SUDDEN SHIFT TO ENGLISH ONLINE LEARNING: NURSING STUDENTS' ANXIETY LEVELS

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ABSTRACT
The COVID-19 pandemic has forced educational institutions in Indonesia to convert face-to-face learning into online learning. This sudden change certainly brings many challenges, one of which is related to students' anxiety. This research aims to identify the anxiety level of nursing students at Pelita Harapan University while learning English virtually. A quantitative method was applied, with a Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) questionnaire as an instrument. Second-year nursing students who had passed the English for Nurses course were the population of this study. To generate the sample, the researchers utilized a convenience sampling technique, resulting in 182 respondents. The results showed that 69.8% of respondents felt moderately anxious during the English online class. In addition, test anxiety was the most common anxiety category experienced by nursing students. It made students afraid of failing to get good grades, being overwhelmed in understanding the material, nervous when they must speak English, and panicking when they do not comprehend the oral feedback given by the teacher in synchronous class. The results of this study are expected to provide insight to educators to develop strategies to reduce students' anxiety levels.
Keywords: *Anxiety*, *English, Nursing, Pandemic*

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic that emerged at the end of 2019 to date has caused significant changes in all aspects of human life. In the education sector, the impact of COVID-19 is seen in the sudden change toward online learning at all levels of education. This is done as a manifestation of the 'social distancing' policy launched by the Indonesian government to suppress the spread of the virus. Online learning is a form of distance education where teaching and evaluation are conducted using

online, internet-based delivery. Its implementation, therefore, involves the utilization of learning applications, electronic devices, and social networks (Bakia et al., 2012; Dhull & Sakshi, 2017).

Learning with new methods is surely not a walk in the park. Several studies found various obstacles appearing shortly after online learning was carried out, which involve unstable networks, high need for internet quota, limited material explanation, and inadequate IT infrastructure for those living in rural areas (Agustina et al., 2020; Mulyani et al., 2021; Pratama & Ibrahim, 2020). The challenges also arose among students, such as limited knowledge about digital devices and online learning applications, lack of motivation, being easily distracted, and stress due to the greater number of tasks (Wiratman & Rahmadani, 2022; Yuzulia, 2021). Another personal challenge that students might encounter is related to anxiety. Nan & Haoda (2020) figured out that English online classes increased students' anxiety to some extent, particularly when they use English to speak and answer questions.

Anxiety alone is linked to external and internal fears triggering the body to react and give a behavioral, emotional, cognitive, or physical response (Videbeck, 2011). It has been a great concern in foreign language learning as it is one of the substantial challenges faced by language learners. The causes of foreign language anxiety have been broadly separated into three components, namely communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety (Horwitz, E.K., Horwitz, M.B., Cope, 1986). Communication apprehension is a kind of bashfulness characterized by the fear of speaking and expressing complex ideas in front of others. Fear of negative evaluation is an extension of it, where learners are anxious about others' evaluations. They may be afraid of being laughed at by their classmates or being underestimated if they make mistakes. Test anxiety, on the other hand, is an apprehension toward performance evaluation. This occurs when learners are afraid of failing the exam or getting unsatisfactory scores.

Studies examining university students' anxiety in learning English during the COVID-19 pandemic have been severally conducted. Valizadeh (2021), whose research object was Turkish EFL students, discovered that more than half of the respondents felt uneasy wondering if other students might notice their home settings or hear annoying sounds from their homes, recording all online activities and being restricted during English virtual classrooms. Comparably, Mohammed & Mudhsh (2021) revealed how Saudi EFL learners have been moderately distressed during the pandemic due to the sudden change to online learning. Of all respondents, female respondents were found to be more anxious than male respondents. Having done the research in Indonesia, Sumarsono et al. (2021) found that most EFL students at Mandalika University were anxious when interacting with others using English. The feeling of incompetence, fear of mistake, vocabulary gap, low

proficiency, and non-optimal practice was believed to be the triggers of students' anxiety. Research on this topic, however, mostly involves EFL students. There have not been many studies examining the anxiety levels of non-English department students. This study was hence carried out to explore the anxiety level of nursing students in learning English during the pandemic. English is undoubtedly crucial for nursing students as it assists them in communicating with foreign patients when they work later. It also gears students to understand the instructions for imported medical devices used in hospitals. By mastering English, a nurse has more opportunities to increase her career level (Sukmawati, S. & Syamsuriyati, 2020).

Referring to this background, the research question of this study is: 'what are the levels of anxiety experienced by nursing students in online English learning during the COVID-19 pandemic?'. Besides finding out the anxiety levels of nursing students, researchers also seek to identify respondents' characteristics encompassing age, gender, the time they started studying English, and whether they took informal English courses outside school. The results of this study are expected to inform educators and educational stakeholders about nursing students' anxiety levels so they can set up teaching improvement plans or strategies to reduce students' anxiety.

LITERATUR REVIEW
Online Learning

Online learning is a teaching method in synchronous and asynchronous environments where the educators and students are bodily separated; therefore, internet access and electronic devices such as laptops, mobile phones, and tablets are there to help (Kentnor, 2015; Nguyen, 2015). Singh & Thurman (2019) further explained that synchronous learning is more ordered with real-time communication between teacher and students, which is also allowing for instant feedback. This type of online learning is usually done using video conferencing platforms such as zoom, skype, google meet, and Microsoft teams. Asynchronous learning, contrarily, is not precisely arranged as the materials are not delivered in the form of live online lectures. Students hence can study and access the content everywhere and anytime. There are some ideal characteristics of online learning mentioned by Meylani et al. (2015); (1) having computer tutorials and engaging online learning activities; (2) integrating several educational technologies to increase students' involvement; (3) utilizing the dimensions of effect, attitudes, intrinsic, and extrinsic motivation to better comprehend students' attitudes in online learning; (4) supporting various types of learning experiences and fulfilling students' need; (5) promoting learner autonomy by conducting self-reflection and self-explanation; (6) providing scaffolding; (7) enabling cooperative activities for students to interact virtually with

their classmates; (8) equipped with professional development such as webinar and training.

The implementation of online learning could bring several advantages to the pedagogical process. First, it is feasible that students could easily get hold of materials and comfortably learn it everywhere. It thus enables all parties to decrease the use of transportation costs and other related expenses. Supporting this, Songkram (2015) argues that the integration of IT devices in online learning has caused a deduction of students' fees, so it can be somewhat frugal. It also fosters students to be autonomous in what they learn. They could practice managing learning methods, evolve a high sense of responsibility, and hone their skills in utilizing learning resources. Nevertheless, the emergence of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic is not without its challenges. The biggest challenge relies on the implementation of practical learning that requires face-to-face meetings between teachers and pupils, such as in the clinical practice of the medical department. With fully online practical teaching, teachers will certainly have difficulty assessing students' skills in particular aspects. The assessment may be done using video, yet students' houses must not be equipped with the supplies they need for the practice as in the laboratory. Second, online learning, which is carried out through separation, turns to mitigate students' interaction and disturb their focus. In contrast to traditional teaching methods, online learning could be less efficacious due to the nothingness of face-to-face assembly. It also disallows teachers to prevent undesirable students' actions like cheating and plagiarizing (Al-Rawashdeh et al., 2021; Arkorful, V.& Abaidoo, 2015; Mukhtar et al., 2020).

Foreign Language Anxiety

In a broad sense, anxiety is an emotion marked by certain physiological characteristics, the feeling of tension, and a worried mind as if a threat is imminent (Keliat, 2012; Wooten, 2008). While in the foreign language learning context, anxiety refers to the nervousness and restlessness about the learning process that can influence one's performance, especially the fluency and quality of oral language production (Horwitz et al., as cited in Nascente, 2001). The anxiety felt by students in learning a foreign language is commonly established by low self-confidence, dragging them to silence or reluctance to speak in all classroom situations, despite their fairly good skills and knowledge.

Many believe that speaking anxiety has to do with dread. As mentioned by Szyszka (2017), anxiety can be driven by communication apprehension, which has long been ascribed to language deficits. Experiencing this, students may be afraid of mispronouncing words or misrepresenting the meaning of the utterance. Another trigger is related to the test, including its duration, techniques, environment, and clarity of instructions. Test anxiety also involves students' fright of failing a foreign

language class or getting bad scores and is often experienced by perfectionist students. The last trigger is a negative evaluation, where students are anxious about accepting negative reactions from teachers or other students if they speak using the foreign language learned (Hassani & Rajab, 2012; Toyama & Yamazaki, 2018). There are three levels of anxiety in general; low, moderate, and high. At low levels, individuals may run into trouble concentrating, difficulty in sitting still, body shaking, and suddenly rising voices. At moderate levels, learning and problem-solving are still possible, regardless of their effectiveness. The physiological responses occurring at this level cover palpitations, increased pulse, cold sweats, and mild somatic symptoms. At high levels, people will not be able to follow the learning process well. They may feel increased somatic symptoms, hyperventilation, and intense fear (Bergara, 2018; Halter, 2014; Sanei, 2016)

English for Nurses

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is a branch of English Language Teaching developed based on certain needs of knowledge and professions. It is mainly intended for adult learners at higher educational institutions or workplaces aiming to learn English in specific fields (Salmani-Nodoushan, 2020). English for medical purposes (EMP) is one of ESP's offshoots containing the language of healthcare for doctors, nurses, and other medical practitioners. It could be classified into English for nurses, English for laboratorian, and English for doctors (Maher, as cited in Skelton & Whetsone, 2012).

English for nurses emerges to assist nursing students in developing their English skills. Nurindah & Nggawu (2019) argues that learning English is significant for nursing students as it assists them in communicating with foreign patients and supports their career advancement at work. As a part of ESP, the implementation of English for nurses should ponder some teaching aspects such as students' characteristics, language needs, language use, and suitable type of courses. It should also cover all four English skills in a balanced way since all are interrelated and equally important to complete communication. Reading and listening, as receptive skills, focus on receiving information, while speaking and writing, as productive skills, focus on delivering information.

RESEARCH METHOD
Research Design
This study employs a quantitative descriptive method in which data were presented in numerical and descriptive form. According to Apuke (2017), quantitative research "deals with quantifying and analysis variables in order to get results. It involves the utilization and analysis of numerical data using specific statistical

techniques to answer questions" (p.40). Meanwhile, the descriptive method is built up to evolve and analyze findings in a detailed way.

Participants

The population of this research was second-year nursing students at Pelita Harapan University who have passed the English for Nurses course, totaling 315 students. The sample was then taken using convenience sampling techniques based on the readiness and availability of the respondents (Solimun & Fernandes, A., A., 2018). To generate the sample size, researchers used Slovin's formula (e = 0.05), resulting in 176 respondents.

Instrument and Data Collection

Data from this research were gathered using *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale* (FLCAS) constructed by Horwitz et al. and adapted by Subekti (2018). The questionnaire consists of 25 statements, where eight statements were related to test anxiety, nine statements were related to communicative apprehension, and nine statements were related to negative evaluation. Each statement was accompanied by a five-point rating scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Data Analysis

The validity and reliability of the questionnaire were confirmed as it was first tested on 30 respondents outside the research. There are three levels of anxiety in this study – low, medium, and high anxiety, with a range from 25 to 125. According to Hayatdayoudi & Kassaian (2013), the higher the language anxiety students feel, the greater the symptoms they show during the oral performance. The score was thus directly proportional to students' anxiety levels. The higher the score, the higher the anxiety and the more complex the symptoms. The division among levels was also based on the standard deviation (14.2), mean (72.5), and median (72).

FINDINGS

Respondents' characteristics analyzed in this study encompass initial, age, gender, the time they started learning English, whether they have ever joined an English course outside school, and the period of the course taken. Below are the demographic characteristics of 182 respondents:

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Respondents' Characteristics		Frequency (f)	Percentage %
Age	17 years old	3	1.7%
	18 years old	68	37.3%
	19 years old	82	45%
	20 years old	23	12.7%
	21 years old	6	3.3%
Gender	Female	165	90.7%
	Male	17	9.3%
The start of learning English	Kindergarten	38	21%
	Elementary School	103	56.5%
	Junior High School	34	19%
	Senior High School	7	3.5%
English Course Experience	Yes	66	36.2%
	No	116	63.8%
The Period of The Course	1-11 months	26	39.4%
	1-4 years	34	51.6%
	> 5 years	6	9%

Table 1 shows that most of the respondents were female (90,7%). Respondents aged 19 seemed to dominate, with a total of 82 people (45%). In addition, more than half of the respondents had been exposed to English learning since elementary school (56.5%). Some also took English courses outside school to familiarize themselves with English. Their period of learning English in an informal setting, however, was varied. 6 out of 66 respondents admitted that they learned English in the course for more than five years, another 34 respondents learned for 1-4 years, and the rest learned for less than a year.

Table 2. Nursing students' anxiety in online English learning

Range	Level	Frequency	Percentage
25-57	low	26	14.3
58-86	medium	127	69.8
87-125	high	29	15.9

Table 2 shows respondents' anxiety in general. Based on the analysis, most of the respondents felt moderately anxious about English online learning (69.8%). Meanwhile, 29 respondents felt highly anxious (15.9%), and the rest just felt a little anxious (14.3%). This is in line with the research done by Pakpahan & Gultom (2020), finding that 63.3% of English education students in one private university in Indonesia felt fairly anxious about online English learning.

Furthermore, the analysis revealed that 116 of 165 female respondents and 11 of 17 male respondents had a moderate level of anxiety, as seen in Table 3:

Table 3. Respondents' anxiety levels based on gender

Anxiety levels	Gender		Total
	Female	**Male**	
Low	23	3	26
Medium	116	11	127
High	26	3	29
Total	165	17	182

Regardless of the result showing that females had higher anxiety than males, studies about the influence of gender on language anxiety have long yielded opposing outcomes. Some studies found no gender influence on language anxiety. As investigated by Soffa (2015), the language anxiety level of male and female students majoring in English at Brawijaya University Indonesia was not significantly different. Yih et al. (2017) also did not figure out a significant relationship between gender and language anxiety in their study held at Universiti Teknologi Mara, Sarawak, Malaysia. Only factors such as fear of negative evaluation and communication apprehension were highly correlated to gender. On the contrary, some research revealed that gender does affect one's anxiety level. As Gerencheal (2016) mentioned, females are more susceptible to language anxiety than males when it comes to public speaking due to their metacognitive beliefs. Yet, others found that males demonstrate higher anxiety while learning a foreign language (Lu & Liu, 2015; Nurhaeni, 2019). Taken together, all these results advocate further studies involving undetected variables to solve the vagueness.

In terms of age, most of the respondents in this study were in the age group of 18 and 19. As shown in the table, there were 55 respondents aged 19 years who were quite anxious and 13 respondents of the same age who were highly anxious. Similarly, there are 49 respondents aged 18 years with moderate levels of anxiety and 11 respondents at the same age with high levels of anxiety.

Table 4. Respondents' anxiety levels based on age

Anxiety levels	Age					Total
	17	**18**	**19**	**20**	**21**	
Low	0	8	14	4	0	26
Medium	3	49	55	14	6	127
High	0	11	13	5	0	29
Total	3	68	82	23	6	182

This result is similar to what was found by Kusmayanti et al. (2022), who examined university students' level of anxiety in online English learning during a pandemic. Most of the respondents in her study were in their nineteens and twenties. Out of 204 respondents, nearly half were moderately anxious to learn English in an

online environment. Only a few students experienced high speech anxiety levels. Whether age has an impact on one's level of language anxiety is still a debate today. Maclnryre and Gardner (as cited in Dutra & Finger, 2019) argue that adult students tend to be more worried when it comes to foreign language learning because they need a longer time to absorb information and are more critical of themselves, particularly with regard to accuracy. On the other hand, Dewaele (2017) claims that younger students may be more anxious than adult students, especially if language learning is a new experience for them. Despite the contrasting arguments, a series of studies seemed to recommend that age is an appreciable variable in foreign language learning, yet it may overlap with other variables.

In addition, 66 of 182 respondents in this study had ever taken an English course outside school. Despite the adequate experiences, some still had high anxiety, and half had moderate anxiety. Meanwhile, 15 of 116 respondents who did not take additional English courses experienced high anxiety, and other 82 respondents experienced moderate anxiety.

Table 5. Respondents' anxiety levels based on English course experience

Anxiety levels	English Course Experience		Total
	Yes	No	
Low	7	19	26
Medium	45	82	127
High	14	15	29
Total	66	116	182

Viewed from the level of education, most of the respondents, or as many as 103 respondents, learned English since elementary school. Of these, 20 felt high anxiety, and 71 others felt moderate anxiety. Surprisingly, there were also respondents who had just learned English in high school. Despite being a bit late compared to other respondents, none of the respondents experienced high anxiety. Almost all of them were just moderately anxious.

Table 6. Respondents' anxiety levels based on their level of education when learning English

Anxiety levels	The Start of Learning English				Total
	Kindergarten	Elementary School	Junior High School	Senior High School	
Low	4	12	9	1	26
Medium	26	71	24	6	127
High	8	20	1	0	29
Total	38	103	34	7	182

Predominantly, of the three subscales of anxiety, most respondents (59.3%) experienced test anxiety where they were afraid of making mistakes or giving an unsatisfactory performance, leading to bad scores.

Table 7. Respondents' responses on three elements of language anxiety

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Test Anxiety	108	59.3
Communicative Apprehension	31	17.1
Negative Evaluation	43	23.6
Total	**182**	**100**

The table shows the students' responses to three elements of language anxiety. It indicated that test anxiety was the highest percentage, and the lowest one was communicative apprehension.

DISCUSSION

Many studies have proven that test Anxiety greatly determines students' achievement and proficiency in learning English as a Foreign Language, either in the online or onsite environment (Aydin et al., 2020; Cakici, 2016). As Zeidner (2007) explained, test anxiety is a combination of phenomenological, physiological, and behavioral responses that may bring a negative influence or cause failure in exams or evaluative circumstances. Sperling (2017) further explicates that test anxiety consists of two main components: worry and emotionality. The worry denotes one's cognitive state that involves negative self-talk and thoughts on self-performance, particularly those related to exams.

On the other hand, emotionality represents physiological and affective reactions that cover physical symptoms and uncomfortable feelings such as tension and nervousness. This supports the findings that most respondents of this study were afraid of failing to take English online classes well, anxious when they did not understand the oral feedback delivered by lecturers in synchronous classes, confused by the amount of material to be studied, nervous in synchronous classes, and overwhelmed with many tenses of English learned.

Similarly, Pahargyan (2021), in his study, found that students felt more anxious in English online tests due to self-imposed demands of perfect performance, which then raised their antipathy toward mistakes. Wendiyarti (2022), who conducted research at a junior high school in Mempawah Hilir, also discovered that test was the main factor triggering students to be anxious about learning English during the pandemic. Thus, it appears that in this sudden change to online learning, most students feel quite anxious about learning English and the biggest anxiety they face has to do with tests.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, this study seeks to explore nursing students' anxiety levels in online English learning during the pandemic. To get more comprehensive information, the researchers also identified respondents' characteristics, including age, gender, the level of education where they started studying English, and whether they joined informal English courses outside school.

The results implied that as many as 69.8% of respondents felt moderately anxious about participating in online English learning. In terms of gender, 26 of 165 female respondents and 3 of 17 respondents experienced high anxiety. In terms of age, most respondents in this study were 18 and 19 years old, and they felt quite anxious about learning English virtually. There were, however, 11 respondents aged 18 years and 13 respondents aged 19 years who had high anxiety toward this. Furthermore, 66 of the 182 respondents had studied English informally outside of school. Despite the considerable experience in learning English, some of them were still extremely anxious about being in an online English environment. In terms of education level, most of the respondents started learning English in elementary school. Of the 103 respondents, 20 were still highly anxious, even though they had learned English at an early age. Overall, the anxiety subscale commonly found among nursing students was test anxiety, where students were afraid of not being able to give their best performance in every online activity and understand the online materials given.

The results of this study are expected to provide educators and stakeholders with an overview of nursing students' anxiety in learning English and to be a reference in developing plans or strategies for reducing their anxiety levels. Nevertheless, further research on factors influencing nursing students' anxiety while learning English virtually needs to be conducted.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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