The Relationship between Students Speaking Achievement and Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety

Belilew Molla* and Wassie Tefera

Department of English Language and Literature; College of Social Sciences and Humanities, Dilla University

Abstract

This study was designed to investigate the major causes of speaking anxiety and the relationship between students speaking anxiety and student speaking achievement. For this purpose 135 grade 12(twelve) social and natural science stream students were randomly selected from Hawassa, Addis ketema preparatory and secondary school. A self-reporting Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Scale questionnaire (FLSAS) which is consisted of 28 items was administered to measure the students' English speaking anxiety level. To determine the relationship between the students speaking anxiety and speaking achievement, the result of achievement test, which was designed by the researcher, was used. Pearson's Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to determine relationship between anxiety and achievement. Moreover, an Independent Samples t-test was used to find out whether there is significance difference between males and females' anxiety level and achievement. The results of the study revealed that there are four general causes of speaking anxieties: oral presentation test, self-assessment of speaking ability, comparison of other, and fear of negative evaluation. The study also showed that there was high negative correlation between students' speaking anxiety and achievement. With respect to gender, no statistically significant difference was observed between males and females on their foreign language speaking anxiety and achievement.

1   Introduction

1.1   Background of the Study

English has become a global language with the rapid growth of interconnectivity in international trade, diplomacy, mass entertainment, international telecommunications, and scientific publications. It has become a lingua franca for native and non-native speakers of English since most of the communications are being made through the English language. The prestige position it has in the world demanded people all over the world to communicate in English. This intern demands people to be communicatively competent in English.

Moreover, as an international language, English has an important place in school subjects. As Brown(2001), since English is a necessary part of the educational system and quality language teaching decisions need to be taken with a broader framework of the aim of education. Besides, Awol (1999: 18), for example, mentions that "English is an important school subject in that pupils' future is largely dependent on the success in it." In line with this, the Ethiopian Minister of education (2002) explained that English has played an important role in the field of education. Following this, almost or maybe all of the schools, especially in Ethiopia, teach English as a subject beginning from grade

* Corresponding Author; ©2022 Dilla University.
Email: `belilewmolla@yahoo.com`

one and use it as a means of instruction beginning from grade 5.

Communicative skills are important tools in our lives, and essential for the development, maintenance, and transmission of culture from one generation to the next. The main goals of English teaching are to develop learners' basic communication abilities and their interest in learning English. In every teaching institution, four language skills of listening, reading speaking and writing are taught. Learners are expected to speak English in class and outside the class in social situations. Nothing can be achieved without efficiently communicating with others. All human interactions are good communication. Learning a second language does not occur in isolation: it occurs in a situational and social context and is used to express social and functional meanings. Speaker uses his/her linguistic competency and communicative competency for successful communication (Guyueguo, 1988:49). Cummins (1994) states that oral language is an important component of language development in ESL. It is a common thought among learners that speaking is harder than other skills. Levelt (1993) states that talking is one of the dearest occupations, people spend hours a day convincing, telling stories, teaching people and, of course, speaking to other people.

Moreover, speaking is one of the most complex cognitive, linguistic, and motor skills that play a vital role in the communication process. It is the most important type of linguistic activity. Developing speaking skills help in creating an effective connection among the individual's society. It is an active part of their daily life and a tool of learning (Dorgham, 2011: 1). In a related context, Alia (2007:1) views that "speaking is a complicated mental process and a productive skill." Also, Brown (2001: 9) argues that speaking is not a single skill, rather speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing information. In addition, Harmer (2001:15) points out that speaking includes two categories; accuracy and fluency. This means that developing speaking skills involve the correct use of vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and having the ability to speak spontaneously. Students

who are dominant in the speaking and listening practices are those who are linguistically-talented only.

Researchers in the field of second/ foreign language believe that speaking skills are important of the curriculum in language teaching, and the ability to speak in a foreign language is at the very heart of what it means to be able to use a foreign language (Biggs & Move, 1993; Elis, 1988; Liu, 2001). However, the learners' foreign language speaking ability is influenced by different factors. Researchers in language have identified different learner factors that are thought to have a noticeable influence on speaking a foreign language. Anxiety has been considered as one of the most crucial affective factors which influence second language learning. Research by different researchers (Gardner, 1985; Gardner,Trembly, & Masgoret, 1997; Horwitz & Cope, 1986), especially in Western Countries; has been conducted to find out the relationship between foreign language speaking anxiety and speaking proficiency and achievement at different environment. On their result, these researchers have found different relationships between foreign language speaking anxiety and speaking proficiency. A study by Horwitz (1986) and Macintyre and Gardner (1994) indicated that foreign language anxiety is responsible for students' negative emotional reaction to language learning. Moreover, Horwitz and Cope (1986) pointed out that:

The emphasis on oral aspects of language means that students have to learn to understand what others say and to try to speak out what they want to express in a foreign language class. However, since English is the target language, the correct emphasis is on the development of communicative competency pauses particularly great difficulty for the anxious students.

Being anxious and nervous are common in second or foreign language classrooms. Basic(2011) states that speaking anxiety is a fear of expressing oneself orally and it can negatively affect students' speaking performance. It is most likely that anxiety or nervousness can obstruct and inhibit one's ability to speak since a person who experiences that kind of anxiety will not be able to focus on the speaking process. It means that the learner does not have the

bravery to speak up during the lessonsince he/she might be thinking about how to speak perfectly without making mistakes.As a result, the students prefer to be silent than actively participate in pair and group discussions.

Though many efforts are made by the government to improve the quality of English language teaching, the success of developing students' English language achievementseems highly inadequate in Ethiopian preparatory schools today. The extent of the problem is explained by Tesfaye (2012) as "... there are serious complaints regarding the English language proficiency of students. Many students who join universities and colleges can hardly express themselves in English. It is unfortunate to hear that many primary school teachers and even some teachers in higher institutions of learning do not have the required level of proficiency in English".

As can be seen from the research findings and government reports, Ethiopian students in general and Hawassa Addis Ketema grade 12 students, in particular,are not performing well in any of the English language skills especially in speaking skills though they have been learning the language on average for about twelve years.Students become anxious when they are required to present their work or work in pairs and groups. Therefore, this particular research work tries toinvestigate the correlation between speaking anxiety and performance in speaking. It tries to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the major causes of speaking anxiety for Grade 12 students?
2. Is there a correlation between students' speaking achievement and speaking anxiety?
3. Is there any statistically significant mean difference between male and female students speaking anxiety and achievement?

1.2   Review of related literature

Defining Language Anxiety

Broadly speaking, anxiety is a state of unease, a kind of troubled feeling in the mind marked by excessive uneasiness. It is also defined by Spielberger, (1983, cited in Awan *et al.* 2010, p. 33) as

"a subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the automatic nervous system" (p.15). In addition, Sillamy (1996 cited in Idri, 2012) described anxiety as an affective state characterized by a feeling of insecurity, a diffused trouble. Anxiety in relation to foreign or second language learning, on the other hand, is defined as the specific negative reaction experienced in particular foreign or second language learning contexts when learners are expected to perform in the second or foreign language. (Gardner and MacIntyre, 1993). These definitions reflect researchers'diverse views on anxiety, complicating the issue of finding one encompassing definition of this concept.

Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety

For decades, the body of extensive research undertaken on foreign language anxiety has been to a great extent concerned with the role of anxiety in language learning in general, its causes and the way to cope with it. (Brown, 1974; Horwitz et.al, 1986; Oxford, 1999; Krashen, 1985; Aida, 1994; Idri, 2012). Moreover, many studies also deal with and explore anxiety associated with foreign language speaking (Subaşı, 2010; Cheng *et al.*, 1999; Kitano, 2001; Gregersen and Horwitz, 2002; Liu, 2007; Tsiplakides and Keramida, 2009; Fang-peng and Dong, 2010) because it is considered as a highly anxiety-provoking aspect in a foreign language learning situation. (Cheng *et al.*, 1999).

Devoted solely to speaking and communicating in the target language, foreign language speaking classrooms have often filled many students with nervousness and dread. Horwitz *et al.* (1986) claim that students suffering from foreign language speaking anxiety report feelings of apprehension and worry, and also feel uncomfortable about speaking in class. They believe that only correct English must be spoken and comparing their skills with native speakers of the target language, which makes them fear that their pronunciation is not good enough. Kitano (2001) argues that "speaking skill is usually the first thing that learners compare with that of peers, teachers, and native speakers" (p. 550). Faced with their teachers" questions that they must answer and the possibility of talking in front of the whole class, they may have difficulty concentrat-

ing, and experience some symptoms like "nausea, sweating, weak knees and a dry mouth". (Boyce *et al.*, 2007). These anxious students may also skip classes, exhibit some disruptive behavior in class or quit studying altogether.

Although it is a major obstacle to foreign language learning in general and to speaking more specifically, anxiety can be reduced. Understanding the nature and the sources of foreign language speaking anxiety can offer more insights on how to deal with it. It can help teachers to support and encourage anxious students to be actively involved in foreign language speaking classrooms, as well as to ensure a relaxed low-anxiety environment for the improvement of their speaking skills.

Theoretical Underpinnings

The literature overflows with research on foreign language anxiety and space does not permit a detailed review of the literature on this construct. Yet, to understand its nature, it is crucial to examine some theories postulated by major researchers in the field of language anxiety.

Horwitz *et al.*'s Research on Language Anxiety

Foreign language classes had always left students with feelings of uneasiness, nervousness and dread and this cannot be attributed only to cognitive abilities, or proficiency in the language. (Horwitz *et al.*, 1986). In almost thirty years of research, Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) found that foreign language anxiety is a distinct affective variable in the foreign language learning process and that it has specific, well-defined detrimental effects on learning. To discover the real causes of language anxiety, Horwitz *et al.* designed in 1986 the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), a tool including thirty-three items used by foreign language instructors to determine and capture the scope and severity of students' anxiety and to examine its effects on learning in different contexts.

Horwitz *et al.* (1986) identified three varieties or sources of foreign language anxiety. The first variety is communicative apprehension, which arises from the inability to adequately express thoughts and ideas. The second is fear of negative evaluation

(FNE) which is defined as apprehension about others' evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectations that others would evaluate one-self negatively. The third source is test anxiety or apprehension over academic evaluation. These three types of anxiety can cause students to postpone language study indefinitely or to quit learning altogether. They are experienced by many language learners and they pose potential problems because they interfere with and restrain learner's ability and ultimately impede their proficiency in the foreign language.

Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis

Krashen (1985), on the other hand, developed the Affective Filter Hypothesis which stipulates that a number of affective variables play a role in second language acquisition. He observed that anxiety if high is considered as an "affective filter" or a "mental block" that correlates negatively and prevents input from reaching the language acquisition device (Krashen, 1985, p. 100). In other words, when the filter is high it obstructs success in the second language. Therefore, Krashen asserted that second language teachers need to make sure that the students' affective filter is low at all times in order for learning to take place. He also believed that the Affective Filter is caused by environmental factors such as a stressful learning environment (i.e., too much instructional error correction, a strong focus upon pronunciation and form, or being humiliated amongst one's peers.

2 Research Design and Methodology

2.1 Research Design

A correlational research design has been used to discover the relationship between students speaking anxiety and speaking achievement. The researcher has opted for this type of research because it is closer to real-life situations rather than laboratory experiments, which constitute a technical advantage over experiments in that it offers a possibility to study a phenomenon in natural settings.

2.2 Subjects of the Study

The main focus of this research is to check the relationship between students' English language

speaking achievement and speaking anxiety. A total of 135 male and female learners were participated in this study. They were all grade 12 preparatory students from Hawassa Addis Ketema comprehensive and preparatory school. Among these, 74 were females and 61 were males from both natural and social science streams. The number of female participants is more than male participants, and the subjects were selected randomly.

2.3 Instruments of Data Collection

In this study, the researcher'sobjective was to determine the correlation between students speaking anxiety and their speaking achievement in the class. Thus, the study employed the Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Scale questionnaire (FLSAS) and the speaking achievement test. The data obtained from the FLSAS and speaking achievement test were presented and analyzed quantitatively. The researcher used FLSAS which was originally developed by Huang (2004) and adapted by (Hassan, 2009). Thus students rated the questionnaire as the degree of agreement or disagreement with the items on a 5- scale.

In this research the questionnaire consisted of two parts, one was intended to collect personal information of the participants such as age, gender, and stream. The other was the Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Scale (FLSAS). The second major data gathering instrument in this study wasthe speaking achievement test. The purpose of the test is to measure students' English speaking achievement and its relationship with speaking anxiety.

Regarding the evaluation of speaking skills, Knight (1992) says that teachers could be familiar with a rubric with different criteria and grading scales. This is quite easy. The teacher can simply choose some criteria on which she/ or he grades students and list them along the left side of the page. Then she/he can create an even number of columns along the top of the page, four is the easiest to start if this is his or her first rubric. These columns will represent the potential skill levels of the students' abilities. It is possible to define each criterion by the label of ability the students will exhibit. For example, the way of labeling the boxes on the rubric would meet expectations high, meets expectations low, and slightly underperformers does not meet expectations. So, after evaluating each student's performance, the teacher can determine the level of the students' performance according to the criteria and an objective grade with the suggestion for areas in which the students can improve (Knight, 1992).

In this study Knight's (1992) criteria were used to rate students' performances. These criteria include pronunciation, vocabulary, accuracy, fluency, communication, and interaction. Thus, it is necessary to evaluate students in qualities of pronunciation, vocabulary, accuracy, fluency, communication and interaction.

Assuming all these criteria into account, the speaking test was prepared by the researcher. The test adopted in this study is from grade 12 English for Ethiopia's old textbook on page 40. In the speaking test, the participants were required to narrate a story only based on the picture on the book. The story whose picture consisted of four scenes was about a rabbit and a tortoise, which seems fairly familiar to the subjects.

In this particular study, Knight's (1992) criteria were used. These criteria are:

- Communicating clearly and effectively without making practically any mistakes in all aspects (9 - 10 points).
- Making few mistakes in pronunciation, intonation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency and interaction (7 -8 points).
- Making more mistakes and not clear some of the time to be heard (5 - 6points).
- Making lots of mistakes in all aspects and very hard to understand (3 - 4 points).
- Unable to perform the task at all (1 - 2 point).

2.4 Data Gathering Procedure

First, the speaking test from the old English for grade 12 students' text book was administered. As mentioned earlier, the test was narrating the story in the picture. While students' were narrating the story, they were videotaped. This was done to help the researcher watch the video so many times and evaluate the students' performance. After the students finished the test, 135 students were asked

to ratethe foreign language classroom speaking anxiety scale (FLSAS). For the administration of the questionnaire, first, the teacher with his colleague who teaches in the same school gathered the students in a school hall. Then gave a brief explanation of the main objectives of the questionnaire and asked them to respond honestly and frankly and then all the questionnaires were collected.

2.5   Method of data analysis

All the collected data were organized and analyzed in an appropriate way to answer the research questions. To analyze the data collected through the questionnaire and speaking achievement test, the researcher used the SPSS windows 20.

Firstly, in order to analyze the frequency distribution of the participants' answers for each item of the foreign language anxiety scale, descriptive analysis was used to compute the mean and standard deviations for each item and each kind of anxiety to see the general situation.Secondly, Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient was used to analyze the correlation between English speaking anxiety and English speaking achievement. Then the independent samples t-test was employed to see if there were any statistically significant differences between male and female students speaking achievement.

3   Results

Two groups of students participated in the study from the same scool. The first group of participants was 70 students, from Hawassa Addis Ketema grade twelve natural science stream students, and the second group of participants was 65 students from a similar school social science stream.

Two sets of data were collected through two different instruments. The first set of data was collected with a Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Scale questionnaire, distributed to all participants. The second set of data was collected through a speaking achievement test.

In order to investigate the sources of foreign language anxiety, each item in the second section of the FLSAS was analyzed. Since some items were negatively worded, they were reversely scored. The next table illustrates the descriptive statistics of the responses of the slightly, moderately, and highly anxious participants to 28 items on the FLSAS (Hanssen, 2009).

Considering that the highest possible score that can be taken from the questionnaire is 140, and the lowest is 28. Then, the highest score (140) was subtracted from the lowest (28). Next, the result (112) was divided by three. Then, the quotient (37.3) was added to the lowest FLSAS questionnaire (28). The sum up to 65.3 was considered as the lowest anxiety group. To get the moderately anxiety group, the lowest anxiety group boundary (65.3) was added to 37.3; then the sum, 102.6 was the boundary of moderately anxious participants. Now, it is clear that score greater than 126.6 could be considered as the highest anxiety group (Hanssen, 2009).

As can be seen in Table 1, several questionnaire items have medians of 4.00 or higher, indicating that more than half of the participants in those groups agreed or strongly agreed with those statements. Only six of the questionnaire items for the low anxious participants have medians of 4.00. However, the moderately anxious participants consider several of the statements as sources of anxiety, with eleven of the questionnaire items for the moderately anxious participants having medians of 4.00 or more. The highly anxious participants consider most of the statements as sources of anxiety. Twelve of the questionnaire items for the highly anxious participants have medians of 4.00 or more.

In addition to the median scores, the frequency and the percentages of the responses of the participants for each item were analyzed. Several items which indicate speaking anxiety were rated by moderately and highly anxious students. Since no particular anxiety-provoking situation was identified by slightly anxious students, their responses were not included in this analysis.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of the responses of low, moderately and highly anxious participants to 28 items on the FLSAS

Item No	Min.	Max.	Median	Min.	Max.	Median	Min.	Max.	Med.
1. I feel anxious while speaking English in class	1	2	1	1	5	4	1	5	4
2. I feel less nervous about speaking in English in front of others when I know them. (+)	3	4	4	1	5	4	4	5	5
3. I feel very relaxed about speaking in English class when I study the planned contents before the class. (+)	3	5	3.5	2	5	4	4	5	5
4. I am anxious in class when I am the only person answering the question asked by my teacher in English class. (+)	1	2	1	1	5	3	4	5	5
5. In English class I start to panic when I know I will be graded in oral activities.	1	1	1	1	5	4	5	5	5
6*. I fear giving a wrong answer while answering questions in English class.	1	1	1	1	5	3	1	5	5
7. I enjoy English class when I know that we are going to discuss in English. (-)	1	4	4	1	5	3	1	5	5
8. I feel very embarrassed when I speak in English at the front of the class. (+)	1	2	2	1	5	3	1	5	5
9. Because of being corrected by my teacher, I am afraid of going to the speaking class. (+)	1	1	1	1	5	3	3	5	5
10. I feel nervous when I take part in a group discussion in class. (+)	1	3	2	1	5	3	3	5	5
11. I think my classmates speak English better than me, I am nervous about speaking in oral activities.	1	2	1	1	5	3	1	5	4
12. I worry about oral presentation tests in English.	1	4	2.5	1	5	4	2	5	4
13. I would feel better about speaking in English if the class were smaller. (+)	1	4	4	2	5	4	1	5	4
14. I get anxious when I cannot express my thoughts effectively while speaking English	1	2	1.5	1	5	4	3	5	4
15. I am more willing to speak in English class when I know the scheduled oral activities. (+)	1	4	3.5	1	5	4	3	5	4
16*. I feel relaxed in pair-work activities (-)	1	3	1.5	1	5	3	4	5	5
17*. I like going to class when I know that oral tasks are going to be performed. (-)	1	4	2.5	1	5	3	4	5	4
18*. I know that everyone makes mistakes while speaking in English, so I am not afraid of being laughed at by others. (-)	1	4	2.5	1	5	3	4	5	4
19*. I like to volunteer answers in English class. (-)	1	1	1	1	5	3	1	5	4
20. I am more willing to get involved in class when the topics are interesting. (+)	3	4	4	2	5	4	1	5	4
21. I don't feel tense in oral tests if I get more practice speaking in class. (+)	1	4	2	1	5	4	1	5	3
22. I feel uncomfortable when my teacher asks other students to correct my oral practice in class. (+)	1	4	1	1	5	3	4	5	3
23*. I do not feel pressure when my teacher corrects my oral mistakes in class. (-)	1	4	3.5	1	5	2	1	5	3
24. Gong to English conversation class makes me more nervous than going to other class.	1	4	1.5	1	5	1	4	5	5
25. I worry about oral presentation tests in English class.	1	4	1.5	1	5	1	3	5	5
26. I feel nervous in group work activities. (+)	1	4	2.5	1	5	2.5	3	5	5
27*. During an oral test, I do not feel nervous. (-)	3	4	3.9	1	5	4	2	5	5
28. Even if I am well prepared for the planned contents, I feel anxious about speaking English. (+)	1	2	1	1	5	2	3	5	5

* The items which were reversely scored.

Moderately anxious participants items with a combined agree/strongly agree the frequency of 50% and over were chosen for analyses, and for highly anxious participants, the items with combined agree/disagree frequency of 70% and over were chosen to analyses. The items which include a facilitating condition (2, 3, 13, 15, 20 and 21) were not taken into consideration. The next table presents the list of the items that were chosen to analyze the moderate and high anxiety levels.

Table 2: Median scores and percentages of the responses to the items that were chosen to analyze for the two anxiety levels

Moderately anxious				Highly anxious			
	Item Number	Median	%		Item Number	Median	%
14.	I got anxious when I cannot express my thoughts effectively while speaking English.	4.00	73.3	5.	In English class, I start to panic when I know I will be graded in oral activities.	4.00	93.3
27*.	During an oral presentation test, I do not feel nervous.	4.00	65.6	27*.	During an oral presentation test, I do not feel nervous.	4.00	87
12.	I worry about oral presentation test in English.	4.00	62.2	1.	I feel anxious while speaking English in class.	4.00	78.4
1.	I feel anxious while speaking English in class.	4.00	59.7	11.	If I think my class mates speaking English better than me, I am nervous about speaking in oral activities.	4.00	84
				14.	I get anxious when I cannot express my thoughts effectively while speaking English.	4.00	82
				25.	I stumble when I answer questions in English.	4.00	80.3
				12.	I worry about oral tests in English class	4.00	78.4
				6.	I fear giving a wrong answer while answering questions in English class.	4.00	74
				24.	Going to English conversation class makes me more nervous than going to other class.	4.00	71.4

* The items which were reversely scored

When the sources of speaking anxiety are analyzed based on the list of the highly anxious participants, it can be said that these items indicate the nine major anxiety-provoking situations. The two highest-ranked situations are revealed by the results of the responses to items 5 and 27. What these items have in common is that they both focus on oral tests. That is, the majority of the highly anxious participants get anxious due to being graded in oral activities or oral exams. This finding is also

supported by the results of the responses to item 12, which is another item about oral tests that appears on the list. The responses to item 1 confirm that the highly anxious participants suffer from speaking anxiety in general, which is consistent with their responses to two other items on the list, 24, feeling nervous about attending conversation class, and 25, stumbling while answering questions in English. When it comes to comparing their speaking abilities to those of others, which is revealed by the results of item 11, it was found that the majority of the highly anxious participants find it anxiety-provoking.

The responses to item 14 show that the highly anxious participants feel nervous when they cannot express themselves. This statement may be related to self-assessment of speaking abilities because to be able to decide that they can express their thoughts effectively, they have to evaluate their speaking abilities, and negative self-evaluation may result in anxiety. The final anxiety-provoking situation for the highly anxious participants is stated in item 6, regarding fear of giving a wrong answer, which can be connected to the fear of negative evaluation.

For the moderately anxious participants, four anxiety-provoking situations were found. All these situations were also found on the list of the highly anxious participants. The major anxiety-provoking situation is revealed by the results of item 14. This was identified as the fifth source of anxiety by the highly anxious participants. The results indicate that like the highly anxious learners, the moderately anxious participants feel nervous when they self-assess their speaking skills.

Another situation that the moderately anxious participants found to be anxiety-provoking is revealed by the results of a reverse scored item 27, which is about oral tests. This situation was seen as the second major anxiety-provoking situation on the list of highly anxious participants. This was followed by item 12, which is also about oral tests. This was identified as the seventh anxiety-provoking situation by the highly anxious participants. The last one is revealed by the results of the responses to item 1, which includes a more general statement about speaking anxiety and was seen as the third item on the list of the highly anxious learners.

When the results of the responses to the FLSAS are further analyzed, it can be said that four different sources of speaking anxiety are identified by the moderately and highly anxious participants. Oral exams are found to be one source as the results of the responses to items 5, 12, and 27 indicate. The second source is related to self-assessment of speaking abilities, which is revealed by the results of the responses to item 14. The third one is self-comparison to others, which is yielded by the results of item 11. The last source is the fear of negative evaluation, which is revealed by the results of item 6. The other items 1, 24, and 25, are thought to be general statements about speaking anxiety. Therefore, they are not classified into a particular category. In light of the findings, it can be said that the moderately and highly anxious participants' responses to the FLSAS indicate that oral exams, self-assessment of speaking abilities, self-comparison to others, and fear of negative evaluation are major anxiety-provoking factors in this EFL context.

In order to check the correlation between speaking achievement and speaking anxiety, the scattered plot was used. The scattered plot is a plot that is used to check the relation of two variables.
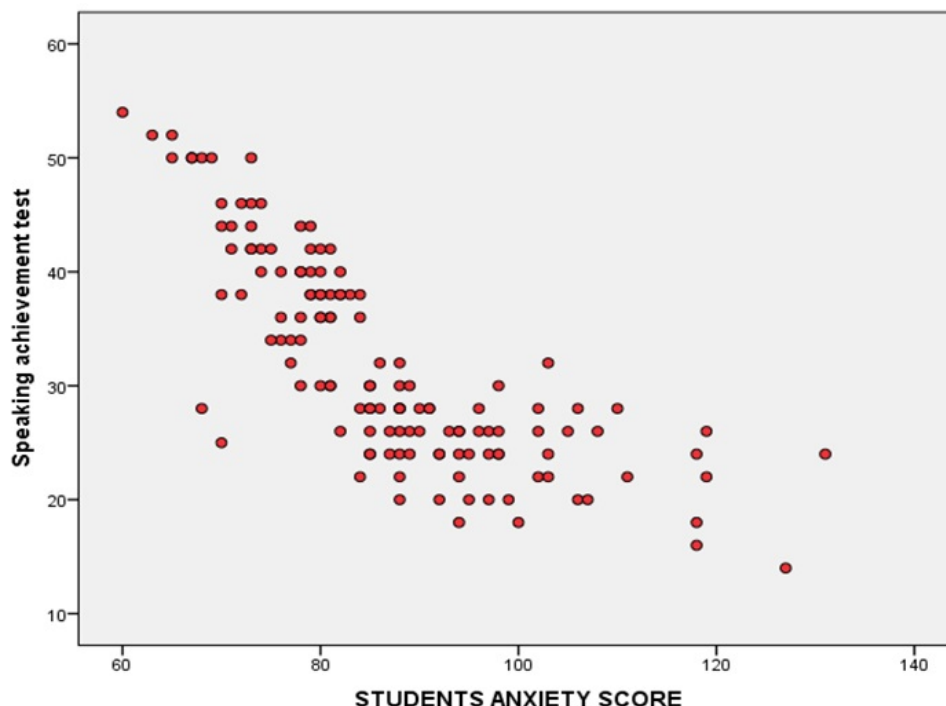
Figure 1: The descriptive statistics of male and female on the result of achievement and anxiety

From the above scatter plot, there appears to be a strong, negative correlation between the two variables (speaking comprehension test score and Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety score) for the sample as a whole. Respondents who scored good marks (shown on the y or vertical axis) experience a lower level of speaking anxiety (shown on the x, or horizontal axis). On the other hand, respondents who scored less marks (shown on the y, or vertical axis) experience a high level of speaking anxiety (shown on the x, or horizontal axis).

The scatter plot indicated that when one of the variables (speaking test score) increased, the other variable (speaking anxiety score) decreased, in other words, when the listening test score decreased, the listening anxiety score increased. This means there is a negative correlation between the two variables; so would be appropriate to calculate a Pearson product-moment correlation for these two variables.

Table 3: Correlation coefficient between language anxiety and English speaking achievement

Students anxiety score	Pearson Correlation	1	-.759**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	135	135
Speaking proficiency test	Pearson Correlation	-.759**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	135	135

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

According to Table 3, the correlation coefficient is -.759**, which is significant at .05 level. The value of this correlation indicated that anxiety has

a negative impact on achievement. This is because, statistically, if the correlation is negative and the significant value is less than the given point value,

anxiety has a debilitative effect on students' achievement. This study investigated that anxiety has a debilitative effect on grade 12 students. This finding is supported by studies on this concern.

The third research question deals with whether there would be a statistically significant difference between male and female students in speaking anxiety and speaking achievement. To this effect, an independent samples t-test was used.

Table 4: Descriptive statistics of independent samples t-test

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Anxiety score of male	61	80	171	100.57	14.826
Speaking proficiency test of male	61	20	52	33.44	8.680
Anxiety score of female	74	75.00	142.00	102.6757	14.19831
Speaking proficiency test of female	74	14.00	54.00	30.9595	9.67760

Table 4, indicated that the mean and standard deviation for male students' anxiety level was 100.57 and 14.82. The mean and standard deviation of speaking test achievement for these students were 33.44 and 8.68 respectively. On the other hand, the mean and standard deviation for female students for anxiety level were 102.67 and 14.19 respectively.

The mean and standard deviation of speaking test achievement for females were 30.95 and 9.67. Since descriptive statistics do not indicate a significance level, an independent samples t-test was used to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between male and female students speaking anxiety and speaking achievement.

Table 5: Independent samples t-test of males and females in tests of speaking achievement and anxiety of speaking

		Lerner's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% CI of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	Df.	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Students anxiety score	Equal variances assumed	.259	.612	-.839	133	.403	-2.102	2.505	-7.057	2.853
	Equal variances not assumed			-.836	125.879	.405	-2.102	2.516	-7.080	2.876

Table 5 illustrates the level of significance of the foreign language speaking anxiety and achievement scores according to gender. An independent-samples t-test was used in order to test the significance of mean differences of scores of males and females speaking anxiety scores and speaking achievement.

The magnitude of females' anxiety was greater than males (F=102.67, for females and M=100.57 for males), but no significant difference is seen in

their speaking anxiety and speaking achievement. Though the magnitude of anxiety levels differ a little bit, no significant difference was observed since the P-value is greater than alpha-value (0.405 > 0.05).

4 Discussions

The major objectives of this study were to identify the major causes of speaking anxiety and the relationship between speaking anxiety and students' speaking achievement. The results indicated that

there are four major causes of anxiety: oral presentation test, self-assessment of speaking ability, comparison of others, and fear of n ergative evaluation. The results also revealed that there is a strong negative correlation between speaking anxiety and test achievement. This study is in line with the findings of Choen and Holliday (1982). Their study also indicated that there is a strong negative correlation between students speaking anxiety and test achievement.Similarly, Macintyre and Gardner (1994) reported a significant correlation between language anxiety and performance in courses and proficiency tests. However, it should be noted that both negative and positive correlations less than and greater than the one obtained here have been reported by (Chastain1975, Horwitz, 1986). The fact that the anxiety variables are negatively correlated shows that debilitating anxiety appeared in learners. According to Gardner (1985) and Larsen-Freeman, and Long (1991), negative correlation indicates the fact that anxiety impairs performance.

Moreover, Abate (1996) in his local study found that anxiety had a debilitativeeffect on student performance and the correlation values were negative.Similarly, another local study by Melesse (2007) states that students' test result was poor due to the anxiety they experienced during the test. In both studies, students' poor backgrounds in learning English were responsible for the quality of the students' task and performance. Similarly, the subjects of this study might have experienced poor background in English classrooms to accomplish tasks and activities.

The magnitude of females' anxiety was greater than males (F=102.67, for females and M=100.57 for males), but no significant difference is seen in their speaking anxiety and speaking achievement. Though the magnitude of anxiety levels differ a little bit, no significant difference was observed since the P-value is greater than alpha-value (0.405 > 0.05).

The third research question deals with whether there is a statistically significant mean difference between male and female students. The result indicated that there was no statistically significant difference between male and female students speaking anxiety and achievement though there is little difference in

mean between the two groups. Wuegbuzie *et al.* (1999), who looked ion to possible relationships between anxiety and gender in their participants', found no statistically significant difference between males' and females' anxiety levels, the fact that females exhibited a little bit somewhat higher levels of anxiety. Zhao (2007) also found that, though males seem more anxious than females, it was not statistically significant.

However, the findings of this study contrast with Wilson (2006) who suggested that female students often have higher levels of anxiety than males in academic settings and have low achievement. Moreover, Cheng (2002) cited in Wilson (2006), investigated that females were significantly more anxious than males (M= 85.67 for females, and M =77.41 for males). However, the findings of this study indicated that there are no significant differences in levels of anxiety.

5 Conclusion

This research focused on identifying the major causes of speaking anxiety and investigating the relationship between speaking anxiety and speaking achievement at Hawassa Addis ketema grade 12 students. The resultrevealed four major sources of speaking anxiety.These are oral exams, self-comparison to others, self-assessment of speaking skills, and fear of negative evaluation. The self-reports of the students'questionnaire indicated that certain linguistic difficulties (pronunciation and lack of vocabulary), the teacher's manner, and crowded classrooms were additional sources of speaking anxiety in this particular study context. It is widely accepted that anxiety plays a crucial role while learning a second language. The impact of such emotional arousal in language learning and its debilitating effects has long been considered in the language classrooms. So in order to increase students ' speaking achievement, there is a need to decrease students speaking anxiety.

The result of the study also revealed that there is a strong negative correlation between students speaking anxiety and speaking achievement with the correlation coefficient of .759 and significant at 0.05 level. Concerning the comparison of males and females, the result indicated that females' anx-

iety level was a little bit higher than males (.403, for females and .405, for males). However, the difference was not statistically significant.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Ethical approval

Consent was sought form the research participants. Confidentiality was maintained in reporting information.

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