
ANALYZING STUDENTS' AWARENESS OF SPEAKING SKILLS IN ENGLISH AS FOREIGN (EFL) CLASSROOMS

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the factors that influence tenth-grade DKV students' awareness of their speaking skills in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom at SMKN 3 Tasikmalaya. The research employed a quantitative cross-sectional survey design and involved 50 students selected from a total population of approximately 150 learners. Data were collected through a Likert-scale closed-ended questionnaire consisting of 18 validated and reliable items representing psychological and linguistic factors. The results were analyzed using descriptive statistics in SPSS. The findings reveal that both psychological and linguistic factors influence students' awareness of their speaking skills. The overall mean score of all questionnaire items was 56, with a standard deviation of 7.1, indicating a moderate to high level of speaking awareness among students. Psychological factors ($M = 3.21$) showed a slightly higher influence than linguistic factors ($M = 3.16$). Students frequently reported feelings of nervousness, fear of making mistakes, and a lack of confidence when speaking in English. Linguistic challenges, such as vocabulary recall, grammatical accuracy, pronunciation difficulties, and fluency issues, also significantly affected their speaking awareness. Hence, the study concludes that psychological barriers particularly self-assessment, self-confidence, and self-awareness are slightly more dominant in shaping students' speaking awareness compared to linguistic difficulties. These findings highlight the importance of addressing both emotional and linguistic needs in the EFL classroom to enhance students' speaking development. The study recommends that teachers create supportive learning environments, provide positive feedback, and offer more speaking opportunities to build students' confidence and linguistic competence.

Keywords: Keywords: speaking awareness, psychological factors, linguistic factors, EFL learners, vocational high school.

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is an essential skill in learning English because it allows students to express ideas, share opinions, and communicate naturally. Harmer (2007) states that speaking involves fluency, accuracy, vocabulary mastery, pronunciation, and interaction skills. These components are highly important for vocational high school students, especially those majoring in Visual Communication Design (DKV), who often need to present their work, explain concepts, and communicate professionally. However, many students still feel insecure when speaking. Observations during the teaching practicum at SMKN 3 Tasikmalaya revealed that several students appeared hesitant, nervous, avoided eye contact, and gave short or unclear answers. Some admitted that they were afraid of making mistakes, lacked confidence, or felt their vocabulary and pronunciation were inadequate.

Several factors influence students' speaking performance. Brown (2001) explains that social, affective, and cognitive factors play significant roles. Support from teachers and peers can build students' confidence, while an unsupportive environment may increase anxiety. Emotional factors such as motivation and self-confidence also determine students' willingness to speak. In addition, cognitive demands such as planning ideas and choosing appropriate words spontaneously affect fluency and accuracy. Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory reinforces this idea by emphasizing that speaking skills develop through interaction and become internalized as a form of self-regulation.

Speaking awareness refers to students' ability to notice, evaluate, and reflect on the quality of their speaking performance. Goleman (1998) explains that self-awareness helps individuals understand their strengths, weaknesses, and emotions while communicating. In language learning, this awareness enables students to identify aspects that need improvement, such as fluency, vocabulary, grammar, or pronunciation. Students with good awareness tend to participate more actively, manage anxiety more effectively, and respond positively to feedback. In contrast, students with low awareness often avoid speaking and doubt their ability to perform well.

Speaking awareness is shaped by both psychological and linguistic factors. Psychologically, confidence, self-evaluation, and emotional readiness strongly influence a student's willingness to speak. Anxiety often causes hesitation, fear of being judged, and unclear speech. Linguistically, limited vocabulary, weak grammar, and pronunciation difficulties make speaking more challenging. Previous studies show that the classroom environment, language limitations, and positive feedback experiences substantially affect the development of students' awareness (Nurdin, 2020; Wang, 2014; Mahdi, 2024; Ervayuni & Dewi, 2021). However, some studies argue that awareness alone does not guarantee speaking proficiency if issues such as anxiety and lack of practice persist (Nurmiati, 2024; Umaira et al., 2025).

These findings highlight the need to examine more deeply how psychological and linguistic factors interact to shape students' speaking awareness, especially among vocational learners. Research on speaking awareness among DKV students remains limited, even though communication skills are highly important for their future careers. Understanding these factors can help teachers design more effective learning activities, create a supportive classroom atmosphere, and provide meaningful feedback that helps students recognize and improve their speaking abilities. Therefore, this study aims to identify the psychological and linguistic factors that

influence the speaking awareness of tenth-grade DKV students at SMKN 3 Tasikmalaya, guided by the main research question: What factors influence students' awareness of their speaking skills in EFL classrooms?

METHOD

Research Design

This study used a quantitative cross-sectional survey design. Creswell (2014) explains that this design is suitable for describing trends, attitudes, or characteristics of a population at a single point in time. It was chosen because the study aimed to examine the psychological and linguistic factors influencing students' speaking awareness without manipulating variables. This one-time data collection provided a clear snapshot of students' awareness in the EFL classroom.

Settings and Participants

The research was conducted at SMKN 3 Tasikmalaya, a public vocational school offering various programs, including Visual Communication Design (DKV). English is taught as a compulsory subject, and speaking activities support students' communication skills. The population consisted of approximately 150 tenth-grade DKV students, but due to time and access limitations, 50 students participated using convenience sampling. Despite the smaller sample size, it provided meaningful insight into the target group.

Research Instrument

Data were collected using a closed-ended questionnaire measuring psychological and linguistic factors affecting speaking awareness. The instrument contained 18 Likert-scale items (1 = Strongly Disagree to 4 = Strongly Agree). Psychological items were adapted from Umaira (2025) and Mahdi (2024), while linguistic items were adapted from Mahdi, D.A (2024) and Wang, Z (2014). The questionnaire was reviewed by an English teacher and a lecturer to ensure clarity and appropriateness.

Data Collection

The questionnaire was distributed through Google Forms between October 27 and November 7, 2025. Prior permission was obtained from the school, and students were informed about confidentiality and voluntary participation. Completed responses were checked and then processed through SPSS.

Data Validity and Reliability

A pilot test with 30 students from another school was conducted prior to the main study. The validity of each item was tested using Pearson's Product Moment correlation. Items with an r-value greater than r-table value of 0.361 (df=28, alpha= 0,05) were considered valid. Using Pearson's correlation, 18 out of 23 items were deemed valid. Reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha resulted in 0.919, indicating excellent internal consistency.

Table 3.5.1 of Validity Test

Correlations

items	r value	r table	validity
s1	.533**	0,361	valid
s2	.623**	0,361	valid
s3	.507**	0,361	valid
s4	.507**	0,361	valid
s5	.585**	0,361	valid
s6	.816**	0,361	valid
s7	.717**	0,361	valid
s8	.591**	0,361	valid
s9	.715**	0,361	valid
s10	.702**	0,361	valid
s11	.648**	0,361	valid
s12	.690**	0,361	valid
s13	.593**	0,361	valid
s14	.675**	0,361	valid
s15	.724**	0,361	valid
s16	.724**	0,361	valid
items	r value	r table	validity
s17	.708**	0,361	valid
s18	.700**	0,361	valid

The initial questionnaire consisted of 23 items, covering both psychological and linguistic factors related to speaking awareness. The validity of each item was tested using Pearson's Product-Moment correlation. Items with an r-value greater than the r-table value of 0.361 ($df = 28$, $\alpha = 0.05$) were considered valid. Based on the results, 18 items were found to be valid, while 5 items did not meet the validity requirement and were therefore removed from the final instrument. Based on the table above r value is higher than r table indicated that all of the items were valid.

Table 3.5.2 of Reliability Test

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.919	18

Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, and the instrument achieved a coefficient of 0.919, indicating excellent internal consistency. This result shows that the questionnaire items were stable, consistent, and appropriate for measuring factors influencing speaking awareness among tenth-grade DKV students.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics in SPSS. Each Likert response was coded numerically, and results were displayed in tables to identify dominant psychological and linguistic patterns influencing speaking awareness.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter explains the results of the questionnaire distributed from October 27th to November 7th, 2025. A total of 50 students completed the instrument, and all responses were analyzed using SPSS 26. The findings answer the research question about the psychological and linguistic factors that influence students' speaking awareness in EFL classrooms. questionnaire consisted of two categories: psychological factors (S1–S9) and linguistic factors (S10–S18).

Table 4.1.1 of Psychological Factors

Statement
I can understand my own feelings whether I feel nervous, confident, or calm when speaking in front of the class. (S1)
I realize that I still have some weaknesses when speaking English. (S2)
I accept other people's opinions and use them to improve my speaking skills. (S3)
I like to try new ways to make my English speaking better. (S4)
I feel nervous when speaking English in front of my classmates. (S5)
Sometimes I feel afraid of making mistakes when speaking English. (S6)
I don't feel confident speaking English in front of my classmates. (S7)
I think about what other people might think about the way I speak English. (S8)
I'm not too excited to learn English because the lessons feel boring. (S9)

Table 4.1.2 of Linguistic Factors

Statement
Sometimes I can't find the right words to say what I mean when speaking English. (S10)
I like learning and using new English words, and I can only speak English well when I know the meaning of the words. (S11)
Sometimes I forget some words when speaking English. (S12)
I feel embarrassed when I pronounce an English word incorrectly. (S13)
I often ask someone to repeat or explain something when I don't understand. (S14)
Sometimes I speak English with pauses or hesitation. (S15)
I still find it hard to make correct sentences, so I don't feel confident to join in speaking. (S16)
I still have trouble using the correct tenses (verb forms) in English. (S17)
I'm not used to English grammar rules like tenses, sentence order, and singular or plural words, so I still feel unsure when speaking. (S18)

Table 4.1.3 of Mean and Std. Deviation

		Statistics																		
		S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	S11	S12	S13	S14	S15	S16	S17	S18	Total
N	Valid	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.3200	3.3600	3.2800	3.1600	3.3600	3.2600	3.0200	2.8400	2.3000	3.1400	2.9000	3.2600	3.1600	3.3400	3.1800	3.1400	3.0800	3.2200	56.3200
Std. Deviation		.65278	.77618	.57286	.71027	.72168	.83278	.79514	.73845	.78895	.60643	.58029	.66425	.76559	.56281	.52255	.67036	.52838	.61578	7.14411

The descriptive statistics show that mean scores ranged from 2.30 to 3.34, indicating a moderate level of speaking awareness. The highest mean was S14 (3.34), showing that many students often ask others to repeat information when they do not understand. The lowest mean was S9 (2.30), suggesting that most students do not find English boring. The mean score of psychological factors had an average mean of 3.21, while linguistic factors had 3.16. This indicates

that emotional aspects such as nervousness, fear of making mistakes, and low confidence slightly influence speaking awareness more than linguistic limitations.

Table 4.1.4 Result of Psychological Factors

Statement	Category				
	SD	D	A	SA	Total
I can understand my own feelings whether I feel nervous, confident, or calm when speaking in front of the class. (S1)	2,0	4,0	54,0	40,0	100,0
I realize that I still have some weaknesses when speaking English. (S2)	6,0	-	46,0	48,0	100,0
I accept other people's opinions and use them to improve my speaking skills. (S3)	2,0	-	66,0	32,0	100,0
I like to try new ways to make my English speaking better. (S4)	4,0	6,0	60,0	30,0	100,0
I feel nervous when speaking English in front of my classmates. (S5)	2,0	8,0	42,0	48,0	100,0
Sometimes I feel afraid of making mistakes when speaking English. (S6)	2,0	4,0	60,0	34,0	100,0
I don't feel confident speaking English in front of my classmates. (S7)	6,0	12,0	56,0	26,0	100,0
I think about what other people might think about the way I speak English. (S8)	8,0	12,0	60,0	12,0	100,0
I'm not too excited to learn English because the lessons feel boring. (S9)	12,0	54,0	26,0	8,0	100,0

The psychological data show that 66% of students accept feedback to improve their speaking (S3), and 60% try new ways to become better (S4). However, many still struggle with confidence: 56% feel insecure speaking in class (S7), and 60% worry about others' opinions (S8). These findings suggest that self-awareness significantly impacts self-confidence. Students who are overly concerned with how others perceive their performance often experience fear, anxiety, and hesitation, which ultimately diminishes their confidence when speaking English in the classroom.

Table 4.1.5 Result of Linguistic Factors

Statement	Category				
	SD	D	A	SA	Total
Sometimes I can't find the right words to say what I mean when speaking English. (S10)	2,0	6,0	68,0	24,0	100,0
I like learning and using new English words, and I can only speak English well when I know the meaning of the words. (S11)	4,0	10,0	78,0	8,0	100,0
Sometimes I forget some words when speaking English. (S12)	2,0	6,0	56,0	36,0	100,0
I feel embarrassed when I pronounce an English word incorrectly. (S13)	4,0	10,0	52,0	36,0	100,0
I often ask someone to repeat or explain something when I don't understand. (S14)	2,0	-	60,0	38,0	100,0
Sometimes I speak English with pauses or hesitation. (S15)	6,0	-	70,0	24,0	100,0
I still find it hard to make correct sentences, so I don't feel confident to join in speaking. (S16)	4,0	4,0	66,0	26,0	100,0
I still have trouble using the correct tenses (verb forms) in English. (S17)	2,0	4,0	78,0	16,0	100,0
I'm not used to English grammar rules like tenses, sentence order, and singular or plural words, so I still feel unsure when speaking. (S18)	-	10,0	58,0	32,0	100,0

In terms of linguistic factors, 78% of students struggle with tenses (S17), 68% have difficulty finding the right words (S10), and 70% often pause or hesitate (S15). Even so, students show positive attitudes toward learning vocabulary, with 78% enjoying using new words (S11). This suggests that mastering vocabulary significantly boosts students' confidence and willingness to speak English without hesitation. The findings demonstrate that students' speaking awareness is shaped by the interaction of psychological conditions, learning experiences, and linguistic competence. The findings show that students' speaking awareness is shaped by psychological conditions, prior learning experiences, and linguistic competence. This supports Goleman's (1998) view that self-awareness, self-assessment, and confidence are crucial for developing speaking skills.

Many students rely on external feedback and are sensitive to how others perceive their performance, which often leads to insecurity and fear of errors, consistent with Ervayuni and Dewi's (2021) observations. Supportive feedback, however, strengthens confidence and aligns with Glover's (2019) emphasis on self-awareness for continuous improvement. The results also reveal that students are motivated to adopt strategies that enhance their speaking ability and seek more opportunities for practice, echoing Nurdin's (2020) claim that repeated practice increases confidence and awareness.

Although linguistic challenges persist, students' willingness to learn and use new vocabulary demonstrates a positive attitude toward improvement, supporting views from Mahdi (2024) and Harmer (2007) regarding the importance of vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and fluency. Evidence of frequent pauses, hesitation, and difficulty forming accurate sentences highlights ongoing linguistic limitations. Requests for repetition further show the influence of vocabulary and grammar on speaking awareness, as noted by Qowimah (2021). Overall, the findings indicate that psychological factors exert a slightly stronger influence on students' speaking awareness than linguistic ones, although both remain essential for effective speaking performance.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the data analysis, this study concludes that students' awareness of their speaking skills in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom is influenced by both psychological and linguistic factors. The overall mean score of all questionnaire items ($M = 56$; $SD = 7.1$) indicates that students generally have a moderate level of speaking awareness. In the categorized, psychological factors (S1–S9) showed a slightly higher average of 3.21 compared to linguistic factors (S10–S18), which had a mean of 3.16. This suggests that psychological aspects play a more dominant role in shaping students' speaking awareness.

Factors such as nervousness, fear of making mistakes, low self-confidence, and concern about how others perceive them significantly impact students' readiness and willingness to speak. These emotional conditions often create barriers that hinder students from performing confidently in speaking activities. However, many students show awareness of their speaking challenges through their willingness to accept feedback and try new strategies to improve their skills. Linguistic factors also play a crucial role in students' speaking awareness. Students frequently encounter difficulties with vocabulary recall, grammar accuracy, sentence construction, pronunciation, and fluency. These limitations can result in frequent pauses, hesitation, and a lack of confidence when expressing their ideas in English.

In summary, the findings indicate that while both factors are important, psychological factors have a slightly greater influence on students' speaking awareness. Although students tend to recognize their linguistic weaknesses, their emotional responses such as anxiety and lack of confidence have a stronger impact on their speaking performance. Therefore, fostering students' speaking awareness requires a balanced approach that addresses both their emotional readiness and linguistic competence.

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