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PRE-SERVICE EFL TEACHERS' ANXIETY IN TEACHING ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS

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Abstract: This study discusses pre-service EFL teachers' anxiety in teaching English speaking skills, focusing on the strategies to reduce the anxiety and how it affects the quality of teaching. The survey was conducted in a higher education in Ciamis involving 23 pre-service EFL teachers. Questionnaires were used to gather the data. The first result reveals that pre-service EFL teachers need to implement some strategies to motivate students and reduce anxiety in teaching English as a foreign language. Meanwhile, the second result shows that pre-service EFL teachers were mentally anxious related to all teaching English speaking skills activities, but for most of them, it did not diminish their confidence while performing in front of class. Thus, the findings of this research revealed that some strategies to overcome EFL teachers' anxiety in teaching speaking. Promoting learning activities without excessive pressure, emphasizing language importance, evaluating errors, and maintaining ethical conduct can reduce anxiety in teaching English speaking skills to pre-service teachers. It is suggested for future research to investigate the anxiety of pre-service EFL teachers assisted by psychologists to find out a better solution.

Keywords: anxiety, teacher, teaching, speaking

INTRODUCTION

English is taught as a foreign language in Indonesia, which means that EFL students learn the language. It has become a common sense that studying English is crucial for gaining new knowledge and opening prospects ina global setting (Eisenschmidt & Oder, 2018). The usage of English globally is influenced by colonialism, ship-borne trade with the Americas, and political factors in addition to this one (Cintrón-Valentín et al., n.d.). As a result, non-native English-speaking nations try to establish an English-speaking atmosphere at school as the first stage in teaching children English from a young age. Comparing to non-native speaker, a native speaker is considered to be a better instructor. According to this assertion, an English instructor mustface

numerous difficulties when instructing students on English grammar, speaking, and instructional techniques (Jakhongirovna, 2022). A teacher should keep their passion and excitement for teaching, in addition to improving their English proficiency. However, learning anxiety always occurs in some EFL learners.

Students' anxiety does not only refer to undergraduate students but also to pre-service EFL English teachers, in particular, teaching English. Learning anxiety can hinder students' academic performance and motivation. It often stems from fear of failure, negative past experiences, pressure to succeed, or lack of confidence. This anxiety can lead to avoidance behaviors, difficulty concentrating, low participation, and poor retention of information, ultimately impacting overall learning effectiveness and growth. Teaching anxiety is defined similarly to learning anxiety, which is a term used to encompass fear that an individual experiences internally (Amiri & Ghonsooly, 2015). According to Liu & Wu (2021), anxiety is a natural feeling when people encounter a condition that is not familiar to them, they are going to feel nervous and tense, and that is anxiety. Thus, the topic of this research highlights Pre-service teachers' anxiety in teaching speaking.

English teachers must also be excellent educators in the twenty-first century. Measuring successful teaching is difficult and unstable because it depends on one's perspective. According to two studies from Jacob et al. (2017) and Molway (2021), evaluating successful teaching involves both inner and extrinsic factors. The teacher's character, including motivation, zeal, and interactions with students, is included in the intrinsic component. The extrinsic component comes from the teacher's expertise, which may be developed through practicing to enhance teaching, such as their proficiency with instructional materials and teaching methodology. Meanwhile, teaching strategy relates to the way of teaching, managing the classroom, and teaching approach. EFL teachers seem to have an excellent job in teaching English to students (Ragawanti, 2015). EFL teacher results in making the students familiar with the subject. Moreover, as an EFL teacher in teaching English, the role of this job plays a crucial part in the development of the students, specially, a new teacher who feels anxiety in the first lesson.

The present study is supported by five previous studies which are relevant, including Akinsola, (2014) published a publication entitled "Assessing Pre-Service Teachers' Teaching Anxiety." Zaki & Salsabila (2024) investigated the research entitled "EFL Pre-Service teachers' anxiety during teaching practice Pre-Service Teachers' Anxiety and Anxiety Management during the First Encounter with Students in EFL Classroom." Gorospe (2022) has published a paper titled "Pre-Service Teachers' Anxiety during Teaching Practicum." Novitasari & Murtafi'ah (2022) wrote a journal article entitled "Foreign Language Teaching Anxiety Among Pre-Service Teachers During Teaching Practicum." Furthermore, Chang & Lin (2020) wrote a journal article entitled "Teaching English through English: Exploring Anxiety in Non- native Pre-service ESL Teachers."

Furthermore, those studies already emphasized the stress that pre-service EFL teachers experience when teaching English. Most of them discuss how to reduce or prepare for anxiety in the classroom. The researchers of those previous studies explain how to lessen or prepare for teaching English about anxiousness leading to the similarities among the studies lie. However, this study differs from the previous study because the writer focuses on the strategies and the anxiety in teaching English, especially in speaking skills. As a result, this study explores the strategies applied by a teacher to reduce his/her anxiety when teaching English speaking skills. The writer conducted this research entitled Pre-Service EFL Teachers' Anxiety in Teaching English Speaking Skills.

METHOD

This study was conducted at a higher education institution in Ciamis, which is relevant to the topic that the writer intended to investigate because the research site has a pre-service teacher program. The survey using questionnaires were used to gather the data; it was administered to 20 pre-service EFL teachers. The questionnaire was used as the primary data to examine the data accuracy and to verify or refute the teacher's impressions (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012). The

research questions employed in this research qualitatively assessed the data as Aithal & Aithal (2020) defined that is data designed to collect specific information related to the study. Then, the writer described all the obtained data in a description. Hatch and Lazaraton, as cited in Herlina (2023), constructed the research formula to find out the percentage of students' answers, as follows;

$$\text{Proportion (P)} = \frac{N}{T} X\ 100\%$$

Notes:
P : Population of Answer
N : Number of Answers (Number of frequency)
T : Total of Sample

The next step is interpreting the data using the following codes' categories:
Categories;
0% : None of the pre-service EFL teachers felt the anxiety
1%-25% : Small parts of pre-service EFL teachers felt the anxiety
26%-50% : Half of pre-service EFL teachers felt the anxiety
51%-75% : Most of pre-service EFL teachers felt the anxiety
76%-100% : All of pre-service EFL teachers felt the anxiety

Codes;
SA : Strongly Agree
A : Agree
N : Neutral
D : Disagree
SD : Strongly Disagree

Regarding the questionnaires, it was adapted and modified from Akinsola (2014). The following Table 1 shows the questionnaire delivered to the participants.

Table 1: A set of questionnaire items

No	Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	Anxious about not being able to teach the subject properly					
2	Anxious about making grammatical and vocabulary errors					
3	Anxious of errors in word pronunciation					
4	Anxious about not being able to answer students' questions					
5	Anxious about not being able to transfer the knowledge					
6	Low self-confidence/self-esteem					
7	Anxious about assigning suitable assignments to the students					
8	Anxious about whether or not my plans will be effective					
9	Anxious about maintaining an effective approach					
10	Anxiety about how the teacher would answer only to one or more unfulfillinglessons					

The result of questionnaires were then categorized, transcribed, and evaluated to answer the second research question in line with the study's purpose. Transcribing and describing were utilized in data analysis, particularly when assessing the questionnaire. Percentage computation is required to explain the data. Finally, data analysis was interpreted and drawing conclusion (Corbin, 2017) to obtain the desirable finding.

FINDINGS

This study aims to elaborate on pre-service EFL teachers' anxiety in teaching English speaking Skills and its affects to the quality of teaching. The writer obtained the questionnaire data from students of a higher education institution in Ciamis who had experienced anxiety in teaching English speaking skills during teacher preparation programs as pre-service EFL teachers. There were 11 items on the questionnaire, and the results are shown in Figure 1 Various answers to every question.

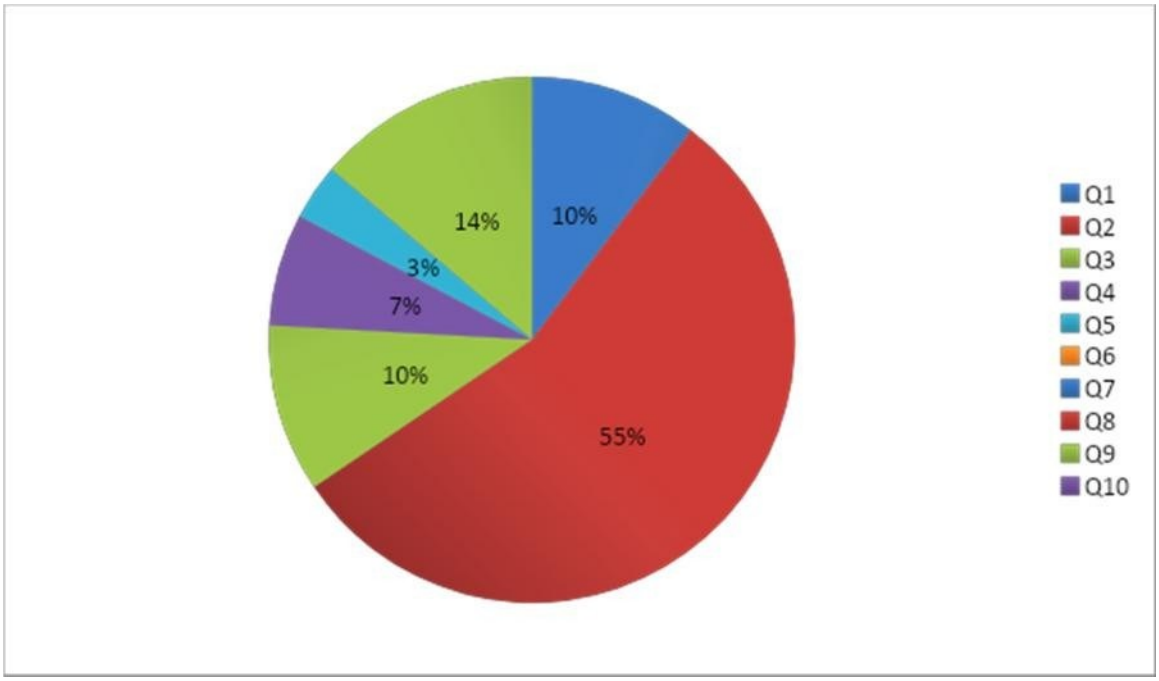


Figure 1: Questionnaire result

As given in Figure 1, 15% of the pre-service EFL teachers strongly agreed, 80% of students agreed, and 5% were undecided. It shows that most of them are experiencing the anxiety of not being able to teach the subject properly. Error word pronunciation also caused them to feel anxious, as did the second statement, in which 15% strongly agreed, 55% agreed, and 5% were undecided. On the third question, 15% strongly agreed, 55% agreed, 20% were undecided about their answers, and 10% of them disagreed that they feel anxious about errors in word pronunciation.

Anxiety about not being able to answer students' questions was also felt by most of the pre-service EFL teachers. It can be seen from Figure 1 that 10% of them strongly agreed, 65% agreed, and 20% undecided about the statement; meanwhile, 5% of them disagreed. The fifth statement, which wasanxious about not being able to transfer the knowledge, was strongly agreed by 5% of the pre-service EFL teachers, 75% agreed, 5% undecided about the statement, and 15% disagreed. Above all, the anxiety about the previous statements, the sixth statement seemed confusing for most of them because the result showed that 30% of them agreed, 45% were undecided about the statement, and 25% disagreed if they had low self-confidence/self-esteem.

On the seventh statement about anxiety, assigning suitable assignments to the students was agreed by 40% of the participants, 25% were undecided about the statement, and 35% disagreed with the statement.For the eighth statement, 50% agreed, 15% undecided, 30% disagreed, and 5% strongly disagreed, feeling anxious about whether or not their plans would be effective. The next statement about whether or not they felt anxious about maintaining an effective approach can be seen by the data that 20% of them strongly agreed, 55% agreed, 10% undecided, and 15% disagreed with the statement. The tenth statement presented the pre-service EFL teachers' feeling that they felt worried about how the teacher would respond if several unfulfilling subjects occurred, it shown by the data 75 75 75% of them agreed, even though 25% of them were still undecided

about the statement. The last question alsoseemed related to them that they felt anxious about whether or not my performance would be sufficient from the school subject teacher's point of view which can be seen by the result that 10% of the pre-service EFL teachers strongly agreed, 70% are agreed, 10% undecided the statement and 10% of them disagree.

Thus, the findings of this research revealed that some strategies to overcome EFL teachers' anxiety in teaching speaking. Promoting learning activities without excessive pressure, emphasizing language importance, evaluating errors, and maintaining ethical conduct can reduce anxiety in teaching English speaking skills to pre-service teachers.

DISCUSSION

The present study discusses the findings after analyzing the data related to the research questions: What are the pre-service teachers' strategies to overcome anxiety and gain more confidence in teachingEnglish Speaking skills, and how does anxiety affect the quality of teaching English speaking skills in classroom activities? This would also be provided with some relevant theories and previous studies, as previously mentioned.

As stated earlier, dealing with the findings revealed some strategies to overcome EFL teachers' anxiety in teaching speaking, enhancement of learning activities without excessive pressure, emphasis of language importance, error evaluation, and maintaining of ethical conduct that can reduce anxiety in teaching English speaking skills to pre-service teachers. In line with this research, Novitasari & Murtafi'ah (2022) declare that learning pre-service practicum can be overcome by some practicum activities.

In pre-service teacher preparation programs, the dominant focus is on understanding what it means to be a teacher and learning how to be a teacher, rather than learning how to teach a specific subject to students (Illingworth, 2012). The result of the resent study implied that some of them enjoyed that role during the teacher preparation program, but they all agreed that they also struggled with creating a comfortable classroom atmosphere, as Agustiana (2022) has published a paper titled "Pre-Service Teachers' Anxiety during Teaching Practicum" and explained that practice makes better.Less teaching experience and material mastery the material led to teaching anxiety. The pre-service EFL teachers of a University in Ciamis emphasized the importance of evaluating errors andmaintaining teacher ethics to provide the best teaching performance despite hardships. They also stressed the significance of acquiring students' outputs.

Anxiety, which Mohtasham, et al., (2017) defines as the state in which a person feels "uncomfortable, frustrated, self-doubt, apprehensive, or worried," can arise during English-speaking teaching activities, especially when the classroom atmosphere is not conducive or students lack motivation. During the program, participants should have implemented some strategies to motivate students and reduce anxiety in teaching English as a foreign language. One of the strategies is to motivate studentsto learn the language without excessive pressure, but by highlighting its importance and significance. As Sammephet et al., n.d. (2013) stated in their research, "Pre-Service Teachers' Anxiety and Anxiety Management during the First Encounter with Students in EFL Classroom," to relieve anxiety, they managed the anxiety by accepting the classroom situations and letting the situations flow.

The other strategy was also similar to the first one, but this one stressed tracing students' understanding of a material, then providing the material that they felt they did not understand, and practicing it. Akinsola (2014) mentioned in "Assessing Pre-Service Teachers' Teaching Anxiety" that anxiety was found to be particularly associated with classroom control problems, one of which was withachieving lesson goals. They believed these strategies were effective in making students more active in classroom activities. However, Illingworth (2012) noted that new teachers begin stronger if "they have some theoretical and practical learning before standing in front of a class", and teachers who embrace inquiry into their professional practices are prepared as lifelong learners to face the evolving demands society places on the education process.

The questionnaire data also reveals how anxiety affects the quality of teaching English-

speaking skills in classroom activities. Akinsola (2014) stated in his research, "Assessing Pre-Service Teachers Teaching Anxiety," that the significance of identifying sources of students' worries/anxieties during teaching practice lies in the evidence that anxiety affects teachers' behavior, and this, in turn, reduces classroom effectiveness. Meanwhile, the result of the present study revealed that pre-service EFL teachers were mentally anxious related to all teaching English speaking skills activities, especially in making grammatical and vocabulary mistakes, but for most of them, it did not diminish their confidence while performing in front of the class. This links to what is said by Thin (2022) & Widyastuti (2021), anxiety isa natural feeling when people encounter a condition that is not familiar to them, they are going to feel nervous, tense, and those feelings are anxiety. Therefore, this present study showed that anxiety did not affect most pre-service EFL teachers in providing the best quality of teaching English speaking skills.

CONCLUSION

This study discusses pre-service EFL teachers' anxiety in teaching English speaking skills. After transcribing and marking certain key points, the writer synthesized the material acquired from a closed-ended questionnaire. This study revealed that pre-service EFL teachers had experienced anxiety in teaching English speaking skills during the teaching preparation program. In addition, from the result of a closed-ended questionnaire that had been revealed previously, the writerconcluded that since English is a foreign language in our country, it is normal to have anxiety during teaching English speaking skills activities, mentally. However, it should not affect the quality of teaching English-speaking skills. However, pre-service teachers must maintain their responsibility as good role models and provide their best teaching performance. Therefore, there would be no more unfulfilling lessons, and the students could receive the knowledge very well. It is highly recommended for future results to include pre-service EFL teachers' anxiety in teaching English speaking skills because of its benefit in English education. It is highly recommended for future researchers to include the topic area of this research, since the benefits of this research have been proven significantly. However, suggestions for future researchers are broadening research design, such as experimental design, mixed methods, methods of inquiry using semi-structured interview and observation, etc.

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