

## Stabilized Foreign Language Anxiety and Its Impact on Speaking Performance

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### Research Article

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#### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to stabilize EFL students' Foreign Language Anxiety level which affected their speaking performance. The goal was achieved through the implementation of positive feedback, non-offensive manner of correction, and lenience towards making mistakes. The design was a classroom action research. The techniques were implemented to 18 students for six weeks. Speaking tests and the FLCAS were administered before and after the implementation. The results of the speaking test showed that students below the Good level improved at least level higher in speaking. The results of the FLCAS showed that students who previously had high-anxiety shifted to moderate-anxiety and improved their speaking ability.

### INTRODUCTION

FLA is closely related to speaking. It is pointed out that speaking in a foreign language is the major source of anxiety<sup>[1,2]</sup>. Horwitz et al.<sup>[3]</sup> reported that subjects possessing high level of anxiety were afraid to speak in foreign language classes. Moreover, Young<sup>[4]</sup> argues that high level of anxiety is on par with communication apprehension. Compared to other classes, foreign language class creates quite a terror to its students. In foreign language class, students are expected to give oral performance more than in science class or others. To make it worse, they are asked to speak in a language which is foreign to them. Different grammatical rules, alien pronunciation, and perhaps completely unlike vocabulary items are enough reasons for them to fear speaking. Liu<sup>[5]</sup> reveal that most of the subjects in their research were afraid to take the risk to speak in English class; one third of them were anxious in English classroom, afraid of being negatively evaluated, and apprehensive about public speaking.

Horwitz et al.<sup>[3]</sup> define Foreign Language Anxiety (henceforth FLA) as "the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with the arousal of autonomic nervous system ... which prevents some people from performing successfully in a foreign language". They developed a measurement of foreign language anxiety focusing on classroom setting widely-known as Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). Several studies using this measurement found significant negative correlations between FLCAS and foreign language achievement<sup>[6-9]</sup>. It means that the higher the foreign language classroom anxiety a student suffers from, the lower his foreign language achievement is.

It must be understood that to alleviate FLA, a teacher needs to understand the factors causing it. In her research, Young<sup>[4]</sup> reported some factors that contribute to FLA as (1) low self-esteem, (2) individualized activities, and (3) fear of making mistakes. Low self-esteem is closely related to FLA and speaking. As previously mentioned, individuals with low self-esteem tend to have high level of anxiety and experience communication apprehension. When a student experience communication apprehension, he is at a disadvantage because most likely he has difficulty in recalling vocabulary items<sup>[10]</sup>, thus, hindering the speech production. This state can trigger frustration, and frustration experienced by students due to the inability to express their ideas in foreign language can lead to hesitation to communicate<sup>[3]</sup>.

Individualized activities is the next in order. Subjects in Young's research were reported to experience anxiety when they were called on by the teacher or asked to speak in front of the class by themselves. Students prefer to volunteer to answer rather than to be called on, and speaking in front of the class is surely anxiety-provoking<sup>[11]</sup>. On the other hand, they were reported to enjoy working in a group. Activities such as small group work help students reduce their anxiety as they feel that they are sharing responsibilities and not answering the questions alone<sup>[11]</sup>.

Fear of making mistakes can also trigger anxiety. Students fear when they make mistakes they will be negatively evaluated and laughed at. There is also a possibility of not wanting to risk their self-esteem by publicly making mistakes and being corrected in front of others. The majority of Young's research subjects feel that they would have been less worried had it been acceptable to make mistakes.

As previously explained, low self-esteem can cause FLA. Price <sup>[2]</sup> describes individuals with low self-esteem as people who believe that they perform worse than the others and think that everyone else is looking down on them. Baumeister et al. <sup>[12]</sup> argue that people with low self-esteem develop a cautious and self-protective personal style to protect themselves from humiliation. To alleviate these tendencies, students with low self-esteem need to be rewarded with positive feedback for their effort of speaking in foreign language. A replicate findings by Vallerand and Reid <sup>[13]</sup> showed that positive feedback led to higher intrinsic motivation for both male and female. Meanwhile, motivation has significant positive correlation with self-esteem <sup>[14]</sup>. Thus, positive feedback is highly likely to boost one's self-esteem which is expected to result in lowering the FLA level.

In line with the traditional view of feedback, Josephs et al. <sup>[15]</sup> mention that people with low self-esteem are more likely to accept positive feedback from a knowledgeable external source than from themselves. In the case of students with low self-esteem, teachers can take the authority to be the knowledgeable external source. To be a resourceful external source, teachers need to fathom that positive feedback can take various forms. It can be in forms of praise (e.g. great, good, or excellent), affirmation (e.g. yes, correct, or OK), laughter to students' response, or non-verbal cues (nodding, thumbs up, or finger snapping) <sup>[16]</sup>.

The other cause of FLA which needs to be counteracted is individualized activities. Individualized activities like speaking in front of the class in foreign language by one self or doing individual report in foreign language are highly likely to provoke anxiety. The feeling of having to bear responsibility alone often causes students to freak out. Teachers should avoid this mode of learning for students with high FLA. Students prefer activities in which they do not have to bear the embarrassment alone when they make mistakes. Pair work will help solving this problem <sup>[16]</sup>. Having small class is also beneficial. The larger the class, the more participants students have to face and the more anxiety provoking it is.

Fear of making mistakes can also cause FLA. Interestingly, it is not only experienced by those with low self-esteem but also by those who suffer from perfectionism. Perfectionists have a tendency to set excessively high standard for their performance, and they, especially the maladaptive ones, are prone to and extremely fear failure <sup>[8,17]</sup>. At the end of their findings, Gregersen <sup>[17]</sup> point out that approaches used to help perfectionist students are also beneficial for anxious foreign language students. Some approaches can be adapted for students with FLA. He suggests teachers to build a friendly, supportive learning environment and ensure students that they position themselves as helping figures to promote learning instead of evaluators. It agrees with Young's <sup>[4]</sup> findings about the characteristics of teachers which tend to reduce students' anxiety in foreign language speaking class. They mention the characteristics as friendly, having good sense of humor, patient, and relaxed. It then continues with emphasizing that making mistakes is also part of learning. Young's <sup>[4]</sup> subjects reported that the teacher reduced their foreign language anxiety by 'not making a big deal over mistakes' or 'not overly correcting mistakes'. It helped them alleviate their anxiety when the teacher made the students realize that everyone made mistakes or that it was natural to make mistakes.

After reviewing all related literature on the issue at hand, it can be concluded that in order to minimize the raise in students' FLA level a teacher should pay attention on the way he corrects students' errors/mistakes. He needs to be a friendly helping figure instead of an intimidating one. Besides, raising students' self-esteem which results in an alleviated FLA level can also be done by giving positive feedback to the students for the efforts they are attempting. Furthermore, a teacher can also deal with FLA by reducing students' fear of being negatively evaluated which can be achieved by being lenient towards them when they are making mistakes. More importantly, by alleviating students' FLA level it is expected that students will increase their ability in speaking in English. Therefore, these three techniques provide a solution to the problems mentioned before. These techniques can be used hand in hand to improve students' ability in speaking by stabilizing students' FLA level.

## METHODS

### Participants

The subjects of this research were 18 students of various English programs (e.g. General English, TOEFL, and IELTS preparation) in an English institution in Malang. The research was done under the name of Speaking Corner which was a free conversation club designed to enhance students' communication practice outside the designed curriculum. Since the subjects were the students of our own, the observation and the informal interview with the subjects in order to identify the problem had been done beforehand.

## MATERIALS

### The Instruments Were As The Following:

1. An anxiety instrument, an Indonesian version of the FLCAS developed by Horwitz et al. The FLCAS is a 33-item questionnaire to measure the foreign language anxiety level within the boundary of language classrooms. Since this research was done in a

classroom setting, it fit the need of discovering the students' FLA level prior to the employment of the techniques. The FLCAS measures students FLA level on a 1-5 Likert scale. However, to avoid too many neutral answer the questionnaire was changed into a 1-4 Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, 4=strongly agree). From 33 items, 24 items are inclined to anxiety while the other 9 items (item number 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 18, 22, 28 and 32) are the opposite, meaning that strongly agree for these 24 items and strongly disagree for the 9 items indicate high anxiety. Students are said to have high anxiety level if their score ranges from 100 to 132. Meanwhile, score ranging from 66 to 99 is considered as moderate level and was set as the criterion of success.

This scale was used as it had demonstrated an alpha coefficient of 0.93 for internal reliability. Since it was translated into Bahasa, the translated version of the FLCAS was validated by an expert. Afterwards, it was tried out to a number of respondents to ensure its reliability. The alpha coefficient for the reliability from the try out was 0.917. The questionnaire comprises three aspects: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. Since it was important to know each student's FLA level, students had to input the initial of their names in the questionnaire.

2. An oral performance instrument. The speaking test was administered before and after the implementation of the techniques. The test before the implementation of the techniques requested students to talk about themselves as well as their perception of their own ability in speaking in English. The test administered after the implementation requested students to make a self-reflection about their speaking ability before and after joining the Speaking Corner.

3. An observation instrument. The observation checklist was used to observe me as the teacher in charge. The teacher observation checklist was completed by the teacher coordinator. The observation checklist was used to keep track on my performance as the teacher in charge to check whether I had applied the strategies as planned. Field note was used to jot down occurrences which were not stated in the observation checklist and regarded as a support for the observation checklist. The field note might contain interesting and specific information obtained from the observation such as the interaction between students, students and the teacher, or the atmosphere.

4. The interview guide was used to gather information on students' opinion concerning the techniques. Students was asked about how they felt toward the three techniques applied, which strategy that made them feel better (alleviate the anxiety) and which strategy that made them feel worse (possibly make them feel pressured). The written feedback and the interview were done to know the students' response for the strategies applied in the research so that I know what to fix, and it was administered in form of discussion in hope that students was more truthful and open. The interview was done after the speaking test.

**PROCEDURE**

A preliminary study was done beforehand to identify the problems. The preliminary study was administered in 4 General English, 2 TOEFL, and 1 IELTS classes. These classes consisted of 3 to 4 university students and university graduates from different majors and varying semesters. During this stage the initial speaking test was administered, and the Indonesian FLCAS was asked to complete.

The next step was planning the strategies and how the techniques should be implemented. The strategies in employing these techniques were as shown in **Tables 1-3**.

**Table 1.** Strategies in giving positive feedback.

Types of positive feedback	Example	When
Praise	Saying great, good, or excellent	- performing well
Affirmation	Saying yes, correct, or OK	- attempting answering in/mostly in English
		- volunteering in class
		- speaking clearly (neither whispering nor mumbling)
	Friendly laughter to students' response	- using terms or vocabulary items given in the materials or discussed in class
		- helping a friend on a task (finding difficult words or re-explaining the assignment)
Non-verbal cues	Nodding, thumbs up, or finger snapping	- expressing their opinion in/mostly in English
		- any other attempts showing willingness to participate in the class discussion.

**Table 2.** Strategies in employing non-offensive manner of correction in coping with FLA.

Correcting errors/mistakes	
When	- Give correction during grammar practice, tolerate during communication practice
Which	- Correct errors/mistakes that lead to misunderstanding the message
	- Correct errors/mistakes that frequently appear

How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use 'Delayed correction' for errors/mistakes that do not inhibit meaning</li> <li>- Use 'Direct correction' for errors/mistakes that inhibit meaning by rewording</li> <li>- Summarize and review the most common errors/mistakes at the end of the activity                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Correct errors/mistakes in a friendly manner                                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Avoid intimidating tone</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Avoid cornering/blaming the students                                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use jokes</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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**Table 3.** Strategies in employing lenience towards making mistakes.

Attempts	When
Give emphasis that making mistakes is acceptable	In the first four/five meetings
Give emphasis that everybody makes mistakes during foreign language production/ making mistakes is normal	Before students performing speaking
Give emphasis that making mistakes is also part of the language learning	Most of the time when mistakes/errors are corrected

In this stage the lesson plan for 12 meetings were developed and criteria of success were set. The criteria of success were that at least 80% of the students reached Fair level in terms of content, fluency, and delivery.

The next phase was the implementation. During this phase, the classes were conducted for 6 weeks. The subjects were assigned into 4 classes consisting of 4 to 5 students. The focus of the class was on speaking practice.

The following stage was observing. The observation was done at same time as the implementation. Records were taken in this stage. After the implementation finished, the second speaking test was administered. Following the speaking test was the written feedback and interview.

The last stage was reflecting. All the data were processed and the results were compared to the criteria of success. If it met the criteria of success, the cycle would be stopped, and the report was written.

**Data Analysis**

The data concerning the subjects' speaking score were calculated into percentages to see the improvements in the content, fluency, and delivery. The speeches were transcribed to provide an illustration of the improvement. The FLCAS data were calculated to see the decrease in the FLA level. Later, the data both in speaking and FLCAS were compared to the data taken in the preliminary study. The means were compared to see if the improvement is significant.

The data from the observation, the written feedback, and the interview were processed to know if the implementation was done as planned and to know the subjects' responses regarding the implementation of the techniques.

**RESULTS**

From the speaking test, it was found that students' speeches were categorized to Very Poor, Poor, Fair, Good, Very Good, and Excellent. From 18 speeches, the result of the analysis on students' speaking test in terms of content of speech shows that 17 (94%) speeches reached at least level 3 (Fair) and were put into Fair, Good, and Very Good categories. The majority of the speeches, 14 speeches (78%), fell into the category of Fair and Good. No speech was categorized into Very Poor or Excellent. While there was only 1 speech labeled as Poor, 7 speeches were regarded as Fair, and 7 others were categorized into Good. Meanwhile, the remaining 3 speeches were labeled as Very Good.

In terms of fluency, 83% reached at least level 3 (Fair). There were 5 (28%) speeches labeled as Fair, and 10 (56%) were labeled as Good. No speech was labeled Very Good or Excellent. Regrettably, out of 18 speeches there were still 2 Poor and 1 Very Poor speeches.

In terms of delivery, 15 (83%) speeches were categorized into Fair, Good, and Very Good. Most of the speeches were labeled as Good (44%). However, 3 speeches were still categorized into Poor. A more detailed information of the spread of the score can be viewed in **Table 4**.

**Table 4.** Students' speaking scores in terms of content, fluency, and delivery.

Aspect	Level	Score	Number of students	Percentage
Content	Excellent	6	0	0%
	Very Good	5	3	17%
	Good	4	7	39%
	Fair	3	7	39%
	Poor	2	1	6%
	Very Poor	1	0	0%

Fluency	Excellent	6	0	0%
	Very Good	5	0	0%
	Good	4	10	56%
	Fair	3	5	28%
	Poor	2	2	11%
	Very Poor	1	1	6%
Delivery	Excellent	6	0	0%
	Very Good	5	1	6%
	Good	4	8	44%
	Fair	3	6	33%
	Poor	2	3	17%
	Very Poor	1	0	0%

The results of the FLCAS scores was then compared between before and after. The comparison shows how the anxiety level lessened to the desired level (moderate-anxiety level). The paired sample t-test shows the comparison in the anxiety level before and after the instruction. The p value shown is 0.000. It means that there was a significant difference in the FLA level before and after the implementation of the techniques.

The comparison between FLCAS scores was then compared to students' speaking scores in terms of content, fluency, and delivery. This was done in order to collect information on the improvement of the speaking production based on the level of anxiety. The related data can be seen in **Table 5**.

**Table 5.** Speaking scores improvement based on the anxiety level.

No	Anxiety level	Shifting anxiety level	Group level before the instruction	Improvement					
				(number of students)					
				Content		Fluency		Delivery	
				Yes	No	Yes	NO	YES	NO
1	Low-anxiety	low to low	-	-	-	-	-	-	
		moderate to low	poor	1	-	-	-	-	
			fair	1	-	-	-	-	
	high to low	-	-	-	-	-	-		
2	Moderate-anxiety	low to moderate	-	-	-	-	-	-	
		moderate to moderate	fair	-	-	2	-	1	-
			good	2	3	-	4	1	4
			very good	-	1	-	-	-	-
		high to moderate	very poor	1	-	1	-	1	-
			poor	4	-	5	1	6	-
fair	3	1	2	-	2	-			
3	High-anxiety	low to high	-	-	-	-	-	-	
		moderate to high	-	-	-	-	-	-	
		high to high	very poor	1	-	-	-	1	-

The results of the observation reveal that the implementation was done as proposed in the plan. The subjects also showed a great enthusiasm during the classes. This is supported by the results of the written feedback and interview.

## DISCUSSION

It was observed that when various modes of positive feedback (i.e., praise, affirmation, or non-verbal cues) were given, students showed enthusiasm and displayed willingness to be involved in the discussion. It was observable that they tried harder to put their thoughts in class discussions. This is in line with the findings that Pierce et al. [2] present. Their study mentioned that positive rewards affect people's intrinsic motivation. In this case, students raised their intrinsic motivation, thus led to the predisposition to participate in the speaking activities.

Moreover, from the written feedback and interview it was found that students upgraded the way they perceived their ability in speaking when they were given positive feedback. It built their confidence and their conscience that they actually had the potential to speak in English. Supporting this findings, Vallerand [13] postulated that positive feedback instigated higher level of intrinsic motivation and competence feelings. Higher exposure to positive feedback when attempting at speaking in English aroused students' intrinsic motivation. They instilled the belief that they were capable of doing the task.

Besides, students also showed a great degree of enjoyment during classes. Concerning this, that the positive feelings obtained from being praised enhanced not only intrinsic motivation but also enjoyment of a task. It can be concluded that the positive feedback given to the students generated the inclination to participate further in the speaking activities because it made them feel the enjoyment to speak in English and feel more competent than they were before.

In regards of correction, students displayed preference to the direct correction rather than the delayed correction. While correction, either direct or delayed, has the chance to prevent fossilization, it also has the likelihood of exposing students to embarrassment in front of their peers. However, during the interview students in this research revealed that they did not feel mistreated when they were corrected. They explained that they were helped because their teacher clarified their errors/mistakes in a friendly manner. From the observation, it was discovered that the teacher did not overtly correct errors/mistakes especially when the ideas were successfully delivered. Instead, modelling on students' utterances which was accomplished by rephrasing in the correct structure was done most of the time. This is supported by Phillips and Young who mentioned that indirect methods of correction were less negative and less likely to heighten students' affective filter. When students' affective filter is loose, it is easier for them to learn new things.

The other thing that was done when correcting students' errors/mistakes was providing a less-threatening atmosphere. Intimidating/abusive tone was absolutely ruled out. Cornering/blaming the students using insulting and cynical words, gestures, or facial expressions was crossed off the list. Instead, jokes, comebacks to students, and witty comments were put on display. More smiles, friendly laughter, and reassuring words (e.g. it's fine, that's okay, I know you can do this) were exhibited. Young<sup>[4]</sup> supported the notion. She claimed that teachers who had a good sense of humour, were friendly, relaxed, and patient so as to give off comforting vibes and foster student to speak up were noted to help students alleviate their anxiety. Although the use of humour per se was not related to achievement in speaking, Schacht and Stewart argued that injecting wittiness to the scene was worthy of consideration due to its possible impact on attitudes and tension.

Similar outcome was produced by implementing lenience towards making mistakes. After being told that they were allowed to pay less attention on the form, students in this research were reported to have less fear and more freedom when speaking in English. This statement is clarified by their responses in the written feedback and interview. They claimed that even though they perceived themselves as terrible in terms of grammar or vocabulary, they did not feel as frightened as before to speak in English.

Throughout the meetings, students were given emphasis that making mistakes was natural. Over-zealous attempt at correcting every errors/mistakes the students made was avoided. In addition, students were ensured to have a good grip of the notion that mistakes equaled the opportunity to learn something new either for themselves or their fellow classmates. Students mentioned that when they made mistakes either in sentence construction or in pronunciation, they learned something new, and so did their peers. Consequently, they displayed a shift in their perspective towards making mistakes. Making mistakes, which they believed to be something they absolutely needed to avoid before, since then became a much approachable fellow for the students. For which, they became more open to corrections and less restricted in conveying their ideas through oral production.

Phillips agrees with this notion. She reported that students whose language egos were relatively fragile need to be treated with careful consideration. One of the considerations was to reassure that mistakes were a natural part of language acquisition. Students were bound to make realistic expectations for themselves that they would not be a pro after one or two exercises in speaking. In that way, it reduced the anxiety during speaking practice, for anxiety, as described by MacIntyre, divides attention during cognitive performance. This state leads to failure in the performance and triggers negative self-evaluation and self-deprecation. Hence, this condition needs to be avoided at all cost.

In terms of content, it was found that students speak more utterances from meeting to meeting. The most apparent improvement was shown by students who belonged to Poor group prior to the instruction and improved themselves to Fair group. By the end of the meeting, they were able to produce more sentences. These students managed to reduce the vagueness in their speech much better than before the meetings were held. They did this by providing more explanation and more examples to the ideas they were trying to convey. There were also fewer misunderstandings as they succeeded in connecting incoherent statements. It was mostly displayed by students who improved from Fair to Good. This finding was similar to Steinberg and Horwitz's<sup>[3]</sup> study which theorized that non-anxious subjects tended to describe more interpretatively compared to those who were in anxious states.

Beside the content of speech, students also showed improvements in fluency. It was discovered that students' speech became more fluid as the meetings progressed. It was mostly exhibited by students who progressed from Fair to Good. The students' speeches became less halting and less fragmentary compared to theirs prior to the implementation of the techniques. It was indicated by the decline in the use of filler. Moreover, they also exhibited less attempt at searching for words. It was particularly due to the preparation time given to them before speaking. During the first half of the meetings they still showed fragmentary responses when inquired directly, especially for questions which required long and detailed responses.

Meanwhile, during the last half of the meetings, students started to produce fewer incomplete sentences. At first, students who belonged to Very poor, Poor, and Fair uttered sentences mostly without subjects, or they misused the pronouns. After listening to the explanation of a simple rule of a sentence construction, they started to organize their utterance better by including subject

and verb in the utterances. Some attempts were failed because sometimes they forgot the rules. The verbs were mostly incorrect due to the missing s or be or the misapplication of –ing form, base verb, past form, or past participle. Most of the time they were still confused about how to distinguish verbs and adjectives which led to the disappearance of the verb. However, their speeches were much easier to understand and listen to compared to before. These findings were in line with Dekeyser. He mentions that students with higher intrinsic motivation did better on oral accuracy and fluency with error correction. Krashen postulates that students who are highly anxious are less likely to learn grammatical structure. On the other hand, students who are less anxious are more likely to acquire grammatical structure.

On the other hand, similar occurrence happened to the Good group as it did to the upper level groups concerning the content of speech. They did not exhibit any significant improvement in terms of fluency except for the less use of filler. The decline in the use of filler caused the speech to be firmer and more fluid. Although sometimes they were still hesitant and put some pauses on account of attempting at rephrasing or constructing the correct order of words, the overall fluency of this group was considered adequate. Common mistakes such as missing s or misusing verbs were evident, yet they could not be categorized into the occurrence of incomplete sentences, and they did not inhibit meaning or obstruct communication.

As for the delivery, it was revealed that students who progressed from Poor to Fair made the most improvement in this trait. Unlike the students who belonged to the Good group since the beginning of the study, the students who were categorized as Poor were much more timid. They were more concerned with what to say rather than how to say it. As the result, the delivery was far from being sufficient. There was an infrequent demonstration of gestures, awkward facial expressions which typically exhibited fear, confusion, or discomfiture, wavering volume which required a great effort on behalf of the listener, and an abundant reliance to the note which made the speaking production was more like reading aloud.

Nonetheless, these students showed some changes in this facet. There were some gradual improvements especially on the reliance of the note. Like before, they still kept their note close to them. However, despite reading the note like they used to, they started to care less about it. Frequent reading was still apparent during the first half of the meetings, yet as the time goes by the reading changed into peeking (in the Fair group, the peeking changed into glancing).

They also exhibited a better projection. They managed to speak in a clearer volume that could reach the whole class (even though the size of the class was small to begin with) so that the other members of the class could easily catch what the speech was about, which was proven by the coherence of the questions they asked. It happened most likely due to the freedom they felt after being told that making mistakes was normal or that it was a good chance to learn from mistakes. Likewise, as the students became more confident, they started to employ more body language. They used more hand gestures and exhibited more facial expressions. Although these parts did not develop that much, it was still observable that they showed much less timidity in their expressions. According to Leary, a manifestation of anxiety can be in form of fidgeting, playing with the surrounding objects, stuttering and stammering, and looking jittery. When students alleviate their anxiety and boost their confidence, the manifestation automatically reduces its occurrence causing a more relaxed expression and clearer voice.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

### Conclusion

The classroom action research which was conducted in two months (one and a half month for the implementation and two weeks for collecting additional data) conceives some findings. The focus of the research itself was to improve students' ability in speaking through stabilizing their foreign language anxiety. The analysis of the findings presents that students made some improvements in three aspects of speaking i.e., content of speech, fluency, and delivery. Additionally, the analysis of the findings also shows that alleviation in the foreign language anxiety level from High to Moderate was apparent. The shift in the anxiety level, one way or another, helped students improve their speaking ability. Students also displayed a broadly positive responses towards the implementation of positive feedback, non-offensive manner of correction, and lenience towards making mistakes. It can be concluded that the implementation of the three techniques is proven to be efficacious in improving students' ability in speaking.

### Suggestions

Some classroom implications can also be considered by English teachers. In order to encourage students, especially those with anxiety problem, to speak in English, teachers are suggested to:

1. Build a relaxed and supporting learning environment;
2. Present themselves as a figure whose purpose is to help the students instead of evaluating them;
3. Be generous in giving positive feedback to appreciate students' effort in speaking especially those with high anxiety problems;
4. Avoid correcting errors/mistakes in a harsh way that will result in students getting humiliated in front of their peers;
5. Give emphasis that making mistakes is also part of language acquisition process.

Rooms for improvements are also offered to further researchers who are interested in investigating similar problems. More research subjects are greatly preferable. With larger research subjects it will be easier to take inferences at liberty. However, the number of the students within a class should be kept at minimum number possible because the techniques will be difficult to implement if the class has too many members. Moreover, longer exposure to the techniques may benefit students more. With the instruction focusing solely on speaking for more than two months, it is expected that students show more improvements. It is also intriguing to know the relationships among the improvements in different aspects of speaking. For example, how the improvements in the content of speech is related to the improvements in fluency or delivery. Another intriguing idea to inspect is the relationship between the decline in the FLA level and the improvement in speaking. If it is proven to be positively correlated, more effort in reducing the anxiety level will be attempted. Since anxiety is not the only factors affecting language learning, it is suggested that further researchers explore anxiety along with the other factors affecting language learning such as aptitude, intelligence, or age.

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