

Exploring the Fear of Presentation Among 5th Semester English Education Students at University of Muslim Nusantara Al Washliyah

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Abstract

Presentation anxiety is a common challenge among university students. Particularly in their academic journey. This study aims to investigate the causes of students' fear experienced in presentation by English Education Department student in 5th semester in University of Muslim Nusantara Al Washliyah Medan and the solution how they remove their fear in presentation by their own way. A qualitative research method with thematic analysis was applied, involving two students in fifth semester as research subjects. The parameters for this study were base on students' preperation, self-confidence, and peer perception. The results revealed three primary themes : Lack of preparation, Fear of peer judgment, and limited communication skills. The findings show that inadequate preparation and fear of being judge by peers significantly contribute to students' presentation anxiety. Additionally, limited communication and laguage skills further escalate the fear. This study proves that academic and psychological factors play a crucial role in shaping students' confidence during presentation.

Keywords: *Presentation Fear, 5th Semester Students, Communication Skill, Peer Perception, Qualitative Analysis, Thematic Analysis.*

Abstrak

Kecemasan saat presentasi merupakan tantangan umum di kalangan mahasiswa. Terutama dalam perjalanan akademis mereka. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki penyebab ketakutan mahasiswa yang dialami dalam presentasi oleh mahasiswa Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di semester 5 di Universitas Muslim Nusantara Al Washliyah Medan dan solusi bagaimana mereka menghilangkan rasa takut mereka dalam presentasi dengan cara mereka sendiri. Metode penelitian kualitatif dengan analisis

tematik diterapkan, melibatkan dua mahasiswa di semester lima sebagai subjek penelitian. Parameter untuk penelitian ini didasarkan pada persiapan mahasiswa, kepercayaan diri, dan persepsi teman sebaya. Hasilnya mengungkapkan tiga tema utama: Kurangnya persiapan, Ketakutan akan penilaian teman sebaya, dan keterampilan komunikasi yang terbatas. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa persiapan yang tidak memadai dan ketakutan akan penilaian teman sebaya berkontribusi secara signifikan terhadap kecemasan presentasi mahasiswa. Selain itu, keterampilan komunikasi dan bahasa yang terbatas semakin meningkatkan rasa takut. Penelitian ini membuktikan bahwa faktor akademis dan psikologis memainkan peran penting dalam membentuk kepercayaan diri mahasiswa selama presentasi.

Kata Kunci: *Ketakutan Presentasi, Mahasiswa Semester 5, Keterampilan Komunikasi, Persepsi Teman Sebaya, Analisis Kualitatif, Analisis Tematik.*

1. Introduction

Presentation anxiety is a significant challenge faced by university students, particularly in academic settings where effective communication skills are essential. As highlighted by Pranoto & Suprayogi (2019), speaking is a core skill in communication, and overcoming barriers such as anxiety is vital for successful meaning exchange. Despite its importance, many students struggle with presentation anxiety, often due to a lack of preparation, fear of peer judgment, and limited communication skills. These factors can negatively impact students' confidence and hinder their academic performance. Over the years, various methods have been proposed to address presentation anxiety and improve students' communication skills. Nguyen & Newton (2020) found that in Vietnam's formal education system, limited attention to communication and presentation skills created barriers to students' professional goals. Similarly, Fadillah (2020) emphasized the role of internal factors, such as self-confidence and preparation, in shaping students' ability to communicate effectively. A study conducted by Irianti et al (2024) revealed that public speaking created through the application of flipped classroom since it leads to students' critical thinking skill. However, many students continue to struggle due to limited access to effective strategies or resources.

This study aims to explore the causes of presentation anxiety among 5th-semester students in the English Education Department at the University of Muslim Nusantara Al Washliyah Medan. It further investigates the strategies students use to overcome their fear and improve their presentation skills. The study focuses on factors such as preparation, self-confidence, and peer perception to identify key challenges and solutions.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Presentation Anxiety in Academic Contexts

Presentation anxiety is a widespread issue among students and professionals alike, often linked to fear of public speaking, peer evaluation, and self-perception (Nguyen & Newton, 2020). Research has shown that a lack of preparation significantly contributes to students' anxiety, particularly when they are unfamiliar with their topic or lack confidence in their delivery (Fadillah, 2020). Academic and psychological factors, such as self-confidence and fear of judgment, are closely tied to presentation anxiety, making it an essential area for research and intervention (Kelly, 2001).

2.2 Self-Confidence and Peer Perception

Self-confidence plays a vital role in overcoming presentation anxiety. According to Alsadae & Sase (2022), students with higher levels of self-confidence tend to perform better in public speaking and presentations. Conversely, fear of peer judgment can create significant barriers, especially in competitive or evaluative environments (Pranoto & Suprayogi, 2019). Peer perception also influences students' willingness to take risks and engage in active communication, further highlighting the need to create supportive and non-judgmental learning spaces.

2.3 Overcoming Presentation Anxiety

Various strategies have been proposed to address presentation anxiety, including increased preparation, practice, and the use of supportive tools or techniques. For instance, Xodabande (2017) emphasized the importance of rehearsing presentations to build familiarity and reduce stress. Nguyen & Newton (2020) found that students who practiced their presentations and sought feedback from peers or instructors experienced a noticeable reduction in anxiety. Additionally, psychological interventions, such

as relaxation techniques or positive self-talk, have proven effective in boosting students' confidence and reducing fear of public speaking (Fadillah, 2020). This study builds on the existing literature to explore how 5th-semester students address presentation anxiety, focusing on their preparation methods, self-confidence, and responses to peer perception. By identifying common challenges and solutions, this research aims to provide practical recommendations for reducing presentation anxiety and enhancing students' communication skills.

3. Method

This research utilized a qualitative approach with thematic analysis. Thematic analysis involves identifying and analyzing themes or patterns within qualitative data. Two participants were selected from the English Education Department at UMN Al-Washliyah, both in their fifth semester. Data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews, enabling open-ended responses based on participants' personal experiences. The interview questions focused on exploring participants' feelings, causes of anxiety during classroom presentations, and strategies they employ to manage such fears. The researcher employed this method to understand the participants' perspectives in-depth, tailoring questions based on their responses during the interview.

Table 3.1 Participants' Criteria

| No | Participants | Status | universities | Cause of the fear in presentation | Solution to remove the fear in presentation |
|----|--------------|-----------------|------------------|---|---|
| 1 | RJR | English Student | UMN Al-Washliyah | Peers' judgment | Full preparation material and mental |
| 2 | WNS | English Student | UMN Al-Washliyah | Self confidence and feeling inappropriateness | Calm herself down. |

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

The result of the research showed that were found three themes, namely; Lack Of Preparation, Fear Of Peer Judgment, and Limited Communication Skills by asking the causes of their fear in presentation and also the solution how they remove their fear by their own way.

- The Causes Of The Fear

"What usually makes you afraid when presenting in front of the class?"

RJR : "I'm afraid of somebody judging me and also afraid when I misspoke in front of the class when presenting."

WNS : "I've even almost trembled because I don't believe in myself. Usually, it's about feelings of self-confidence and feelings of inappropriateness."

The participants indicated that fear of judgment and lack of self-confidence were the main sources of anxiety. **RJR** shared her worry about others' opinions, while **WNS** highlighted internal self-doubt as the primary reason for her anxiety. These findings align with prior research that suggests fear of public speaking is often rooted in self-perception and fear of negative evaluation.

- Removing Their Fear

"Do you continue your presentation with your fear? Or is there solution to remove your fear?"

RJR : "Actually, in the beginning, the fear feels so strong, and then if you get used to doing it, the fear will disappear little by little. My solution is preparing our mental because it doesn't mean that the fear is gone, but we feel confident when we speak in front of the class."

WNS : "I usually calm myself the first time that it can be missed. I don't try to reflect on myself or calm myself down."

The participants demonstrated resilience by employing different strategies to manage their anxiety. **RJR** emphasized the importance of mental preparation and gaining confidence through consistent practice. Meanwhile, **WNS** focused on calming herself during initial moments of fear, though she admitted to avoiding self-reflection during these instances. Based on the findings, it can be summarized that consistent practice, mental preparation, and staying calm are essential for managing anxiety during presentations. Creating a supportive classroom environment could further help students overcome their fears.

4.2 Discussion

The findings of this study reveal three key themes contributing to presentation anxiety: Lack of Preparation, Fear of Peer Judgment, and Limited Communication Skills. These results align with prior research, such as Fadillah (2020), which highlights insufficient preparation as a significant factor in presentation-related stress. Participants reported that inadequate planning and practice hindered their ability to present confidently, supporting Ali and Hasan (2023), who emphasize the importance of effective preparation strategies for reducing anxiety among ESL learners. Additionally, Fear of Peer Judgment emerged as a major source of stress, as highlighted by RJR and WNS. This finding is consistent with Alsadae and Sase (2022) and Sari and Nugroho (2022), who assert that self-perception and fear of negative evaluation play a critical role in public speaking anxiety. Limited communication skills, particularly difficulties in organizing ideas and language proficiency, also proved to be significant contributors. This observation aligns with Vallauri (2020) and Wang and Chen (2022), who found that low self-efficacy in using a foreign language exacerbates presentation anxiety. RJR's comment on overcoming fear through consistent practice further validates Ali and Hasan's (2023) argument that building confidence through regular preparation is essential for managing anxiety. Then, it is also related with the students' confidence in pronouncing English words correctly (Anjani&Lubis, 2022)

At the end, fostering collaboration and a supportive learning environment, as suggested by Yusuf and Suryani (2021), can enhance students' confidence. Thus, creating a positive and encouraging classroom atmosphere can help students manage their fears and perform more effectively in public speaking.

5. Conclusion

This study identified three primary factors contributing to presentation anxiety: Lack of Preparation, Fear of Peer Judgment, and Limited Communication Skills. The findings indicate that inadequate preparation, self-doubt, and fear of peer evaluation were significant challenges faced by participants. Emotional factors, such as self-perception and stress, also played a major role. Participants employed various coping strategies. For instance, RJR emphasized mental preparation and consistent practice, while WNS relied on calming techniques without engaging in deep self-reflection. These strategies underscore the need for personalized approaches to managing anxiety, consistent with the findings of Yusuf and Suryani (2021) and Ali and Hasan (2023), who highlight the importance of collaboration and continuous practice in fostering speaking confidence. Thus, this research aligns with previous studies such as Ali and Hasan (2023), which underscores that structured preparation and consistent practice help alleviate anxiety, and Yusuf and Suryani (2021), which reinforces that creating a positive classroom atmosphere is essential for helping students manage presentation fears. Together, these studies highlight that a combination of preparation, mental resilience, and a supportive environment is crucial for improving students' public speaking performance. The conclusion affirms that consistent practice, mental preparation, and a supportive classroom environment are crucial for alleviating presentation anxiety. This study also reinforces the notion that a positive learning atmosphere

builds students' confidence, equips them with effective strategies to manage their fears, and enhances their public speaking abilities.

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