

**Exploring the Impact of English Language Course Experience Background
on Students' Speaking Anxiety in a Junior High School in Palembang**

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**EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE COURSE BACKGROUND ON
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A THESIS

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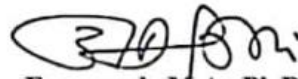
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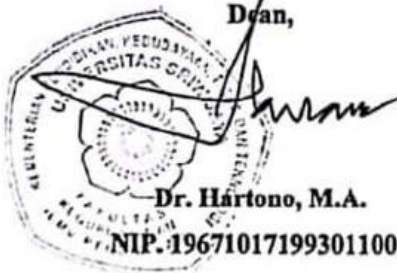
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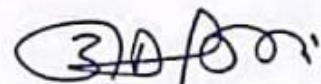
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The Undersigned,



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DEDICATION

This thesis is sincerely dedicated to:

my parents, Ibrahim Yusuf and Siti Hofiah and my sister, Badriyah Ulfah who
always give endless support and love to me.

Then thank you very much for all of my beloved friends who always help me and
gave me strength to finish my thesis

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Palembang, September 23rd, 2024

The Author,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rana Fakhira', written over a horizontal line.

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**EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE COURSE BACKGROUND
ON STUDENTS' SPEAKING ANXIETY IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL**

ABSTRACT

Abstract. This study investigates the impact of English language course backgrounds on speaking anxiety among junior high school students. Recognizing the significant challenge of speaking presents in language learning, particularly in spontaneous and real-time processing contexts, this research addresses a gap in existing literature which predominantly focuses on broad psychological and classroom-related factors. Utilizing a combination of questionnaires and interviews, the data were collected from students with and without prior English language course experiences background. Findings of the study reveal that students without such backgrounds exhibit higher levels of speaking anxiety, attributed to lower confidence and proficiency. Conversely, those with English course experience show significantly reduced anxiety levels. The study identifies key factors contributing to speaking anxiety, including apprehension of verbal communication, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. Then the study found The outcomes offer valuable insights for educators and policymakers in designing effective language courses that enhance students' speaking confidence and proficiency.

Keywords: *Anxiety, English, English language course background, Evaluation, Acquisition*

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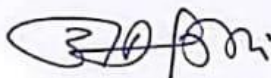
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

In recent years, the importance of English language proficiency has been widely recognized, particularly in non-native English-speaking countries. Among the various skills involved in mastering English, speaking is often considered the most challenging for students due to its spontaneous nature and the need for real-time processing. This challenge is particularly pronounced in junior high school students who are at a critical developmental stage for language acquisition. Several studies have explored factors contributing to speaking anxiety among students. Horwitz et al. (1986) identified communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation as primary sources of language anxiety. Additionally, Young (1991) and MacIntyre & Gardner (1994) emphasized the role of language classroom dynamics, teacher-student interactions, and peer pressure in shaping students' speaking anxiety. More recent research has delved into the impact of various teaching methods, classroom environments, and individual learner differences on speaking anxiety (Park & French, 2013; Alrabai, 2014). Despite extensive research, there remains a significant focus on general anxiety factors, with less attention given to how specific background experiences in English language courses influence speaking anxiety. This gap in the literature underscores the need to understand how previous educational experiences, teaching methodologies, and curricular designs in English language courses affect students' confidence and anxiety levels in speaking. The current body of literature has predominantly addressed broad psychological and classroom-related factors influencing speaking anxiety. However, there is a noticeable gap in research specifically examining the impact of students' backgrounds in English language courses on their speaking anxiety in junior high school settings. Most existing studies tend to overlook the nuanced differences in how various types of course content, instructional methods, and previous exposure to English-speaking environments affect students' speaking confidence.

Some previous researchers have carried out the study dealing speaking anxiety. The first research is conducted by Despita (2022) The purpose of this study is to shed light on the language anxiety cases, especially related to anxiety in the English language, among MTs Ilham Palembang's ninth grade students. The investigation's outcome is The speaking anxiety factors that the students experienced when speaking English as a foreign language (EFL) included low self-efficacy, sensitivity to anxiety, irrational faith to say something in English, and incorrect attribution body signal because they were having trouble expressing their ideas in English. Then, The second research was conducted by Yuli (2021). The variables that, in the eyes of Indonesian EFL learners, precipitate Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety are reported in this study. The results of this study indicated the variables that can cause anxiety in kids. Cilem did the third study in 2021. The goal of this study is to determine the age-related speaking anxiety experienced by adult, adolescent, and child language learners in Turkey. Out of all the quantitative research approaches, the survey design was used to perform this study. Quantitative information was collected from 4016 individuals of various ages. It was shown that English language learners in Turkey have a modest degree of speaking anxiety, and that age unquestionably has an impact on language acquisition. While older age groups are more nervous, self-conscious, and fearful of making errors when speaking, younger age groups have lower levels of speaking anxiety.

Furthermore, while some studies have investigated the role of specific interventions aimed at reducing speaking anxiety, there is limited research on how foundational course experiences contribute to or mitigate anxiety over time. This lack of targeted investigation into the interplay between course background and speaking anxiety calls for a more detailed exploration to inform better educational practices and curriculum development. Therefore, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how English language course backgrounds shape junior high school students' speaking anxiety. The findings are expected to offer valuable insights for educators, curriculum designers, and policymakers to develop

more effective strategies for reducing speaking anxiety and enhancing language proficiency among students.

1.2 The Problems of the Study

In relation to the background of the study, the r identifies several problems as follows:

1. How is the speaking anxiety of English language course experience background students compare to those of students who did not have English language course experience background?
2. What are factors contributing to the different level of speaking anxiety among both English course background and non-background students?
3. What kinds of teachers' behavior and classroom activities may help to reduce foreign language speaking anxiety in EFL classroom?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the speaking anxiety of English language course experience background students compare to those of students who did not have English language course experience background.
2. To find out the factors contributing to the different level of speaking anxiety among both English course background and non-background students
3. To find out teachers' behavior and classroom activities that help to reduce foreign language speaking anxiety in EFL classroom.

1.4 The Significance of the Study

This study explores the relationship between English language course experience and speaking anxiety among learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Understanding the significance of this study is vital for educators, students, and educational institutions in shaping more effective teaching methods and support systems for EFL learners. Schools and language centers can adjust their teaching strategies based on whether students have a prior English language course background. If students with prior experience demonstrate lower anxiety, integrating similar course components in the curriculum may help alleviate anxiety in those without the same background. Educational institutions can implement targeted interventions, focusing on the

factors contributing most to anxiety, such as fear of negative evaluation, communication apprehension, or lack of proficiency.

The study provides a pathway for educators to offer personalized support to students based on their specific anxiety triggers. This will ensure a more supportive classroom environment for both groups. The knowledge of these factors can inform curriculum developers to design courses that specifically address the roots of anxiety, such as integrating confidence-building activities or linguistic support in the curriculum.

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