

## Reducing Fear of Oral Presentation Through Communication Strategies

Siti Khadijah Mohd Mohari, Nurul Jannah Ahmad Ghulamuddin,  
Muhammad Harriz Zaini, Ahmad Suhairi Mohamed Suhaimi,  
Mohd Naquiuddin Zulkarnain

Academy of Language Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA Pahang Branch  
Corresponding Author Email: [jannahghulamuddin@uitm.edu.my](mailto:jannahghulamuddin@uitm.edu.my)

To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v13-i4/16808> DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v13-i4/16808

**Published Date:** 17 April 2023

### Abstract

Non-native English learners often face challenges to articulate their ideas while speaking in the target language. Because of this, it was far more difficult for them to get their thoughts over to the audience. To overcome this issue, the learners employ various communication strategies to promote their audience's understanding. Hence, this research aims to determine the factors that contribute to fear of oral presentations and the communication strategies (CS) used by undergraduate students. The study employs a quantitative survey in which 201 participants in a public university in Pahang were conveniently selected to answer a three-sectioned survey; Section A elicits demographic background of the participants, Section B investigates their communication strategies used and Section C probes on the causes of fear of oral presentation. The findings show that students dread oral presentations both due to internal and external forces. They commonly employ Social-affective strategies and Message reduction, orientation and non-verbal strategies to cope with their fears. Additionally, the usage of CS has a slight impact in reducing their fear of oral presentation. Future research on alternative strategies to reduce students' fear of oral presentation are therefore recommended in order to tackle the issue.

**Keywords:** Oral Presentation, Communicative Strategies, Public Speaking, Trait Anxiety, State Anxiety

### Introduction

#### *Background of Study*

The ability to perform oral presentations in a target language is crucial to ensure one is having a balanced language skills proficiency. In other words, speaking skills are very important for effective communication (Ahmad et al., 2022). There is an urgent need to understand communication tactics to achieve a brighter future, particularly in terms of job advancement. Ibrahim et al (2022) in his recent study, agree that language learners may prevent communication breakdown by employing communication strategies.

Being able to communicate eloquently is one of the most valuable traits once an individual starts working these days. It is a talent that can be learned and developed through time, and college years are undoubtedly the best time for students to achieve so. Many students at the university voiced their worries as they have difficulties not being able to speak out in front of a large audience due to anxiety (Hasibuan & Irzawati, 2019; Nguyen, 2019).

In Malaysia, oral presentation or public speaking has always been an issue for most students. They tend to have high anxiety whenever they need to carry out oral presentations in public (Aziz & Kashinathan, 2021; Miskam & Saidalvi, 2019). Despite having had at least eleven years of English instruction at school, many of them still struggle with presenting oral presentations. This will affect the effectiveness of the presentations as ideas, opinions and knowledge are not properly conveyed. The graduates' incapacities to communicate well to large group of audience obviously is a major concern among Malaysian employers. In study by (Nesaratnam et al., 2020), ability to communicate well in small and large groups especially in English is one of the most sought criteria in the hiring process. As a result of this difficulty, graduates often fail to get acceptable positions since they are unable to provide sensible and clear replies in job interviews. In addition to that, employers have to incur additional costs to train their new employees to become better speakers.

Fortunately, this problem could be rectified once the fundamental cause is identified. It is indeed crucial to seek solutions to the problem as speaking is utilised more often than reading and writing when someone is communicating (Rivers, 1981). In addition to that, studies have proven that excellent public speaking skills have demonstrably favorable effects on students' academic achievement, professional prospects, and daily life (Chollet et al., 2015; Tsang, 2020).

### **Statement of Problem**

In a study by Ali et al (2021), about 63% of the participants stated that they are feeling anxious in the event of oral presentation. In another study by Black (2019), about 75% of the participants face the same problem. The causes of the problem were said to be their own anxiety, lack of grammar skills, low self-confidence (Dansieh et al., 2021) among others. Amir et al (2022) also added that the reason for fear in doing oral presentations is due to feeling afraid that their purpose will be misunderstood by their listeners and thus the message that they want to get across cannot be conveyed. Studies by many researchers show that such problems could be managed with appropriate steps, for example conducting regular oral presentations. This could lead to many benefits for L2 students such as letting them use the language regularly, improving their confidence, and enhancing their communication skills (Nouairia, 2019). Ability to communicate well opens up abundant opportunities for an individual especially in terms of career path such as attracting potential customers and boosting career advancement (Nikitina, 2011).

Thus, the first objective of the study is to investigate the root cause of the problem. Endler (1980) proposed that fear of oral presentation could be coming from trait (internal) or state (external) anxiety. The first type of anxiety is related to one's emotional state or condition and the latter is related to the perceived threat posed in the environment. This study further looks into the five types coping mechanism that language learners could use to overcome the problem as proposed by Yaman & Kavasoglu (2013), which include social-affective, fluency-oriented, negotiation for meaning, accuracy-oriented and also message reduction orientation and non-verbal strategies. In addition to that, the association between communication strategies (CS) and the fear of public speaking as well as a more focussed

investigation involving categories of CS and fear of oral presentation should be explored further (Ahmad et al., 2022).

### **Objective of the Study and Research Questions**

This study is done to answer the following questions;

- What are the perceptions of the learners towards the causes of their oral presentation anxiety?
- How do learners perceive the use of communication strategies to reduce oral presentation anxiety?
- What is the relationship between causes of oral presentation anxiety and communication strategies?

### **Literature Review**

#### *Communication Strategies*

Communication strategies are needed to develop speaking skills (Yaman and Kavasoglu, 2013) because by developing an ability to use this strategy; the learners can develop their communicative proficiency and enable them to compensate their deficiency in the targeted language (Bialystock, 1990 as cited in Yaman and Kavasoglu, 2013). The uses of communication strategies are varied; Kongsom (2009) listed some of the situations in which the strategies can be used such as negotiating meaning (Tarone, 1980), maintaining the conversation (Long, 1981) or handling communication difficulties or breakdown (Faerch and Kasper, 1983). There are two major perspectives that are viewed when the researchers studied communication strategies: the interactional views and the psycholinguistic view. The former is based on the interaction process between the learner and the speakers for the negotiation meaning, while the latter is considered as a cognitive process with a focus on comprehension and production (Yaman and Kavasoglu, 2013). One of the strategies which is negotiating meaning (Tarone, 1980) can be viewed as part of the interactional views, as well as handling communication difficulties or breakdown (Faerch & Kasper, 1983). Based on the psycholinguistic view, Panggabean and Wardhono (2017) stated that Faerch and Kasper (1984) defined communication strategies as a conscious plan to solve the problem in reaching particular communicative goal and they categorize them into two types of strategies which are reduction strategy and achievement strategy. Regardless of the definitions defined from different perspectives, these definitions lead to a similar purpose which is solving the problems that are faced by the speaker by applying some techniques in communication (Panggabean and Wardhono, 2017)

#### *Fear of Oral Presentation*

Oral presentation is often related to higher level educational studies, yet it does not stop at such a stage (Rahmat et al., 2022). When going to the workplace, for example, oral presentations will also be expected from the employers to convey their ideas to the higher ups. In communicating for the needs, ideas and opinions, oral presentation has become an encouraged platform (Zainuddin et al., 2022). Nonetheless, presenting orally is still dreaded due to the idea that the individual cannot speak clearly and confidently in English (Ahmad et al., 2022). According to Rahmat (2019); Rahmat et al (2022), the fear in oral presentation is divided into two apprehensions which are the trait, mainly put as the characteristics or anxiety level of the person and the state, where the level of anxiety is influenced by the environment and evaluation from the audiences. It is also believed to be quite a challenge for

non-native learners to have confidence when speaking to a crowd (Belaman et al., 2022). Nevertheless, Grieve et al (2021) have mentioned that more research evidence on specific fears, the strategies used by students in addressing them and how such fears affect the students' university experience are needed.

#### *Past Studies on Communication Strategies*

Understanding the communication strategies (CS) will surely give tremendous advantages to students to enhance their communication skills and boost their confidence level in using a second or foreign language. Students of second or foreign languages frequently use different strategies of communication to assist them once they face difficulties in oral presentation or even when communicating with another person. These strategies are considered as a "crutch" to compensate for the language incompetencies that they have due to lack of vocabulary or wrong usage of grammar rules. For pupils to "survive" a communication breakdown, Ibrahim et al (2022) states that they employ CS. According to Ellis (1985, cited in Putri (2013), CS can be thought of as "psycholinguistic plans" that have to do with a learner's communicative competence that are made consciously and serve as a backup when the learner is unable to execute it. In short, CS are the methods that language students use in order to better their language learning.

To cope with difficult situations during oral presentation, Selinker (1972) highlighted language students use at least five processes. They are language transfer, strategies of second language communication, transfer of training, strategies of second language learning and finally over-generalization. Nakani (2006) introduced his own design, Oral Communication Strategy Inventory (OCSI) to evaluate communication interactional aspects. His design eventually was utilized to look further into students' communication strategies such as avoidance or reduction tactics and achievement or compensatory strategies (Yusparizal et al., 2018).

There have been many past studies on communication strategies. The sorts of communication strategies employed by more proficient students and less proficient students were compared in a study by (Panggabean and Wardhono, 2017). A qualitative study was conducted among 72 students of three classes. Observations and analysis of their oral presentations, fieldnotes and recordings were done. According to the study's findings, students who performed better utilised eleven different forms of communication tactics, whereas those who performed worse employed thirteen different types. However, the students from both levels of proficiency mostly employed three different sorts of communication strategies, namely; code switching, repetition and the use of fillers or time-gaining strategies. In another study done by Belaman et al (2022), they investigated the communication strategies used by students in their oral presentations. 210 students from a public university in Malaysia participated in this study. Findings revealed that message reduction, orientation, and non-verbal tactics are most frequently used by participants, who also tend to be influenced by a variety of internal and external factors that heighten anxiety during oral presentations.

#### *Past Studies on Fear of Oral Communication*

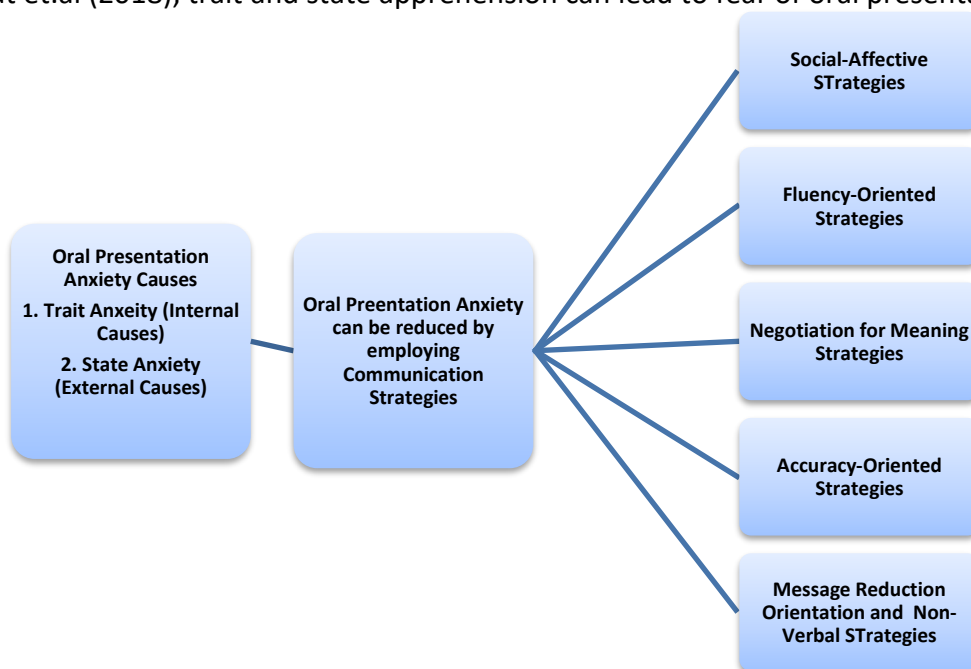
When it is not the native language, speaking English in front of the audience would be very difficult for the language learners. Many studies have been done to investigate the fear of speaking or oral communication among second or foreign language learners. A quantitative study by Soomro et al (2019) was done among 100 undergraduate engineering students in

Pakistan to investigate the factors of anxiety during English oral presentation skills. According to one of the findings, oral presentation skills appeared to be the most problematic oral communication skills for the respondents, compared to other oral communication skills which are meeting/interview, conversation and group discussion. In the same study, it was also found out that stress and nervousness was the main cause of anxiety that affected their performance in oral presentation, followed by lack of motivation and poor oral communication skills. The majority of the respondents were reported to forget their thoughts and ideas during the presentation they have prepared well beforehand. This was mainly due to the attitude of their friends who sometimes make fun and laugh at them, thus making them feel stressed and nervous. This study is crucial especially for educators in tertiary level as the student’s fear towards oral communication could be acknowledged and support for the students can be provided to penetrate the problem.

Next, the study by Dansieh et al (2021) also looked at the elements associated with the fear of public speaking or glossophobia. This study involved 46 final year secretarial students of the Dr. Hilla Limann Technical University. According to the survey done, initially the majority of the respondents agreed that the major possible cause of glossophobia was fear of making mistakes. Their thought on that has been proven by Aliyu et al (2019) in their study among undergraduate ESL students through a pre-post quasi experimental research design. Nevertheless, the final findings found that the main cause of anxiety in public speaking among the respondents was the natural shyness, followed by the fear of being laughed at. This is in line with the view expressed by Kushner (2004) in his book. Thus, it was agreed that in order to overcome this problem, both students and lecturers need to come out with effective strategies. This study can be a reference for other educators and students to understand more about oral communication and its fear, as well as how to deal with the same issue.

*Conceptual Framework of the Study*

According to Santrock (2009), learners face two types of anxiety. The first one is trait anxiety. This refers to the characteristics of the learner. The next one is state anxiety. States are characteristics pattern of feeling in a situation at a specific moment in time. According to Rahmat et.al (2018), trait and state apprehension can lead to fear of oral presentation.



### Figure 1- Conceptual Framework of the Study- Reducing Oral Presentation by Employing Communication Strategies

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework of the study. In the context of this study, oral presentation apprehension can be caused by either trait or state anxiety. According to Endler (1980) fear of oral presentation can be either trait (internal) or state (external). Learners can reduce these anxieties by employing communication strategies. According to Yaman, & Kavasoglu, (2013), there are five types of communication strategies and the strategies are social-affective, fluency-oriented, negotiation for meaning, accuracy-oriented and also message reduction orientation and non-verbal strategies.

### Methodology

This quantitative study was done to investigate the use of communication strategies to reduce oral presentation anxieties. 201 respondents were selected conveniently to participate in this study. The 5-likert scale instrument used a survey adapted from Yaman & Kavasoglu (2013) for communication strategies and Endler (1980) for oral presentation anxieties. Table 1 shows the distribution of items in the survey. Part one is the demographic profile. Section B has 6 items on personal -related burnout, section C has 8 items on work-related burnout and section D has 6 items on colleague -related burnout.

Table 1

*Distribution of items in survey*

SECTION	VARIABLE	SUB-COMPONENT	NO OF ITEMS
<b>B</b>	<b>COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES</b> Yaman, & Kavasoglu, (2013)	social-affective strategies	6
		fluency-oriented strategies	6
		negotiation for meaning strategies	4
		accuracy oriented strategies	5
		message reduction orientation and non-verbal strategies	5
		total for cs	25
<b>C</b>	<b>CAUSES OF FEAR</b> Endler (1980)	state anxiety	7
		trait anxiety	7
		total fear	14
<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF ITEMS</b>			<b>40</b>

Table 2

*Reliability Statistics for the instrument*

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.928	40

Table 2 shows the reliability statistics for the survey. SPSS analysis revealed a Cronbach alpha of ,928; thus, revealing a high reliability of the instrument used. Data was then analysed to reveal mean scores to answer all the research questions for this study.

**Findings***Findings for Demographic Profile*

## Q1.Gender

1	Male	31%
2	Female	69%

Figure 2- Percentage for Gender

As shown in Figure 2, the current study included 201 undergraduate students from a Malaysian public institution. Based on the figure, 31% of the respondents are male while 69% of them are female.

## Q2 Age Group

1	18-19	65%
2	20-21	30%
3	22-23	4%
4	24 and above	1%

Figure 3- Percentage for Age Group

Figure 3 describes the percentage of age group of the respondents. According to the figure, 65% of them are 18 to 19 years old, 30% of them are 20 to 21 years old, 4% of them are 22 to 23 years old, and 1% of them are 24 years old and older.

## Q3.Highest Academic Level

1	SPM	44%
2	STPM./Matriculation /Foundation	12%
3	Diploma	27%
4	Degree	17%

Figure 4- Percentage for Highest Academic Level

Figure 4 provides the academic level of the respondents that participated in this study. 44% of them are sitting for SPM, 27% of them are pursuing their Diploma, 17% of them are doing their Degree, and 12% of them are currently studying for STPM/Matriculation/Foundation.

*Findings for Causes of Oral Presentation Anxiety*

This section presents data to answer research question 1: How do learners perceive their causes of oral presentation anxiety? In the context of this study, oral presentation anxiety is caused by (a) external factors and (b) internal factors.

## (a) external factors

	Mean
EFQ1 The marks I will get for the presentation	4.2
EFQ 2 The size and composition of the audience	4.1
EFQ 3 The venue of my presentation	3.9
EFQ 4 The time of day of my presentation– (some people are better in the morning and some in the evening)	3.6
EFQ 5 My personal state of emotional wellbeing (personal problems)	3.6
EFQ 6 My previous low marks (what if I get low marks again?)	4.1
EFQ7 My previous high marks (what if I am not able to get another high mark?)	4

Figure 5- Mean for External factors

The findings above show the mean for External factors which causes oral presentation anxiety among the respondents. The highest mean (M=4.2) shows that the learners perceive their cause of oral presentation anxiety is the marks that they will get for the presentation. The following mean of M=4.1 indicates that the oral presentation anxiety is caused due to the size of composition of the audience as well as their previous low marks. Furthermore, the learners also perceive that their previous high mark (What if I am not able to get another high mark?) is one of the factors that contributes to their anxiety with the score of M=4. The respondents also perceive that the venue of their presentation is one of the external factors that causes anxiety during the oral presentation with the mean score of M=3.9. The lowest mean score recorded is M=3.6 where the respondents' external factors are related to their time of day of the presentation and their personal state of emotional wellbeing.



## (b) internal factors

	Mean
IFQ1 my nervousness	4.1
IFQ 2 My insufficient preparation	3.9
IFQ 3 My lack of presentation abilities	4
IFQ 4 My physical appearance	3.7
IFQ5 I am not as good as others	4.2
IFQ6 I forget your words	4.2
IFQ7 I fear large audience	4.1

Figure 6- Mean for Internal factors

The Mean for Internal Factors in Figure 6 portrays the seven questions asked to the respondents under the section of Internal Factors that causes their oral presentation anxiety. It is found that the Internal Factors Questions 5 (I am not good as others) and 6 (I forget your words) have gotten the same response from the respondents, with the mean score of 4.2. Besides that, with the same mean score of 4.1, the Internal Factors Question 1 (My nervousness) and Question 7 (I fear large audience) illustrate that a large audience may somehow influence the respondents' level of anxiety when they are orally presenting. Contrarily, with the lowest mean score of 3.7, the Internal Factors Question 4 (My physical appearance), somehow points out that the respondents are confident with their appearance for an oral presentation, and it does not add up much to their tension.

*Findings for Communication Strategies*

This section presents data to answer research question 2: How do learners perceive the use of communication strategies to reduce oral presentation anxiety? In the context of this study, communication strategies are measured by (a) social-affective strategies, (b) fluency-oriented strategies, (c) negotiation for meaning strategies, (d) accuracy-oriented strategies, (e) negotiation for meaning strategies, and message reduction, orientation and non-verbal strategies.

## (a) Social-affective strategies

	Mean
SASQ1 I try to relax when I feel anxious.	3.9
SASQ 2 I try to enjoy the conversation.	4
SASQ3 I try to give a good impression to the listener	4.2
SASQ 4 I actively encourage myself to express what I want to say	3.6
SASQ 5 I don't mind taking risks even though I might make mistakes	3.3
SASQ 6 I try to use fillers when I cannot think of what to say.	3.4

Figure 7- Mean for Social-affective Strategies

Figure 7 illustrates the mean scores for six Social-affective strategies perceived by the respondents which could reduce their oral presentation anxiety. Evidently, with a mean score of 4.2, the respondents believe that trying the best to leave a good impression on the audience will be the most successful strategy. Second, they think they may lessen their presentation anxiety by attempting to relax whenever they feel anxious ( $M=3.9$ ). In contrast, with the mean score of 3.3., it is evident that the respondents are most hesitant to take risks out of concern for making mistakes.

(b) Fluency oriented strategies

	Mean
FOSQ1 I pay attention to my rhythm and intonation.	3.5
FOSQ2 I pay attention to my pronunciation	3.7
FOSQ3 I pay attention to the conversational flow	3.7
FOSQ4 I change my way of saying things according to the context.	3.7
FOSQ5 I take my time to express what I want to say	3.9
FOSQ6 I try to speak clearly and loudly to make myself heard	3.9

Figure 8- Mean for Fluency Oriented Strategies

The mean scores for Fluency Oriented Strategies are as shown in Figure 8. Based on the data, majority of the respondents resort to taking their time to express what they want to say and try to speak clearly and loudly to make themselves heard ( $M=3.9$ ). Next, with the mean score of 3.7 which is the second highest, in order to lessen their anxiety towards oral presentation, the respondents choose to pay attention towards their pronunciation as well as the conversational flow and also change their ways to express what they want to say. Paying attention to the rhythm and intonation is clearly the least strategy used to bring down their fear of oral presentation.

c) Negotiation for meaning strategies

	Mean
NMQ 1 I make comprehension checks to ensure the listener understands what I want to say	3.6
NMQ 2 I repeat what I want to say until the listener understands.	3.6
NMQ 3 While speaking, I pay attention to the listener's reaction to my speech.	3.9
NMQ 4 I give examples if the listener doesn't understand what I am saying.	3.7

Figure 9- Mean for Negotiation for Meaning Strategies

Figure 9 indicates the mean scores for Negotiation for Meaning Strategies. From the data, most of the respondents believe that paying attention to the listeners' reactions to their speech while speaking is the most effective strategy ( $M=3.9$ ). Next, the strategy with the second highest mean score ( $M= 3.7$ ), the respondents feel that providing examples to their listeners can help them reduce their fear of oral presentation. In contrast, making comprehension checks to ensure the listeners understand what they want to say and repeating what they want to say until the listeners understand are the two strategies with the lowest mean score which is 3.6.

## (d) Accuracy oriented strategies

	Mean
AOSQ1 I pay attention to grammar and word order during conversation	3.3
AOSQ2 I notice myself using an expression which fits a rule that I have learned	3.4
AOSQ3 I correct myself when I notice that I have made a mistake.	3.9
AOSQ4 I try to emphasize the subject and verb of the sentence.	3.4
AOSQ5 I try to talk like a native speaker.	3.5

Figure 10- Mean for Accuracy Oriented Strategies

Figure 10 illustrates the mean score for Accuracy Oriented strategies. Most of the respondents chose to correct themselves when they notice the mistake they have made; with the highest mean score recorded ( $M=3.9$ ). Next, with the mean score  $M=3.5$ , the respondents prefer to try talking like a native speaker which is one of the accuracy-oriented strategies when doing oral presentation. Two noticeable data which recorded the same score  $M=3.4$ , show that the respondents notice that they use an expression which fits a rule that they have learned, and they also try to emphasize the subject and verb of the sentence. Lastly, paying attention to grammar and word order during conversation clearly shows that it is the least preferable strategy used due to the mean score recorded which is  $M=3.3$ .

## (e) Message reduction, orientation and non-verbal strategies

	Mean
MRQ1 I reduce the message and use simple expressions.	3.6
MRQ2 I use words which are familiar to me.	4.2
MRQ3 I replace the original message with another message because of feeling incapable of executing my original intent	3.4
MRQ4 I try to make eye contact when I am talking	3.6
MRQ5 I use gestures and facial expressions if I can't communicate how to express myself	3.8

Figure 11- Mean for Message Reduction ,Orientation and Non-verbal Strategies

The Mean scores for Social-Affective Strategies is illustrated in Figure 11, displaying the five questions asked to the respondents. With the highest mean score of 4.2, Question 2 (I use words which are familiar to me) is found to be the most obvious strategy used by the respondents in communicating with others. Question 5 (I use gestures and facial expressions if I can't communicate how to express myself) with the mean score of 3.8 (second highest), on the other hand, proves that a non-verbal strategy is as important for communication. Nonetheless, Question 3 (I replace the original message with another message because of feeling incapable of executing my original intent) is revealed to be of the lowest mean score (3.4), as the respondents are shown to have empathy in their ways of communicating with others, and for sure, they would not want to be misunderstood by the wrongly conveyed message. As stated by Amir et al (2022), the bridging gap among people is communication, as it helps people to understand one another whilst removing misunderstandings.

*Findings for Relationship between Fear of Oral Presentation and Communication Strategies*

This section presents data to answer research question 3: What is the relationship between causes of oral presentation anxiety and communication strategies? To determine if there is a significant association in the mean scores between oral presentation anxiety and communication strategies, data was analysed using SPSS for correlations. Results are presented separately in table 3, 4, 5 and 6 below.

Table 3

*Correlation for Causes of Fear and Communication Strategy-Fluency*

		TOTALINTandEXT	TOTALfluency
TOTALINTandEXT	Pearson Correlation	1	.194**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.006
	N	201	201
TOTALfluency	Pearson Correlation	.194**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	
	N	201	201

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 above shows there is an association between causes of fear and communication strategy-fluency. Correlation analysis shows that there is a low significant association between causes of fear and communication strategy-fluency ( $r=.194^{**}$ ) and ( $p=.000$ ). According to Jackson (2015), coefficient is significant at the .05 level and positive correlation is measured on a 0.1 to 1.0 scale. Weak positive correlation would be in the range of 0.1 to 0.3, moderate positive correlation from 0.3 to 0.5, and strong positive correlation from 0.5 to 1.0. This means that there is also a weak positive relationship between causes of fear and communication strategy-fluency.

Table 4

*Correlation for Causes of Fear and Communication Strategy-*

		TOTALINTandEXT	TOTALNegotiateMeaning
TOTALINTandEXT	Pearson Correlation	1	.232**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	201	201
TOTALNegotiateMeaning	Pearson Correlation	.232**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	201	201

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

## Negotiation for Meaning

Table 4 above shows there is an association between causes of fear and negotiation for communication strategy-meaning. Correlation analysis shows that there is a low significant association between causes of fear and negotiation for communication strategy-meaning ( $r=.232^{**}$ ) and ( $p=.000$ ). According to Jackson (2015), coefficient is significant at the .05 level and positive correlation is measured on a 0.1 to 1.0 scale. Weak positive correlation would be

in the range of 0.1 to 0.3, moderate positive correlation from 0.3 to 0.5, and strong positive correlation from 0.5 to 1.0. This means that there is also a weak positive relationship between causes of fear and negotiation for communication strategy-meaning.

Table 5

*Correlation for Causes of Fear and Communication Strategy-Accuracy*

		TOTALINTandEXT	TOTALAccuracy
TOTALINTandEXT	Pearson Correlation	1	.245**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	201	201
TOTALAccuracy	Pearson Correlation	.245**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	201	201

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 above shows there is an association between causes of fear and negotiation for communication strategy-accuracy. Correlation analysis shows that there is a low significant association between causes of fear and negotiation for communication strategy-accuracy ( $r=.245^{**}$ ) and ( $p=.000$ ). According to Jackson (2015), coefficient is significant at the .05 level and positive correlation is measured on a 0.1 to 1.0 scale. Weak positive correlation would be in the range of 0.1 to 0.3, moderate positive correlation from 0.3 to 0.5, and strong positive correlation from 0.5 to 1.0. This means that there is also a weak positive relationship between causes of fear and negotiation for communication strategy-accuracy.

Table 6

*Correlation for Causes of Fear and Communication Strategy-Message Reduction*

		TOTALINTandEXT	TOTALMessageReduction
TOTALINTandEXT	Pearson Correlation	1	.216**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002
	N	201	201
TOTALMessageReduction	Pearson Correlation	.216**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	
	N	201	201

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 6 shows there is an association between causes of fear of oral presentation and communication strategy-message reduction. Correlation analysis shows that there is a low significant association between causes of fear of oral presentation and communication strategy-message reduction ( $r=.216^{**}$ ) and ( $p=.000$ ). According to Jackson (2015), coefficient is significant at the .05 level and positive correlation is measured on a 0.1 to 1.0 scale. Weak positive correlation would be in the range of 0.1 to 0.3, moderate positive correlation from 0.3 to 0.5, and strong positive correlation from 0.5 to 1.0. This means that there is also a weak

positive relationship between fear of oral presentation and communication strategy-message reduction.

## **Conclusion**

### *Summary of Findings and Discussion*

The current study revealed that the perceived causes of the participants' fear of oral presentation were caused by both external and internal factors. In contrast to the findings that was conducted by Belaman et al (2022), the most significant external factor affecting the students is the fear of the marks that they will obtain for the said presentation. However, this is followed closely by fear of getting low marks for the said presentation as well as the fear of the size of the audience. Meanwhile, the least concern that they have are related to the venue of the presentation and their personal emotional wellbeing. The findings are tallied to the findings reported by Belaman et al (2022); Ibrahim et al (2021) which both studies highlighted a large audience is one the dominant factors to trigger the students' fear of oral presentation.

Furthermore, there are internal variables that contribute to the students having the same anxiety of giving oral presentations. The propensity to forget what they were going to say, as well as the concern that they were not as excellent as other people, have been identified as the primary reasons of anxiety of oral presentation among them. Both fears stem from internal issues. Next, following closely, the fear of large groups and their own anxiety are also significant internal factors of their fear of oral presentation. The findings are consistent with (Ibrahim et al., 2021; Belaman et al., 2022; Ahmad et al., 2022). Because of these factors, the students are having trouble putting together their presentations, which makes it more difficult for them to deliver an effective presentation to the audience.

The second study question focuses on the students' perspectives about the use of communication skills to alleviate the stress associated with giving oral presentations. According to the key findings on all communication strategies utilised by the students, there are two methods that are generally used by the students; they are: 1) Social-affective strategies and 2) Message reduction, orientation and non-verbal strategies.

Firstly, by using one of the social-affective strategies, the students said that they do all in their power to make an impression on the audience (M=4.2). As the students are giving their presentations, it is clear that they are paying attention to the reactions of their audience. They look for positive body language from the audience as a sign that they are succeeding in what they are attempting to do. On the other hand, the students are very reluctant to take risks and are terrified of making errors when presenting their work. This appears consistent with Belaman and colleague's (2022) findings that the students care too much of other's thoughts of them. They also tend to place excessive expectations on oneself to achieve perfection, which ultimately leads to an increase in their anxiety (Grieve, 2020). Students need to be reminded by their language instructors that taking chances and making errors are natural parts of the process of learning a second language.

As for the second most used method, the students tend to opt for Message Reduction, Orientation and Non-verbal Strategies. The students believe that by using words which are familiar to them (M=4.2) will make their presentation more effective and presentable. Similar to the finding by Ahmad et al (2022), they are certain that the presentation will be successful by using vocabulary that not only they are comfortable with, but also one they anticipate the audience will have no trouble understanding.

Finally, in answering the third research question, the findings indicate that there are low positive associations between both internal and external fear of oral presentation and all

types of communication strategies. This may suggest that the usage of CS slightly reduces the students' fear of oral presentation. The results are reported to be consistent with Ahmad and colleagues' (2022) findings which stated the use of CS has minimal effect on the students' fear of presenting in public. This implies that, in addition to teaching CS to students, language teachers could explore alternative approaches to reduce their fear of public speaking.

#### *Pedagogical Implications and Suggestion for Future Research*

The findings indicate that the language students were deeply concerned about their marks and the size of the audience when they were delivering oral presentations. Benefitting from this study, language teachers could employ several strategies to lessen their students' fear as well as increase their confidence. One of the effective methods that could be used is by introducing students-centered teaching strategies (Nghah et al., 2022) which encourages students to lead the conversations in classes. It is also helpful in creating a relaxed environment for students to get used to speaking in public. Additionally, language instructors could raise students' knowledge of the use of communication strategies since these methods have proven to strengthen students' abilities in oral presentation (Siti Rohani, 2021) although they have minimal impacts on the students' fear of oral presentation. Future research may explore students' perceptions of the various methods that are best suited to prepare them for future oral presentations. It will be fascinating to compare the students' perception versus the results of methods that yielded actual positive impact.

#### **References**

- Ahmad, S. N., Rahmat, N. H., & Shahabani, N. S. (2022). Exploring Communication Strategies and Fear of Oral Presentation among Undergraduates. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 12(8), 1810 – 1832.
- Ahmad, S. N., Rahmat, N. H., Shahabani, N. S., & Khairuddin, Z. (2022). Discovering The Relationship between Communication Strategies and Fear of Oral Presentation among University Students. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 12(9), 1185–1212.
- Aliyu, M. M., Korau, S. M., & Basiru, A. (2019). Reducing Undergraduates Speaking Anxiety through Class Interactions and Oral Presentations. *Asian Journal of Contemporary Education*, 3(1), 36-43.
- Amir, N., Rahmat, N. H., Sim, M. S., Sukimin, I. S., Radzi, S. F. M., & Raus, F. A. M. (2022). Fear of Oral Presentation: Trait or State Anxiety? *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 12(5), 833 – 845
- Aziz, A. A., & Kashinathan, S. (2021). ESL Learners' Challenges in Speaking English in Malaysian Classroom. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 10(2), 983–991.
- Belaman, J. A. X., Zakaria, S. F. B., Nasharudin, S. N. S., Ibrahim, I. W., Abdullah, S. A. S., & Rahmat, N. H. (2022). Balancing The Use of Oral Communication Strategies and Fear for Oral Presentation: The Case for Language Learning. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*. 12(6), 849 – 868
- Dansieh, S. A. (2021). English Language Skill Needs of the Secretarial Student. *International Journal of Literature, Language and Linguistics*, 7(1), 276-289.
- Dansieh, S. A., Owusu, E., & Seidu, G. A. (2021). Glossophobia: The fear of public speaking in ESL students in Ghana. *Language Teaching*, 1(1), p22-p22.

- Endler, N. S. (1980). Person-situation interaction and anxiety. In I. L. Kutash (Ed.), *Handbook on stress and anxiety*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, pp.249-266.
- Grieve, R., Woodley, J., Hunt, S. E., & McKay, A. (2021) Student fears of oral presentations and public speaking in higher education: a qualitative survey. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 45(9), 1281-1293.
- Hasibuan, A. R., Irzawati, I. (2020) Students' Speaking Anxiety on their Speaking Performance: A Study of EFL Learners. In: The 3rd International Conference on Innovative Research Across Disciplines 2019, 20 – 21 September 2019, Grand Inna Bali Beach Sanur Bali, Indonesia.
- Ibrahim, N., Anuar, N. A. K., Mokhtar, M. I., Zakaria, N., Jasman, N. H., & Rasdi, N. N. (2022). Exploring fear of public speaking through social cognitive theory. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 12(1), 135-154.
- Jackson, S. L. (2015) *Research methods and Statistics-A Critical Thinking Approach* (5th Edition) . Boston, USA: Cengage Learning.
- Kongsom, T. (2009). The effects of teaching communication strategies to Thai learners of English. *Language education today: Between theory and practice*, 154.
- Kushner, M. (2004). *Public Speaking For Dummies*. (2nd ed.), New Jersey, USA, John Wiley & Sons.
- Nesaratnam, S., Salleh, W. H. W., Foo, Y. V., Hisham, W. M. W. S. W. (2020). Enhancing English proficiency and communication skills among Malaysian graduates through training and coaching. *International Journal of Learning and Development*, 10(4), 1- 12.
- Ngah, N. S., Safian, N. L., Hussain, S. S. H. @, Hussain, A. M., Ngah, N. S. A., & Rahmat, N. H. (2022). Is There a Balance between Causes of Fear and Use of Communication Strategies? *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 12(12), 83 – 98.
- Nguyen, T. H. (2019). Oral Presentation: An Effective Approach To Enhance Non-English Major Students' Speaking Proficiency. *The Scientific Journal Of Tra Vinh University*, 1(35), 43-50.
- Nouairia, S. (2019). The Importance of Oral Presentation in Learning the Speaking Skill. Retrieved from <https://dspace.univ-guelma.dz/jspui/handle/123456789/4858>
- Miskam, N. N., & Saidalvi, A. (2019). Investigating English language speaking anxiety among Malaysian undergraduate learners. *Asian Social Science*, 15(1), 1-7.
- Panggabean, C. I. T., & Wardhono, A. (2017). Communication Strategies Used By EFL Students in Their Presentation. *Indonesian EFL Journal: Journal of ELT, Linguistics and Literature*, 3(2): 39-54.
- Rahmat, N. H. (2019). Cycle of Fear in Learning: The Case for Three Language Skills. *American Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 4(1), 151-162.
- Rahmat, N. H., Arepin, M., Abdul Rahman, S. A. S., Yunos, D. R. M., Mohandas, E. S., Sukimin, I. S., & Razlan, Z. (2022). Finding A Balance in Self-Imposed and Other-Imposed Prophecies for The Fear of Oral Presentations. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 12(7), 133 – 148.
- Rahmat, N. H., Mohandas, E. S., Razlan, Z., Arepin, M., Hassan, A. F., & Taib, S. A. (2022). Oral Presentation: Is there a Relationship between Fear of Negative Evaluation and Cause of Fear? *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*. 12(7), 1259 – 1270.



- Rahmat, N. H., Rahman, O. N. A., Hasa, H. R., & Aepin, M. (2018) AN Analysis of ESL Oral Presentation Trait and State Apprehension. *European Journal of English Language Teaching*, 4(2),65-77.
- Rohani, S. (2021). The Use of Oral Communication Strategies across Students of Different Proficiencies. In AISOFOL. Jakarta. Retrieved from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/348756553\\_The\\_Use\\_of\\_Oral\\_Communication\\_Strategies\\_across\\_Students\\_of\\_Different\\_Proficiencies](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/348756553_The_Use_of_Oral_Communication_Strategies_across_Students_of_Different_Proficiencies).
- Santrock, J. W. (2009) Educational Psychology. Boston: Mc Graw-Hill
- Soomro, M. A., Siming, I. A., Shah, S. H. R., Rajper, M. A., Naz, S., & Channa, M. A. (2019). An investigation of anxiety factors during English oral presentation skills of engineering undergraduates in Pakistan. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 9(3), 203-210.
- Yaman, S., & Kavasoglu, M. (2013). The adaptation study of oral communication strategy inventory into Turkish. *International Journal of Human Sciences*, 10(2), 400-419.
- Zainuddin, A., Rahim, M. A., Harith, N. H. M., Yusof, R., Barakbah, N. B. M., & Rahmat, N. H. (2022). Is There a Relationship between Communications Strategies and Fear of Oral Presentation? *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 12(10), 2116 – 2136.