



ISSN: 2249-894X  
IMPACT FACTOR : 5.7631 (UIF)  
UGC APPROVED JOURNAL NO. 48514  
VOLUME - 8 | ISSUE - 8 | MAY - 2019

## EXPLORING SPEAKING ANXIETY IN ENGLISH AMONG STUDENT TEACHERS OF B.Ed. PROGRAMME

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### ABSTRACT:

Language is the most effective medium of communication through which the total development of an individual takes place. Every language rests on its pillars of four basic skills i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing. The same is the case with English language also. The acquisition of mother tongue occurs naturally without any conscious effort, whereas the study of a second or foreign language requires deliberate and conscious effort from the

part of the learner. English being a global language which gives access to international employment opportunities has gained tremendous popularity and knowledge of the language has become inevitable in the modern days for a successful career.

**KEYWORDS:** *Speaking Anxiety in English, B.Ed. Student Teachers.*

### INTRODUCTION

English which is a foreign language is being taught in India as a second language. Apart from the much discussed factors with regard to the poor performance of students in English like defective teaching methods, lack of competent teachers, overcrowded classrooms etc. there are many affective variables like motivation, attitude, self esteem and anxiety (Ozturk & Gurbuz, 2014) which has an important influence in the learning of a foreign or second language. As suggested by Horwitz et al. (1986) learning a foreign language is accompanied by a

sort of anxiety or fear which affects all the aspects of learning i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing. They have called it as Foreign Language Anxiety with three major aspects; communication apprehension which is associated with an inhibition or hesitation to communicate with others, fear of negative evaluation which is related to the concern about an evaluation of their performance by others and test anxiety that is associated with performance in the examination.

Though the anxiety associated with foreign language learning has its impact on all aspects of language learning, the anxiety with regard to speaking is the worst affected. It creates uncomfortable feelings of tension and anxiety which can go

to the extent of the person feeling dizzy and shivering at the thought of speaking or participating in a discussion using English language.

### NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The medium of instruction in most of our higher education courses is English. However very often even when they are having sufficient mastery in the linguistic aspects of the language and are able to write their answers well, the students fail miserably when it comes to speaking a few words on their own or while taking part in a discussion. They are having problems while speaking, presenting their seminar papers or while participating in a group discussion in English.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study has been designed with the following objectives.

- To find out the percentage of student teachers having severe, moderate and mild Forms of Speaking Anxiety in English.
- To find out whether there is any significant difference in Speaking Anxiety in English among student teachers with different elective subjects.
- To find out whether there is any significant difference in the Speaking Anxiety in English between male and female students.

### HYPOTHESES

1. There is significant difference in the percentage of student teachers having severe, moderate and mild forms of speaking Anxiety in English.
2. There is significant difference in Speaking Anxiety in English of student teachers with different elective subjects.
3. There is significant difference in the Speaking Anxiety in English between male and female student teachers

### METHODOLOGY

The investigators adopted normative survey method for the present study. The sample of the study consisted of 300 student teachers of Teacher Education Colleges in Thrissur district (Kerala), who have enrolled in the two year B.Ed. course with different elective subjects like English, Mathematics, Natural Science and Physical Science. For the purpose of the analysis they are classified into English and Science groups. The investigator used an adapted version of Second Language Speaking Anxiety Scale (SLSAS) developed by Woodrow (2006) which is a 5-point Likert scale which is intended to measure the second language speaking anxiety.

### STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES

- Percentage Analysis
- Preliminary Statistics
- Test of Significance of Difference between Means

### ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

**Table 1: Speaking Anxiety in English among Student Teachers of B.Ed. Programme**

Variable	N	Mean	SD
Speaking Anxiety in English	300	46.05	9.28

From Table-1, the mean score of the Speaking Anxiety of the total sample is 46.05 with SD 9.28.

**Table 2: Percentage of Student Teachers of B.Ed. Programme in Different Levels of Speaking Anxiety in English**

Level of Speaking Anxiety	N	Percentage
Severe	87	29.07
Moderate	130	43.29
Mild	83	27.64

From Table-2, 29.7% of student teachers of B.Ed. programme have severe Speaking Anxiety. A good majority of the students i.e. 43.29% suffers from moderate anxiety with regard to speaking English and only 27.64% fall in the category of student teachers having mild Speaking Anxiety.

**Table 3: Comparison of Speaking Anxiety in English among Student Teachers based on Gender**

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Level of Significance
Male	70	47.23	9.13	2.12	P<0.05
Female	230	44.58	9.22		

Table-3 shows that the mean and standard deviation of the scores obtained on Speaking Anxiety in English for male students are 47.23 and 9.13 and for females the values are 44.58 and 9.22 respectively. The obtained t-value is 2.12 which is greater than the set value at 0.05 level of significance. It shows that there is a significant difference between the mean Speaking Anxiety in English scores of male and female students ( $t=2.12$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). The mean values show that compared to female students, male students have more Speaking Anxiety in English.

**Table 4: Comparison of Speaking Anxiety in English among Student Teachers of based on Elective Subject**

Elective Subject	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Level of Significance
English	125	46.23	9.01	0.731	P>0.05
Science	175	45.76	8.99		

Table-4 depicts that the mean and standard deviation of Speaking Anxiety in English for English Language student teachers are 46.23 and 9.01 and for Science the values are 45.76 and 8.99 respectively. The obtained t-value on comparing the mean scores of English language and science students is 0.731 which is more than the set value at 0.05 level of significance ( $t=7.31$ ;  $p>0.731$ ). It shows that there is no significant difference between the Speaking Anxiety in English of the students who have English as their optional subject and those whose optional subject is Science. It can be inferred from the analysis that Optional subject is not an important factor in differentiating the B.Ed. students on the basis of their Speaking Anxiety in English language

### CONCLUSIONS

- The student teachers of B.Ed. program are found to have considerable Speaking Anxiety in English
- They have different levels of Speaking Anxiety in English with 29.07 having severe, 43.29 with moderate and 27.64 with mild Speaking Anxiety in English
- Gender is an important factor in differentiating male and female student teachers on the basis of their Speaking Anxiety in English. The male students show more Speaking Anxiety compared to the females.
- The student teachers who have taken English language as their elective subject and those with Science as their elective do not show considerable difference in their Speaking Anxiety in English. Hence it can be inferred that the elective subjects do not have a significant influence on the Speaking Anxiety in English of the student teachers. It requires special mention that even those student teachers who are prospective English language teachers tomorrow are no exception in having anxiety in speaking English.

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