One possible explanation for the lower levels of consonance between the FLSP teachers’ and students’ perceptions of the importance of the carrier content regarding speaking anxiety could lie within the postulations of FLSP instruction, which requires teachers to accentuate the real content of FLSP instruction and not the carrier content for which they would have to possess real knowledge of the specialist subject content (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998). Consequently, FLSP teachers are inclined to over-estimate the levels of the carrier content knowledge of FLSP students (Čepon, 2016). The apparent disregard of the FLSP teachers of the effect of inadequate carrier content on the raised levels of speaking anxiety may also arise simply from the negative strategy of ignoring the physical manifestations of that fear (2015).

Conclusions

The study showed that FLSP students and teachers hold different perspectives regarding the reasons for speaking anxiety in an FLSP. The FLSP students perceived insufficient specialist subject content knowledge as the main reason for their speaking anxiety, while the FLSP teachers’ perceptions gave priority to oral tests, the students’ inability to speak fluently and speaking anxiety arising from a feeling of apprehension of being looked down upon by classmates/peers for making mistakes. To conclude, insufficient knowledge of the carrier content is a decisive reason for FLSP speaking anxiety that teachers should acknowledge more extensively.

These findings are likely to provide insightful information and have implications for tertiary FLSP education. The difference in perceptions of the reasons for speaking anxiety between the FLSP students and teachers calls for further mutual understanding with a view to becoming better informed of each other’s perceptions.

References


