#### **Jurnal Ilmiah Mandala Education (JIME)**

Volume 11 No. 3 Agustus 2025 *p-ISSN* : 2442-9511, *e-2656-5862* 

DOI: 10.58258/jime.v11i3.9268/http://ejournal.mandalanursa.org/index.php/JIME

# Students' Psychological Problems in Speaking at Nursing Science

#### Rani Autila

STIKES Indonesia

Article Info	Abstrak
Article history: Accepted: 6 Agustus 2025 Publish: 11 Agustus 2025	EFL students do not only have linguistic problems but also psychological problems when learning English. The present study aims to describe psychological problems in speaking. This study was conducted under descriptive design. Participants in this study were 33 fourth-semester students of Nursing Science at Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Kesehatan Indonesia (STIKESI). The instrument
Keywords: English Problems Psychological Skills Speaking	used in this study is an online questionnaire. The findings indicate that although anxiety, lack of confidence, and fear of making mistakes are significant problems, respondents showed a generally neutral attitude toward these problems. However, the presence of these psychological barriers, coupled with shyness and lack of motivation, suggests that targeted interventions are needed to improve English-speaking performance among respondents.
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Corresponding Author:

Rani Autila

Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Kesehatan Indonesia (STIKESI)

Email: rani.autila.academic@gmail.com

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Speaking skills are very important when learning a second or foreign language. The success of language learning is measured by the learners' performance in speaking the language they are learning. Most people who learn a language will be able to speak so that they can communicate. Speaking is one of the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Speaking will also be used twice as much as reading and writing in our communication, speaking is usually compared to writing, and both are referred to as productive skills. Speaking is also defined as constructing meaning that involves the production, reception, and processing of information. Form and meaning depend on the context of the participants speaking goals (Burns, 2022). According to (Leong and Ahmadi 2017) speaking is one of the most important skills to be developed and improved as a strong communication system. In addition, speaking is the main approach to human communication (Afshar and Asakereh, 2016). Speaking also helps to establish communication with people around and get a lot of knowledge information, expand friendships and easily establish relationships with others. In addition, students who increase their vocabulary find it is easier to communicate in expressing opinions, ideas, feelings, and learning concepts.

Meanwhile as (Joesoef, 2022) states, speaking is one of the most difficult skills that students have to deal with. Speaking is considered the most important skill of the four English language skills. According to (Srinivas, Rao 2019) the capacity to speak English is very crucial in humans' lives. Language has social characteristics in which conversation seems to interact with different to expressing ideas and responding opinion. There are a few approaches to improve speaking for example by practicing English regularly with friends. In additional to (Wulandari, 2022), communication will be effective if the interlocutor can understand what the speaker intended. According (Leong and Ahmadi 2017) there are five components of speaking skills concerned with pronunciation, grammar,

e- ISSN: 2656-5862, p-ISSN: 2442-9511

#### 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research used descriptive quantitative research methods. Sugiyono (2016:7) explains that quantitative research methods are methods based on the philosophy of positivism, used in examine the sample and research population. Quantitative research is research that presents data in the form of numbers as results the research. The descriptive research method is an internal method research into the status of a human group, an object, a condition, a thought or current events. Descriptive methods are used to create a picture or a systematic, factual and accurate description of a phenomenon. Quantitative descriptive research is research that describes variables as they are supported by data in the form of numbers resulting from actual conditions.

Based on the statement above, this research would be categorized into quantitative descriptive research. The research method used is a survey method. According to (Sugiyono, 2010) survey research is "research conducted on large or small populations". Researcher used this type of research, namely describing situational conditions from data through questionnaires. The results of the analysis are to describe and explain in detail the analysis of students' problems in speaking as performance in the English Language Education Department.

Participants are important in this research. In this study, the participants would be 33 fourth-semester students of Nursing Science at Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Kesehatan Indonesia (STIKESI). In this research, an online questionnaire instrument would be used by a Google form. Questionnaire is a data collection technique that is carried out by giving a set of written statements that are closed or open to the respondent for them to answer. The questionnaire that would be used in online data collection is a closed questionnaire with eighteen items. The answer scores are arranged based on the Likert scale.

## 3. RESULT

Research conducted on psychological problems of speaking performance, respondents gave answers that anxiety some felt neutral towards statements related to anxiety, with 60% being neutral when asked if they felt nervous speaking in front of the class and 60% also being neutral when asked about anxiety when speaking in English. This shows that although anxiety is present, anxiety may not be a dominant factor for most respondents. However, there are indications of mild anxiety, especially with physical symptoms such as sweating or shaking when speaking in front of others.

Shyness appears to be a notable concern, with 50% of respondents feeling neutral about being too shy to speak English even when they know the answer, and 55% preferring to stay quiet in English class out of fear of being caught. This indicates that shyness significantly impacts the willingness of respondents to engage in English speaking activities, potentially hindering their language development. Confidence in English speaking abilities is a major issue, with 70% of respondents doubting their ability to speak English well.

Insecurity about pronunciation was also common, with 35% being neutral and 30% disagreeing with statements regarding confidence in their pronunciation. This lack of confidence is likely a significant barrier to effective communication in English. Motivation to improve English speaking skills is relatively low among the respondents. For instance, 30% disagreed with being motivated to improve their English speaking ability, and 55% were neutral about seeing the point in practicing English. This lack of motivation may stem from the perceived difficulty or lack of enjoyment in speaking English, as evidenced by the 35% who were neutral about enjoying English speaking.

The fear of making mistakes is a prevalent concern, with 55% of respondents being neutral and 30% agreeing that they are afraid of making mistakes when speaking English. Additionally, the worry about being laughed at by classmates was evident, with 55% neutral and 20% disagreeing with this fear. This suggests that the fear of judgment by peers is a significant factor that may discourage active participation in English speaking. The finding from questionnaire can be seen below:

## 1. Anxiety

The majority of respondents 61% reported feeling neutral when asked if they feel nervous speaking in front of the class, with only 0% strongly agree. 46% also reported feeling neutral about anxiety when asked to speak in English, while 3 % disagreed. 46 % of respondents reported neutral feelings about sweating or shaking when speaking in front of others, with a smaller percentage 9 % strongly disagree. On average, anxiety was prevalent, but 40 % respondents feeling neutral with the statements related to anxiety.

**Table 1. Questionnaire Result on Anxiety** 

	Statements	Answer				
No		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	I feel nervous when I have to speak in front of the class.	0%	24%	61%	12%	3%
2	I often feel anxious when asked to speak in English	18%	30%	46%	3%	3%
3	When I have to speak in front of others, my hands often sweat or shake.	0%	24%	46%	21%	9%
4	I have difficulty concentrating because of anxiety when speaking in public	15%	18%	40%	24%	3%
	Average	8%	24%	48%	15%	5%

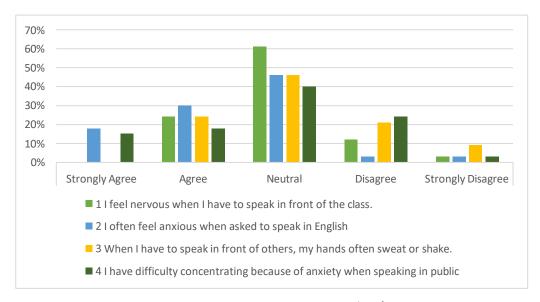


Figure 1. Questionnaire Result on Anxiety

## 2. Shyness

Almost half of the respondents 40% were agree about feeling shy when speaking English even if they know the answer, with 3% strongly disagree. 55% disagree to stay quiet in class,

indicating did not fear of being caught or corrected, with 0% strongly agree. Shyness did not seem to be a significant issue, with respondents mostly disagree of shyness. The data provided highlights the issue of shyness in speaking English in an academic context. Here is an analysis of the findings: Agree responses about shyness: 40% of respondents were agree about feeling shy when speaking English, even when they knew the answer. This suggests that the majority of participants were either unsure or indifferent about their shyness. This may indicate a tendency to be unsure or reluctant to admit shyness, or that they only experience shyness in a mild way, not strong enough to affect their confidence. Disagreement about Shyness 3 % strongly disagreed that they felt shy when speaking English even when they knew the answer, indicating that a quarter of respondents did not recognize shyness as a problem.

	Statements	Answer					
No		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
5	I feel too shy to speak English, even when I know the answer	15%	40%	33%	9%	3%	
6	I prefer to stay quiet in English class because I am afraid of being caught	0%	15%	27%	55%	3%	
7	I often avoid speaking English because I am shy	0%	27%	27%	46%	0%	
		50/	250/	200/	250/	20/	
	Average	5%	27%	29%	37%	2%	

**Table 2. Questionnaire Result on Shyness** 

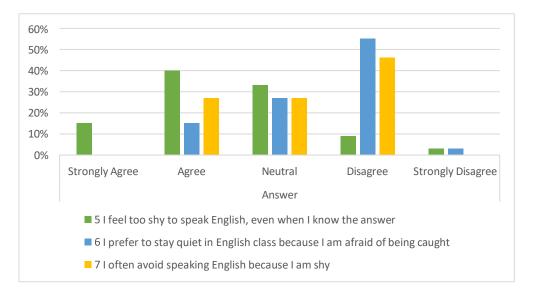


Figure 2. Questionnaire Result on Shyness

## 3. Lack of Confidence

A significant portion 58% doubted their ability to speak English well, with a minimal percentage strongly agree and disagree. Insecurity about pronunciation was common, with 30% being neutral and 64% agree. 51% of respondents agreed about lacking confidence in their ability to speak English, with a small percentage (6%) disagree.

No	Statements	Answer					
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
8	I doubt my ability to speak English well	6%	58%	30%	6%	0%	
9	I feel insecure about my English pronunciation	3%	64%	30%	3%	0%	
10	I believe that my English speaking ability is not good enough	9%	61%	18%	12%	0%	
11	I hesitate to speak English because I lack confidence in my ability	3%	51%	40%	6%	0%	
	Average	5%	58%	30%	7%	0%	

Table 3. Questionnaire Result on Lack of Confidence

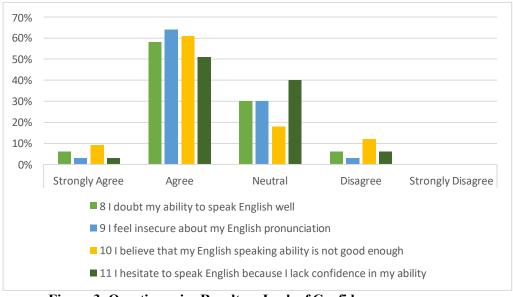


Figure 3. Questionnaire Result on Lack of Confidence

## 4. Lack of Motivation

Motivation to improve English speaking skills was high, with 40% disagree and 0% strongly agree about statement "I am not motivated to improve my English speaking ability". The responses showed difficulty in seeing the point of practicing English, with 30% being neutral and 24% agree. A moderate lack of motivation was evident among respondents, with 40% disagree about statement "I do not enjoy speaking English, so I do not put much effort into it".

Average

Answer No Statements Strongly Strongly Agree Neutral Disagree Agree Disagree I am not motivated to 12 improve my English 0% 24% 6% 40% 30% speaking ability I find it difficult to see the 30% 12% 24% 30% 3% 13 point in practicing speaking English. I do not enjoy speaking 14 0% 12% 40% 12% English, so I do not put much 36% effort into it

20%

24%

37%

15%

4%

**Table 4. Questionnaire Result on Lack of Motivation** 

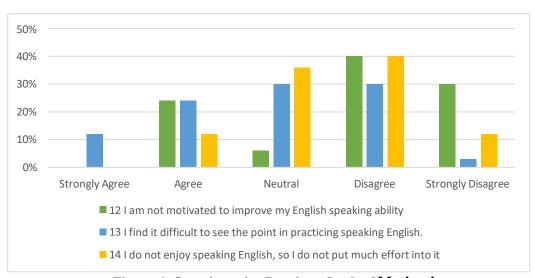


Figure 4. Questionnaire Result on Lack of Motivation

# 5. Fear of Making Mistakes

Respondents agreed 49% about the fear of making mistakes when speaking English, while 9% disagreed. The fear of classmates laughing at mistakes was neutral to moderate, with 36% neutral and 42% agreed. Overall, the fear of making mistakes was a significant factor affecting speaking performance, with most respondents tending to be neutral but still showing signs of worry.

Table 5. Questionnaire Result on Fear of Making Mistakes

		Answer				
No	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

15	I am afraid of making mistakes when speaking English	0%	49%	42%	9%	0%
16	I am worried that my classmates will laugh at me if I make mistakes in English	6%	42%	36%	15%	0%
17	I prefer to remain silent rather than risk making mistakes when speaking English	6%	18%	33%	40%	3%
18	Making mistakes in English makes me feel embarrassed.	0%	27%	46%	21%	6%
	Average	3%	34%	40%	21%	2%

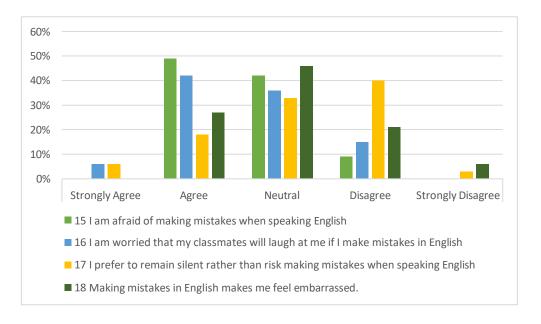


Figure 5. Questionnaire Result on Fear of Making Mistakes

Based on explanation above, 24% students choosing agree and 48% students choosing neutral when answering questionnaire about anxiety factor. Anxiety is the sense of panic attacks. It is an emotional response that occurs while speaking. According to (Collins Cobuild in Zsuzsa, 2010) anxiety is a sensation of nervousness and worries about something. According to (Suleimenova, 2020) anxiety is described as mental discomfort or disquiet brought on by a fear of danger or catastrophe. Anxiety is a negative manner of expressing human emotions. Anxiety is an unpleasant or affective state that individuals desire to avoid or get rid of it. It is approximately as synonym for a variety of fear.

Then, 37% students choosing disagree and 29% students choosing neutral when answering questionnaire about shyness factor. Shy students may avoid speaking in class, even when they know the correct answers or have something meaningful to contribute. This avoidance behaviour can lead to missed opportunities for practice and improvement in language skills. Shyness often leads to a reluctance to participate in classroom activities, which in turn limits the opportunities for students to practice and develop their speaking skills (Brown, 2007). Then, Shyness can inhibit a student's

e- ISSN: 2656-5862, p-ISSN: 2442-9511

fluency, as the fear of being judged or making a mistake causes them to speak less and with more hesitation (Horwitz & Young, 1991). Also, shyness not only affects a student's willingness to speak but can also lead to social isolation, further reinforcing the cycle of anxiety and avoidance (Dornyei, 2005).

Further, 58% students choosing agree and 30% students choosing neutral when answering questionnaire about lack of confidence. Students who lack confidence often hesitate before speaking, which results in frequent pauses, disrupted speech, and difficulty in maintaining the flow of conversation. A lack of confidence can cause students to hesitate and second-guess themselves, leading to fragmented speech and reduced fluency (Brown, 2007). Moreover, students who lack confidence often avoid speaking situations, which further deprives them of the practice necessary to build their language skills (Dornyei, 2005). Then, this limits their linguistic range and prevents them from developing more advanced language skills. When confidence is lacking, students tend to stick to simple language, avoiding complex structures that could lead to errors (Macintyre & Gardner, 1994)

Furthermore, 37% students choosing disagree and 24% students choosing neutral when answering questionnaire about lack of motivation. This lack of engagement results in limited language development. A lack of motivation is often manifested in reduced effort and minimal engagement in speaking tasks, which hinders language acquisition (Dörnyei, 2001). When motivation is low, students tend to procrastinate and avoid speaking tasks, which perpetuates a cycle of poor performance and further demotivation (Williams & Burden, 1997). Without motivation, students are unlikely to challenge themselves, resulting in stagnation or even regression in their language skills (Ushioda, 2008).

Moreover, 34% students choosing agree and 40% students choosing neutral when answering questionnaire about fear of making mistakes. The fear of making mistakes can paralyze students, leading to unwillingness to engage in speaking activities and ultimately hindering language acquisition (Horwitz, 2001). Students who are overly concerned about making mistakes tend to restrict their language use to what they know is safe, which limits their growth as language learners (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994). When students fear making mistakes, they often develop a negative self-image, which reinforces their reluctance to speak and hampers their language development (Dornyei, 2005).

# 4. CONCLUSION

This study was conducted to determine what psychological problems students face when speaking and what are the most dominant psychological problems faced by students when speaking. Based on what has been discussed, presented, and analyzed, the researcher concluded that overall, the findings indicate that although anxiety, lack of confidence, and fear of making mistakes are significant problems, respondents showed a generally neutral attitude towards these problems. However, the presence of these psychological barriers, coupled with shyness and lack of motivation, suggests that targeted interventions are needed to improve English speaking performance among respondents. Efforts to build confidence, reduce shyness, and eliminate fear of making mistakes can be very helpful in improving their speaking ability.

## 5. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Alhamdulillahirabbil 'alamin, the writer addresses her great praise and thankfulness to Allah SWT who has given her opportunities, health, and ability to finish this research. This great task is also impossible to be completed without helps and supports from many persons. The writer wants to highly acknowledge the persons for their valuable contributions. Especially for fourth semester students of the year 2023 intake majoring in Nursing Science at the Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Kesehatan Indonesia (STIKESI) that have become the participants of this research. With all humility, the author realizes this research is still far from perfect. Therefore, the author expects constructive criticism and suggestions for the perfection of this research.

#### 6. DECLARATIONS

- Author Contribution: Rani Autila, Conceptualization, Writing Original Draft, Editing and Visualization, Writing Review & Editing, Formal analysis, and Methodology, Validation and Supervision.
- Funding Statement: The study was funded by individual writer. Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest. Additional Information: Additional information is available for this paper.

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