

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SPEAKING ANXIETY AMONG PHASE C STUDENTS DURING CLASSROOM PRESENTATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Speaking is one of the most important language skills for elementary school students, but many students still experience anxiety when asked to present. The purpose of this study is to analyze the factors causing anxiety in phase C students (grades V and VI) during presentations in class. The descriptive qualitative research approach with a case study method in three elementary schools in the Sunan Kalijaga Cluster, Cilacap. The subjects were five students, four teachers, and five parents. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation studies. Data were analyzed through data condensation, data presentation, and verification of conclusions. Data were validated through triangulation of methods and sources. The results of the study indicate that Phase C students' anxiety during presentations in front of the class is caused by internal and external factors. Internal factors include (1) cognitive/psychological aspects (fear of making mistakes and feeling inferior); (2) emotional (nervousness, embarrassment, and mental pressure); (3) behavior of avoiding taking turns speaking; and (4) negative experiences and a tendency towards perfectionism. External factors include (1) peer social environment that causes fear of being ridiculed; (2) competitive classroom climate; (3) teacher communication style that determines a sense of security or fear; (4) limited family support in speaking practice and emotional support; and (5) minimal interactive learning media, resulting in less motivation to speak. It was concluded that speaking anxiety arises from the interaction of a child's psychological state and the learning environment. It is necessary to map the causal factors and involve teachers, parents, and schools to continuously boost students' confidence when speaking in front of the class.

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INTRODUCTIONS

Speaking is a language skill that plays a crucial role in student development because it allows them to convey ideas, build social interactions, and construct knowledge during the learning process (Tarigan, 2021; Damanix, 2021;

Harianto, 2021; Dahlia, 2023; Hanifah et al., 2024; Susanti, 2024). At the elementary school level, speaking skills contribute to self-confidence, the courage to argue, and the ability to establish healthy social relationships (Anjelina & Tarmini, 2022; Andriani et al., 2023). Therefore, developing speaking skills requires holistic, contextual learning that prioritizes students' psychological development to foster meaningful communication, the courage to express opinions, and the ability to think logically (Marzuki, 2019; Muammar, 2021; Hanifah et al., 2024; Susanti, 2024; Prabowo & Wakhidin, 2024). This concept aligns with the direction of the Independent Curriculum, which emphasizes active, reflective, collaborative learning and strengthening student agency so that students can express their ideas confidently and responsibly (Kemendikbudristek, 2024). This is crucial because opportunities for students to express themselves safely significantly impact the learning process, social interactions, and character development (Dacey & Kenny, 2000; Suyitno, 2016).

However, a common phenomenon across various countries indicates that students' speaking skills remain low due to speaking anxiety. This condition is evident in low participation in class discussions, limited initiative in asking questions, and a tendency to avoid presentations due to fear of making mistakes and being judged by peers (Pasaribu & Sijabat, 2022; Cantopher, 2023; Fatimah & Putra, 2024; Arifah et al., 2025). Speaking anxiety is influenced by internal factors such as low self-confidence, negative experiences, perfectionist thoughts, and fear of failure. and external factors such as oppressive teacher communication styles, competitive classroom situations, lack of peer support, and learning that doesn't provide a safe space for expressing opinions (Grieve et al., 2021; Anwar et al., 2022; Syahriani & Santoso, 2024; Riska et al., 2024). This phenomenon is a serious concern because speaking anxiety can hinder the development of communication skills, higher-order thinking processes, and students' social interactions at school.

The phenomenon of speaking anxiety was also evident in phase C students (grades 5 and 6) at three elementary schools in the Sunan Kalijaga cluster. They tended to be passive during both classroom learning and group discussions. Students exhibited restless behavior, lowered their heads, lowered their voices, avoided eye contact, and even stiffened their bodies when asked to perform in front of the class. Interviews with teachers revealed that students actually understood the material but were reluctant to express their opinions due to fear of being wrong, being laughed at, or being criticized by their peers, thus suboptimal learning interactions. Although these symptoms of anxiety are readily apparent, their root causes remain unclear. Every student may exhibit anxiety with the same signs, but the causes can be different, such as a fear of making mistakes due to negative experiences, a lack of self-confidence, a fear of being teased by peers, or the pressure of a competitive classroom environment. Without a clear understanding of the source of anxiety, it is difficult for teachers to choose the right learning approach to address it.

Several previous studies have identified the causes and management of speaking anxiety. Monotonous learning methods and authoritative teacher communication can increase fear of speaking because students feel threatened and worried about making mistakes (Kuntarto & Aritonang, 2023). Conversely, the use of role-playing methods and visual media has been shown to reduce anxiety and encourage students' courage during presentations (Annisa et al., 2025; Damanix, 2021). Monotonous learning has the potential to increase academic anxiety due to limited interaction and increased performance pressure (Sulistyo et al., 2025). From a psychological perspective, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is effective in helping students overcome negative thoughts and increase their confidence in speaking (Anwar et al., 2022). Counseling helps manage the emotional stress that arises during class presentations (Suwito & Sulianto, 2023; Harahap & Silvianetri, 2024). Furthermore, support from family, teachers, and peers plays a crucial role in fostering students' courage to speak in front of the class (Riska et al., 2024; Yunitasari et al., 2023).

In summary, previous research confirms that speaking anxiety arises from learning patterns, social support, and students' psychological conditions, requiring an integrated approach to addressing it. However, most studies have focused on secondary school and university students; no in-depth studies have analyzed the factors causing speaking anxiety during class presentations in Phase C students (grades 5 and 6). Yet, children at this age are in a transitional period of cognitive and social development that requires a specific pedagogical approach to foster confidence in communication. This is in line with Piaget's theory, which states that children aged 10–12 are in the transition stage

from concrete operations to formal operations, thus requiring social support, a sense of security, and emotional support to develop logical thinking skills (Andriani & Muntohar, 2022; Novita et al., 2023; Setiana & Eliasa, 2024). Based on this, the novelty of this research is the comprehensive mapping of internal and external factors causing speaking anxiety in Phase C students during class presentations, based on anxiety indicators according to Dacey & Kenny (2000). Internal factors include cognitive and psychological aspects, emotional factors, avoidance behaviors, personal experiences, and perfectionist tendencies. External factors include the social environment and peer relationships, classroom climate and learning situations, teacher communication styles, family support, and limited media and learning resources.

Based on this background, the research problem is formulated as follows: "What are the factors causing speaking anxiety in Phase C students during class presentations?" The purpose of this research is to analyze the factors that cause speaking anxiety in Phase C students during class presentations, both internal and external, within the context of the Independent Curriculum. Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich the study of elementary educational psychology by understanding the emotional, social, and learning environment factors that influence students' communication skills. Practically, the findings can serve as guidelines for teachers and schools in designing learning that is more sensitive to students' feelings, creates a space for equal communication, and provides support that encourages Phase C students to be more confident and confident in speaking in front of the class.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research used a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study method to analyze in-depth the factors causing anxiety in class speaking among Phase C students (grades V and VI of elementary school). This approach allows researchers to contextually understand how emotional, social, and environmental experiences influence students' speaking abilities. This aligns with Creswell (2016), who emphasized that case studies are used to deeply analyze phenomena in real-world contexts, and Hamzah (2020), who explained that qualitative methods aim to understand the meaning of human behavior within their social environment in a natural and holistic way.

The research was conducted in three elementary schools in the Sunan Kalijaga Cluster in Adipala District, Cilacap, from September to November 2025. The locations were selected because the schools were open, supportive of the research process, and provided access to in-depth information regarding learning conditions in the field. Purposive sampling technique was used to determine the criteria for research subjects by considering selecting subjects who were considered most relevant and had experience or characteristics that matched the research focus. Thus, the data obtained could provide an in-depth understanding of speaking anxiety during class presentations. The following table shows the research subjects and criteria based on the purposive sampling technique.

Table 1. List of Research Subjects Based on Role and Selection Criteria

| Code | Subject | Total | Criteria |
|-------|--------------|-------|--|
| S1-S5 | Students | 5 | (1) showed symptoms of speaking anxiety during classroom presentations based on the teacher's preliminary observations, such as nervousness, avoiding eye contact, trembling voice, refusing to take turns, or difficulty expressing ideas; (2) represented a range of causes of speaking anxiety, covering both internal and external factors. |
| T1-T4 | Teachers | 4 | (1) taught the classes where the research was conducted; (2) had experience observing students' behavior during class presentations; (3) understood classroom learning dynamics and student interaction when speaking in front of the class; (4) were able to provide information regarding teacher-student communication patterns, classroom climate, assessment approaches, and peers' responses during presentations. |
| Pa1- | Parents/Guar | 5 | (1) were aware of the student's habits and level of preparedness when |

| Code | Subject | Total | Criteria |
|------|---------|-------|---|
| Pa5 | dians | | completing presentation assignments, including emotional reactions at home (anxiety, fear of making mistakes, or avoidance of practice); (2) were able to provide information about the forms of family support related to the child's speaking or presentation activities. |

Research ethics were maintained by providing all subjects with an explanation of the purpose, procedures, and benefits of the study before data collection began. Consent was obtained through written permission from parents/guardians and verbal assent from students. The identities of students, teachers, and parents were disguised using codes (S1–S5, T1–T4, Pa1–Pa5) to maintain confidentiality and ensure their comfort. All participation was voluntary and without coercion, and participants had the right to discontinue participation at any time without any consequences.

Data were collected through participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentary studies (Moleong, 2017). Participant observation was implemented by observing student behavior during presentations without altering the learning dynamics. The focus of observation was directed at nonverbal indicators of anxiety, such as a weak or trembling voice, averted gaze, tense expressions, nervous gestures, and a tendency to refuse to speak. Through this technique, researchers obtained an authentic picture of how anxiety naturally manifests in classroom situations. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers, students, and parents to explore factors contributing to anxiety. Example questions for students: "How do you feel when you have to present in front of the class? Do you feel nervous, afraid of making mistakes, or embarrassed?" Questions for teachers: "While observing the student during the presentation, what factors do you think most influence the emergence of anxiety, such as the classroom atmosphere, how peers respond, or the student's fear of making mistakes?" Questions for parents: "When your child tells you about his or her presentation experience at home, does he or she show any particular fear, hesitation, or worry?" Documentation studies examined teacher notes, learning reflections, and school activity archives related to student participation to strengthen the interpretation of observation and interview data.

Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2018) through a process of data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. In the condensation stage, data from observations, interviews, and documentation were simplified to highlight internal and external indicators of speaking anxiety. The condensed data was then presented, then categorized based on Dacey and Kenny's (2000) theoretical framework, into two causal groups: internal factors (psychological, emotional, and behavioral aspects, as well as negative experiences or perfectionism) and external factors (social interactions with peers, classroom atmosphere, teacher communication style, family support, and the availability of learning resources). The conclusion-drawing process was conducted inductively to identify patterns of relationships between internal and external factors in the emergence of speaking anxiety in students. Analysis continued from data collection until valid findings were obtained, thus reflecting the empirical reality of speaking anxiety in phase C students.

Data were validated through source and technique triangulation (Fiantika et al., 2022). Source triangulation compared the views of teachers, students, and parents regarding the factors causing speaking anxiety, while technique triangulation combined observation, interviews, and documentation to obtain a comprehensive picture of student behavior and responses in the classroom. The application of triangulation is important because speaking anxiety is subjective and influenced by psychological and social factors, so that the validity and credibility of the data can be guaranteed, and the research results accurately reflect the factual conditions in the field.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Result

The findings of this study indicate that anxiety about speaking in front of the class in phase C students is not only evident in silence, hesitation, or fear of speaking, but is influenced by a number of more fundamental factors.

Each student exhibits similar symptoms, but the causes vary, ranging from negative experiences when speaking, low self-confidence, and fear of being ridiculed by peers to a competitive classroom atmosphere. A comprehensive analysis of internal and external factors provides a clear picture of the root of these problems, allowing for a clearer understanding of the relationship between internal and external factors. Internal factors include the psychological, cognitive, and emotional conditions of students, while external factors relate to the social environment, teacher communication patterns, family support, classroom climate, and the learning media used. The research findings obtained through direct observation, interviews with teachers, students, and parents, and learning documentation are summarized in the following table to provide a systematic overview of the causes of speaking anxiety and facilitate the identification of appropriate learning strategies.

Table 2. Factors Contributing to Speaking Anxiety in Phase C Students During Classroom Presentations

| Factor Category | Indicator | Sub-Indicator | Observation Findings | Interview Findings (Teacher, Student, Parent) | Documentation Findings |
|-----------------|----------------------------|---|---|--|---|
| Internal | Cognitive/Psychological | Fear of making mistakes, low self-confidence | students appeared hesitant when responding, frequently paused mid-sentence, or avoided eye contact. | Teacher: Most students are afraid of making mistakes because they worry about being laughed at by peers. Student: Admitted low self-confidence. Parent: Child feels embarrassed when speaking in front of the class. | Teacher notes: Some students refused to take turns speaking and chose to stay silent. |
| | Emotional | Nervous, embarrassed, stressed | Physical signs of nervousness: sweaty hands, trembling voice, flushed face | Teacher: Some students appeared tense before presenting. Student: Felt very nervous. Parent: Child often experienced stomachaches before presenting. | Teacher reflection: Some students appeared anxious during presentations. |
| | Avoidant Behavior | Refusing turns, diverting attention | Students looked down, pretended to be busy, or joked to avoid speaking turns | Teacher: Some students deliberately joked to avoid being called. Student: Often asked peers to go first. Parent: Child sometimes pretended to forget the text. | Participation records: Some students rarely participated. |
| | Experience/Perfectionism | Negative past experiences, fear of repeating mistakes | Students tensed when reminded of previous errors | Teacher: Being laughed at previously made students reluctant to speak. Student: Tried to speak perfectly to avoid mistakes. Parent: Child practiced a long time before presenting. | Teacher notes: Students often rewrote answers before presenting. |
| External | Social Environment / Peers | Teasing, lack of social support | Some students appeared embarrassed and remained silent after | Teacher: Peer teasing triggers embarrassment in most students. Student: Afraid of being laughed at. Parent: Child has | Observation: Laughter from peers when someone made mistakes. |

| Factor Category | Indicator | Sub-Indicator | Observation Findings | Interview Findings (Teacher, Student, Parent) | Documentation Findings |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|
| | | | being teased by peers | experienced teasing during presentations. | |
| Classroom Climate / Learning Situation | Tense atmosphere, evaluation-focused | Students appeared stiff and hesitant when corrected in front of the class | Students appeared stiff and hesitant when corrected in front of the class | Teacher: Often corrected mistakes immediately. Student: Felt tense and afraid of making mistakes. Parent: Classroom atmosphere felt pressuring. | Lesson plans: Speaking activities are evaluative, with limited guided practice. |
| Teacher Communication Style | Direct criticism, minimal positive reinforcement | Students looked down after being corrected in a harsh tone | Students looked down after being corrected in a harsh tone | Teacher: Acknowledged students are easily offended when criticized. Student: Afraid to speak for fear of being scolded. Parent: Child fears the teacher when making mistakes. | Teacher reflection: Need to evaluate communication approach. |
| Family Support | Limited practice, lack of emotional support | Students are not used to practicing speaking at home | Students are not used to practicing speaking at home | Teacher: Children accustomed to practicing at home are more confident. Student: Rarely practiced. Parent: Not sure how to support the child's speaking practice. | Home visits: No routine speaking practice at home. |
| Learning Media and Facilities | Limited and unengaging media | Students quickly bored when presenting without visual aids | Students quickly bored when presenting without visual aids | Teacher: Learning media is still limited. Student: More comfortable speaking with images/videos. Parent: Child more enthusiastic with engaging media. | Inventory: Learning media is basic and not yet multimedia-based. |

Table 2 shows that the causes of students' speaking anxiety are not singular but result from the interaction between personal factors and the learning environment. To provide a more comprehensive understanding of these dynamics, the following description examines research findings based on indicators from both factor categories: internal and external.

Internal Factors

Cognitive/psychological factors are demonstrated through fear of making mistakes and low self-confidence when speaking in front of the class. This mechanism occurs when students anticipate the possibility of making mistakes while speaking, causing their brains to generate negative thoughts, such as imagining being laughed at by their peers or being reprimanded by the teacher. This then triggers hesitation, lowering their heads, or pausing mid-explanation. This is reflected in one student's statement, "I'm afraid if I say something wrong, my friends will laugh, so I don't feel brave enough to speak in front of the class" (interview with S2, 30/09/2025). The teacher confirmed this tendency: "When asked to speak, some students immediately lower their heads, partly because they're afraid of giving the wrong answer" (interview with T2, 01/10/2025). Teacher documentation also showed a tendency for students to avoid speaking during class presentations.

The emotional aspect was characterized by physical reactions such as sweaty hands, a red face, a trembling voice, and unsteady breathing when having to present. This mechanism works when the body perceives the

presentation situation as threatening, causing the nervous system to trigger a stress response such as tension or embarrassment, ultimately causing students to perform less fluently even though they actually understand the material. Some students even experienced physical complaints such as stomach aches before their turn to speak, indicating that anxiety stems from emotional stress. Additional interview findings corroborated this, with one student saying, "When I want to speak, I usually have a stomach ache and a headache, and my hands are really cold" (interview with S4, 30/09/2025). Teachers also observed a similar pattern during class: "Anxious students usually have trembling voices, and they take deep breaths before starting to speak" (interview with T4, 01/10/2025). This aligns with observation notes, which showed students trembling and some holding their stomachs while waiting for their turn to present.

The behavioral aspect of avoidance was characterized by students tending to divert attention, pretending to be busy, or joking to avoid being singled out. The mechanism is evident when students use avoidance strategies to reduce the likelihood of being called on, thus making them feel safe in the short term. However, in the long term, this behavior actually increases anxiety because they are less exposed to speaking situations. Observation data and activity logs show a pattern of low participation in presentation situations. Interview results support this finding, with one student stating, "If the teacher wants to point, I pretend to look for a pencil or chat with a friend so I don't get called on to present" (interview with S1, 30/09/2025). The teacher also confirmed this pattern, saying, "Some people deliberately appear busy so they don't get called on, and this pattern is seen almost every time there is a speaking activity in front of the class" (interview with T1, 01/10/2025). Documentation of activity shows that students tend to remain silent when asked who wants to start the presentation.

The experience/perfectionism aspect, namely the desire to appear perfect due to negative experiences such as being teased or giving incorrect answers on previous occasions. The mechanism occurs when students believe that even the smallest mistake must be avoided, so they over-prepare, repeat their scripts repeatedly, or even delay speaking to wait for the "perfect" moment. This situation actually creates greater anxiety because students focus on the possibility of failure rather than on the natural process of speaking. This is evident in the statement of one student, "Before, if I made the slightest mistake during a presentation, someone would immediately laugh, so now if I haven't completely memorized it, I don't want to go forward" (interview with S5, 30/09/2025). A parent corroborated this finding, "If there is a presentation assignment, he studies for a very long time because he is afraid of making the slightest mistake. Sometimes he cries if he feels he hasn't done it perfectly" (interview with Pa5, 30/09/2025). Teacher notes in the class report documentation also indicate that students with previous negative experiences tend to take longer before daring to speak again.

External Factors

The peer environment is one factor that influences speaking anxiety. Ridicule, negative comments, or laughter from peers when someone makes a mistake can make students feel embarrassed and prefer to remain silent. This mechanism arises from a strong need to be accepted within a group; when the group doesn't provide a sense of security, the courage to speak decreases. One student stated, "If I say something wrong, my friends will laugh, so I prefer to stay quiet" (interview with S3, 09/30/2025), and a teacher added, "Some students immediately lower their heads or are reluctant to answer when friends laugh at their mistakes" (interview with T3, 01/10/2025). Classroom observations revealed that some students held back and watched their peers' reactions before speaking, while teacher notes documented low student engagement during presentations.

The classroom climate, or learning situation, characterized by a competitive and evaluation-driven atmosphere, made speaking feel like a test of ability. This pressure arises because students perceive mistakes as a threat to their self-esteem, leading them to refrain from speaking. One student stated, "If the teacher immediately assesses, I'm afraid of making mistakes and don't want to come forward" (interview with S1, 09/30/2025), and the teacher added, "The students seem stiff and hesitant because the classroom atmosphere is too evaluative" (interview with T1, 01/10/2025). Lesson plan documentation and observation notes indicate that speaking practice is still minimal and evaluative,

increasing emotional tension among students. As a result, their courage to speak decreases because the class feels stressful and threatens their psychological safety.

The teacher's communication style, for example, direct criticism without positive reinforcement, creates fear in students because every mistake is associated with negative evaluation. One student explained, "If I make a mistake, the teacher immediately says 'wrong,' so I'm afraid to come forward again" (interview with S4, 30/09/2025), while the teacher added, "Some students hold back after being corrected because they're afraid of being scolded" (interview with T4, 01/10/2025). Observations showed that students who received direct reprimands tended to remain silent and lower their heads, while those who received encouragement or positive feedback appeared more confident. This fear arose because students perceived that any inappropriate response would negatively impact their relationship with the teacher and their social acceptance in the classroom.

Family support, namely students' mental readiness and speaking skills, was influenced by interactions and practice at home. A lack of formal and informal practice led students to come to class feeling unprepared and low in self-confidence. One student revealed, "Mom said to practice so I wouldn't make mistakes, but I kept thinking about it and was afraid to speak in class" (interview with S2, 30/09/2025), and a parent added, "Sometimes I told her to practice so she wouldn't be embarrassed, but she just got nervous" (interview with Pa2, 30/09/2025). Home visits and documentation showed that most children did not regularly practice speaking at home. This lack of practice triggered anxiety because students perceived themselves as unprepared and feared disappointing their parents and teachers.

Learning media and tools, such as limited visual, audio, or digital media, can make speaking monotonous and boring. When media is unsupportive, students struggle to express ideas due to the lack of visual or audio stimuli that facilitate language processing. One student said, "If there are pictures or videos, I'm more confident in speaking because I'm less afraid of making mistakes." (Interview with S5, 30/09/2025). A teacher added, "The children seem more active and confident when using interactive media compared to speaking without aids." (Interview with T4, 01/10/2025). The media inventory showed that most aids were simple, resulting in lower student engagement without media support. A sense of security and comfort increases when engaging media is used, allowing students to focus more on learning activities rather than fear of being judged.

Discussions

The speaking anxiety of Phase C students arises from the interaction of internal and external factors. Internally, fear of making mistakes, low self-confidence, nervousness, and inexperience/perfectionism drive avoidance behavior because children anticipate the risk of making mistakes and the negative impact they will have on peer and teacher evaluations. Externally, an unsupportive peer environment, a competitive classroom climate, teacher criticism without positive reinforcement, a lack of support for home practice, and limited learning media exacerbate discomfort and decrease speaking confidence. In other words, anxiety arises because students perceive speaking situations as threatening to self-esteem and social acceptance, while a safe, supportive environment supported by interactive media can reduce anxiety and gradually increase speaking confidence. These findings reinforce the theory put forward by Dacey & Kenny (2020), which states that children's anxiety stems not only from within themselves but also from the environment that shapes their social perceptions. Therefore, learning strategies that foster a positive, empathetic, and socially supportive atmosphere are needed, both at school and at home.

The findings of this study align with those of Fatimah & Putra (2024), who highlighted the speaking skills of second-grade elementary school students in Malang. Internal factors such as self-confidence and external factors such as social interaction influence students' speaking ability. The current study is relevant to these findings because both emphasize the role of psychological and social aspects in the speaking process, although the focus of this study is more on speaking anxiety as an emotional response that can hinder student performance, rather than solely on speaking ability. The added value of this study lies in its focus on speaking anxiety as an emotional response that can hinder performance, rather than solely speaking ability, thus providing a deeper understanding of how fear and doubt affect student participation in classroom activities.

Similarly, Kuntarto & Aritonang (2023) emphasize the importance of internal factors, such as low self-confidence and fear, as well as external factors, such as parenting styles and teacher methods, in hindering the speaking ability of lower-grade students at SD Negeri 139/IV, Jambi City. The current study is relevant to these findings because it also identifies a combination of personal experiences, emotional states, and social interactions as causes of speaking anxiety, although its focus is different. Previous research emphasized general speaking skills, while the current study focuses on students' psychological and emotional responses.

This is in line with Palupi et al. (2022), who examined speaking anxiety in English courses and found that anxiety was a major barrier to communication, which aligns with the focus of this study. However, the differences lie in the educational level and learning context. The previous study examined first-semester students in a foreign language course, while this study focuses on elementary school students in Phase C of the Independent Curriculum.

This is also in line with Suryaningrum (2024), who found that family environment, school environment, and teaching methods influence the speaking confidence of upper-grade students at SDN 7 Dobo. The current study aligns with these findings by demonstrating the influence of external factors on speaking readiness, but differs in emphasizing the importance of the interaction between internal psychological and external factors in shaping students' speaking anxiety. This study provides a more holistic perspective on how personal experiences, emotions, and social dynamics play a role in the emergence of anxiety.

Research conducted by Castro-Vaca & Argudo-Garzón (2024) demonstrated the influence of the classroom environment on the speaking anxiety levels of 10th-grade students in Ecuador, and that environmental interventions were able to reduce anxiety. These results align with current research, which shows that classroom atmosphere and teacher communication patterns influence speaking anxiety. The difference is that their research subjects were upper secondary students, while this study's added value is its emphasis on classroom climate, teacher communication patterns, and social interactions in the context of elementary school phase C, which provides insight into how external factors can be utilized to gradually reduce anxiety.

Overall, this study shows that anxiety about speaking in front of the class in elementary school students in phase C arises from a complex interaction between internal and external factors. Internal factors, particularly psychological and emotional aspects, such as low self-confidence, fear of making mistakes, and perfectionism, influence students' mental readiness to speak. Meanwhile, external factors, particularly the social environment of peers, classroom climate, teacher communication patterns, family support, and learning media, shape a sense of security and comfort that determines the extent to which anxiety arises or decreases. Unlike previous studies that emphasize speaking skills or interventions, this study analyzes speaking anxiety as an emotional response that affects performance, using a qualitative observational approach that reveals the dynamics of daily classroom interactions, the simultaneous integration of internal and external factors, and a focus on elementary school students in phase C within the Independent Curriculum. The added value of this research lies in its in-depth understanding of the dynamics of speaking anxiety that emerge in daily classroom interactions. Research findings that map the factors causing speaking anxiety will provide a basis for teachers and schools to determine learning strategies, classroom communication patterns, and forms of emotional support that are truly relevant to the needs of Phase C students. This will ensure that intervention and learning strategies implemented are not simply based on assumptions but on scientifically sound findings.

Practical recommendations from this research point to the importance of creating a learning process that fosters a sense of emotional safety for students. Teachers can implement empathetic learning strategies through gradual speaking practice, accompanied by positive appreciation for every effort or progress, no matter how small. Simple psychological support, such as pre-speaking breathing exercises, positive self-talk, and peer support, can also help students relieve tension before performing in front of the class. Parental involvement through communication exercises at home, such as retelling daily activities or reading aloud, can consistently strengthen speaking experiences. Furthermore, the use of interactive learning media has the potential to create a pleasant speaking atmosphere so that students do not feel emotionally threatened when performing in front of peers.

These findings align with research by Yunitasari et al. (2023), which confirmed that emotionally supportive learning strategies, such as Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL), can reduce learning anxiety in elementary school students by maximizing social support and positive learning experiences. This reinforces the idea that a learning approach that considers students' emotional states can help alleviate fear when they have to express their opinions. This finding also aligns with the research of Anwar et al. (2022), which explains that strengthening self-efficacy through psychological interventions such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is effective in reducing speaking anxiety and increasing self-confidence when speaking in public. The relevance of these two studies further strengthens the conclusion that emotional support, psychologically friendly learning strategies, and strengthening students' self-confidence are important foundations for increasing their courage to speak in the classroom. This approach not only helps students speak but also helps them feel comfortable, safe, and confident when expressing their thoughts in front of others.

CONCLUSION

Anxiety about speaking during class presentations in Phase C elementary school students arises from the interaction of internal and external factors. Internal factors include (1) cognitive/psychological aspects, characterized by low self-confidence and fear of making mistakes, causing students to hesitate and be reluctant to speak; (2) emotional aspects, seen in nervousness, embarrassment, tension, and physical symptoms such as a trembling voice, which reinforce speech barriers; (3) avoidance behavior, such as delaying turns or pretending to be unprepared, prolonging anxiety; and (4) experience/perfectionism, trauma from previous negative experiences, which encourages over-preparation and emotional distress. External factors include: (1) the social environment and peer reactions that often lead to fear of ridicule; (2) an overly competitive and stressful classroom climate; (3) the teacher's communication style that determines students' sense of security or fear when speaking; (4) limited family support, both in terms of speaking practice at home and emotional support, amplifying children's anxiety when speaking at school; and (5) a lack of interactive learning media that reduces opportunities for enjoyable speaking practice.

The implication is that mapping the factors causing speaking anxiety during class presentations can be used by teachers and schools as a basis for determining learning strategies, classroom communication patterns, and forms of emotional support that are truly relevant to the needs of Phase C students. Therefore, solutions are not simply about pressuring students to speak, but rather fostering courage once the source of their anxiety is addressed. Practically, teachers can create a safer and more supportive classroom atmosphere, for example, implementing short-term classroom strategies such as providing opportunities to speak in small groups or in pairs before presenting, providing positive reinforcement, and using interactive learning media. Schools can create medium-term programs, such as teacher training to understand student anxiety and build empathetic classrooms, interactive learning media, and teacher-parent collaboration for speaking practice at home. Parents can also be involved through home speaking practice and providing emotional support. A holistic approach involving teachers, parents, schools, and other relevant parties is crucial for building children's confidence, facilitating the expression of ideas in class, and creating a safe and supportive learning environment.

This study has several limitations. The study subjects only involved Phase C students in one cluster of elementary schools, so the results cannot be generalized to other schools. Furthermore, because it used a qualitative approach, the findings obtained are descriptive and interpretive in nature, thus not providing strong causal evidence. This study also did not deeply explore the influence of various learning methods and the use of digital technology on speaking anxiety. For future research, it is recommended to expand the number and variety of participants, and combine quantitative and qualitative methods for more comprehensive results. Furthermore, interventions aimed at reducing speaking anxiety can be tested experimentally, for example through Cognitive Therapy (CT) or mild Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), as well as relaxation techniques, using a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) design. An RCT is an experimental research method in which participants are randomly assigned to an intervention

and a control group to systematically assess the effectiveness of an intervention, thereby more clearly demonstrating cause-and-effect relationships.

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