

An Analysis of Students' Speaking Anxiety in Learning English at Elementary School

¹Dwi Melansari, ²Dia Fransisca

^{1,2} English Study Program, STKIP Muhammadiyah Pagaram, Indonesia
Jl. Komber H Umar 123 Pagaram

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received: June 11, 2026

Revised: July 12, 2026

Accepted: October 17, 2026

Keywords:

English learning

Elementary school students

Foreign language anxiety

Speaking anxiety

Self-confidence

Conflict of interest:

None

Funding information:

None

Correspondence:

Dwi Melansari

dwimelansari2003@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Speaking anxiety has emerged as one of the most influential affective factors affecting English language learning among young learners. Despite the emphasis on communicative competence in elementary education, many students continue to experience anxiety when participating in English-speaking activities. This article critically reviews and synthesizes recent literature on students' speaking anxiety in elementary school English learning. The review focuses on the relationships among speaking anxiety, self-confidence, English proficiency, teacher support, peer evaluation, classroom environment, and speaking performance. Drawing upon studies published between 2018 and 2026, this article examines the causes, manifestations, consequences, and interventions associated with speaking anxiety. The findings indicate that speaking anxiety is a multidimensional construct influenced by psychological, linguistic, instructional, and sociocultural factors. Fear of negative evaluation, low self-confidence, limited language proficiency, unsupportive classroom climates, and excessive correction practices consistently emerge as significant predictors of anxiety. Furthermore, high levels of speaking anxiety negatively affect classroom participation, willingness to communicate, speaking performance, and language development. The review also reveals that speaking anxiety differs across proficiency levels, with lower-proficiency learners generally reporting higher anxiety than more proficient peers. The article concludes by proposing educational implications and identifying future research directions related to young learners' speaking anxiety.



This is an open access article under the [CC-BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) international license.

How to cite (APA Style):

Melansari, D., Fransisca, D. (2026). An Analysis of Students' Speaking Anxiety in Learning English at Elementary School. *JEIT (Journal of Educational Innovations and Technologies)*, 2(1), 102-115.
<https://journal.ciptapustaka.com/index.php/JEIT/article/view/181>

The increasing importance of English as an international language has transformed language education policies across many countries (Crystal, 2003;

Graddol, 2006; Richards, 2015; Galloway & Rose, 2018). English is no longer viewed solely as an academic subject but as a crucial communication tool for participation in the globalized world (Jenkins, 2015; Rose et al., 2021; Kirkpatrick, 2020). Consequently, English instruction has been introduced at increasingly earlier stages of education, including elementary schools, with the expectation that early exposure may facilitate language acquisition and communicative competence (Cameron, 2001; Pinter, 2017; Nikolov, 2020).

However, learning English as a foreign language presents considerable challenges for young learners (Lightbown & Spada, 2021; Ellis, 2015; Gass et al., 2020). Among the four language skills, speaking is widely regarded as the most demanding because it requires learners to process vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and meaning simultaneously while responding in real time (Brown, 2007; Thornbury, 2005; Nation & Newton, 2009). Unlike reading or writing activities, speaking often exposes learners to immediate social evaluation, making it particularly susceptible to emotional influences (Horwitz et al., 1986; Young, 1991; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994).

One of the most significant emotional barriers in foreign language learning is speaking anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994; Teimouri et al., 2019; Botes et al., 2020). Foreign language anxiety has been identified as a major affective factor that influences learners' confidence, motivation, participation, and academic achievement (Gardner, 2010; Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Resnik & Dewaele, 2023). Recent reviews indicate that speaking anxiety remains one of the most frequently investigated emotional constructs in second language acquisition because of its substantial impact on communication and language performance (Teimouri et al., 2019; Botes et al., 2020; Dewaele & Li, 2021).

Research consistently demonstrates that students experiencing high levels of speaking anxiety are less likely to participate actively in classroom discussions, volunteer answers, engage in oral communication tasks, or take risks in language use (Liu & Jackson, 2008; Woodrow, 2006; Mak, 2011; Marzec-Stawiarska, 2015). Instead, they often remain silent, avoid interaction, and limit opportunities for language practice (Young, 1991; Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002; Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2009). Such behaviors may create a negative cycle in which anxiety reduces communication opportunities, reduced communication hinders language development, and weaker language skills subsequently increase anxiety (MacIntyre et al., 1998; MacIntyre, 2017; Teimouri et al., 2019).

The issue becomes particularly important in elementary school settings because young learners are still developing self-confidence, emotional regulation, and social awareness (Pinter, 2017; Cameron, 2001; Nikolov, 2020). Research involving primary-school learners indicates that children are highly sensitive to peer reactions, teacher feedback, and classroom atmosphere (Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020; Dewaele & Li, 2021; Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014). Consequently, speaking activities may become anxiety-provoking experiences

even when learners possess adequate language knowledge (Liu, 2022; Resnik & Dewaele, 2023; Botes et al., 2022).

Although foreign language anxiety has been extensively studied among secondary school and university students, research focusing specifically on elementary school learners remains relatively limited (Teimouri et al., 2019; Botes et al., 2020; Dewaele & Li, 2021). Existing studies frequently emphasize general foreign language anxiety without examining how self-confidence, language proficiency, teacher support, peer evaluation, and classroom environment interact to influence speaking anxiety among young learners (Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020; Resnik & Dewaele, 2023; Liu, 2022). Furthermore, previous findings regarding the relationship between language proficiency and anxiety remain inconsistent across educational contexts (MacIntyre, 2017; Teimouri et al., 2019; Botes et al., 2022).

Conceptual Framework

Drawing on the literature discussed above, this article proposes a conceptual framework to illustrate the relationships among self-confidence, teacher support, classroom environment, language proficiency, speaking anxiety, and speaking performance among elementary school learners. In this framework, self-confidence, teacher support, classroom environment, and language proficiency are conceptualized as factors associated with speaking anxiety. Higher self-confidence, supportive teacher feedback, and a positive classroom environment may be associated with lower levels of speaking anxiety, whereas limited language proficiency may contribute to anxiety during oral communication. However, the relationship between language proficiency and speaking anxiety may vary across educational contexts. Speaking anxiety, in turn, may be associated with learners' willingness to participate, fluency, and performance in speaking activities. High anxiety may discourage classroom participation and limit opportunities for oral practice, potentially creating a cycle in which reduced practice and unsuccessful speaking experiences reinforce anxiety (MacIntyre et al., 1998; MacIntyre, 2017; Teimouri et al., 2019). This framework provides an organizing perspective for synthesizing the literature rather than a causal model empirically tested in the present article. Figure 1 illustrates the proposed relationships among these factors.

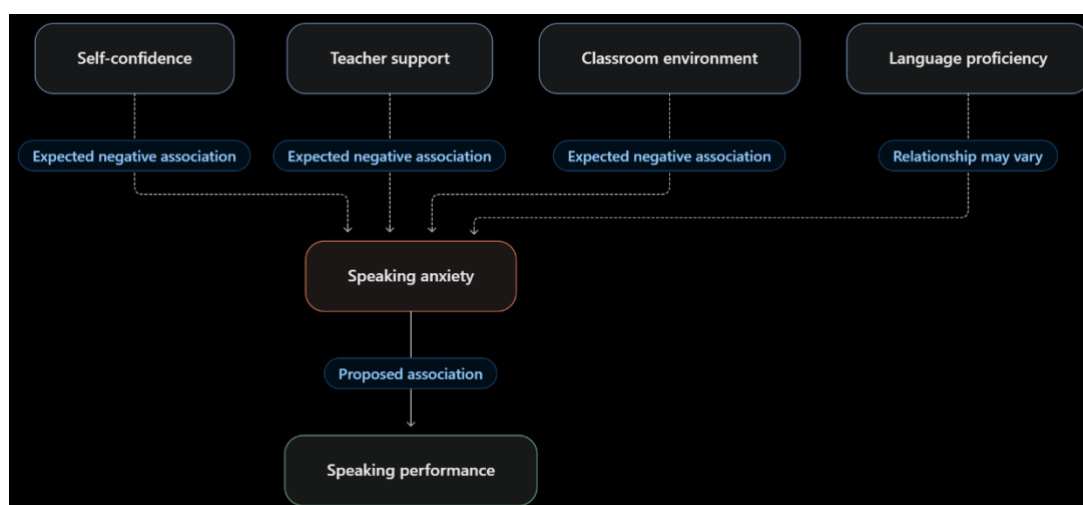


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of Factors Associated with Speaking Anxiety and Speaking Performance among Elementary School Learners

Therefore, this article aims to critically analyze speaking anxiety in elementary school English language learning by synthesizing theoretical and empirical literature. Specifically, the article seeks to: (1) examine the major factors associated with speaking anxiety among elementary school learners; (2) analyze the relationships between speaking anxiety and key variables, including self-confidence, teacher support, classroom environment, and language proficiency; (3) examine how speaking anxiety is associated with speaking performance across different proficiency levels; and (4) identify pedagogical strategies that may help reduce speaking anxiety and support speaking performance.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design using a Critical Literature Review (CLR) approach to investigate students' speaking anxiety in learning English at the elementary school level. A Critical Literature Review was selected because it enables researchers to systematically examine, compare, evaluate, and synthesize findings from previous studies in order to develop a comprehensive understanding of a particular phenomenon (Snyder, 2019; Xiao & Watson, 2019). Unlike empirical studies that collect primary data directly from participants, a literature review focuses on analyzing existing scholarly works to identify patterns, gaps, contradictions, and emerging trends within the field (Booth et al., 2021; Snyder, 2019). Through this approach, the researchers were able to critically explore the factors contributing to speaking anxiety, its effects on students' language performance, and the pedagogical strategies proposed to reduce anxiety in English language classrooms (Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre, 2017).

The review concentrated on studies published between 2018 and 2026 to ensure that the findings reflected contemporary perspectives and recent developments in English language teaching and learning. This period was chosen because recent studies have increasingly emphasized the psychological dimensions of language learning, particularly anxiety, self-confidence, motivation, and classroom interaction among young learners (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2019; Teimouri et al., 2019). Furthermore, the selected timeframe allowed the researchers to examine how current educational practices, technological developments, and learner-centered approaches influence students' speaking anxiety in elementary school contexts (Mercer & Gregersen, 2020; Resnik & Dewaele, 2021).

The Critical Literature Review approach also facilitated a deeper examination of theoretical frameworks related to foreign language anxiety. Several foundational theories, including Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Theory proposed by Horwitz et al. (1986), affective factors in second language acquisition proposed by Krashen (1982), and contemporary perspectives on learner psychology (Mercer & Gregersen, 2020), were used as tualtual foundations for interpreting the reviewed studies. By integrating theoretical and empirical evidence, this study sought to provide a comprehensive understanding of speaking anxiety among elementary school students and to identify implications for future research and educational practice (MacIntyre, 2017; Teimouri et al., 2019).

Instruments and Procedures

Literature Sources

The primary sources of data in this study consisted of scholarly publications, including peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings, review papers, books, book chapters, and other academic publications related to speaking anxiety and English language learning. The selected literature addressed various aspects of foreign language anxiety, including speaking anxiety, communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, test anxiety, self-confidence, language proficiency, teacher support, peer interaction, classroom environment, and speaking performance (Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre, 2017). These sources were chosen because they provide reliable and evidence-based information regarding the psychological and pedagogical dimensions of language learning (Booth et al., 2021; Snyder, 2019).

Relevant literature was identified through several reputable academic databases, including Google Scholar, ERIC, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, Taylor & Francis Online, and Scopus-indexed journals. These databases were selected because they contain a wide range of high-quality publications in the fields of education, applied linguistics, psychology, and language teaching (Xiao & Watson, 2019; Booth et al., 2021). The use of multiple databases helped ensure comprehensive coverage of relevant studies and minimized the possibility of

overlooking significant publications related to speaking anxiety among elementary school learners (Snyder, 2019; Page et al., 2021).

To maintain the quality and relevance of the reviewed literature, inclusion and exclusion criteria were established. Studies were included if they focused on speaking anxiety, foreign language anxiety, English language learning, or related psychological factors among school-aged learners and were published between 2018 and 2026. Publications written in English and available in full-text format were prioritized to facilitate detailed analysis (Page et al., 2021; Xiao & Watson, 2019). Studies that lacked sufficient methodological information, were unrelated to language learning, or focused exclusively on higher education contexts without discussing implications for younger learners were excluded from the review (Booth et al., 2021; Snyder, 2019).

Data Collection Procedures

The data collection process was conducted systematically through several stages to ensure the credibility and comprehensiveness of the review. The first stage involved identifying relevant publications using specific keywords and search strings. Keywords included “speaking anxiety,” “foreign language anxiety,” “English learning,” “elementary school students,” “young learners,” “self-confidence,” “teacher support,” “peer evaluation,” “classroom environment,” and “speaking performance.” These keywords were combined using Boolean operators such as AND and OR to broaden or narrow the search results as needed (Page et al., 2021; Xiao & Watson, 2019). This strategy enabled the researchers to locate studies that directly addressed the phenomenon under investigation while maintaining relevance to the research objectives (Booth et al., 2021; Snyder, 2019).

The second stage involved screening and selecting the identified publications. Titles, abstracts, and keywords were initially reviewed to determine their relevance to the topic of speaking anxiety in English language learning. Publications that met the inclusion criteria were then examined in greater detail through full-text reading (Page et al., 2021; Snyder, 2019). During this process, duplicate records were removed, and studies that did not align with the objectives of the review were excluded. This screening procedure ensured that only relevant and high-quality sources were included in the analysis (Booth et al., 2021; Xiao & Watson, 2019).

The third stage consisted of organizing and categorizing the selected literature according to major themes identified in previous studies. These themes included conceptualizations of speaking anxiety, causes of anxiety, self-confidence, language proficiency, teacher support, peer evaluation, classroom environment, communication apprehension, fear of making mistakes, and differences in anxiety levels across proficiency groups (Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre, 2017). The categorization process facilitated systematic comparison among studies and enabled the researchers to identify recurring patterns and

significant findings across different educational contexts (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2019; Mercer & Gregersen, 2020).

Data Analysis Procedures

The collected literature was analyzed using thematic content analysis, a qualitative analytical technique commonly employed in literature review studies to identify, organize, and interpret recurring themes within textual data (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Nowell et al., 2017). This method was selected because it allows researchers to examine complex educational and psychological phenomena by synthesizing findings from multiple studies and identifying meaningful patterns across different contexts (Snyder, 2019; Xiao & Watson, 2019). Through thematic analysis, the researchers were able to explore how speaking anxiety is conceptualized, experienced, and addressed in elementary school English learning environments (MacIntyre, 2017; Teimouri et al., 2019).

The analysis began with an intensive reading of all selected publications to gain a comprehensive understanding of their objectives, methodologies, findings, and conclusions. Relevant information related to speaking anxiety was highlighted and coded according to emerging concepts and themes (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Nowell et al., 2017). During this stage, particular attention was given to factors influencing speaking anxiety, including linguistic competence, self-confidence, classroom atmosphere, teacher behavior, peer interaction, and fear of negative evaluation (Horwitz et al., 1986; Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2019). The coding process enabled the researchers to systematically organize information and identify relationships among different variables discussed in the literature (Mercer & Gregersen, 2020; Resnik & Dewaele, 2021).

Following the coding process, the identified themes were compared and synthesized across studies to determine similarities, differences, and recurring trends. The researchers examined how various studies explained the causes and consequences of speaking anxiety, as well as the effectiveness of different pedagogical interventions designed to reduce anxiety and improve speaking performance (MacIntyre, 2017; Teimouri et al., 2019). Particular attention was given to findings related to teacher support, collaborative learning, positive classroom environments, confidence-building activities, and communicative teaching approaches, as these factors were frequently reported as effective strategies for reducing anxiety among language learners (Mercer & Gregersen, 2020; Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2019).

Finally, the synthesized findings were interpreted critically to generate broader insights regarding speaking anxiety among elementary school students. The researchers evaluated the strengths and limitations of previous studies, identified gaps in the existing literature, and highlighted areas requiring further investigation (Snyder, 2019; Booth et al., 2021). The results of the analysis were then used to formulate conclusions and provide recommendations for English language teachers, curriculum developers, and future researchers interested in addressing speaking anxiety in elementary school contexts (Teimouri et al.,

2019; Resnik & Dewaele, 2021). Through this rigorous analytical process, the study aimed to contribute a comprehensive and evidence-based understanding of speaking anxiety and its implications for English language education.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The literature reviewed in this article suggests that speaking anxiety is a multidimensional phenomenon associated with psychological, linguistic, instructional, and social factors (Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre, 2017). However, the relationships among these factors should not be interpreted as uniform across learners and learning contexts. Although previous studies generally associate self-confidence, classroom support, and positive learning experiences with reduced anxiety, the influence of each factor may depend on learners' proficiency, perceptions of evaluation, and classroom experiences (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014; Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020). This perspective suggests that speaking anxiety is better understood through the interaction of multiple factors than through a single explanatory variable.

Self-confidence is an important factor in understanding learners' willingness to communicate. Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory proposes that individuals' beliefs about their capabilities influence their motivation, behavior, and emotional responses. This perspective is consistent with literature associating stronger self-confidence with greater willingness to participate in speaking activities (Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020; Dewaele & Li, 2021). Nevertheless, confidence should not be treated as the sole explanation for differences in speaking anxiety. Learners who believe in their abilities may still experience anxiety when they anticipate negative evaluation or face unfamiliar communicative situations. Conversely, learners with limited confidence may participate more readily when classroom conditions provide sufficient support. Therefore, self-efficacy offers a useful explanation of learners' perceived capabilities, but it should be considered alongside social and instructional conditions when interpreting speaking anxiety.

The role of fear of negative evaluation further illustrates the limitations of explanations based exclusively on linguistic competence. Horwitz et al. (1986) conceptualized foreign language anxiety in relation to communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety, while Young (1991) highlighted classroom-related sources of language anxiety. These perspectives suggest that anxiety may arise not only from difficulties in producing language but also from learners' expectations about how others will respond to their performance. This interpretation is consistent with the literature emphasizing interpersonal relationships and classroom climate (Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020; Liu, 2022). However, the relative influence of linguistic difficulty and social evaluation may differ between learners and situations. For example, a learner may feel relatively comfortable during pair work but become anxious during a whole-class presentation, even when the language demands are comparable.

Thus, speaking anxiety should be examined in relation to both the linguistic demands of a task and the social conditions under which it occurs.

These considerations are particularly relevant to elementary school learners, whose confidence and responses to social evaluation are still developing. The literature discussed by Mercer and Dörnyei (2020) and Gregersen and MacIntyre (2014) emphasizes the importance of affective and classroom-related factors in language learning. Nevertheless, conclusions about younger learners should be drawn cautiously when the available evidence also includes adolescents or university students. Differences in developmental stage, previous learning experiences, and classroom expectations may limit the extent to which findings from older learners can be generalized to elementary school contexts. Accordingly, the importance of peer reactions and teacher feedback provides a plausible basis for understanding speaking anxiety among children, but further age-specific evidence is needed to establish how these influences operate in primary education.

The relationship between language proficiency and speaking anxiety presents a particularly important issue in the literature. Lower proficiency may increase anxiety because learners have fewer linguistic resources available when formulating responses in real time. However, the relationship is not necessarily linear: learners with stronger language skills may also experience anxiety when speaking involves public evaluation, high performance expectations, or unfamiliar social situations (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; MacIntyre, 2017). These observations indicate that linguistic competence and emotional experience represent related but distinct dimensions of speaking performance. Consequently, proficiency alone may not adequately explain why some learners participate confidently while others remain reluctant to speak. Rather than assuming that increasing proficiency will automatically reduce anxiety, teachers and researchers should consider how learners' perceived competence, task demands, and evaluation experiences interact. This interpretation also highlights the need to distinguish learners' actual language proficiency from their beliefs about their ability to communicate.

Differences in research methods may also contribute to variation in reported findings, although this possibility needs to be evaluated against the methods used in individual studies. Questionnaire-based research can identify patterns in learners' reported anxiety and its associations with other variables, but self-reported responses may not fully capture how anxiety changes during specific speaking activities. Similarly, findings from a particular classroom, age group, or educational setting may not be directly comparable with those obtained from different populations or contexts. These methodological considerations are important when interpreting the literature because differences in instruments, participant characteristics, and research designs may influence the patterns observed. However, without a systematic comparison of the methods and findings of individual studies, these factors should be regarded

as possible explanations for inconsistencies rather than established causes of disagreement among researchers.

The classroom environment provides another important perspective for interpreting speaking anxiety. Supportive teachers, constructive feedback, collaborative activities, and positive peer relationships may create conditions in which learners feel more comfortable participating in oral communication (Dewaele & Li, 2021; Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020; Resnik & Dewaele, 2023). In contrast, excessive correction, competitive classroom conditions, and negative peer interactions may increase apprehension and discourage participation (Young, 1991; Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014). Nevertheless, a supportive environment should not be understood simply as one in which teachers avoid correcting errors. Feedback remains necessary for language development, and the relevant pedagogical question concerns how correction is delivered and perceived. Constructive feedback that addresses errors without humiliating learners may support both language development and emotional safety. This distinction suggests that teachers should balance linguistic guidance with the need to maintain learners' confidence and willingness to communicate.

The reviewed literature also indicates a need for more focused research on speaking anxiety among elementary school learners. Although existing work provides useful theoretical explanations of foreign language anxiety, evidence drawn from older learners may not fully represent the developmental and instructional characteristics of primary education (Teimouri et al., 2019; Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020; Dewaele & Li, 2021). Moreover, examining self-confidence, proficiency, teacher support, and classroom climate separately may not fully explain how these factors operate together. A more integrated approach would investigate how individual characteristics and classroom conditions interact, while distinguishing reported anxiety from observable participation and speaking performance.

Longitudinal and mixed-method research could contribute to this understanding in complementary ways. Longitudinal designs could examine whether learners' anxiety and confidence change over time, while qualitative interviews, classroom observations, or speaking-task reflections could provide insight into learners' experiences and the circumstances in which anxiety emerges. Combining these approaches may help researchers examine not only whether variables are associated but also how learners interpret speaking situations and respond to classroom experiences. Theoretically, such research could extend the application of self-efficacy and foreign language anxiety perspectives to elementary education by clarifying how perceived competence, social evaluation, and instructional conditions jointly relate to learners' emotional and communicative experiences. These implications remain directions for further investigation rather than conclusions established by the present literature synthesis.

Pedagogical Implications

The discussion has several implications for English language teaching at the elementary school level. First, teachers should establish supportive learning environments in which learners can participate without fear of ridicule or humiliating criticism (Dewaele & Li, 2021; Resnik & Dewaele, 2023). Encouraging effort, acknowledging progress, and treating mistakes as a normal part of language learning may help learners develop confidence while maintaining opportunities for language development (Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020; Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014).

Second, speaking activities should be introduced progressively according to learners' linguistic and emotional needs. Pair work and small-group interaction may provide less socially demanding opportunities to practise before learners move to whole-class speaking tasks (Lightbown & Spada, 2021; Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020). However, these activities should be viewed as adaptable instructional options rather than universally effective solutions, since learners may respond differently depending on their confidence, proficiency, and previous experiences.

Third, feedback should balance linguistic accuracy with communicative confidence. Teachers should provide clear and constructive guidance without making learners feel personally judged for their mistakes (Young, 1991; Horwitz et al., 1986). This approach does not require teachers to avoid correction; instead, it emphasizes the importance of the timing, manner, and purpose of feedback in supporting both language development and participation.

Fourth, cooperative learning activities can provide opportunities for peer support and shared communication goals (Dörnyei, 2005; Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020). Nevertheless, group work should be structured carefully because peer interaction may also create pressure for learners who fear negative evaluation. Teachers should therefore establish respectful interaction norms and ensure that participation is encouraged without exposing anxious learners to unnecessary embarrassment.

Finally, teacher education programs should address affective factors in language learning, including speaking anxiety, self-efficacy, and fear of negative evaluation (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014; Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020). Greater awareness of these factors may help teachers recognize different sources of anxiety and adapt speaking activities, feedback, and classroom interaction accordingly. Overall, the pedagogical implications of this review emphasize the importance of combining language support with attention to learners' emotional experiences rather than treating speaking anxiety solely as a consequence of limited proficiency.

CONCLUSION

Speaking anxiety is a multidimensional challenge in elementary school students' English language learning, shaped by the interaction of psychological, linguistic, social, and instructional factors. This review highlights the roles of self-confidence, fear of negative evaluation, language proficiency, teacher support,

peer relationships, and classroom environment in understanding learners' anxiety during speaking activities. The reviewed literature also suggests that language proficiency alone is insufficient to explain learners' emotional responses to oral communication.

Theoretically, this review contributes an integrated perspective on speaking anxiety by bringing together individual, interpersonal, and classroom-related factors. Rather than viewing anxiety solely as a consequence of limited language proficiency, the review emphasizes the importance of considering learners' perceived competence, experiences of social evaluation, and classroom conditions together. This perspective provides a basis for interpreting speaking anxiety as a context-sensitive phenomenon and highlights the relevance of examining the relationships among these factors in elementary school settings. However, these relationships should be understood as a synthesis of the reviewed literature rather than as causal effects established by the present article.

Practically, the review highlights the need to integrate emotional support with linguistic instruction in elementary English classrooms. Teachers may support learners by creating psychologically safe learning environments, providing constructive feedback, introducing speaking activities progressively, and encouraging respectful peer interaction. These practices offer pedagogical directions for addressing speaking anxiety while maintaining opportunities for language development. Their implementation should be adapted to learners' proficiency levels, emotional needs, and classroom contexts rather than assumed to be equally effective for all students.

Future research should investigate speaking anxiety among elementary school learners more directly through longitudinal and mixed-method designs. Further studies could examine how self-confidence, language proficiency, teacher support, peer evaluation, and classroom environment interact over time and how these relationships are associated with learners' participation and speaking performance. Such research would help clarify the applicability of existing theoretical perspectives to primary education and provide stronger empirical grounds for developing and evaluating pedagogical interventions. Overall, understanding speaking anxiety requires attention to both learners' linguistic development and the psychological and social conditions in which language learning takes place.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to express sincere gratitude to the lecturers of the English Education Study Program at STKIP Muhammadiyah Pagaralam for their valuable guidance and support during the completion of this study.

REFERENCES

Bandura, A. (1997). Self-efficacy: The exercise of control. W. H. Freeman.

- Botes, E., Dewaele, J.-M., & Greiff, S. (2020). The foreign language classroom anxiety scale and academic achievement: An overview of the prevailing literature and a meta-analysis. *Journal for the Psychology of Language Learning*, 2(1), 26–56.
- Brown, H. D. (2007). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (5th ed.). Pearson Education.
- Dewaele, J.-M., & Li, C. (2021). Teacher enthusiasm and students' social-behavioral learning engagement: The mediating role of student enjoyment and boredom in Chinese EFL classes. *Language Teaching Research*, 25(6), 922–945.
- Dewaele, J.-M., & MacIntyre, P. D. (2014). The two faces of Janus? Anxiety and enjoyment in the foreign language classroom. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 4(2), 237–274. <https://doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2014.4.2.5>
- Dörnyei, Z. (2005). *The psychology of the language learner: Individual differences in second language acquisition*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Ellis, R. (2015). *Understanding second language acquisition* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Gregersen, T., & MacIntyre, P. D. (2014). Capitalizing on language learners' individuality: From premise to practice. *Multilingual Matters*.
- Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. A. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 70(2), 125–132. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1986.tb05256.x>
- Lightbown, P. M., & Spada, N. (2021). *How languages are learned* (5th ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Liu, M. (2022). Foreign language anxiety and English speaking performance: A review of recent studies. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, Article 1373290.
- Liu, M., & Jackson, J. (2008). An exploration of Chinese EFL learners' unwillingness to communicate and foreign language anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 92(1), 71–86. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2008.00687.x>
- MacIntyre, P. D. (2017). An overview of language anxiety research and trends in its development. In C. Gkonou, M. Daubney, & J.-M. Dewaele (Eds.), *New insights into language anxiety: Theory, research and educational implications* (pp. 11–30). *Multilingual Matters*.
- Mak, B. (2011). An exploration of speaking-in-class anxiety with Chinese ESL learners. *System*, 39(2), 202–214. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2011.04.002>
- Mercer, S., & Dörnyei, Z. (2020). *Engaging language learners in contemporary classrooms*. Cambridge University Press.
- Resnik, P., & Dewaele, J.-M. (2023). Learner emotions and teacher support in foreign language classrooms: A review of recent developments. *Language Teaching Research*, 27(4), 789–808.

- Teimouri, Y., Goetze, J., & Plonsky, L. (2019). Second language anxiety and achievement: A meta-analysis. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 41(2), 363–387. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263118000311>
- Woodrow, L. (2006). Anxiety and speaking English as a second language. *RELC Journal*, 37(3), 308–328. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688206071315>
- Young, D. J. (1991). Creating a low-anxiety classroom environment: What does language anxiety research suggest? *The Modern Language Journal*, 75(4), 426–439. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1991.tb05378.x>