.053>
- Kuluşaklı, E., & Genç, G. (2024). L2 communication apprehension and communicative competence of pre-service English teachers. *Heliyon*, 10(16), e32587. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e32587>
- Kusumawat, A. J., & Fauzia, F. S. (2019). Students' Anxiety in Indonesian EFL Public Speaking Class: A Quantitative Research. Proceedings of the 2019 5th international conference on education and training technologies,

- Li, Q., Xie, Z., & Zeng, G. (2023). The Influence of Teaching Practicum on Foreign Language Teaching Anxiety Among Pre-Service EFL Teachers. *SAGE Open*, 13(1), 21582440221149005. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440221149005>
- Lian, A., Syahdan, S., Manalu, C., & Natsir, M. (2025). Practicum anxiety and English language preservice teacher preparation in Indonesia: Experiences from the COVID-19 pandemic. *English Teaching & Learning*, 49(1), 125-148. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42321-024-00171-2>
- Liu, M., & Jackson, J. (2008). An exploration of Chinese EFL learners' unwillingness to communicate and foreign language anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 92(1), 71-86. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2008.00687.x>
- Luo, H. (2025). Reducing Foreign Language Anxiety. In H. Luo (Ed.), *Foreign Language Anxiety: Theory, Methodology, and Practice* (pp. 159-188). Springer Nature Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-95-0740-5_7
- MacIntyre, P. D., Clément, R., Dörnyei, Z., & Noels, K. A. (1998). Conceptualizing willingness to communicate in a L2: A situational model of L2 confidence and affiliation. *The Modern Language Journal*, 82(4), 545-562. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1998.tb05543.x>
- Maharyadin, A., Sunggingwati, D., & Rusmawaty, D. (2022). Speaking Anxiety: Experiences Of Pre-Service Teachers'in Efl Context Learning At The Second, Fourth And Sixth Semester Within Gender Based In English Department Of Mulawarman University. *Ilmu Budaya: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, Seni dan Budaya*, 6(2), 401-415.
- Tóth, Z. (2011). Foreign language anxiety and advanced EFL learners: An interview study. *WoPaLP*, 5(1), 39-57.
- Woodrow, L. (2006). Anxiety and speaking English as a second language. *RELC journal*, 37(3), 308-328. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688206071315>