

**FOREIGN LANGUAGE ANXIETY IN EXPRESSING OPINIONS:
SYMPTOMS, CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES OF SENIOR
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AT SMAN 6 KEDIRI**

SKRIPSI

Presented as Thesis Writing as the Requirement to Obtain the Sarjana Degree of
Education in English Language Education Department
Faculty of Teacher Training and Education
University of Nusantara PGRI Kediri



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2026

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Entitled:

**FOREIGN LANGUAGE ANXIETY IN EXPRESSING OPINIONS: SYMPTOMS,
CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
AT SMAN 6 KEDIRI**

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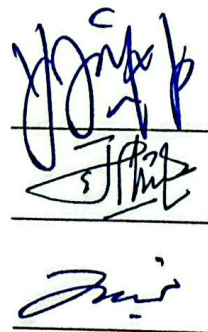
Approved and accepted by all its qualification by the examination committee of
University of Nusantara PGRI Kediri

Date: 17th July 2026

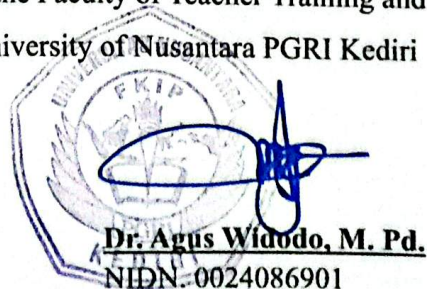
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MOTTO AND DEDICATION

MOTTO:

“Our doubts are traitors, and make us lose the good we oft might win, by fearing to attempt.”

- William Shakespeare, Measure for Measure

DEDICATION:

1. Allah SWT, for His endless blessings, guidance, and mercy.
2. Prophet Muhammad SAW, whose teachings continue to inspire my journey.
3. My beloved mother, Binti Masriah for her unconditional love, prayers, and endless sacrifices.
4. My beloved father, Katimin, for his unwavering support, hard work, and encouragement.
5. My beloved friends, especially BNN and Abu Rijal, thank you for your support, laughter, and unforgettable memories throughout this journey.
6. Someone very special, thank you for believing in me, encouraging me, and reminding me to keep moving forward. You know who you are.
7. Finally, to myself. Thank you for not giving up. Thank you for enduring countless revisions, moments of self-doubt, exhaustion, and uncertainty. Thank you for choosing to keep going, even when the finish line seemed so far away. This thesis is proof that persistence, courage, and faith can turn challenges into achievements. I am proud of how far you have come, and I hope you never stop believing in yourself..

ABSTRACT

Amysha Azzahra: Foreign Language Anxiety In Expressing Opinions: Symptoms, Challenges And Strategies Of Senior High School Students At Sman 6 Kediri, Skripsi, the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, University of Nusantara PGRI Kediri, 2026

Keywords: Foreign Language Anxiety, Opinion-Based Speaking, Speaking Challenges, Coping Strategies, EFL Students.

Expressing opinions is one of the most demanding speaking activities for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners because it requires students to generate ideas, organize arguments, and express personal viewpoints while communicating in English. Although previous studies have extensively examined Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) in speaking, limited research has specifically investigated how anxiety manifests during opinion-based speaking activities. Therefore, this study focused on students' Foreign Language Anxiety when expressing opinions in English.

This study aimed to investigate the symptoms, challenges, and coping strategies of Foreign Language Anxiety experienced by senior high school students when expressing opinions in English. A descriptive quantitative survey design was employed involving 278 students from SMAN 6 Kediri selected through simple random sampling. Data were collected using a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire developed based on Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope's (1986) Foreign Language Anxiety theory and analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, and mean scores.

The findings revealed that students experienced a moderate level of Foreign Language Anxiety across all dimensions. Among the anxiety symptoms, cognitive symptoms recorded the highest overall mean, while experiencing a fast heartbeat before speaking emerged as the most prominent physical symptom at the item level. Regarding the challenges, pronunciation concerns, grammar uncertainty, and difficulty remembering ideas while expressing opinions quickly were identified as the three most dominant difficulties. Pronunciation concerns emerged as the greatest challenge, indicating that students were more concerned about being understood than achieving perfect linguistic accuracy.

To cope with anxiety, students primarily relied on peer support, linguistic preparation, and self-confidence strategies. Among these, discussing ideas with peers before speaking was the most frequently reported strategy, indicating that collaborative learning and adequate preparation helped students feel more confident during opinion-sharing activities.

In conclusion, this study provides a more comprehensive understanding of Foreign Language Anxiety during opinion-based speaking by highlighting students' symptoms, challenges, and coping strategies. The findings also offer pedagogical implications for English teachers to create collaborative and supportive speaking environments that promote students' confidence and willingness to communicate in English.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Praise is always offered to the presence of Allah S.W.T who has bestowed His mercies and blessings so that this thesis entitled " Foreign Language Anxiety in Expressing Opinions: Symptoms, Challenges and Strategies of Senior High School Students at SMAN 6 Kediri" can be completed.

Furthermore, the writer would like to thank to all parties who have contributed to the success of writing and preparing the proposal of this research, including:

1. Dr. Zainal Afandi M.Pd. as the Rector of University of Nusantara PGRI Kediri who always motivates his students
2. Dr. Agus Widodo, M.Pd. as the Dean of the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education who always encourage his students to learn hard
3. Dr. Khoiriyah, M.Pd. as the Head of English Language Education Study Program who always advise and guide the students during the writing of this thesis
4. Dr. Yunik Susanti, S.Pd., M.Pd. as the first supervisor who always gave valuable advice and guidance from the beginning until the completion of this thesis.
5. Dr. Diani Nurhajati, M. Pd. as the second supervisor who patiently provided valuable guidance, insightful feedback, and continuous support throughout the completion of this thesis.
6. All lecturers and staff of English Language Education Department who facilitate students to experience pleasant atmosphere
7. Other parties who cannot be mentioned one by one who have given prayers and support during the process of writing this thesis

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the introduction of the research. It explains the background of the study, the formulation of the problem, the objectives of the research, and the significance of the research. This chapter provides the foundation for understanding the issue of foreign language anxiety experienced by senior high school students when expressing opinions in English. Therefore, the explanation in this chapter is intended to clarify the focus, purpose, and relevance of the study.

A. Background Research

English plays a significant role as a global language that connects people from different countries and cultural backgrounds in various fields such as education, technology, and international communication (Rao, 2019b). As a means of global interaction, English enables individuals to access wider information and actively participate in the international community (Mahapatra & Pradhan, 2022). In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, mastering English is not only limited to understanding linguistic knowledge, but also the ability to use the language effectively in real communication. Among the four language skills, speaking is considered one of the most essential skills because it reflects learners' ability to express ideas, thoughts, and feelings in direct interaction (Akhter, 2021a). The importance of speaking skill lies in its function as a primary tool for communication, which allows learners to convey meaning clearly and confidently in real-life situations. Therefore, developing students' speaking ability becomes a crucial aspect of English language learning in order to prepare them for global communication demands.

In the context of English language learning, speaking is not only about producing words but also about conveying ideas, particularly through expressing opinions. Expressing opinions requires students to communicate their thoughts clearly and respond to others in meaningful interactions, which makes it an essential component of speaking activities in the classroom (Novianti, 2020). In

addition, the ability to express opinions is closely related to students' critical thinking, as they are expected to analyse information, form arguments, and justify their viewpoints logically (Ramezani et al., 2016). However, many students still find it challenging to express their opinions in English due to limited confidence and lack of practice in structured speaking activities. Therefore, appropriate teaching strategies are needed to support students in developing their ability to express opinions effectively, such as interactive techniques that encourage active participation and idea sharing (Dewi, 2023a).

However, in reality, many students still experience difficulties in speaking English, especially when they are required to express their opinions. These difficulties are often related to linguistic aspects such as limited vocabulary and lack of grammar mastery (Normawati et al., 2023a). In addition, psychological factors also play an important role in influencing students' speaking performance in the classroom (Wulandari et al., 2022). Students often feel nervous, hesitant, and afraid of making mistakes when speaking in front of others, which reduces their confidence to participate actively in classroom discussions (Putri et al., 2020a). As a result, even students who have (et al., 2024) of English tend to remain silent or give very limited responses during speaking activities. This condition indicates that speaking problems in EFL classrooms are not solely caused by language limitations, but are also strongly influenced by students' emotional and psychological states.

These psychological problems are closely related to a phenomenon known as Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA), which commonly occurs in the process of learning and using a foreign language. Foreign Language Anxiety is defined as a feeling of tension and fear that arises specifically in language learning situations, especially when learners are required to communicate using the target language (Marwan, 2016a). This concept was originally introduced by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope, and it remains widely used as a theoretical foundation in studies of language anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986a). Recent studies have also confirmed that FLA significantly affects students' speaking performance and participation in both traditional and online learning environments (Russell, 2020). In addition, a

systematic review by Oteir and Al-Otaibi (Oteir & Al-Otaibi, 2019a) highlights that foreign language anxiety is one of the most influential factors that can hinder students' ability to communicate effectively in English. Therefore, understanding FLA is essential in identifying the challenges faced by students when they are required to express their opinions in English.

Foreign Language Anxiety can be observed through various emotional and physical symptoms experienced by students during speaking activities. Students often feel nervous, anxious, and uncomfortable when they are required to speak in English, especially in front of others (Kasap, 2019). In some cases, anxiety also appears in physical forms such as trembling, sweating, and difficulty in concentrating while speaking (Sanaei, 2016a). These symptoms can lead to negative impacts on students' speaking performance, as they may struggle to organise their thoughts and express their ideas clearly. As a result, students tend to avoid speaking opportunities or participate minimally in classroom interactions (Aguila & Harjanto, 2016a). This condition shows that foreign language anxiety not only affects students' emotional state but also significantly influences their ability to communicate effectively in English.

Previous studies have widely explored foreign language anxiety in speaking contexts and its impact on students' performance in learning English. Many studies have found that speaking anxiety is a common issue among EFL learners and can significantly influence their willingness to communicate in the classroom (Çağatay, 2015a). In addition, research has also highlighted the important role of teachers in reducing students' anxiety through supportive classroom environments and appropriate teaching strategies (Chahrazad & Kamel, 2022a). These studies show that efforts to overcome speaking anxiety are often focused on external factors, particularly the role of teachers in facilitating communication. However, most of these studies still discuss speaking anxiety in general contexts and do not specifically focus on more complex speaking tasks, such as expressing personal opinions. Therefore, further investigation is needed to explore more specific contexts of speaking anxiety, particularly from the students' perspective.

Despite the growing number of studies on foreign language anxiety, several gaps can still be identified in the existing literature. Furthermore, limited studies have simultaneously examined anxiety symptoms, challenges, and coping strategies in the specific context of expressing opinions in English among Indonesian senior high school students. Previous research has mainly focused on speaking anxiety in general contexts without specifically examining more complex speaking tasks such as expressing personal opinions. In addition, many studies emphasise external factors, particularly the role of teachers in reducing students' anxiety, rather than exploring how students themselves manage and cope with their anxiety. Although some studies have discussed coping strategies, these are often presented in a general way and do not fully capture students' personal and subjective experiences. Furthermore, limited attention has been given to speaking situations that require spontaneous and opinion-based responses, which are more cognitively demanding for students. Therefore, this study aims to fill these gaps by focusing on students' challenges, symptoms, and coping strategies in dealing with foreign language anxiety when expressing opinions in English.

To address these gaps, this study focuses on exploring students' experiences in dealing with foreign language anxiety, particularly when expressing opinions in English. This study aims to identify the challenges faced by students, examine the common symptoms of anxiety they experience, and analyse the coping strategies they use to manage these difficulties. By concentrating on opinion-based speaking tasks, this research provides a more specific and contextualised understanding of foreign language anxiety in EFL classrooms. Furthermore, this study employs a quantitative approach using a survey method to obtain empirical data from senior high school students. It is expected that the findings of this study can contribute both theoretically and practically, especially in supporting the development of more adaptive and student-centred speaking activities that consider learners' emotional conditions.

B. Formulation Of The Problem

1. What symptoms of foreign language anxiety are most commonly experienced by senior high school students when expressing opinions in English?

2. What challenges related to foreign language anxiety do senior high school students at SMAN 6 Kediri face in expressing opinions in English?
3. What strategies do senior high school students at SMAN 6 Kediri use to overcome foreign language anxiety in expressing opinion in English?

C. Objectives Of The Research

1. To examine the symptoms of foreign language anxiety most commonly experienced by senior high school students at SMAN 6 Kediri when expressing opinions in English.
2. To find out the challenges related to foreign language anxiety faced by SMA Negeri 6 Kediri students in expressing their opinions in English.
3. To find out the coping strategies used by SMA Negeri 6 Kediri students in overcoming foreign language anxiety in expressing opinions in English.

D. The Significance Of This Research

This research is expected to contribute both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) theory, particularly the framework proposed by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope, by providing a more contextualised understanding of how anxiety manifests in specific speaking situations, especially in expressing opinions among senior high school students. This study highlights a more complex speaking activity that involves not only linguistic ability but also cognitive and social pressures, thereby expanding the application of FLA in opinion-based speaking tasks.

Practically, the findings of this study can assist English teachers in understanding students' foreign language anxiety, particularly in activities that require expressing opinions in English. This understanding can support teachers in designing more effective and student-centred speaking activities, such as discussions and opinion-sharing tasks, that consider students' emotional conditions. In addition, the findings may serve as a reference for developing teaching strategies and materials that not only focus on language accuracy but also promote students' confidence and communicative competence.

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