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*PronSIG's Online Conference*

***L2 Anxiety during Oral Presentation  
by Japanese University Students***

*by Hiroko Nakamura, Tottori University of Environmental Studies*

**Tottori University of Environmental Studies**

**Hiroko Nakamura**



# Tottori University of Environmental Studies

Faculty of Environmental Studies

Faculty of Business Administration



# Outline

- Introduction
- Previous studies
- An acoustic study of L2 anxiety  
(Nakamura et al., 2020: Nakamura& Nomura, 2018)
- Educational implications  
*Oral Communication Festival*
- Conclusion

# I . Introduction

# F0 Study of L2 Anxiety

- Japanese higher communication apprehension (CA) (Klopf, 1984; Nakamura et al, 2013)
- Communication apprehension related to L2 learning anxiety (Norman, 2012; Nakamura et al., 2013)



Is it possible to visualize L1 and L2 anxiety?



# Background

## Fluency disorder (Stuttering)

- Linguistic aspects: repetitions, prolongation, blocks
- Emotional aspects: anticipatory and apprehensive reaction to speaking situations

# The Top 10 Fears in American Adults

- 1 ?
- 2 Financial problems
- 3 (H )
- 4 Deep water
- 5 (D )
- 6 Sickness
- 7 Insects and bugs
- 8 Loneliness
- 9 Flying
- 10 Driving/riding in a car

# The Top 10 Fears in American Adults

(Richimond, et al., 1993)

- 1 Public speaking
- 2 Financial problems
- 3 Heights
- 4 Deep water
- 5 Death
- 6 Sickness
- 7 Insects and bugs
- 8 Loneliness
- 9 Flying
- 10 Driving/riding in a car



## II . Previous Studies

# CA among College Students

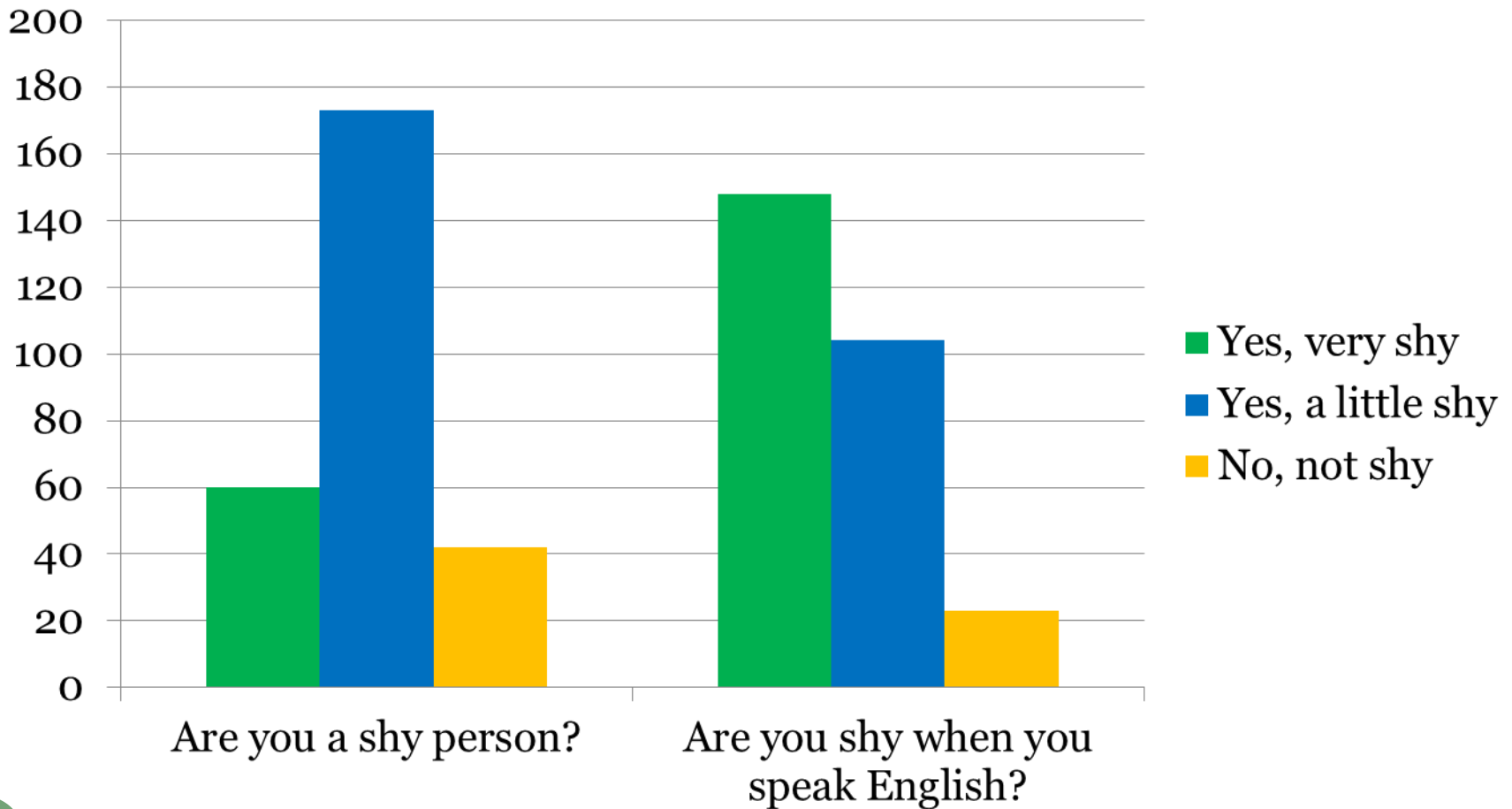
(Klopf,1984)

- **Scale: Personal Report of Communication Apprehension-24 (PRCA 24:McCrosley, 1982)**
- **Participants: Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, Korean, American college students**
- **Score range:24-120**
- **Scores above 65 shows higher apprehension**

Language/culture	Number of Participants	Mean CA scores(SD)	% of High CA
Japanese	504	65.90 (10.72)	<b>35.9</b>
Chinese	184	62.18 (11.23)	26.0
Filipino	312	58.09 (10.59)	13.8
Korean	73	52.78 (10.59)	<b>2.8</b>
American	397	63.34 (12.48)	<b>33.5</b>

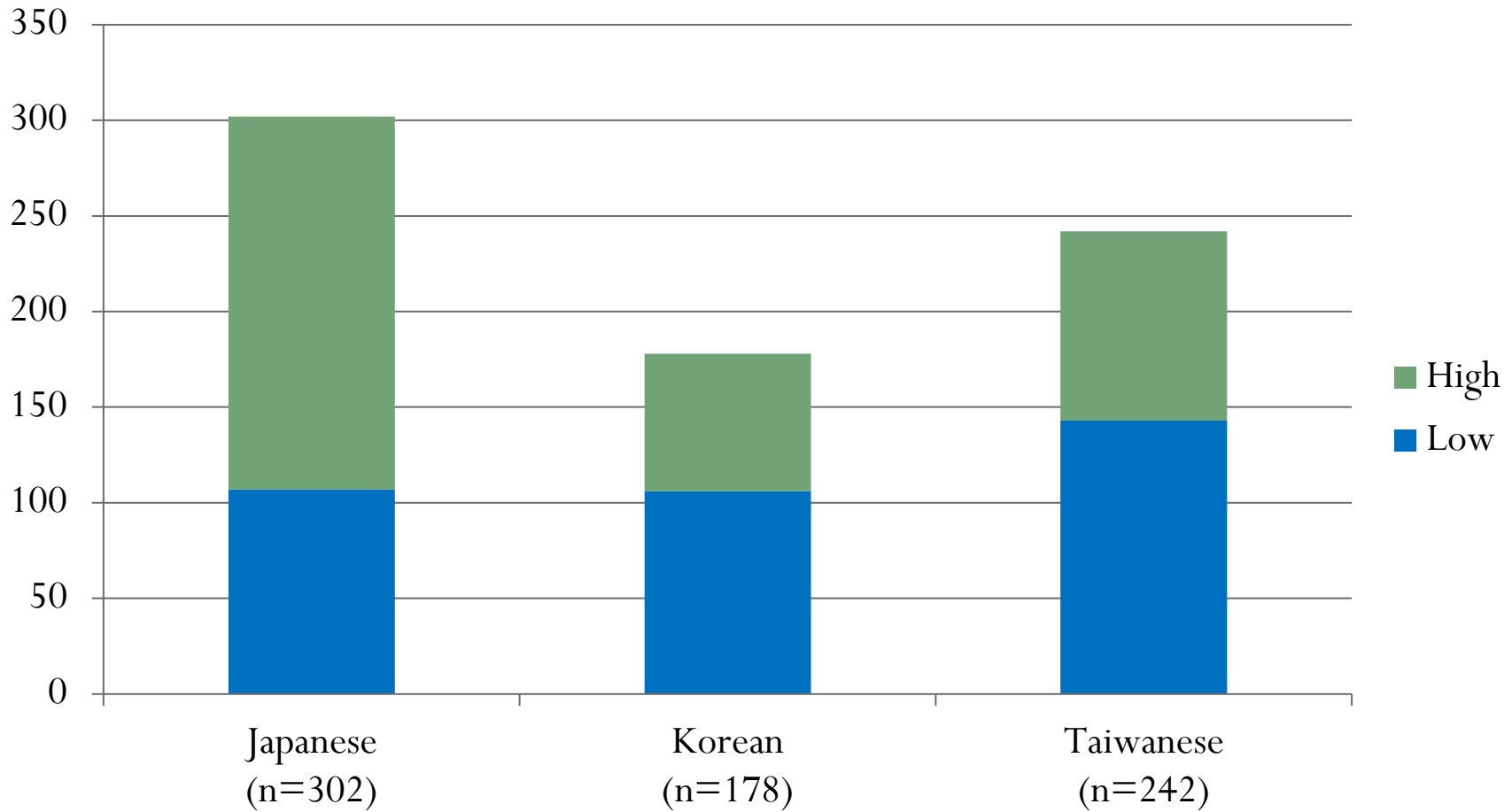
# Are You Shy? (Norman, 2012)

n=275



# CA of College Students across Language/Culture

(Nakamura et al., 2013)



# Language Anxiety and Perceived Pronunciation Competence (Szyszka,2011) (n = 48)

	<b>Aspect of pronunciation</b>	<i>R</i>	<i>p</i>
1.	Vowels	-.1	.48
2.	Consonants	-.25	.07
3.	Word pronunciation	-.29*	.04
4.	Word stress	-.52*	.00
5.	Weak forms	-.32*	.02
6.	Rhythm	-.57*	.00
7.	Linking	-.44*	.00
8.	Assimilation	-.36*	.01
9.	Intonation	-.27	.06
10.	Overall pronunciation	-.46*	.00

# Problems with Previous Studies

- Most studies on the effect of L2 anxiety on segmental and supra-segmental features are based on self reports: questionnaires and self evaluations.



Could an acoustic study objectively explore the effect of communication apprehension and L2 anxiety on speaking skills?

# III. An Acoustic Study of L2 Anxiety



# Objectives

- To investigate the influence of communication apprehension and L2 anxiety on oral presentation of Japanese university students speaking on a stage
- To analyze acoustic parameters to explore the effect of communication apprehension on both L1 and L2

# Method 1

- Collected speech samples of 9 Japanese university students (3 males and 6 females) majoring in English, recorded at **the oral presentation and its rehearsal**
- Made an acoustic analysis of speech using *Praat* to measure F0 values of speech samples

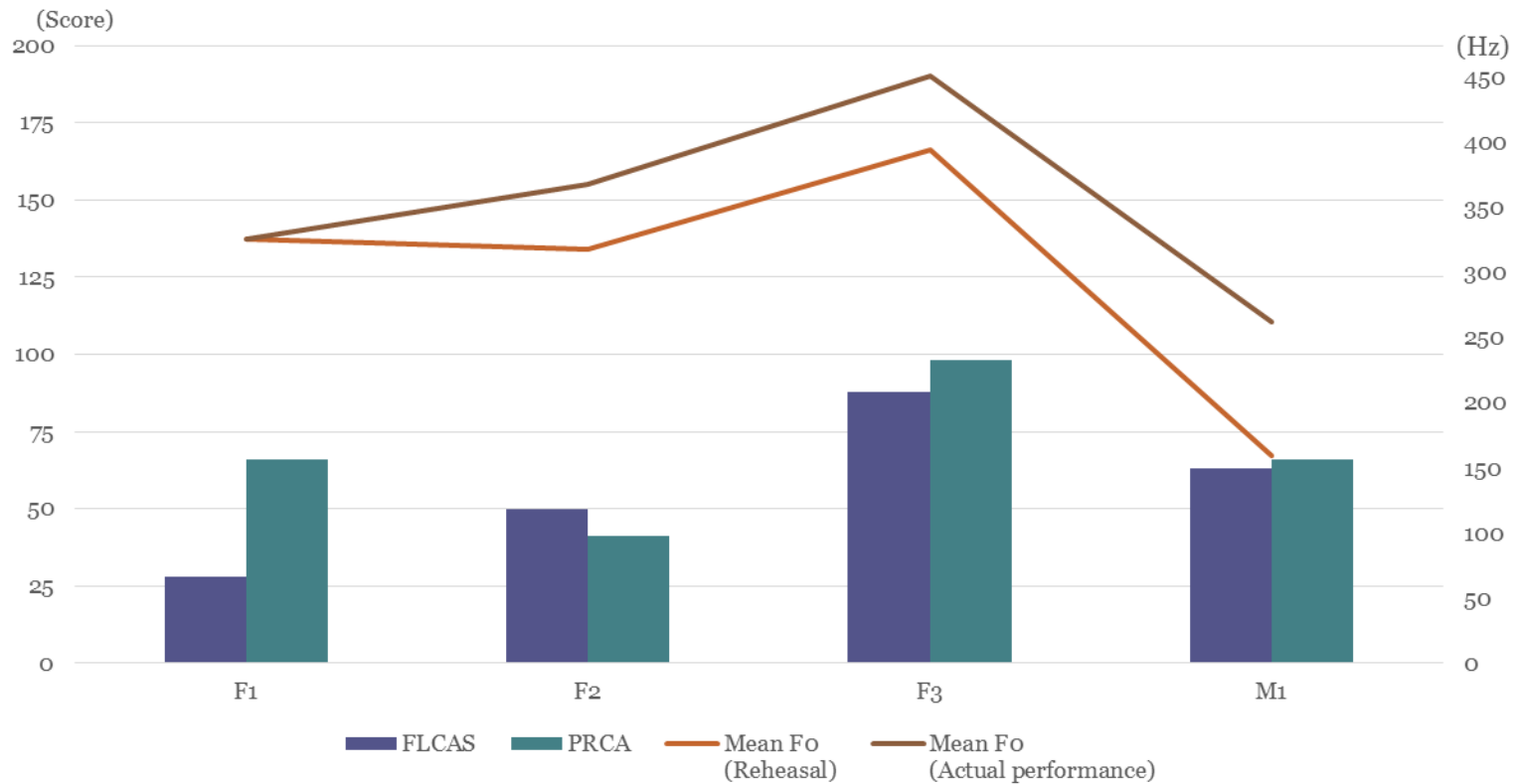
# Method 2

- Conducted two structured closed-ended questionnaires
  1. Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA)

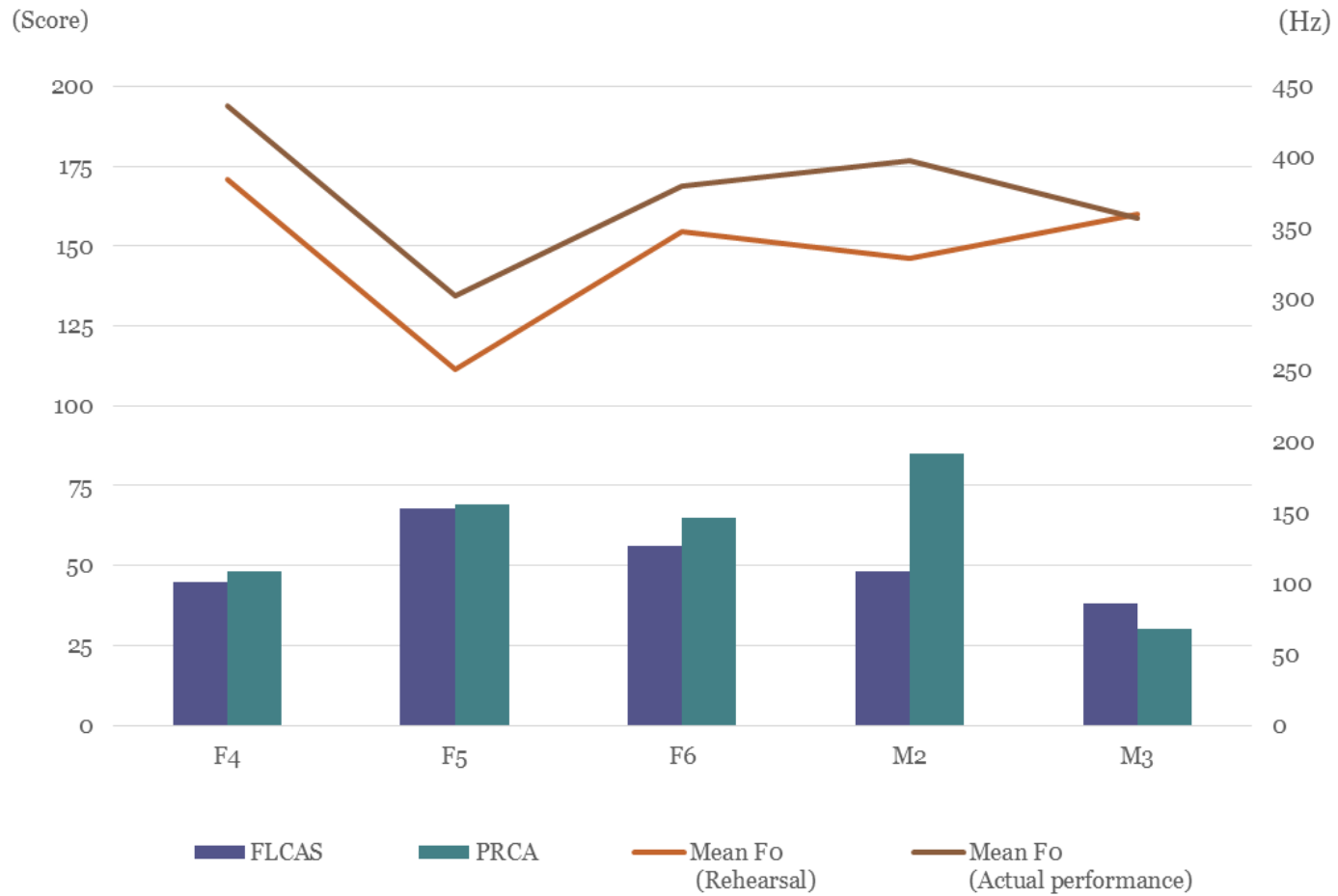
24 statements considering 4 situations: group discussion, meetings, interpersonal, public speaking
  2. Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)

24 statements out of original 33 items, considering communication apprehension, test anxiety, fear of negative evaluation

# Performance 1 (Happy Prince)



# Performance 2 (*Nanimono*)



# *Nanimono* Performance

- A parody of *My Fair Lady* (American Comedy-drama)
- *Elisa: F4*
- *Higgins: M3*
- *Pickering: M2*

# Results

- Mean F0 was significantly higher at the actual performance than the performance during the rehearsal. ( $r = 0.8500, p < 0.001$ )
- Rate of Mean F0 changes was significantly correlated with FLCAS scores. ( $r = 0.7167, p < 0.05$ )
- The least apprehensive student (M3) in both L1 and L2 showed no difference in F0 values between the actual performance and rehearsal. His use of intonation was stable.



# IV. Educational Implications

# Teaching Prosody

- Instability of F0 values among more apprehensive students
- More anxious individuals speak with smaller F0 range. (Jones, et al., 2011)
- Flat intonation of Japanese students (Yamane, 2019)
- Wider F0 range values increase intelligibility of Japanese English speakers. (Yabuuchi & Satoi, 2001)

Can teaching prosody reduce L2 anxiety?

# Oral Communication Festival

- Annual event for Oral Communication Study Group to present drama-style performances
- Students from each member's university participate in this event.
- Online festival was held last year.

Can the enjoyment of performing a drama  
reduce L2 speaking anxiety?

Anxiety vs. Enjoyment (Dwaele & MacIntyer, 2019)

# S's comments on OCF

- What did you learn from participating in OCF?

1. Intonation

2. Pronunciation

3. English skills

4. Intelligibility

5. Pleasure of using English (Shiozawa,2021)

Can learning prosody and enjoyment of performing a drama reduce L2 speaking anxiety?

Anxiety vs. Enjoyment (Dwaele & MacIntyer, 2019)

# V. Conclusion

# Conclusion

- Japanese university students who have higher foreign language anxiety tend to speak with higher mean F0 and their F0 range seems less stable.
- It is important to teach prosody to gain confidence and pleasure in speaking.
- *Professor Henry Higgins, a scholar of phonetics, believes that the accent and tone of one's voice determines a person's prospects in **society**.*



***L2 learning***

# Further Studies

- Cross-cultural research on the effect of personality traits on L2 learning anxiety with Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (MPQ)
- If you are interested in joining this research, please email me at [h-nakamu@kankyo-u.ac.jp](mailto:h-nakamu@kankyo-u.ac.jp)



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Thank you for listening!