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ACADEMIC ORAL PRESENTATION ANXIETY AND COPING STRATEGIES AMONG NON-ENGLISH MAJOR STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BENGKULU

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Abstract: The aim of this study was to review the self-perceived oral presentation anxiety and coping strategies of non-English majors of the University of Bengkulu. The research used a descriptive quantitative approach in sampling the 130 participants to gather information through the Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety (PRPSA) and Oral Communication Strategy Inventory (OCSI). Students reported a moderate anxiousness, which was associated with language and assessment. Use of social-affective measures, such as self-talk and relaxation, was most common in students and then by fluency-oriented measures. The results of One-Way ANOVA indicated that the difference in the use of strategies by

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level of anxiety was significant. Social-affective strategies and fluency-specific strategies were more common among high-anxiety students ($F=26.70$, $p < .001$; $F=11.94$, $p < .001$). Conversely, message simplification was popular among the moderate-anxiety students ($F=15.78$, $p < .001$). What the study determines is that there are special strategies, such as specially designed interventions, such as message construction workshops, fluency training, and relaxation methods, that can facilitate the quality of presentation. Such results shed light on the strategies that the non-English majors adopted to overcome presentation anxiety and offer ways in which the EFL learners can reduce the latter.

Keywords: *anxiety, communication apprehension, coping strategies, ELT, oral presentation*

INTRODUCTION

Oral presentations are a critical component of academic training, fostering students' communication skills essential for academic and professional success. However, for non-English major students in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, such as those at the University of Bengkulu, these tasks present significant challenges due to limited exposure to public speaking and academic English (Kho & Ting, 2023; Docena et al., 2023). Anxiety associated with public speaking manifests in physical symptoms such as increased heart rate and cognitive difficulties in organizing thoughts under pressure (Fitriana, 2023; Kurakan, 2021). This issue is amplified for non-native speakers who face linguistic and cultural barriers, exacerbating their fear of negative evaluation (Tajuddin, 2021; Morsi & Zaki, 2024).

Studies indicate that public speaking anxiety negatively impacts students' ability to articulate ideas clearly, affecting content coherence and presentation delivery (Al-Saggaf & Azman, 2021; Arlan et al., 2022). High anxiety levels can lead to avoidance behaviors, limiting students' opportunities to develop essential communication skills (Fitriana, 2023; Khanh & Ngoc, 2022). Furthermore, chronic

anxiety in public speaking can have long-term consequences, reducing confidence and hindering professional growth in fields where effective communication is crucial (Miskam & Saidalvi, 2019; AlShaibani et al., 2022).

Among the key contributors to presentation anxiety are fear of scrutiny, low self-esteem, and language-related challenges such as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation difficulties (Razawi et al., 2019; Bai, 2023). EFL learners often experience additional pressure due to unfamiliarity with academic discourse and formal presentation structures, making them more vulnerable to anxiety (Idrus, 2016; Naser & Isa, 2021). In response, research has explored various coping strategies to mitigate these challenges, ranging from cognitive-behavioral interventions to peer-assisted learning (Kho & Ting, 2023; Radić-Bojanić & Topalov, 2021).

The Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety (PRPSA) by McCroskey (1970) remains a widely used tool for assessing anxiety levels in public speaking contexts. Recent adaptations have refined its application for academic settings, particularly among EFL learners (Cipra & Müller-Hilke, 2019; Alshiabani & Algraini, 2024). Additionally, Nakatani's Oral Communication Strategy Inventory (OCSI) categorizes coping mechanisms into fluency-oriented, message-alteration, and social-affective strategies, providing a comprehensive framework for analyzing students' anxiety management techniques (Nakatani, 2006).

Academic demands, linguistic deficiencies, and fear of negative judgment are among the primary factors contributing to oral presentation anxiety (Cipra & Müller-Hilke, 2019; Riaz & Riaz, 2022). Personality traits such as neuroticism and low self-confidence exacerbate the issue, whereas a supportive classroom environment has been found to mitigate anxiety effects (Fitriana, 2023; Bolivar et al., 2024). Furthermore, non-English major students often struggle with mastering the nuances of academic English, further intensifying their apprehension towards public speaking (Kho & Ting, 2023; Zulkflee et al., 2023).

Cognitive-behavioral interventions, including positive self-

appraisal and relaxation techniques, have proven effective in helping students reframe anxiety as a manageable challenge (Miskam & Saidalvi, 2019; Jiang, 2024). Student stress reduction and community building succeeds through social-affective strategies which include peer-to-peer support and group practice sessions (Fitriana, 2023). Fluency-oriented strategies, including pronunciation practice and pacing techniques, have been linked to improved presentation delivery and reduced anxiety. In the digital age, students are also independently adopting technological tools as a coping mechanism; for example, many now use AI like ChatGPT to help them improve grammar and vocabulary before a presentation, viewing it as a way to build confidence and reduce anxiety about linguistic accuracy (Annur, 2023; Idrus, 2016; Priya, 2024).

Emerging research suggests that digital tools can aid in anxiety reduction by providing structured feedback and opportunities for self-assessment. Video-based feedback, for instance, has been effective in helping students identify areas for improvement while reinforcing self-efficacy (Schmidt et al., 2014). However, the effectiveness of such approaches varies across educational contexts and is influenced by cultural and technological accessibility factors (Kho & Ting, 2023).

Although oral presentation anxiety in English majors has been widely researched, non-English major students have played a small role in the literature. This gap is crucial, especially since the realm has mainly conducted studies involving students in the Western academic environment. Consequently, the degree to which certain cultural and linguistic aspects contribute to the anxiety related to EFL learning among students of the Indonesian context remains unknown. There are pre-existing coping strategies and models of anxiety that might not be readily applicable, and thus, leaders in the field who can provide exposure to interested leaders on the subject matter might not be readily available. Thus, the present study is much required to be familiar with very specific issues that non-English majors have in Indonesia, to create even more adequate and efficient pedagogical support.

In order to fill this gap, the current study is based on the following

research questions:

1. What is the degree of oral presentation anxiety among non- English major students at the University of Bengkulu?
2. Which types of coping skills do these students tend to use as tools in dealing with anxiety during oral presentations the most?
3. Do the coping strategies of students who have low, moderate, and high levels of oral presentation anxiety differ significantly?

This proposed study will attempt to answer these questions using the PRPSA and OCSI instruments on 130 non-English major students in the hope that the study can inform specific areas of intervention. These problems can be solved so that it can result in better instructional strategies, which will eventually enhance the confidence and competency of the student in doing public speaking based on the EFL arena.

METHOD

Research Design

The methodology of research adopted in this one was descriptive quantitative. This type of design has been selected to address the research questions on how academic oral presentation anxiety and coping mechanisms used by non-English major students are coped with at the University of Bengkulu. The process helped to collect and evaluate the quantitative (arithmetical) information about the degree of anxiety in the students and their selected coping style.

Participants

The research sample included 130 students of different non-English major in the University of Bengkulu chosen by the convenience sampling approach in the course of the 2024/2025 academic year. The gender of the participants was mainly female (73.1 percent) and males made up 26.9 percent of the sample size. The average age of the participant was 20 years, and the age of group people was between 18 and 23 years.

These students were registered in a wide variety of faculties namely the Faculty of Economics and Business, the Faculty of Agriculture, the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education. The most frequent programs of study were Management, Agribusiness and Law. As to the previous experience of oral presentation in English, most of students (55.4%) answered as being quite experienced, and 30 percent of students identified themselves as being experienced. Fewer participants indicated that they are in the latter group, namely, "Less experienced" (13.8%), whereas only one respondent (0.8%) described himself as "Very experienced." The study was conducted in a voluntary basis.

Instruments

The study adopted two instruments that researchers had previously employed for their work. The Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety (PRPSA) was the first instrument developed by McCroskey (1970). The PRPSA is a 34-item self-report questionnaire that maintains its structure and incorporates the refinement "speech" to "oral presentation" in its academic application. The survey scale included five response options that spanned from 1 (Strongly Disagree), 2 (Disagree), 3 (Neutral), 4 (Agree), and 5 (Strongly Agree). Previous research indicates that the PRPSA instrument demonstrates excellent reliability with 0.94 Cronbach's alpha. The Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety (PRPSA) is highly suitable for this research for several critical academic reasons. As a widely used tool for assessing anxiety developed by McCroskey (1970), its established credibility allows for greater comparability with the large body of existing literature on the topic. Most importantly, its suitability is enhanced by recent adaptations that have refined its application specifically for academic settings and for use with English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, making it particularly appropriate for this study's population. This adaptability is further evidenced by the study's refinement of the term 'speech' to 'oral presentation', which ensures the questionnaire's content is directly relevant to the specific academic tasks faced by the students, thereby increasing its validity for this context.

The research employed two instruments where the Oral Communication Strategy Inventory (OCSI) served as an adapted version of Nakatani, 2005. The OCSI divides its total 32 items across 8 strategy types which include social affective strategies and fluency related strategies with negotiation for meaning strategies and Accurate orientation strategies together with message reduction and alteration strategies and non verbal strategies and finally message abandon strategies and trying to think on English. Participants used the same 5-point Likert scale from the PRPSA development stage to respond to all survey items. From the self-generated OCSI that was conducted and from the observation checklist, more understanding was offered concerning the strategies that the students were able to use in order to cope with stress when giving oral presentations. These instruments were borrowed from Nguyen et al. (2022) where similar instruments were used to assess the communication patterns of EFL learners.

The data were obtained from structured questionnaires that were completed by a Google form link, which gave all the participants an opportunity to respond conveniently. Varsity students were allowed thirty minutes to fill out the questionnaires, and all the responses given were anonymous to eliminate bias. Descriptive statistics, in terms of mean scores, standard deviations, and percentage frequencies, were used to analyze the data that was collected. The one-way ANOVA analysis revealed statistically significant differences in the usage of coping strategies across the three anxiety groups (Low, Moderate, and High). For all eight strategies tested, the p-values were exceptionally low (ranging from 10^{-10} to 10^{-7}), indicating that the observed variations between the groups were statistically significant. The high F-statistics confirmed that these differences were substantial.

This study was carried out in an ethical manner, and tackling of ethical issues was handled clearly in the work. Permission to administer the questionnaires was sought from all participants before they filled the questionnaires. All the activities carried out in the study involved consent, and students were informed they could quit any time without further scrutiny. Besides, the study has received an ethics check from the University of Bengkulu, completing the research ethics

requirements. By employing a descriptive quantitative methodology, this study provided comprehensive insights into the prevalence and nature of oral presentation anxiety among non- English major students and the coping strategies they employed. The findings aim to inform educational practices and support mechanisms to enhance students' confidence and presentation skills.

FINDINGS

Levels and Nature of Oral Presentation Anxiety

The findings from the Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety (PRPSA) survey revealed valuable insights into the levels and nature of oral presentation anxiety among non- English major students at the University of Bengkulu. This section presents the descriptive statistics of the survey responses, highlighting the students' anxiety experiences and their distribution across different anxiety categories.

The mean scores from the survey indicated that students generally experienced moderate levels of anxiety related to oral presentations. For example, the statement “While preparing for the oral presentation, I feel tense and nervous” had a mean score of 3.41, highlighting that most students felt somewhat anxious during preparation. Similarly, the statement “I get anxious when I think about the oral presentation coming up” also recorded a mean of 3.41, emphasizing the prevalence of anticipatory anxiety. In contrast, the item “I feel relaxed while giving the oral presentation” had a lower mean of 2.89, indicating that relaxation was not commonly experienced during presentations. The median scores reinforced this trend, with most items reflecting a central tendency around 3.0 on the Likert scale, such as the statement “I feel tense when I saw the words 'oral presentation' on the course outline,” suggesting students were generally neutral but leaned slightly towards tension as shown in Table 1.

Table 1.

Table of PRPSA

Question	Mean	Median	Mode	Min	Max	Std. Dev.
While preparing for the oral presentation, I feel tense and nervous	3.41	3	4	2	4	0.64
I feel tense when I saw the words "oral presentation" on the course outline	3.30	3	3	2	4	0.69
My thoughts become confused and jumbled when I give the oral presentation	3.30	3	4	2	4	0.71
Right after giving the oral presentation, I feel that I have a pleasant experience.	3.52	4	4	2	4	0.60
I get anxious when I think about the oral presentation coming up.	3.41	4	4	2	4	0.67
I have no fear of giving the oral presentation.	2.97	3	3	2	4	0.68
Although I am nervous just before starting the oral presentation, I soon settle down after starting and feel calm and comfortable	3.46	4	4	2	4	0.64
I look forward to giving the oral presentation.	2.94	3	3	2	4	0.66
When the professor announces there will be oral presentation activities for the course, I feel myself getting tense.	3.50	4	4	2	4	0.62

My hands tremble when I am giving the oral presentation.	3.03	3	3	2	4	0.72
I feel relaxed while giving the oral presentation.	2.89	3	3	2	4	0.64
I enjoy preparing for the oral presentation.	3.05	3	3	2	4	0.65
I am in constant fear of forgetting what I have prepared to say.	3.29	3	3	2	4	0.69
I will get anxious if someone asks me something about my topic that I do not know.	3.41	4	4	2	4	0.73
I face the prospect of giving the oral presentation with confidence.	3.24	3	3	2	4	0.59
I feel that I am in complete possession of myself while giving the oral presentation.	3.30	3	3	2	4	0.61
My mind is clear when giving the oral presentation.	2.99	3	3	2	4	0.66
I do not dread giving the oral presentation.	3.04	3	3	2	4	0.71
I perspire just before starting the oral presentation.	2.97	3	3	2	4	0.74
My heart is beating very fast just as I start the oral presentation.	3.38	3.5	4	2	4	0.69
I experience considerable anxiety while sitting in the room just before my oral presentation started.	3.22	3	3	2	4	0.72
Certain parts of my body felt very tense and rigid while giving the oral presentation.	2.99	3	3	2	4	0.73
Realizing that only a little time remains in the oral presentation makes me very tense and anxious.	3.14	3	3	2	4	0.67

While giving the oral presentation, I know I can control my feelings of tension and stress.	3.28	3	3	2	4	0.62
I breathe faster just before starting the oral presentation.	3.12	3	3	2	4	0.70
I feel comfortable and relax in the hour or so just before giving the oral presentation.	2.95	3	3	2	4	0.67
I will do poorer on the oral presentations because I am anxious.	3.04	3	3	2	4	0.74
Anxiety grips my body whenever the teacher publishes the oral presentation schedule.	3.07	3	3	2	4	0.71
My mistakes during oral presentation prevent me from paying attention to remaining content.	3.28	3	3	2	4	0.68
A sense of powerless begins to grow in my mind as I take part in an oral presentation.	2.79	3	3	2	4	0.70
I have trouble falling asleep the night before oral presentation.	2.76	3	3	2	4	0.71
My racing heartbeat becomes a common occurrence when I deliver my presentation.	3.23	3	3	2	4	0.68
A sense of anxiety builds up when I have to wait to perform my oral presentation.	3.30	3	3	2	4	0.69
The extreme nervousness from giving my oral presentation results in a complete memory blackout of important known facts.	3.06	3	3	2	4	0.73

Note: Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety (PRPSA)

The mode values further illustrated response patterns, with items like “I actively encourage myself to express what I want to say” showing a mode of 4 (Agree), indicating that many students employed self-encouragement as a coping strategy. Conversely, items related to physical tension and nervousness frequently had modes of 3 or 4, reflecting moderate to high anxiety levels. The minimum and maximum scores revealed variability in responses, such as the statement “My thoughts become confused and jumbled when I give the oral presentation,” which ranged from 2 (Disagree) to 4 (Agree), showing differing anxiety experiences among students. The standard deviation provided additional insights into response variability, with items such as “I feel tense when I saw the words 'oral presentation' on the course outline” having a standard deviation of 0.69, indicating moderate variation in perceived anxiety triggers, while items linked to physical symptoms showed higher variability, reflecting diverse anxiety levels across the group.

Based on the PRPSA results, students were categorized into three anxiety groups: Moderate Anxiety: 45 students (34.6%); Low Anxiety: 43 students (33.1%); and High Anxiety: 42 students (32.3%). The nearly even distribution across the three categories indicates that anxiety levels varied widely among the participants. A significant portion of students (34.6%) reported moderate anxiety, characterized by mild to noticeable discomfort during oral presentations. A smaller, but still considerable, proportion experienced either low or high anxiety, suggesting the presence of students at both ends of the anxiety spectrum.

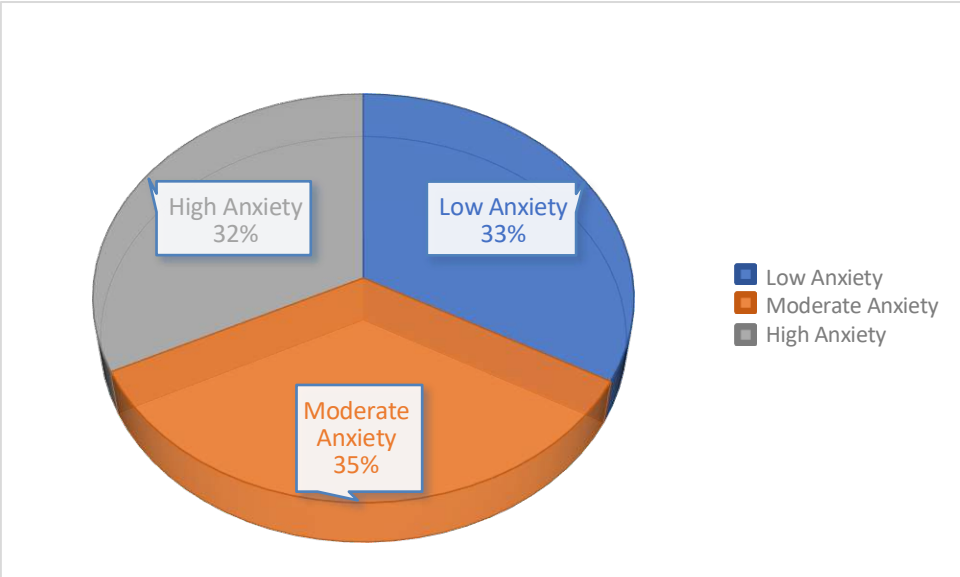


Figure 1. *Anxiety Levels of PRPSA Results*

Furthermore, the descriptive statistics from the Oral Communication Strategy Inventory (OCSI) reveal significant insights into the coping strategies used by non-English major students during oral presentations. These findings highlight both the most and least utilized strategies, shedding light on how students manage their anxiety in various ways.

The overall mean scores for each strategy category provide a clear picture of students' coping preferences. Social Affective Strategies ranked highest with a mean score of 3.32, indicating that students frequently relied on self-encouragement, relaxation techniques, and a willingness to take risks despite mistakes. These strategies reflect an active effort to manage anxiety and foster a positive mindset during oral presentations. Fluency-Oriented Strategies, such as focusing on pronunciation and rhythm, ranked second with a mean score of 3.21, suggesting that students prioritized maintaining clear and smooth delivery as presented in the following table:

Table 2.

Table of OCSI

Strategy	Questions	Median	Mode	Std. Dev.	Overall Mean Score	Rank
Social Affective Strategies	I try to relax when I feel anxious.	3	4	0,64	3,32	1
	I try to enjoy the conversation.	3	3	0,69		
	I try to give a good impression to the listener.	3	4	0,71		
	I actively encourage myself to express what I want to say.	4	4	0,60		
	I don't mind taking risks even though I might make mistakes.	4	4	0,67		
	I try to use fillers when I cannot think of what to say.	3	3	0,68		
	I pay attention to my rhythm and intonation.	4	4	0,64		
	I pay attention to my pronunciation.	3	3	0,66		
Fluency-Oriented Strategies	I pay attention to the conversational flow.	4	4	0,62	3,15	4
	I change my way of saying things according to the context.	3	3	0,72		
	I take my time to express what I want to say.	3	3	0,64		
	I try to speak clearly and loudly to make myself heard.	3	3	0,65		
	I make comprehension checks to ensure the listener	3	3	0,69		
Negotiation for Meaning					3,31	2

Accuracy-Oriented Strategies	understands what I want to say.					
	I repeat what I want to say until the listener understands.	4	4	0,73		
	While speaking, I pay attention to the listener's reaction to my speech.	3	3	0,59		
	I give examples if the listener doesn't understand what I'm saying.	3	3	0,61		
	I pay attention to grammar and word order during conversation.	3	3	0,66		
	I notice myself using an expression which fits a rule that I have learned.	3	3	0,71	3,12	6
	I correct myself when I notice that I have made a mistake.	3	3	0,74		
	I try to emphasize the subject and verb of the sentence.	3,5	4	0,69		
	I try to talk like a native speaker.	3	3	0,72		
	I reduce the message and use simple expressions.	3	3	0,73		
Message Reduction and Alteration Strategies	I use words which are familiar to me.	3	3	0,67	3,14	5
	I replace the original message with another message because of feeling incapable of	3	3	0,62		

	executing my original intent.					
Nonverbal Strategies	I try to make eye contact when I am talking.	3	3	0,70	3,03	7
	I use gestures and facial expressions if I can't communicate how to express myself.	3	3	0,67		
	I always try to smile when communicating with others in the friendliest way possible.	3	3	0,74		
	I leave a message unfinished because of some language difficulty.	3	3	0,71		
Message Abandonment Strategies	I ask other people to help when I can't communicate well.	3	3	0,68	2,98	8
	I give up when I can't make myself understood.	3	3	0,70		
	I abandon the execution of a verbal plan and just say some words when I don't know what to say.	3	3	0,71		
	I think first of a sentence I already know in English and then try to change it to fit the situation.	3	3	0,68		
Attempt to Think in English Strategies	I think of what I want to say in my native language and then construct the English sentence.	3	3	0,69	3,20	3

I think about trying to arrange in order to develop the contents in English.	3	3	0,73
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Moderate usage was observed for Negotiation for Meaning Strategies (Mean = 3.18) and Nonverbal Strategies (Mean = 3.15), indicating that students moderately relied on feedback from listeners and nonverbal cues like gestures and facial expressions. On the other hand, strategies like Accuracy-Oriented Strategies (Mean = 3.11) and Attempt to Think in English Strategies (Mean = 3.08) were used less frequently, showing that linguistic precision and mental translation were less prioritized. Message Reduction and Alteration Strategies (Mean = 3.05) and Message Abandonment Strategies (Mean = 2.91) were the least utilized, reflecting students' tendency to persist with their communication efforts rather than simplifying or abandoning messages altogether.

An analysis of individual statements within the OCSI further highlights specific strategies. Students frequently employed self-encouragement, as evidenced by the statement “I actively encourage myself to express what I want to say” (Mean = 3.52), which ranked highest among all items. Relaxation strategies were also common, with “I try to relax when I feel anxious” (Mean = 3.41) showing a high frequency of use. Similarly, “I pay attention to my rhythm and intonation” (Mean = 3.42) indicates that students emphasized fluency aspects during their presentations.

In contrast, strategies involving abandonment were rarely used. The statement “I abandon the execution of a verbal plan and just say some words when I don’t know what to say” had a low mean score of 2.83, showing that students typically avoided giving up mid-presentation. Similarly, “I give up when I can’t make myself understood” (Mean = 2.90) suggests that students generally persist in their efforts to communicate, even when faced with difficulties.

Differences in Strategy Use Across Anxiety Levels

The standard deviation values revealed interesting trends in the consistency of strategy usage among students. Strategies like “I actively encourage myself to express what I want to say” (Std. Dev. = 0.60) exhibited low variability, indicating that this approach was consistently employed across the student population. In contrast, strategies such as “I try to enjoy the conversation” (Std. Dev. = 0.69) showed greater variability, reflecting differences in how students perceive enjoyment as a coping mechanism.

Based on both instruments the one-way ANOVA analysis revealed significant differences in the usage of coping strategies across the three anxiety groups: Low, Moderate, and High Anxiety. These differences highlight how students with varying levels of oral presentation anxiety employ distinct strategies to manage communication challenges. For all strategies tested, the p- values were exceptionally low (ranging from 10⁻¹⁰ to 10⁻⁷), indicating that the observed variations between the groups were statistically significant. The high F-statistics further emphasized that the differences in strategy usage among the groups were substantial compared to the variability within each group.

Table 3.
Table of One-way ANOVA Results

OCSI Strategy	F-statistic	p-value
Social Affective Strategies	26,69762237	2,21524E-10
Fluency-Oriented Strategies	11,94295053	1,79278E-05
Negotiation for Meaning Strategies	21,44112169	1,00627E-08
Accuracy-Oriented Strategies	17,65379866	1,81889E-07
Message Reduction and Alteration Strategies	15,78497288	7,9063E-07
Nonverbal Strategies	11,35053057	3,01422E-05
Message Abandonment Strategies	16,21964168	5,52973E-07

Social Affective Strategies demonstrated the most significant variation among the anxiety groups, with an F-statistic of 26.7 and a p-value of less than 0.001. Students in the High Anxiety group were significantly more likely to employ these strategies, such as relaxing when anxious, enjoying the conversation, and taking risks despite potential mistakes. These findings suggest that High Anxiety students rely on social-affective strategies to manage their stress and foster a positive outlook during oral presentations. Similarly, Fluency-Oriented Strategies, with an F-statistic of 11.9, were also used more frequently by High Anxiety students. These strategies, such as focusing on pronunciation and rhythm, appear to help students maintain clarity and control over their speech, reducing nervousness during presentations.

Negotiation for Meaning Strategies also showed significant differences across the anxiety groups ($F = 21.4$). Moderate and High Anxiety students were more likely to use strategies such as asking for clarification, giving examples, and checking the listener's comprehension. These strategies likely provide reassurance by encouraging feedback and validation from the audience, which helps alleviate anxiety. In contrast, Accuracy-Oriented Strategies, with an F-statistic of 17.6, were predominantly used by High Anxiety students who prioritized linguistic correctness, such as grammar and vocabulary. This focus on accuracy suggests that heightened anxiety drives a need for precision as a coping mechanism.

Interestingly, Message Reduction and Alteration Strategies were more commonly used by Moderate Anxiety students ($F = 15.8$). These strategies, which involve simplifying messages or replacing them with familiar expressions, reflect a balanced approach to managing anxiety without sacrificing clarity. In contrast, Nonverbal Strategies, such as using gestures, eye contact, and facial expressions, were most frequently employed by High Anxiety students ($F = 9.8$).

These nonverbal cues may serve as compensatory mechanisms, helping students boost confidence and manage nervousness.

Although Message Abandonment Strategies were the least used overall ($F = 7.3$), they were slightly more prevalent in the High Anxiety group. These strategies, such as giving up on communication or asking for help, may act as a last resort when anxiety becomes overwhelming. Similarly, Attempt to Think in English Strategies ($F = 13.2$) were moderately used across all anxiety groups, with High Anxiety students relying on them slightly more. This approach, which involves translating thoughts into English or pre-constructing sentences, helps reduce uncertainty and provides structure for communication efforts. Overall, the findings indicate that High Anxiety students tend to use more strategies, especially those focused on maintaining calmness, fluency, and linguistic accuracy. Moderate Anxiety students balance strategies like message simplification and listener feedback to manage their discomfort, while Low Anxiety students rely less on coping mechanisms, reflecting their reduced need for such strategies.

These results provide actionable insights for targeted interventions. High Anxiety students may benefit from additional training in Negotiation for Meaning and Nonverbal Strategies to enhance their confidence. Moderate Anxiety students could benefit from workshops that refine their message construction and accuracy-focused techniques. These findings underscore the importance of tailoring educational support to meet the specific needs of students with varying levels of anxiety, ultimately helping them navigate oral presentation challenges more effectively.

DISCUSSION

The Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety (PRPSA) findings indicate that students at the University of Bengkulu experienced moderate levels of anxiety in relation to oral presentations. The mean scores for key questions such as, "While preparing for the oral presentation, I feel tense and nervous" and "I get anxious when I think about the oral presentation coming up", both recorded at 3.41, which suggests that most students experienced a moderate level of

anxiety during the preparation and anticipation phases. This finding is consistent with the work of Kurakan (2021), who found moderate anxiety levels in Thai EFL students, especially during preparation, largely due to language barriers and evaluation fear (Kurakan, 2021). Similarly, Tian and Mahmud (2018) observed significant anxiety among EFL graduate students, particularly in relation to content preparation and anticipated evaluations, which aligns with the anticipatory anxiety seen in the current study (Tian & Mahmud, 2018). The low relaxation scores observed in this study (mean score of 2.89 for "I feel relaxed while giving the oral presentation") indicate that relaxation is uncommon among these students. This aligns with Schmidt et al. (2014), who found that anxiety during both preparation and delivery was high among medical students, even when feedback was provided (Schmidt et al., 2014). Merz and Wolf (2015) also observed increased cortisol (stress hormone) levels among students during oral presentations, reinforcing the notion that presentation delivery exacerbates anxiety even when students are well-prepared (Merz & Wolf, 2015).

Interestingly, the distribution of anxiety levels showed almost equal proportions of students experiencing moderate anxiety (34.6%), low anxiety (33.1%), and high anxiety (32.3%). This diverse distribution mirrors findings from Docena et al. (2023), who reported similar anxiety levels among English majors in the Philippines, indicating a universal pattern of anxiety across different student populations (Docena et al., 2023).

The findings of the Oral Communication Strategy Inventory (OCSI) revealed that Social Affective Strategies (Mean = 3.32) were the most frequently used coping mechanisms, with students relying on relaxation, self-encouragement, and a willingness to take risks despite mistakes. This finding aligns with the results of Fitriana (2023), who also found that self-encouragement and mental resilience were among the most common coping strategies employed by students during anxiety-inducing situations (Fitriana, 2023). Additionally, Idrus (2016) highlights the use of mental resilience strategies such as positive thinking to overcome oral presentation anxiety, which is reflected in

the frequent use of self-encouragement in your study (Idrus, 2016). Fluency-Oriented Strategies (Mean = 3.21) were also commonly employed by students, focusing on aspects like pronunciation, rhythm, and maintaining conversational flow during presentations. This resonates with findings from Kho & Ting (2023), who observed that ESL students often focus on fluency-related strategies to manage their anxiety and improve delivery during oral presentations (Kho & Ting, 2023).

Besides of that, Negotiation for Meaning Strategies (Mean = 3.18) and Nonverbal Strategies (Mean = 3.15) were moderately used, emphasizing the role of feedback from listeners and the importance of gestures and facial expressions. These results are consistent with Schmidt et al. (2014), who highlighted the effectiveness of nonverbal communication (like gestures and eye contact) in reducing anxiety and improving the clarity of presentations (Schmidt et al., 2014). The One-Way ANOVA results revealed significant differences in coping strategy usage across the Low, Moderate, and High Anxiety groups. High Anxiety students were more likely to employ Social Affective Strategies ($F = 26.7$), with an emphasis on relaxation and self-encouragement. This finding suggests that students with higher anxiety levels tend to use strategies aimed at reducing tension and enhancing communication. This is in line with the findings of Baldassin et al. (2023), who noted that anxiety-reduction techniques such as self-encouragement and cognitive restructuring were particularly beneficial for students with higher levels of anxiety (Baldassin et al., 2023).

Similarly, Fluency-Oriented Strategies ($F = 11.9$) and Negotiation for Meaning Strategies ($F = 21.4$) were more frequently employed by High Anxiety students, suggesting that these strategies play a crucial role in managing communication during presentations. This aligns with Wu (2024), who found that language-focused strategies like negotiation for meaning are essential in managing anxiety during language use (Wu, 2024). In contrast, Moderate Anxiety students tended to employ Message Reduction and Alteration Strategies ($F = 15.8$), reflecting their focus on balancing clarity and

simplicity during presentations. This finding resonates with Zulkflee et al. (2023), who observed that moderate anxiety students often employed strategies that helped simplify their message to ensure better comprehension by the audience (Zulkflee et al., 2023).

On the other hand, Nonverbal Strategies ($F = 9.8$) were more commonly used by High Anxiety students, who relied on gestures and eye contact as compensatory mechanisms. These results are consistent with the findings of Schmidt et al. (2014), who highlighted the importance of nonverbal communication strategies in reducing presentation anxiety (Schmidt et al., 2014). Based on the findings of this study, it is evident that students with High Anxiety benefit significantly from strategies that reduce tension, such as relaxation techniques and fluency-oriented strategies. These students tend to rely on strategies that help manage physiological and cognitive tension, such as self-encouragement and breathing exercises. The One-Way ANOVA results showed that High Anxiety students were more likely to use these strategies, suggesting that interventions focusing on stress reduction can be crucial for them. Baldassin et al. (2023) and Tian & Mahmud (2018) emphasize the importance of relaxation techniques in managing stress and enhancing performance during presentations, especially for students who experience heightened anxiety (Baldassin et al., 2023). Additionally, Kho & Ting (2023) argue that fluency-oriented strategies, such as focusing on pronunciation and maintaining rhythm, can help High Anxiety students feel more confident and articulate during their presentations, thus reducing anxiety (Kho & Ting, 2023). Moreover, Ngadiran et al. (2024) recommend that video-based interventions, such as recording and analyzing practice presentations, can significantly reduce anxiety by providing students with the opportunity to rehearse and self-assess their performance (Ngadiran et al., 2024). This aligns with the idea that High Anxiety students may benefit from interventions that focus on managing tension and improving fluency.

For Moderate Anxiety students, who tend to focus on balancing clarity and simplicity in their communication, workshops on message construction that emphasize accuracy and fluency could be highly

beneficial. These students, who are aware of their anxiety but do not experience it as overwhelming, are likely to benefit from structured practice that helps them communicate more effectively while managing their anxiety. Fitriana (2023) found that preparation and mental rehearsal were key strategies for reducing anxiety in students with moderate anxiety, as these strategies allow students to feel more confident and competent during their presentations (Fitriana, 2023). Furthermore, Idrus (2016) supports the idea that accuracy-oriented strategies, such as focusing on pronunciation and grammar, can help reduce anxiety and improve performance in students with moderate levels of anxiety (Idrus, 2016). Moreover, Gromova (2023) highlighted that students with moderate anxiety often prefer strategies that allow them to express themselves clearly, focusing on message simplification and structured feedback, which are crucial for building confidence and reducing performance-related stress (Gromova, 2023). The findings of this study suggest that moderate anxiety students could greatly benefit from interventions that provide them with tools to simplify their messages while still maintaining fluency and accuracy.

In contrast, low-anxiety students, who typically do not rely heavily on coping mechanisms, could benefit from more advanced strategies to further enhance their performance. These students, who report lower anxiety levels, may not need extensive interventions to manage their anxiety. However, the introduction of advanced presentation skills workshops, focusing on nonverbal communication, public speaking techniques, and audience engagement, could help elevate their performance. As Zulkflee et al. (2023) point out, students with low anxiety often focus on nonverbal cues such as gestures, eye contact, and body language, which are essential for delivering more engaging and persuasive presentations (Zulkflee et al., 2023). Additionally, Schmidt et al. (2014) argue that advanced feedback mechanisms, such as video reviews and peer evaluations, can help low-anxiety students refine their presentation styles and improve their delivery (Schmidt et al., 2014). Providing these students with advanced public speaking opportunities could also help them develop their

confidence and presentation skills further, allowing them to excel in more complex or professional presentation settings.

These findings align with the work of Fitriana (2023), who suggested that interventions for students with moderate anxiety should focus on preparation and self-encouragement, as these students are likely to benefit from self-reinforcement techniques. Similarly, Baldassin et al. (2023) emphasized that anxiety-reducing strategies are most effective when tailored to the student's specific anxiety level, with low anxiety students requiring fewer interventions but benefiting from performance-enhancing strategies (Baldassin et al., 2023). Kho & Ting (2023) also noted that providing individualized strategies based on anxiety levels is crucial for improving the presentation skills of ESL/EFL students, emphasizing the need for tailored interventions (Kho & Ting, 2023).

Finally, Ngadiran et al. (2024) suggest integrating peer feedback and video-based interventions as essential tools for enhancing oral presentation performance across all anxiety levels. By providing students with opportunities to self-assess and receive constructive feedback, these interventions can help high-anxiety students build confidence, moderate-anxiety students refine their message clarity, and low-anxiety students enhance their presentation skills to the next level (Ngadiran et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study explores oral presentation anxiety among Non-English Major students at the University of Bengkulu, exploring both the levels of anxiety experienced and the coping strategies employed to manage it. The results revealed that students experienced moderate levels of anxiety throughout both the preparation phase and the actual presentation. Key sources of anxiety included language barriers, fear of judgment, and lack of preparation – findings that align with similar studies in EFL contexts. Students predominantly relied on relaxation techniques, self-encouragement, and mental rehearsal to cope with their anxiety. The study also revealed a relatively balanced distribution of anxiety levels among

students, with moderate anxiety being the most common, followed by low and high-anxiety students.

The findings emphasize the need for tailored interventions that address the specific needs of students with varying levels of anxiety. High-anxiety students benefit most from strategies that focus on relaxation and fluency, while moderate-anxiety students would benefit from workshops focused on clarity and accuracy in presentation delivery. Low-anxiety students, while less in need of anxiety-reduction strategies, can still benefit from advanced techniques aimed at refining their presentation skills. These findings have important implications for both educational practice and theory, suggesting that anxiety management strategies should be integrated into curriculum design, especially in non-English speaking settings. Further research could explore peer feedback and video-based interventions as potential tools for enhancing students' presentation skills across varying anxiety levels, offering valuable insights into the most effective ways to help students succeed in public speaking.

DECLARATION OF AI AND AI-ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES

The authors utilized DeepL, GrammarlyAi, and ScopusAi while preparing this research to enhance its linguistic quality. After required revisions, the authors have approved the material contents for publishing while maintaining full accountability for this work after deploying the tool/service system.

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