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Overcoming Oral Presentation Anxiety: A Systematic Review of Tertiary ESL/EFL Students' Challenges and Strategies

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Abstract

This systematic review addresses the widespread fear of oral presentations among ESL/EFL students at the tertiary level. Based on a comprehensive review of academic literature from 2016 to 2023, it identifies and summarises the factors contributing to such anxiety and evaluates effective intervention strategies to alleviate it. Key factors include environmental, psychological, language and resource challenges. Environmental constraints include the complexity of managing large classes and insufficient practice opportunities, while psychological elements include stress, motivation and nervousness. Linguistic challenges relate to aspects such as intonation and the influence of students' mother tongue. In addition, the lack of authentic teaching materials and the limitations of the curriculum highlights resource-related problems. Various intervention strategies were highlighted, focusing on technology-enhanced teaching methods, assessment techniques and student-centred approaches. These strategies aim to promote oral presentation skills while reducing associated anxiety. Significantly, the educator's role in creating a conducive learning environment and the need to integrate technology into modern educational environments was emphasised. While the findings offer valuable insights, they are often context-specific or regionally limited. Therefore, an all-encompassing solution remains elusive. The review highlights the urgency of addressing oral presentation anxiety as it affects students' academic and career trajectories. It argues for a more nuanced, holistic approach that combines traditional and technologically advanced methods to meet student's diverse needs and challenges in the globalised educational landscape of the 21st century.

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Introduction

Communication is a multifaceted and essential skill of great importance in various aspects of our existence. It encompasses everyday interpersonal exchanges and professional and social engagement areas. Its function is to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, information and ideas, thus significantly influencing cognitive processes and perspectives. In particular, oral communication is often preferred to written statements because it reduces transmission time and does not require computers or physical distribution (Anggoro & Sibagariang, 2020; Doerga, 2019).

In the business context, companies place great emphasis on communication skills when hiring employees and invest in the ongoing training of their staff. This aligns with the studies showing that effective communication, discipline and training significantly impact employee performance (Anggoro & Sibagariang, 2020). In addition, communication plays a crucial role in resolving conflicts between employees, using methods such as REACH analysis (Respect, Empathy, Audible, Clarity, Humble), as shown in the study by Ramadhini and Manafe (2022). Effective communication skills promote organisational cohesion and productivity as well as employee success.

Communication has transformed education in the 21st century, especially in Malaysia. To improve students' communication skills, teacher-centred learning has been replaced by student-centred learning (Narayanan, 2018). This transition fits with the changing characteristics of digital natives influenced by video games and Web 2.0 (Narayanan, 2018).

As a sub-set of communication, oral presentation skills are fundamental at all levels of education. These skills help students build confidence, especially when speaking in front of groups, and prepare them for their future careers (Zainuddin et al., 2022). The ability to convey information clearly, concisely and persuasively is paramount, and oral presentations are a valuable platform for students to hone these skills (Yusoff, 2010). These presentations are not only crucial for the classroom, as they provide students with essential skills that they can apply throughout their careers, including in scenarios such as job interviews and professional meetings.

The advent of online learning and virtual classrooms, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, has highlighted the importance of communication skills on another level (Don et al., 2022). Effective oral communication is necessary for virtual environments to maintain a social presence and cognitive engagement.

The focus on oral presentation and communication skills in Malaysia reflects a broader global trend and highlights these competencies' importance for professional and personal development. Malaysia's cultural, linguistic and technological context presents unique challenges and opportunities. Still, the fundamental truth remains: Communication is an essential skill that transcends boundaries and contributes to individual success, academic achievement and organisational

effectiveness.

Core Elements of Successful Oral Presentations

Oral presentations are an essential part of academic, professional and public communication. The success of an oral presentation depends on several factors, including audience understanding, clarity of content, effective use of visual aids, engagement, delivery, storytelling, ethical considerations, technology adaptation, and continued growth and development. These core elements are explored through empirical studies to provide a comprehensive understanding of what makes successful oral presentations.

First, audience analysis and content clarity in educational contexts have been highlighted. Bousaba et al. (2014) conducted a study at Charlotte's Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of North Carolina that focused on improving students' oral presentation skills. The study focused on audience analysis, message coherence and delivery and developed an oral communication rubric to enhance students' ability to communicate technical information. This approach highlights the general understanding that presentations must be tailored to the audience, with explicit, concise content and not unnecessary jargon.

Second, the role of visual aids has been investigated in several studies. For example, Marinho et al. (2020) conducted a cross-sectional analytical study with university students to analyse aspects of public speaking, including non-verbal communication. The study found that shyness was prevalent among young university students, who participated in few public speaking activities and reported speaking with low intensity and could not use their hands naturally in public presentations. Furthermore, Yaffe (2019) argued that public speaking involves oral and visual communication, with poorly chosen slides undermining many presentations. The study emphasised that excellent presentations must have both verbal and visual objectives.

Third, audience engagement is central to effective oral presentations. Confidence and enthusiasm in presenting, often achieved through practice and preparation, are critical to maintaining audience interest. Interactive engagement that allows immediate feedback and clarification adds a dynamic quality to the presentation. This must be accompanied by effective time management to respect the audience's schedule.

In addition, the inclusion of storytelling and the ability to confidently handle questions and objections contribute to a presentation's credibility. Lee and Carpenter (2017) investigated the role of visual storytelling in scientific research poster sessions and emphasised that this popular genre provides more concreteness and persuasiveness in STEM fields.

In addition, ethical considerations such as accuracy and proper attribution provide integrity and trust. In the modern world, adapting to technology, including dealing with technical aspects and adapting presentation style to virtual environments, is crucial. Assessment and feedback can ensure continuous growth and development of presentation skills. Reflection on successes and areas for improvement creates a pathway for continuous improvement of oral presentation skills.

Oral presentations are a complex and multi-layered form of communication. The core elements of successful oral

presentations, as evidenced by empirical studies, include audience understanding, content clarity, effective use of visual aids, engagement, delivery style, storytelling, ethical considerations, technology adaptation, and continued growth and development. When these elements are combined synergistically, the result is a comprehensive approach to successful oral presentations in various settings.

Challenges and Strategies in Oral Presentations

Several studies have examined students' challenges and obstacles in oral presentations, focusing on participants in English language courses. These research projects span different countries, institutions and student populations but reveal many common difficulties. Exploring these challenges has led to a deeper understanding of the underlying causes and potential solutions and offers valuable insights for educators and researchers.

Studies by Mohamed and Asmawi (2018), Aziz et al. (2022) and Hadi et al. (2020) examined challenges in technical oral presentations among engineering and UiTM Kelantan students. The problems identified include language proficiency, lack of confidence, inadequate preparation and lack of technical knowledge. These obstacles hindered students' ability to give effective presentations, demonstrating a need for targeted training strategies. Recommendations from these studies included more practice opportunities, facilitation of peer feedback, and an emphasis on improving fluency through targeted courses and teaching techniques.

Grieve et al. (2021) and Nurwahyuni (2019) took a more psychological approach, focusing on students' apprehensions, coping mechanisms related to public speaking, fears and lack of confidence. They explored the emotional and mental obstacles students face, uncovering issues such as fear of judgement, physical symptoms of anxiety and the negative impact on the university experience. The studies highlighted how public speaking anxiety can hinder academic progress and emphasised the need for universities to recognise and address this widespread problem. Tailored strategies were suggested to address these specific challenges, including more practical support and techniques to reduce anxiety.

Al-Nouh et al. (2015) and Al Harun et al. (2016) examined more personal characteristics such as fear of being judged, dress code, non-verbal communication, delivery techniques and time management. These studies help to understand the multiple issues non-native English speakers face, especially in different cultural contexts such as Arabic and Bangladeshi. They offer insights into the various aspects of oral presentations, considering individual and cultural variables, and suggest solutions such as focusing on body language and visual aids.

Widyastuti and Mahaputri (2015) and Mardiningrum and Ramadhani (2022) examined specific challenges related to presentation skills, such as dependence on notes, stiffness, nervousness, demanding content and high self-expectations during presentations. They analysed the more nuanced presentation elements and showed how minor problems can lead to significant difficulties. Strategies to overcome these obstacles included self-confidence, thorough preparation, strategic eye contact and creating an environment that encourages student autonomy in problem-solving. These studies contribute to the understanding that classroom environment and student self-awareness are essential in successful presentations.

In summary, across all these different contexts and methods, common difficulties emerge in areas such as language proficiency, anxiety, lack of confidence and preparation. Many researchers advocate for more practice opportunities, improved language courses and specialised support to help students overcome these challenges. The findings from these studies highlight the need for comprehensive and individualised approaches that address the psychological and subject-specific aspects of students' difficulties with oral presentations. By addressing these aspects, educational institutions can better help students develop the critical skills needed for effective communication and professional success.

Research Objectives and Research Questions

The primary goal of this systematic review is to provide researchers and educators with a synthesis of empirical evidence collected from previous relevant studies on the challenges tertiary-level ESL/EFL students face when delivering their oral presentations. This will enable further intervention development and research in this field. This study is conducted to answer two research questions:

- a. What factors contribute to oral presentation anxiety among tertiary ESL/EFL students?
- b. Which interventions or strategies have proven effective in mitigating oral presentation anxiety for these students?

Literature Review

Definition of Oral Presentation

An oral presentation is a systematic and formal approach to conveying information, ideas or research findings to an audience through spoken language. Visual aids, such as slides or props, are commonly used in today's educational and professional development settings. This practice is essential for effective learning and development. Oral presentations must be accurate in content, i.e. the information conveyed must be precise and related to the topic (Chiang et al., 2021). According to Saliyeva and Solieva (2022), organising the information thematically ensures that the speech material's presentation is functionally and situationally appropriate. Oral presentations rely on effective communication, which includes elements such as clear pronunciation, intonation of voice and projection, all of which significantly affect the overall impact and understanding of the presentation (Chiang et al., 2021; Blegur et al., 2023). Non-verbal cues such as dress, posture, hand movements, looks and facial expressions are crucial in effectively conveying information and engaging the audience (Grant, 2020), indicating the presenter's confidence and building a professional persona. According to Blegur et al. (2023), consistent practice of oral presentation skills can improve the precision of the information conveyed, the effectiveness of communication and the articulation of speech. Chiang et al. (2021) have developed instruments and scales to objectively assess and improve oral presentations, focusing specifically on educational settings such as nursing programmes. Grant (2020) states oral presentations are essential for developing a professional identity. Several factors, including team dynamics and individual characteristics such as language and cultural background, age and gender, influence these presentations' success. In summary, oral presentations encompass a wide range of

communication aspects that require thorough consideration of the topic, mastery of verbal and non-verbal communication, and continuous learning and growth. They play a crucial role in educational and professional settings and foster the skills needed for competent communication and personal development.

Understanding Oral Presentation Anxiety in ESL/EFL Students

Fear of speaking or presenting in public is a significant obstacle for many students, especially those learning English as a Second or Foreign Language (ESL/EFL). This particular type of anxiety, often studied in the academic literature as an expression of speech anxiety, is characterised by heightened tension, fear and apprehension when individuals have to give oral presentations. Other factors contribute to this anxiety, such as worries about the presentation's content, their competence in spoken English, and apprehensions about their presentation skills (Tian & Mahmud, 2018).

The presence of worry not only affects students psychologically but also leads to various physical symptoms. The field of kinesics, which involves the study of non-verbal communication, such as body movements and facial expressions, could provide valuable insights here. According to Aripin et al. (2020), individuals whose first language is not English may show observable non-verbal cues when anxious, indicating discomfort or tension. These cues may take the form of particular movements or facial expressions.

It is worth noting that people do not experience this anxiety the same way everywhere. There were marked differences in how English graduates and graduates from other disciplines approached giving oral presentations. For example, according to Salem (2019), individuals with a degree in English tend to use emotion-focused coping techniques when giving presentations.

Anxiety about oral presentations comes in many guises, especially for individuals studying English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL). To help these learners, it is essential to know this anxiety's indicators and understand its underlying causes. This information will be a foundation for developing teaching approaches to help students manage and overcome their anxiety.

Oral Presentation Challenges and Opportunities in ESL/EFL Context

Oral presentations in the context of English as a Second Language (ESL) or English as a Foreign Language (EFL) involve a complex interplay of pedagogical approaches, cognitive processes, assessment methods and technological resources. Peer evaluation is a crucial element within this matrix. The study conducted by Pathmaperuma (2019) in Sri Lanka has shown a relationship between peer assessment and improvement in presentation skills among adult English as a Second Language (ESL) learners. The main focus was on the constructive nature of peer feedback, which promotes a collaborative learning environment and encourages students to evaluate their peers critically. This process ultimately improves their understanding and performance.

In today's era of digitalisation, the integration of technology, primarily through the use of mobile apps, has proven to be a transformative force. In a recent study by Nguoi et al. (2022), attention was focused on a mobile application designed

specifically for English as a Second Language (ESL) learners. This application aimed to improve the quality of feedback given to these learners during oral presentations. The programme was praised for improving the quality of participants' contributions, as students tended to provide more accurate and constructive evaluations. This highlights the significant impact technology can have on revitalising conventional teaching methods, particularly in the context of oral presentations in ESL classes.

Another aspect to consider relates to students' perceptions. The study by Abdelmadjid and Radzuan (2022) examined English as a Second Language (ESL) students' perceptions of their experiences with oral presentations. Their study showed a nuanced but positive association between students' views and their evaluation of presentations, highlighting the need for educators to align their teaching practices with students' views to improve their oral presentation skills.

The study conducted by Duklim and Musigrungsi (2018) aimed to investigate the differences in oral presentation skills among students with different language proficiency levels. The research conducted by the authors focused on a sample of 55 individuals enrolled in the English for the International Programme. The study aimed to provide these students with the necessary skills and knowledge to communicate effectively in academic and business settings. According to the study's results, a presentation's effectiveness depends on the presenter's ability to understand the intended purpose, engage the audience and maintain a coherent sequence of concepts.

The study by Sirisrimangkorn (2021) highlights the benefits of project-based learning with presentations in teaching students English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Notwithstanding the difficulties encountered, students acknowledged the importance of such presentations in improving their oral communication, listening comprehension and analytical thinking skills. Nevertheless, the time constraint was a significant obstacle.

The study conducted by Amelia (2022) addressed Indonesian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' views on oral presentations. The study's results shed light on the student's difficulties and the positive aspects they showed. Although the students struggled with psychological challenges such as nervousness, they acknowledged that presentations significantly improved their English language skills and academic abilities.

The study conducted by Fadlan (2020) thoroughly investigated the phenomenon of foreign language anxiety in students learning English as a foreign language (EFL) in the context of presentations. The study examined the many effects of anxiety on speaking skills, considering both beneficial and detrimental aspects. It highlighted the need to address these issues to improve academic performance.

As exemplified by this research, the comprehensive study of oral presentations in ESL/EFL environments highlights the need for a comprehensive methodology that includes peer assessment, technology integration, and a thorough understanding of students' perspectives and barriers.

Importance of Oral Presentations by the Students

Oral presentations are essential in class because they help students to express their ideas clearly and concisely. This practice helps students improve their presentation skills in their studies and prepares them for professional tasks where

knowledge sharing is required.

A student must thoroughly understand the topic to deliver an oral presentation skillfully. This understanding can be achieved through careful research that includes reading authoritative literature, scientific journals and academic articles. In addition, the student must have a thorough knowledge of the objective of the presentation and the exact message they wish to convey to the audience. Consequently, it is crucial to ensure the correct use of language, which includes an appropriate level of formality, grammatical accuracy, lexical choice and other linguistic components (Chitravelu et al., 1995).

Nevertheless, some students find giving an oral presentation a chore and wonder whether it is necessary and what the benefits. Notwithstanding these problems, some compelling advantages to integrating oral presentations into student assessment exist. Jing (2009) claims that the benefits in this context are that it provides the presenting student with valuable opportunities to speak unaided, gives other students a chance to practise their listening comprehension in English, and boosts the presenter's confidence in using English. In addition, the course provides a practical opportunity for people who need English skills for presentations as part of their future professional work. In addition, the course is an excellent catalyst for spontaneous conversations and encourages the development of critical and creative thinking and blending different skills.

Oral presentations encompass several educational dimensions that go beyond the boundaries of academic exercises and offer a variety of learning perspectives. These educational programmes allow students to hone crucial skills valuable to them both in their studies and future careers. Educators can facilitate students' full appreciation of the benefits of oral presentations by emphasising proper preparation and effective communication and recognising this pedagogical approach's value. This method highlights the importance of oral presentations as a diverse and essential element of education today.

Academic Oral Presentation as a Form of Assessment

Oral academic presentations are increasingly recognised as a vital assessment form in various educational settings. They assess students' understanding and knowledge of a subject and ability to communicate and present information effectively. Presentations provide students with a valuable opportunity to cultivate and hone the skills they need for their careers in a context free from intimidation or anxiety. Students can demonstrate their cognitive mastery, understanding of many topics, and ability to effectively convey information and engage an audience.

One innovative approach to improving speaking performance is the use of topic-based presentations. A study by Kashinathan and Aziz (2022) found that this method significantly improved ESL students' English language proficiency. The topic-based presentation, referred to as TOP, was found by students to be a beneficial tool for improving their speaking skills, showing the potential of targeted presentation techniques to enhance language development and communication skills. Another promising strategy is the inclusion of self-assessment through video recording. Tailab and Marsh (2019) explored how video recordings of student presentations can raise awareness of their oral presentation skills,

increasing awareness of essential presentation skills without raising anxiety.

Nevertheless, there are disadvantages to using presentations as a method of assessment. From the student's perspective, these factors may be the anxiety associated with giving presentations to different audiences, which may disadvantage those whose first language is not English. The examiner has concerns about the validity and reliability of the assessment and questions the extent to which the assessment criteria match the skills and knowledge highlighted. The fleeting nature of presentations means that various distractions can affect the assessment, and it can be difficult for the examiner to give undivided attention to a series of presentations. Another possible obstacle for the assessor is the occurrence of boredom (Dryden et al., 2003).

When evaluating presentations, different criteria can be applied at different levels. At the first level, the information must fit the prompt and be presented coherently, with appropriate references and thoughtful analysis. In group presentations, each member must make a fair contribution. At an intermediate level, criteria may include time management, following instructions, adequate preparation, critical thinking and active participation without excessive dominance.

Given these factors, many options can benefit those who take on the challenge of assessing individual oral presentations. Precise assessment and marking criteria, additional examiners, a thorough discussion of presentation guidelines, sufficient practice opportunities, comprehensive feedback and documentation of presentations are all essential strategies. Recognising the skills of students with English as an additional language is also crucial.

Oral case presentations (OCPs) are essential in medical education. Melvin et al. (2019) explored how trainees and supervisors perceive OCPs and emphasised the need for clear expectations and guidelines. Feedback is also crucial, as demonstrated by Taylor and Swanberg (2020), who found that peers and lecturers provide different types of feedback, leading to a restructuring of the oral presentation requirement.

Academic oral presentation as a form of assessment offers multiple benefits, from improving speaking performance to promoting self-confidence and collaboration with peers. Integrating different methods, including topic-based presentations, video self-assessment and structured feedback, can create a more engaging and effective assessment process. The referenced studies offer valuable insights and practical approaches to fully realise the potential of oral presentations in academic assessment. Future research can continue exploring innovative strategies and technologies to refine and expand this essential aspect of education.

Causes of Difficulties in Oral Presentations

Oral presentations can be daunting for most students, whether they are presenting in their first or second language. Students often encounter difficulties delivering, such as low language proficiency, which manifests in slurred pronunciation, poor voice quality and lack of confidence. Oral presentation difficulties cause anxiety for students when they have to give oral presentations as part of their course assessment.

Several factors cause difficulties in academic oral presentations. A study by Juhana (2012) shows that linguistic elements such as lack of vocabulary, understanding of grammatical patterns and mispronunciation prevent students from presenting

in English classes. Tanveer (2007) found that socio-cultural factors such as inadequate exposure to the target language and lack of speaking practice affect students' communicative skills. As a result, students feel humiliated or stressed when presenting in class. Cultural differences, socioeconomic status, self-concept and gender also affect students' oral presentation skills. Juhana's (2012) study also found that fear of making mistakes, shyness, anxiety, lack of confidence and motivation prevent students from presenting in class.

The teacher's role also causes students difficulties in making their oral presentations. The following teacher characteristics that can be associated with difficulties are lack of support from the teacher, unsympathetic personalities, lack of time for personal attention, favouritism, the fact that teaching does not equip students to meet the teacher's expectations and feeling judged by the teacher or wanting to impress the teacher (Palacios, cited in Nguyen, 2011).

Several reasons demotivate students to give an oral presentation. Some students fear their classmates or teachers might judge their English proficiency, which would embarrass them. Therefore, they prefer to remain passive and not participate in oral presentation tasks. Another reason is that students are not interested in English subjects and thus are not motivated to participate in speaking activities such as oral presentations (Mezrigui, 2011). Students' lack of knowledge about speaking activities also demotivates them to participate (Juhana, 2012).

A classroom with many students provides little opportunity for students to practise their oral presentations in class (Mezrigui, 2011). The teacher cannot attend to each student individually and guide or train them. Due to time constraints, students cannot engage in oral presentation tasks, especially alone. The climate also influences students' performance in oral presentations in the classroom. A carefree and cheerful atmosphere encourages students to present well and confidently. On the other hand, an anxious and tense atmosphere caused by several circumstances creates invisible barriers that prevent students from delivering their oral presentations well (Mezrigui, 2011).

Usually, students are allowed to choose their presentation topics based on a topic provided by their teachers. Teachers recommend that students select presentation topics that are familiar, related to real life and appropriate to the level of language required for the presentation. This step increases student interest and makes the presentation easier (Mezrigui, 2011). However, some students have difficulties choosing suitable topics. Consequently, they choose a topic they cannot handle and tend to perform poorly during their oral presentation.

Methodology

A systematic literature review provides a structured approach to identifying, evaluating and interpreting all relevant research on a particular topic. This study followed the method of Fajri and Indah (2022), which consisted of formulating questions, finding relevant papers, assessing their quality, summarising their findings and interpreting the results. This method is essential for scientific studies as it allows for a systematic review of all studies.

The first phase involved planning the review, identifying the need for the review and establishing the review protocol. The main objective was to identify studies that addressed the challenges ESL tertiary-level students face in oral presentations

and uncover effective strategies to overcome these challenges. Once the relevant studies were identified, the data from these primary studies were extracted and synthesised. The final phase was to communicate the findings.

Databases such as Semantic Scholar, Elsevier's Scopus, Springer e-journals, Taylor and Francis, and Educational Resources Information Centre (ERIC) were used to find relevant peer-reviewed research studies or articles. The search was limited to articles written in English and published between 2016 and 2023. Search terms included combinations of keywords such as (oral presentation anxiety) or (oral presentation challenges) and (ESL/EFL tertiary level students or ESL/EFL classrooms). To narrow down the selection, titles and abstracts were screened using the following criteria:

- a. Studies with respondents or participants from tertiary education.
- b. Research conducted in teaching English as a second or foreign language.
- c. Research should emphasis on oral presentation anxiety in ESL/EFL context.
- d. Use of English language in oral presentations.
- e. Use of qualitative, quantitative or mixed research methods, emphasising the need for rigorous studies.

However, it was difficult to exclude certain articles when relying only on titles and abstracts. Therefore, the introduction and conclusions of the potential articles were read thoroughly, resulting in eighty-four relevant articles being shortlisted.

Results and Discussion

Seven systematic reviews and thirty-four past related research from 2016 to 2023 on anxiety faced by ESL/EFL students in delivering oral presentations were identified by following the procedures of conducting a systematic review and were shortlisted. The findings are organised in Table 1 and Table 2 as follows.

Table 1. Summary of systematic reviews on anxiety in delivering oral presentations faced by ESL/EFL tertiary-level students

Article/Study	Number of Studies	Research Design	Main Findings
Mahbub & Hadina (2021)	51 studies	Comprehensive review	The systematic review aimed to identify factors causing poor oral performance, effective teaching strategies, and assessment methods for developing learners' OECSs in EFL contexts. The researchers identified three major themes: factors driving learners' poor performance, teaching strategies, and assessment methods. Under these themes, sub-themes were developed to guide the researchers in reaching the study's objectives. These sub-themes included environmental, psychological, linguistic, and teaching resources factors for factors causing learners' poor performance; technology-based, task-based, interactive, microteaching, and communicative methods for teaching strategies; and mobile-based, university-based, teacher-based, and mixed-panel assessment methods for assessment methods.
Berkhof, van Rijssen, Schellart, Anema, & van der Beek (2011)	12 studies	Comprehensive review	Twelve systematic reviews on communication skills training programmes for physicians were identified. Some focused on specific training strategies, whereas others emphasised a more general approach with mixed strategies. Training programmes were effective if they lasted at least one day, were learner-centred, and focused on practising skills. The best training strategies within the programmes included role-play, feedback, and small group discussions.
			One of the primary practical outcomes of this systematic review is the compilation of effective methodologies and techniques for developing oral competencies at university, primarily revealing the effectiveness of presentation techniques and/or video recording in association with feedback from the teacher or the other students. Also highlighted is the importance of generating opportunities to actively practice these skills in the classroom through guided group work. Including these critical

Moreno, Montilla-Arechabala, & Maldonado (2022)	23 studies	Comprehensive review	<p>actively practice these skills in the classroom through guided group work including these critical aspects can contribute to improved program design or an adequate selection of specific strategies for developing oral competences at the university. For research, the main contributions of these findings stem from the analysis of study quality.</p> <p>This review detects the need for future studies to incorporate control groups, report data concerning the recruitment of subjects, and improve the description of crucial program components; this could improve the interpretation and generalisation of the data. From a conceptual point of view, this study highlights the lack of information and the high conceptual heterogeneity found in primary studies, pointing to the need to develop further specific explanatory theoretical frameworks of oral skills that support certain educational strategies.</p>
Tee, Joanna, & Kamarulzaman (2020)	9 studies	Comprehensive review	<p>The analysis revealed that personal and social factors could impact the effectiveness of coping strategies for public speaking anxiety among university students. The analysis of nine peer-reviewed studies showed that students with different levels of English language proficiency and speaking anxiety tended to adopt different coping strategies. For example, students with an intermediate level of English language proficiency and a high level of speaking anxiety adopted both compensation and metacognitive strategies. In contrast, those with a high English language proficiency and speaking anxiety tended to adopt the affective strategy. Additionally, students with a high level of speaking anxiety exposed to full English medium instruction contexts adopted social and memory strategies. Therefore, it is essential to consider individual differences and tailor coping strategies to each student's needs. Instructors and universities could consider incorporating these strategies into their teaching methods to help students cope with public speaking anxiety. Additionally, notes a limited understanding of different student backgrounds and the instructional environment they encounter may contribute to inequities in English language proficiency and speaking ability. Therefore, instructors and universities could also consider providing additional support and resources to students struggling with public speaking anxiety, such as language classes or counselling services.</p>
Elahemer & Said (2022)	2280 studies	Comprehensive review	<p>It shows that Speaking Anxiety Interventions (SAI) are studied using various methodological designs, namely experimental, quasi-experimental, mixed-methods and qualitative designs. These research designs can provide useful information and insights which can pave the way for developing more sophisticated Speaking Anxiety (SA) management interventions in future research. The review demonstrated that SAI could be categorised according to their mechanism in dealing with SA to direct and indirect interventions. Hopefully, the information presented in this systematic review can assist anxious S/FL learners in identifying the most appropriate SA reduction interventions. Based on this study's results, we recommend examining the cause of SA besides the learners' speaking English proficiency levels before selecting or applying any SA reduction approach since these factors can significantly impact the success or failure of SAI.</p>
Aziz & Kashinathan (2021)	15 studies	Comprehensive review	<p>According to the study, ESL students in Malaysia face both internal and external challenges in speaking English. Internal challenges include a lack of motivation and self-confidence, anxiety, inhibition, and limited vocabulary knowledge. External challenges include a lack of exposure to English outside the classroom, limited opportunities to practice speaking, and a lack of support from teachers and peers. The study suggests that these challenges can have a negative impact on the overall language-learning experience for ESL learners. For example, low motivation and self-confidence, anxiety, and inhibition can lead to a lack of participation in speaking activities, which can hinder the development of speaking skills. Limited vocabulary knowledge can also make it difficult for learners to express themselves effectively in English.</p> <p>Additionally, a lack of exposure to English outside the classroom and limited opportunities to practice speaking can further hinder the development of speaking skills. The article proposes several strategies to address ESL learners' challenges in Malaysia. These strategies include creating a positive emotional rapport with students, creating a friendly and cooperative classroom environment, using authentic activities and materials, providing opportunities for online communication, and using technology to enhance language learning. The study also suggests that teachers should provide support and encouragement to learners and that learners should be given opportunities to practice speaking in a low-stress environment.</p>
Mahbub & Hadina (2021)	51 studies	Comprehensive review	<p>According to the analysis of 51 studies, four main factors were identified as causing poor oral performance in EFL learners: environmental, psychological, linguistic, and teaching resource issues. Environmental factors included learners' limited practice, passiveness, mixed abilities, and large class sizes. Psychological factors included motivation, nervousness, and stress. Linguistic factors had intonation and influence on learners' L1. Teaching resource issues included a lack of authentic materials and the curriculum.</p>

Table 2. Summary of studies on anxiety in delivering oral presentations faced by ESL/EFL tertiary level students and the effective strategies to overcome the anxieties

Article/Study	Number of Participants/Studies	Research Design	Main Findings
Ebenezer, Hashim, & Said (2022)	30 lecturers	Quantitative Descriptive Study Using Factor Analysis.	The study showed that ESL learners experience Public Speaking Anxiety (PSA) due to feelings of anxiety, fear and nervousness. Female students tend to have higher levels of PSA, mainly because they pay more attention to grades than male students. Despite this, PSA is widespread and considered normal. A one-year course in public speaking was beneficial in improving students' English language skills. However, the study was limited to students from four faculties at UITM, suggesting that a comprehensive assessment of PSA should consider various factors such as personality, beliefs, teaching styles and classroom environment.
Soomro, Siming, Channa, Shah, Naeem, & Abbasi (2019)	8 Pakistani engineering undergraduates	Qualitative Exploratory Focus Group Design	The study found that Pakistani engineering students face numerous challenges affecting their oral English presentation skills. These challenges fall into three categories: psychological, social and linguistic. Psychological challenges include fear, anxiety and low self-confidence. Social challenges arise from cultural differences, limited exposure to English and insufficient practice opportunities. Linguistic challenges have vocabulary deficits, grammar and pronunciation problems. The study highlights the relevance of oral presentation skills to the workplace and calls on academic institutions to address these challenges so that students can improve their verbal communication skills.
Wei (2022)	137 master's degree students of Chinese nationality	Quantitative research design	The main finding of this study was that Chinese EFL postgraduates reported high levels of public speaking anxiety during their presentations at international conferences. The study also found that anxiety was influenced by various factors such as English proficiency, the audience's size and the occasion's importance. The study suggests that educators and institutions should provide more support to postgraduates in managing their speech anxiety, such as training programmes and counselling services.
Tóth (2021)	33 students in the second year of their English Studies BA programme	Mixed-Methods Sequential Explanatory Design	The study found that presentations in pairs generally resulted in less anxiety and better perceptions of fluency and accuracy than individual presentations. However, some students felt increased anxiety when presenting with a partner, which triggered negative emotions. Remarkably, none of the 16 pairs had practised their presentations together beforehand. This was mainly because each presentation consisted of different parts, with each member responsible for their part, leading to each person practising independently, depending on what they felt was necessary.
Tóth (2019)	39 students from a Hungarian university in the second year of their English Studies BA programme	Case study	The study found that students felt various emotions during oral presentations, including anxiety, nervousness, excitement and satisfaction. Anxiety was common and was related to lack of preparation, fear of negative feedback and low confidence in English proficiency. To cope, students rehearsed, used visual aids and focused on their content. The study recommends that language teachers give students more practice opportunities and feedback to reduce anxiety and improve speaking skills.
Riaz & Riaz (2022)	518 undergraduate engineering students	Qualitative Cross-Sectional Design	According to the study's findings, the leading causes of anxiety among engineering students in presentations are problems with the English language, audience and evaluation, lack of confidence, lack of experience or poor grooming and poor preparation. Other reasons for anxiety cited in the study were psychological pressure, introversion, lack of knowledge and cramming. Some participants did not give a reason but said they were not afraid. Various causes of anxiety were also mentioned, including fear of grades, overthinking, questions, mood, pace and past experiences.
Benraghda, Radzuan, & Ali (2017)	234 local and international undergraduate students who take English for professional communication at Universiti Malaysia Pahang (UMP)	Cross-sectional survey design	The main findings of this study were that Malaysian ESP students face various challenges when giving oral presentations in English, including language proficiency, anxiety, lack of preparation and cultural factors. The study also found a significant relationship between students' attitude towards delivering oral presentations in English and their performance outcomes. The authors suggest that lecturers can help students overcome these challenges by providing more opportunities to practise, incorporating cultural awareness into the curriculum and reducing students' anxiety through various techniques.

The main findings of this study were that oral presentation contexts had a statistically

limura (2016)	113 first-year students from a national university in Japan	Quantitative research design	The main findings of this study were that oral presentation contests had a statistically significant effect on reducing students' speech anxiety before presenting in English. The study found that the contest effectively reduced the anxiety of all students, regardless of whether they participated as presenters or audience members. The study also found that students were more afraid to speak in front of their classmates than their teachers or strangers. The study suggests that oral presentation contests may effectively reduce Japanese EFL students' anxiety and recommends that further research be conducted to determine the factors contributing to this approach's effectiveness.
Hammad (2020)	60 Palestinian female students from the English department at Al-Aqsa University	Quasi-Experimental Pretest-Posttest Control Group Design	The study found that the use of oral presentations had a positive effect on the participants' speaking performance and helped to reduce their speaking anxiety. The study results showed statistically significant differences in test scores between the experimental group and the control group in favour of the experimental group. The open-ended questionnaire data showed that the study participants were positive about using oral presentations in the EFL classroom.
Kembaren, Lubis, & Ramadini (2022)	6 students of English education	Qualitative Descriptive Design	The findings of this study show that English language students at a university in Medan are generally fearful when speaking in public, especially when giving oral presentations. The study identified five themes related to public speaking anxiety: Nervousness, fear of being judged, rehearsing, fear of making mistakes in word choice, and lack of confidence. The study also found that students used various strategies to reduce their anxiety, such as practising, being well-prepared and using positive self-talk. The study suggests public speaking anxiety can negatively impact students' mental health and academic performance.
Rahmat, Othman, Hasan, & Arepin (2018)	129 students who enrolled for the oral presentation course in UiTM Shah Alam	Cross-sectional survey design	This study's results show that trait and state apprehension can influence students' oral presentation. Trait characteristics such as worrying about one's appearance, inadequate preparation and forgetting words were essential factors. State characteristics such as the place, time and audience influence the presenter. Although male and female students are equally anxious about their oral presentation, the difference between the gender affects both trait and state apprehension in students of different faculties.
Alharbi (2021)	50 EFL students from Qassim University's English and Translation Department	Qualitative Descriptive Design using Triangulation	The main findings of this study were that Saudi EFL students experience anxiety during oral presentations in English. This anxiety is caused by various factors, such as fear of making mistakes, lack of confidence and fear of negative evaluation. The study also found that simulation activities can help students overcome anxiety and improve their speaking skills. The study results can guide teachers and students on how to develop their speaking skills and address the problem of speaking anxiety in the English classroom.
Kheryadi & Hilmiyati (2021)	95 fifth-semester students of the English Education Study Program at Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten	Case Study	The study results showed that students struggled mainly with explanation and self-control during presentations, which often manifested in nervousness and lack of confidence. It was observed that the participants scored lower, especially in the category "pronunciation". While grammar and pronunciation were the areas with average marks, the area where preparation was most lacking was in providing informative and engaging explanations.
Fagsao & Ming (2021)	50 pre-service teachers in MPSPC, specifically those in the BSED and BEED courses	Phenomenological Research Design	The study successfully identified several causes of glossophobia among pre-service teacher students. The primary cause was the audience's manifestations, suggesting that the reactions and presence of the audience contribute most significantly to speaking anxiety. Additionally, linguistic challenges, especially when using English as the medium of communication, were highlighted as the next substantial factor. Personal experiences like stage fright and feelings of shame were categorised under "practical motives," which stood as the third major cause. Lastly, a student's mastery or knowledge of the topic they're discussing was found to be a contributing factor to glossophobia. Furthermore, in response to these findings, the researchers introduced a coping strategy named "DISRUPT," an acronym representing steps to alleviate glossophobia, ranging from diaphragmatic breathing practices to preparing and understanding the topic thoroughly.
		Quantitative survey method	The study found that Thai students in TSAI are afraid of oral presentations in English due to various factors. These include fear of not passing the course, exams and their perceptions of oral English classes. In addition, they are afraid of making mistakes, being critically evaluated, receiving negative feedback, enduring ridicule, being compared to their peers and having difficulty expressing themselves.

Hadi, Izzah, & Masae (2021)	46 Thai students from the Faculty of Education in TSAI	with a focus on one-way ANOVA (Analysis of Variance)	To combat these concerns, educators should be proactive. Teachers can create a classroom environment that is both supportive and positive to help alleviate these fears. Various teaching methods can help students overcome fears and improve their oral communication skills. In addition, educational programmes must be tailored to Thai students' specific needs and consider their different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The findings also highlight the urgent need to continue research to identify the exact causes of speech anxiety among Thai students and develop effective strategies to alleviate it.
Sahan, Abi, Wistrance, & Seran (2022)	25 students from the third semester of the English Study Program at Timor University	Descriptive quantitative research design	The study found that most students had excellent oral presentation skills. However, most of them still had difficulties in oral presentation, such as mispronunciation and lack of fluency. The study suggests that developing and practising new learning strategies, such as oral presentations during the semester, will lead to continuous improvement in communication outside the classroom. The study also suggests that English teachers and/or lecturers teaching EFL students, especially in a context similar to this study, should pay more attention to improving students' mastery of these two aspects of oral presentation.
Roslim, Nimehchisalem, Abdullah, & Razali (2023)	90 diploma and degree undergraduates from Universiti Teknologi MARA	Mixed-Methods Descriptive Design	The study revealed that students' perceptions of online oral presentations were significantly influenced by their personality traits and concerns about the audience. In particular, the fear of failing the oral presentation assessment caused anxiety among students, even if they were well prepared. In addition, students often felt insecure when they thought their fellow students had better English proficiency. This insecurity and the fear of presenting in front of an audience made their online oral presentations even more difficult.
Rosmini, Sakkir, & Patak (2022)	7 students of the English program in Islamic Higher Education	Case study	According to the study's findings, EFL students experience two types of anxiety during oral presentations in thesis examinations: facilitative and debilitating anxiety. Facilitative anxiety positively motivates and is best described as enthusiasm before a challenging task. On the other hand, debilitating anxiety is defined as anxiety that has a negative effect, making students feel tense, worried, scared, nervous, self-doubt, blank, and tremble.
An, Ravindran, & Al-Shaibani (2022)	60 Chinese Malaysian undergraduate students from the Faculty of Social Sciences and Liberal Arts (FoSSLA)	Mixed-methods approach	The study found that the majority of participants, 60%, felt moderate anxiety when presenting in English. In contrast, only 1% felt a high level of anxiety, while 38.3% reported a low level of anxiety. The main cause of this anxiety or communication apprehension was the feeling of not being adequately prepared before giving presentations in English. Looking more closely at the causes of presentation anxiety, six main themes emerged: participants felt nervous when presenting in English in class; they often felt they were not adequately prepared; there was a fear of making mistakes during presentations; students were worried about being judged either by their peers or by lecturers; the perception that lecturers had high expectations increased their anxiety; and there was a fear of failing the course.
Salem (2019)	9 Business English majors, aged 23-24, enrolled in the College of Management Sciences (CMS), Sadat Academy for Management Sciences, Egypt	Quasi-experimental design	The findings of this study suggest that using TED Talks as authentic input material can positively impact the oral presentation skills and vocabulary retention of Business English majors. The experimental group, who were exposed to TED Talks, achieved higher verbal presentation skills and vocabulary uptake/retention scores than the control group who received traditional teaching practices. Additionally, participants reported reduced speaking anxiety after watching TED Talks.
Kamridah, Arafah, & Imran (2016)	135 foreign language learners who were enrolled in the International English Training (IET) program at Cambridge English College (CEC) in Pare-Kediri, East Java, Indonesia	Mixed method	The study found a significant negative correlation between anxiety levels and public speaking performance in foreign language learners. However, anxiety did not need to be left out or reduced. Instead, a systematic learning approach effectively reduced public speaking anxiety and improved speech delivery. The study also identified the role of systematic learning in influencing students' public speaking anxiety. The systematic learning approach is a model that consists of ten relevant steps, which are: identifying the learning purpose, performing learning analysis, identifying characteristic and behaviour input, writing effort purpose, system-based test, developing learning strategy, developing and selecting learning, designing and performing formative assessment, designing and performing summative assessment, and screening learning program. This approach is expected to contribute significantly to overcoming the problems faced by learners in public speaking so that they can have an excellent capacity to speak in public well.
		Quasi-	The findings of this study showed that the use of TED talks as a learning mode positively affected postgraduate students' English speaking performance and anxiety. The experimental and control groups did significantly better on their oral presentations

Liu (2021)	322 first-year postgraduate students	experimental research design	and move structure and became considerably less anxious about speaking English at the end of the 10 weeks. However, the experimental group improved their English speaking performance and anxiety levels more than the control group. The study suggests that TED talks can effectively improve postgraduate students' English speaking skills and reduce their anxiety in formal academic settings.
Ahmad, Rahmat, Shahabani, & Khairuddin (2022)	134 undergraduate students from Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia	Survey	The results indicated that most respondents preferred communication strategies mainly externally influenced in shaping their oral communication and assessment marks. Feeling nervous was their most significant cause of fear of public speaking. Furthermore, correlational findings revealed that communication strategies might somewhat reduce anxiety about oral presentation. These results could suggest the need for more formal strategy training to assist and build motivational needs for learners to manage their fear of public speaking to benefit more from communication strategies for effective public speaking.
Yundayani (2018)		Action Research	The study showed that visual media can improve students' oral presentation performance in small group discussions. The data collected from the study indicated that students' self-confidence in oral presentations improved from cycle 1 to cycle 3. The study also found that peer evaluation positively impacted students' oral presentation performance. Overall, the study suggests that visual media and small group discussions effectively overcome students' difficulties in oral presentation.
Toland, Mills, & Kohyama (2016)	129 undergraduate economics students	Mixed-methods research design	The findings of this study suggest that mobile-video recordings can be an effective tool for teaching English-language presentation skills to Japanese university students. The authors found that students who used mobile-video feedback showed significant improvements in their self-perceived presentation skills and reduced anxiety levels. Students also identified several benefits to using mobile-video for self- and peer-assessment, such as repeatedly viewing the recordings and objectively noticing areas of their performance that needed improvement. However, the authors also identified some challenges associated with using mobile-video, such as concerns related to privacy and cultural differences between Western and Japanese presentation styles. The authors suggest that instructors carefully consider these issues and the unique context in which they teach when using mobile-video as an educational technology.
Sirisrimangkorn (2021)	31 second-year undergraduate students who majored in Business English	Mixed-methods research design	The findings of this study were that project-based learning using presentation positively affected EFL undergraduate learners' speaking skills. The students' English speaking skills improved after the study. The students had positive opinions towards the project-based learning implementation, and they reported that project-based learning implementation was useful for their speaking skill improvement. Moreover, the project-based learning implementation also promoted other learning skills (i.e., listening, reading, and writing skills).
Robillos (2022)	30 third-year college students majoring in the TESOL program	Mixed-method	The findings of this study showed that the intervention program on improving the participants' oral presentation task performance was successful and effective as it helped generate positive results on their presentation task performance and CT dispositions. The qualitative results from the interviews yielded positive results not only on participants' use of LoiLooNote digital GO to facilitate effectively their oral presentation task process but also enhancement of their CT dispositions. The Descriptive Statistics such as mean, frequency, and percentage were calculated and presented in a tabular form. The t-test statistical analysis was used to find out the difference between students' oral presentation task performance and CT dispositions before and after the intervention provided to them. The Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient was also used to determine the relationship between the use of LoiLooNote digital GO and those participants' oral presentation task performance and CT dispositions.
Yee, Abdullah, & Nawi (2017)	37 first-year undergraduate students at an institute of teacher education in Malaysia	Mixed-Method	The results of the quantitative data showed that the students had less anxiety after their oral presentation. During the interview, the participants said they preferred using technology tools such as PowerPoint and other strategies to aid them in oral presentations to reduce their anxiety when speaking in English. This study provides implications for future teacher education to integrate technology in the English speaking courses.
Hallemans	8 intermediate college level EFL classes with a total of 250 students and one beginner college-level EFL	Qualitative phenomenological research design	The study found that using recorded presentations engendered increased application of the experiential learning cycle. This can be seen in the time spent on recordings and the number of recording attempts made before settling on one for submission. The ability to re-record an unsatisfactory presentation was the primary reason reported for believing videoed presentations were more straightforward. The study

(2021)	class with 12 students at a private university in South Korea	grounded in an ontological philosophy.	also found that despite the extra workload, an overwhelming majority of students found recorded asynchronous presentation submissions easier, and the predominate reason was their ability to re-record, with the second most popular reason being the lack of audience-related stress that comes with delivering a live presentation.
Nada & Tewero (2022)			First, the authors found that allowing students to choose their topics could increase their motivation to engage with their topics and the learning instructions. Second, most of the students preferred to choose their selected topics over choosing from the list, and they showed more engagement and motivation in oral presentations when they were given the freedom to choose their topics. Third, the authors found that collaboration between the instructors and the learners becomes a fundamental principle for creating a new practice in this classroom space. Fourth, the authors found that students who showed more enthusiasm spent more time than allotted for the task. Finally, the authors found that using appropriate instructions and tools, such as the Cornell note-taking method, can help students take notes and organise them into effective summaries.
Tailab & Marsh (2020)	68 students at Lincoln University	Qualitative study	The study found that students had a highly positive attitude toward recording their presentations. Most students recognised the importance of maintaining consistent eye contact with the audience throughout the presentation. Almost seventy percent of students confirmed that they spoke loudly, clearly, and slowly, while the rest observed that they needed to improve the quality of their speaking. Overall, students' satisfaction level regarding the video was very high, as was their resulting degree of achievement or improvement of oral skills. The results of the analysis were presented using word tag clouds.
Maming & Anton (2023)	second-grade students of UPTD SMPN 1 Parepare in the academic year 2022/2023 consisted of 320 students from ten classes	Quasi-experimental	The findings of this study showed that the integration of the guided question technique in the oral presentation method had a significant effect on improving the students' speaking ability. The null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was accepted based on the data, which revealed that the mean value of the pretest was 62.17 and the mean value of the posttest was 75.15. The T-test value was 7.23 more than the T table 2.05 at the significance level of 0.05. The study found that learning through question-and-answer had a beneficial effect on raising students' accomplishment, demonstrated by a rise in their cycle-by-cycle learning completion rates. According to the data, 35.56% of students met the learning completion criteria in the first cycle. The minimal completion standard for cycle II is 49.22%. The minimum completeness requirement for the third cycle is 85.20%.
Madzlan, Seng, & Kesevan (2020)	54 first-year, tertiary-level ESL learners	Quasi-experimental design	The study found that the use of video blogs as a tool to deliver public speeches significantly reduced the level of public speaking anxiety among ESL learners. The study also identified several factors that influenced the use of video blogs as a public speaking platform, including environmental, technological, and personal factors. The study concluded that video blogs could effectively alleviate public speaking anxiety among ESL learners and that educators should consider incorporating video blogs into their teaching practices.

Factors Contributing to Oral Presentation Anxiety

Oral presentation anxiety is a widespread and multifaceted problem that significantly affects ESL/EFL learners in tertiary education. This anxiety, which often manifests as fear, nervousness and apprehension, significantly affects students' academic success and psychological well-being. It originates from a variety of interrelated factors, including environmental, psychological, linguistic and educational components, as numerous research initiatives have shown.

A careful review of several in-depth studies shows that this anxiety is not only a complex phenomenon, but also a pressing problem that hinders students' academic development and mental health. It requires a multi-faceted approach to mitigate its effects and a range of strategies to reduce it. A detailed examination of recent research, including a comprehensive study by Mahbub and Hadina (2021) that reviewed 51 studies, reveals a complex interrelationship

between psychological, linguistic, social and educational factors that contribute to this widespread problem. Their research highlighted three key themes: environmental constraints such as inadequate practise opportunities and difficulties in managing large classes; psychological elements such as motivation, stress and nervousness; and linguistic challenges such as intonation problems and the influence of students' mother tongue. In addition, they pointed to problems with teaching materials and emphasised the lack of authentic resources and the inadequacies of the curriculum.

Environmental factors play an important role in promoting anxiety. Students often struggle with limited practise opportunities, passivity, varying abilities and large class sizes, creating a learning atmosphere where confident speakers are not encouraged. Aziz and Kashinathan (2021) emphasise that insufficient exposure to English outside the classroom is a significant external barrier that limits students' ability to hone their speaking skills. Consequently, fostering an environment that encourages active engagement and provides ample opportunity for practise could be a crucial step in reducing anxiety.

Psychological factors further exacerbate the problem as students struggle with reduced motivation and self-confidence, accompanied by increased levels of anxiety and inhibitions. These internal obstacles can make them reluctant to engage in language activities, hindering the development of their speaking skills. Numerous students experience fear of negative evaluation, lack of confidence, and nervousness, which are exacerbated by concerns about making mistakes, being judged by peers or instructors, and meeting high expectations from educators (An et al., 2022). In addition, gender differences have been observed, with female students showing higher levels of public speaking anxiety (PSA), possibly due to a greater emphasis on grades (Ebenezer et al., 2022). Addressing these psychological hurdles by fostering positive emotional relationships and a collaborative atmosphere in the classroom could potentially reduce anxiety.

Language barriers, such as limited vocabulary knowledge and the influence of learners' first language (L1), have been identified as major causes of inadequate oral performance (Mahbub & Hadina, 2021). These language barriers, which include vocabulary gaps, pronunciation difficulties and grammatical problems, often result from limited exposure to English and inadequate practise opportunities that hinder students' ability to communicate competently and confidently during presentations (Soomro et al., 2019). Initiatives aimed at increasing vocabulary and minimising the negative impact of the L1 can be instrumental in reducing anxiety.

The level of anxiety felt by students is significantly influenced by the emotions and presence of the audience. A significant number of students feel anxious and distressed when confronted with critical evaluations, ridicule, and comparisons with their classmates, resulting in increased levels of anxiety during the process of delivering presentations (Fagsao & Mi-ing, 2021; Hadi et al., 2021). The anxiety associated with this phenomenon tends to escalate during notable events such as global conferences or oral defences of scientific dissertations, with the severity of the situation contributing to increased stress levels (Wei, 2022; Rosmini et al., 2022).

Pedagogical methods and interventions have been shown to alleviate oral presentation anxiety. The use of technological tools such as video blogs and mobile video recording has had a positive impact on reducing anxiety levels and improving students' oral communication skills (Yee et al., 2017; Madzlan et al., 2020). Similarly, the implementation of project-based learning, the use of leading question strategies, and the incorporation of visual media have been shown to be effective in

improving students' oral presentation skills and reducing anxiety (Sirisrimangkorn, 2021; Yundayani, 2018; Maming & Anton, 2023). In addition, the ability to choose presentation topics and the autonomy to choose areas of personal interest have helped to increase student engagement and motivation, possibly leading to lower levels of anxiety (Nada & Tewero, 2022). In addition, the use of real input material such as TED Talks positively impacted students' oral presentation skills and vocabulary recall, leading to a reduction in speech anxiety (Salem, 2019; Liu, 2021).

Despite the positive outcomes associated with these treatments, there are still barriers to overcome. These hurdles include privacy issues and different presentation styles due to cultural differences (Toland et al., 2016). Furthermore, the effectiveness of these tactics can be influenced by a range of factors that include environmental, technological, and personal elements (Madzlan et al., 2020).

The problem of anxiety of tertiary education students learning English as a second or foreign language in oral presentations is multi-faceted and convoluted as it is influenced by various elements that include psychological, linguistic, social and pedagogical dimensions. To effectively address this anxiety, a comprehensive approach is required, including a thorough understanding of students' individual needs and experiences, the creation of a conducive and comfortable classroom environment, and the implementation of effective pedagogical tools and interventions. In addition, it is recommended that future studies prioritise the development of more complex theoretical frameworks and interventions to effectively reduce oral presentation anxiety. This will help to improve students' performance in oral presentations and enable them to reach their maximum capabilities. This strategy would include creating supportive learning environments, identifying and resolving psychological barriers, overcoming language difficulties, and implementing effective teaching techniques and materials, all with the aim of enabling students to maximise their skills in delivering oral presentations.

Effective Strategies and Interventions

Oral presentation anxiety is a widespread problem that significantly affects the academic performance and overall language learning experience of ESL/EFL students in tertiary education. A detailed analysis of numerous studies provides a wealth of evidence and strategies that can be used to alleviate this anxiety and create a more conducive learning environment. This section focuses on the effective strategies and interventions to combat oral presentation anxiety based on the conclusions of several extensive studies.

First of all, it is important to understand the causes of inadequate oral performance. According to Mahbub and Hadina (2021), the main causes are environmental, psychological, linguistic and pedagogical factors. Large class sizes and varying abilities, which are among the environmental factors, can promote a passive learning atmosphere and limit opportunities for practise. Psychological factors such as stress and nervousness, often exacerbated by linguistic difficulties and the influence of the learners' mother tongue, add to this anxiety. To address these issues, a multi-faceted strategy is needed that includes changes in teaching techniques and assessment methods. The integration of technology-based, task-based and communicative methods, as well as different assessment approaches, could promote a more engaging and less stressful learning environment.

Numerous studies have identified several factors that contribute to Public Speaking Anxiety (PSA), including fear of negative evaluation, inadequate preparation and language barriers. For example, a study by Ebenezer et al. (2022) found that female students tended to have higher levels of PSA, mainly because they were more worried about their grades. Similarly, Soomro et al. (2019) and Wei (2022) highlighted the psychological, social and linguistic challenges students face, such as fear, anxiety and low self-esteem, which are exacerbated by limited experience with the English language and inadequate practise opportunities.

To overcome these challenges, different strategies have been proposed in different studies. Tóth (2021) suggested that paired presentations could reduce anxiety and improve perceptions of fluency and accuracy. However, the study also found that the lack of joint practice before presentations can sometimes increase anxiety. This observation highlights the importance of preparation, a recurring theme in other studies that have highlighted the effectiveness of rehearsal, the use of visual aids, and focusing on content as effective coping strategies (Tóth, 2019; Kembaren et al., 2022).

In addition, it is important that training programmes aimed at improving communication skills are learner-centred and emphasise active skill practice. Berkhof et al. (2011) emphasised the effectiveness of training initiatives that last at least one day and include methods such as role-playing, feedback and small group discussions. These techniques not only facilitate skill practice, but also foster a supportive community where students can learn from each other, which in turn reduces anxiety.

Moreover, the importance of technology in this scenario cannot be underestimated. Studies by Moreno et al. (2022) and others have highlighted the positive impact of using technology to reduce PSA, including the use of presentation techniques and video recording, coupled with feedback from teachers or peers. This strategy encourages active practice and allows students to critically evaluate and improve their skills. However, more robust research designs are called for to improve the generalisability and interpretation of data, indicating a gap in the existing literature. For example, Iimura (2016) and Yundayani (2018) have highlighted the positive effects of oral presentation competitions and visual media, respectively, on student performance and anxiety reduction.

In addition, classroom environment and teaching practices are central to reducing PSA. Research has emphasised the need to create a supportive and positive atmosphere in the classroom to help students overcome their anxiety and improve their oral communication skills (Hadi et al., 2021; Ahmad et al., 2022). In addition, integrating cultural awareness into the curriculum and providing more practise opportunities have been advocated as effective strategies to help students overcome language skills, anxiety and cultural barriers (Benraghda et al., 2017).

The introduction of innovative teaching methods such as project-based learning and the technique of leading questions have shown promising results in improving students' speaking skills and reducing anxiety (Sirisrimangkorn, 2021; Maming & Anton, 2023). These techniques not only improve speaking skills but also promote other learning skills, thus providing a comprehensive approach to language learning.

Tee et al. (2020) pointed out the differences in coping strategies among students with different levels of English proficiency and speaking anxiety. Adapting coping strategies to individual needs, taking into account personal and social

factors, can significantly increase the effectiveness of interventions. It is important that higher education institutions and educators recognise the diverse backgrounds of students and offer additional support and resources to those struggling with public speaking anxiety.

Elahemer and Said (2022) and Aziz and Kashinathan (2021) also emphasised the importance of understanding the origins of speech anxiety and the internal and external challenges ESL students face. Developing sophisticated speech anxiety interventions (SAI) that take into account students' level of English proficiency and promote a positive, collaborative atmosphere in the classroom can potentially alleviate these challenges.

In summary, dealing with speech anxiety in ESL/EFL students in higher education requires a holistic strategy that takes into account underlying causes and individual differences. Implementing strategies such as integrating technology, fostering a supportive classroom environment and tailoring interventions to individual needs can significantly reduce anxiety. In addition, improving the quality of research and formulating specific theoretical frameworks can set the stage for more effective interventions in the future. It is the shared responsibility of educators, institutions and the broader academic community to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment where students can flourish without the burden of anxiety.

Conclusion

In a nutshell, oral presentation anxiety, a multifaceted problem common among ESL/EFL students, has attracted considerable scholarly attention. Through systematic reviews and detailed analyses, this research has identified various factors contributing to this anxiety, from environmental, psychological, linguistic, and resource challenges. At the same time, it has uncovered a range of intervention strategies that highlight the potential of technology-enhanced teaching methods, various assessment techniques, student-centred approaches and the use of skills. Based on a comprehensive understanding of individual psychological needs, language barriers and general educational dynamics, these strategies improve oral presentation skills and reduce the associated anxiety.

The findings highlight the critical role of educators in creating an environment that fosters effective learning and the importance of technology integration for modern educational institutions. While the studies offer valuable insights, they often relate to specific contexts or geographic regions that may not comprehensively represent the global ESL/EFL student population. Furthermore, the variety of methodologies suggests that there are still no universally accepted best practices in this area. Future research should focus on developing universally adaptable methods, emphasising maximising the potential of digital tools while addressing individual student needs. This will ensure a holistic approach to tackling oral presentation anxiety and produce a generation of confident and articulate speakers.

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