



Exploring Pronunciation Anxiety: A Comprehensive Analysis of Speaking Apprehension among Pre-Service Teachers in Public Speaking Activities

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Abstract: Possessing a high level of competence in pronunciation and public speaking is considered to be essential for success in the field of education. Despite the fact that pre-service teachers are constantly exposed to public speaking opportunities, they still experience feelings of apprehension related to the use of language. This study investigated the perceived pronunciation and public speaking anxiety of participants using a mixed-method explanatory sequential design. The quantitative phase of the study involved 55 respondents. The findings revealed generally high levels of anxiety in pronunciation and public speaking. Further, the factors that contribute to the causation of the feelings of language-related anxiety were also ranked. Moreover, findings also revealed a statistically significant moderate positive correlation between pronunciation and public speaking anxiety. On the other hand, seven participants were involved in the qualitative phase. The participants shared experiences and perceptions through one-on-one interviews. Insights from the qualitative phase revealed the challenges in speaking and pronunciation that affect participants' performance in public speaking contexts. Such findings give light to a better understanding of pronunciation and public speaking anxiety among pre-service teachers and provide insights into how to address these kinds of apprehension in academic and speaking contexts.

Keywords: Pronunciation Anxiety, Public Speaking Anxiety, Apprehension, Pre-Service Teachers, Mixed-Methods.

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INTRODUCTION

Developing clear, accurate, and fluent speaking skills is deemed crucial for pre-service teachers in the academic and professional settings. On top of that, pronunciation efficacy is also recognized as an important aspect in their speaking skills development [1]. However, this aspect is often hindered by anxiety in speaking [2, 3]. Moreover, this has been associated with language-related self-doubt, feelings of inadequacy, and a reduced sense of

competence in the particular language [4]. As a result, inadequate pronunciation not only threatens the speaker's self-image and triggers language-ego but also stands as a major barrier to confident speaking [5, 6]. Among pre-service teachers, this issue has been shown to cause apprehension and reluctance, which limits their willingness to use the English language in teaching [7]. Despite growing concern, little is known about this subject matter, specifically, anxiety in speaking and pronunciation [8].

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For instance, the study conducted in Jambi, Indonesia [10], delved into the speaking anxiety of EFL students in the English Teacher Education Program, including factors that affect it. The study identified language barriers, specifically rooted in low mastery in grammar, short vocabulary, and pronunciation anxiety, as one of the contributing factors tied to this issue faced by students in the English Teacher Education Program. But in most instances, the lack of grammatical knowledge has been given more emphasis than the other elements that also influence the speaking performance [10-13].

In a related context, pronunciation anxiety, particularly brought by the fear of mispronunciation, is said to affect the speaking competence of pre-service teachers in the Philippines. It has been unveiled in the study of [13], that participants who have this anxiety experience intense symptoms during public speaking activities, specifically nausea and excessive sweating. It has been further identified that linguistic obstacles, such as pronunciation issues, are one of the contributory factors to this anxiety. With this, the importance of conducting further examination of the matter at hand was emphasized in order to improve pre-service teachers' ability to guide future students in speaking confidently.

In Davao City [14], conducted a study that examined the perceived oral language proficiency of college students, as well as the common challenges they encountered during their exposure or engagement in speaking activities. According to this study, it has been revealed that participants who encountered difficulty in pronouncing unfamiliar words showed signs of distress and discomfort, which may indicate that language use anxiety exists. Additionally, it entails the need to pay close attention to the detrimental factors that might impede the successful use of the English language.

Although the existing body of literature has given an overview of the subject matter, there are still aspects of it left unreviewed. Previous studies conducted about anxiety associated with pronunciation and speaking were mostly quantitative [15-17]. Additionally, studies [9-19], only mentioned pronunciation as a factor, as they primarily highlighted the role of grammatical knowledge in oral communication and speaking apprehension. [20, 21], also emphasized the need to study the speaking anxiety of pre-service teachers during their teaching education program. Moreover, there is an absence of studies focusing on pronunciation anxiety in public speaking activities of pre-service teachers within Davao City, highlighting the need to conduct a study within the said locality.

Thus, expanding the coverage of the available literature related to the topic, a study employing a mixed-method design was pursued. The researchers conducted an explanatory-sequential study centered on the pronunciation and public speaking anxiety of pre-service teachers from the target school who will be using English as a medium of instruction in their respective areas of specialization. This study aimed to gather data and present an exhaustive understanding of the concepts of pronunciation and public speaking anxiety among the specified respondents by employing both quantitative and qualitative methods.

METHODS

The study utilized a mixed-method design, specifically an explanatory sequential design. Mixed-methods research involves the combination of both quantitative and qualitative data, commonly used in social, behavioral, and health sciences research. In this approach, the researchers draw an interpretation to analyze the research difficulties based on the complementary characteristics of both sets of data [22]. The researchers made use of the explanatory sequential strategy when they wanted to support the quantitative results with qualitative information, since this was a straightforward design. In line with this, the subsequent interpretation and explanation of the findings from the quantitative data analysis will make use of the qualitative data [22, 23].

In research, mixed-method approaches are used due to the fact that they allow researchers to explain results that seemingly contradict, through the use of different research methods. In the context of this study, the researchers chose to use this approach in order to explore the problem in a more detailed and insightful way. Further, the combination of both quantitative and qualitative data can help develop more reliable results. This may strengthen and expand the implications and conclusions of the study [24]. Both approaches are useful in terms of helping address the research questions posed in the study [25].

In this study, the researchers started with the collection of numerical data from the survey questionnaires and the analysis of said data using descriptive-correlational statistics in an effort to identify the levels and explain the factors that lead pre-service teachers to experience anxiety associated with pronunciation and public speaking. Thereafter, the researchers gathered qualitative data in order to find and delve deeper into other potential elements or aspects associated with the variables. An explanatory-sequential design was seen as the ideal fit for the study as it aimed to elaborate or extend qualitative findings with a basis centered on the quantitative results.

Data collection is considered the most significant step of any study because it is required in accomplishing and completing the research process [26].

Before collecting the data, the researchers sought the approval of the Dean of College of the participating school. The researchers also coordinated with the subject instructors to identify pre-service teachers who might be experiencing anxiety or apprehension in pronunciation and public speaking, drawing on the instructors' personal observations as the basis for this assessment. After determining the prospective respondents, an orientation was given where the researchers informed them about the details and procedures of the study, privacy and confidentiality measures, and their rights as respondents. Then, the Informed Consent Form was distributed to the target respondents. The respondents were also given enough time to decide on their participation. Afterwards, the researchers collected the ICF to identify those who agreed to participate and those who did not.

Following that, those who agreed to participate and take part in the study received the

validated survey questionnaires. The respondents indicated their level of agreement or disagreement with each corresponding statement in the two-part validated questionnaire. After filling out the validated questionnaire, the respondents returned it to the researchers. Once the quantitative data were acquired, the researchers then determined who among the respondents from the quantitative phase would be interviewed for the qualitative phase. The researchers also ensured that the participants were not forced to participate, but had done so voluntarily. Further, the participants were the ones who decided on the date, time, and location of their interviews.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings that were focused on the perceived pronunciation and public speaking anxiety of pre-service teachers were presented and interpreted in this chapter. This included the data gathered from both qualitative and quantitative phases. The following findings aim to provide a more detailed insight into the experiences of pre-service teachers and their views related to pronunciation and public speaking anxiety in the use of the English language.

Table 1: The Level of Pronunciation Anxiety

Indicators	Mean	Description	Interpretation
Communication Apprehension	3.83	High	This indicates that pre-service teachers often experience pronunciation anxiety, reflected in notable agreement to statements involving nervousness, self-consciousness, and unease in communication and pronunciation.
Pronunciation Self-Image and Self-Efficacy	4.04	High	
Pronunciation Beliefs	4.28	Very High	This indicates that pre-service teachers constantly experience pronunciation anxiety, reflected in notable agreement to statements involving nervousness, self-consciousness, and unease in communication and pronunciation.
Overall Mean	4.05	High	This indicates that pre-service teachers often experience pronunciation anxiety, reflected in notable agreement to statements involving nervousness, self-consciousness, and unease in communication and pronunciation.

Table 4 presents the level of pronunciation anxiety among pre-service teachers in terms of communication apprehension, pronunciation self-image and self-efficacy, and pronunciation beliefs. The overall mean score of 4.05 indicates a high level of pronunciation anxiety, suggesting that pre-service teachers often experience feelings of nervousness, self-consciousness, and unease in relation to their pronunciation in communicative contexts. Among the three indicators, pronunciation beliefs presented a mean of 4.28, which was categorized as very high. Communication apprehension obtained a mean of 3.83, the lowest among the three indicators, but still described as high.

Additionally, the findings of the pronunciation beliefs factor suggest that pronunciation anxiety is strongly linked to pre-service teachers' beliefs about pronunciation standards, particularly the expectation to attain native-like pronunciation, evident in the statement, *"I think that good English pronunciation is very important for a teacher who makes use of English in instructing his/her students"*. These internalized beliefs held by individuals often cause pressure to intensify and further reinforce expectations. This would then contribute to heightened anxiety among pre-service teachers who are expected to apply correct and accurate pronunciation, especially during classroom instruction. Further, such beliefs may also

evolve with experience and exposure. Thus, pre-service teachers' increased awareness of pronunciation standards may increase self-consciousness and intensify anxiety [27, 28].

Moreover, the findings of the communication apprehension factor indicates that respondents frequently experience pronunciation anxiety during oral communicative activities, evident in the statements *"I feel more comfortable conversing with English speakers at a similar skill level to mine"* and *"I feel nervous when using English to express ideas"*, which reflect their tendencies to avoid conversing with other people, especially those people who have an advanced command of the use of English. Further, the findings align with the studies [29, 30], who noted that fear of errors and linguistic inadequacy are key

sources of anxiety in oral communicative situations. This anxiety, in particular, is relevant for pre-service teachers who are expected to model accurate pronunciation.

However, the generally high level of anxiety observed in the results of this study contrasts with the results of the study [28]. The study found that pre-service teachers experience a moderate level of pronunciation anxiety. This result suggests that the manifestation of this kind of anxiety may vary across contexts. Therefore, it is safe to say that pronunciation anxiety may be prevalent, but its intensity may differ depending on multiple factors such as self-perceptions, individual differences, and beliefs.

Table 2: Ranking of the Three Factors of Pronunciation Anxiety

Indicator	Mean	Rank	Standard Deviation
Communication Apprehension	3.83	3	0.57
Pronunciation Self-Image and Self-Efficacy	4.04	2	0.54
Pronunciation Beliefs	4.28	1	0.42

Table 5 presents a comparison of the mean and standard deviation of the three identified indicators of pronunciation anxiety, and serves as a basis for ranking which among them significantly contributes to causing this anxiety among the respondents. Pronunciation Beliefs had the highest mean score of 4.28, which indicates that this factor contributes to the pronunciation anxiety the most. It also has a standard deviation of 0.42, the lowest standard deviation among the three factors, which indicates a consistent agreement among respondents. Pronunciation Self-image and Self-efficacy follows with a mean of 4.04 and a slightly higher SD of 0.54, which implies moderate variability in respondents' perception. Communication Apprehension had the lowest mean score of 3.83 and an SD of 0.57, indicating that it is the least contributing factor and the most variably experienced among the respondents.

Additionally, the high mean score and low standard deviation for pronunciation beliefs indicate a strong and consistent perception among pre-service teachers that pronunciation standards, especially having pronunciation accuracy, are central to speaking competence. The findings align with the study of [4], which identified pronunciation beliefs as a notable source of anxiety. Further, it also aligns with the study of [31], which found that learners often feel pressured to meet pronunciation standards. The findings also revealed a low standard deviation. The low SD indicates that responses were consistent,

which further suggests that this belief is internalized and rooted in the pre-service teachers' individual cognitive perception of what is considered acceptable in terms of pronunciation and speech. Meanwhile, communication apprehension obtained a slightly lower mean and higher SD in comparison to the other two factors. Its higher SD indicates that experiences associated with apprehension in communicative activities are more individualized and dependent on the context of such activity. Some pre-service teachers may feel comfortable speaking in public settings. However, others may struggle due to factors such as fear of negative evaluation and linguistic inadequacy [32, 33]. The varying responses among the participants also suggest that although communication apprehension contributes to anxiety, it may be less universally or commonly experienced compared to the other two factors.

Further, these results imply that internal cognitive and affective factors may be the primary determinants of pronunciation anxiety among pre-service teachers, particularly individual self-perceptions related to pronunciation competence. The occurrence of anxiety appears to be rooted in how individuals internalize their standards and evaluate their own abilities. This further reflects the importance of having pedagogical approaches that will address the belief systems of individuals as well as the self-concepts that they may have, which are related to pronunciation and skills in speaking.

Table 3: The Level of Public Speaking Anxiety

Indicators	Mean	Description	Interpretation
Communication Apprehension	4.09	High	This indicates that pre-service teachers often experience public speaking anxiety, reflected in notable agreement to statements involving discomfort, self-doubt, and embarrassment during participation in public speaking activities.
Fear of Negative Evaluation	3.88	High	
Test Anxiety	3.79	High	
Overall Mean	3.92	High	

Table 6 presents the perceived level of public speaking anxiety. The findings show that respondents have a generally high level of anxiety, reflected in the overall mean score of 3.92. This means that pre-service teachers frequently feel nervousness, self-consciousness, and stress when required to speak English in academic and evaluative settings. Among the indicators, communication apprehension presented the highest mean of 4.09, categorized as high. Meanwhile, test anxiety had a mean of 3.79, the lowest among the three indicators, but still categorized as high.

The high mean score of communication apprehension suggests that respondents experience nervousness when required to participate in public speaking activities. This is particularly evident in the statement, *"I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English"*, which reflects the internal discomfort and nervousness associated with communication apprehension in public speaking activities. These findings align with existing studies that emphasized how speaking is the most anxiety-

inducing language macro skill [34, 20]. The findings further suggest that pre-service teachers frequently experience discomfort and hesitation when speaking English in public speaking activities, which aligns with findings by [35], that emphasized how the perceived communication competence significantly influences apprehension levels.

Meanwhile, the high mean of test anxiety indicates that pre-service teachers may feel worry or tension during evaluative speaking situations such as presentations or oral recitations, reflected in the statement *"I experience considerable anxiety while sitting in the room just before I start to speak during oral recitations"*. The high mean score of test anxiety indicates that performance-based assessments in English-speaking settings are a significant source of stress for pre-service teachers. This aligns with the findings of the study of [36], who emphasized that anxiety levels escalate when students are unprepared, suggesting that inadequate preparation and pressure in a speaking task or test contribute to heightened stress.

Table 4: Ranking of the Three Factors of Public Speaking Anxiety

Indicator	Mean	Rank	Standard Deviation
Communication Apprehension	4.09	1	0.62
Fear of Negative Evaluation	3.88	2	0.83
Test Anxiety	3.79	3	0.66

Table 7 presents a comparison of the mean and standard deviation of the three identified indicators of public speaking anxiety, and serves as a basis for ranking which among them contributes to causing this type of anxiety among pre-service teachers. Communication Apprehension emerged as the highest-ranking indicator with the highest mean score of 4.09 and the lowest SD of 0.62, among the three indicators. This suggests that pre-service teachers commonly experience heightened anxiety when faced with the possibility of communicating or speaking in public. Ranking second in terms of mean score was the fear of negative evaluation, with a mean score of 3.88 and an SD of 0.83, which reflects greater variability in responses, which further implies that some respondents are highly affected by this factor, while others may be less concerned. Test Anxiety placed in the third rank with a mean score of 3.79 and an SD of 0.66, which indicates a somewhat consistent agreement among the respondents. Further, this also

suggests that test anxiety has less dominance among factors, but still is a relevant contributor to public speaking anxiety, especially in performance-based speaking contexts, such as oral examinations or graded presentations.

Moreover, the high rank of communication apprehension supports the idea that discomfort and fear during oral communication are pervasive and can hinder classroom participation and teaching performance [36, 37]. The low variability in the responses further showed that this form of anxiety was a common experience shared among pre-service teachers, which is most likely rooted in perceived deficiencies in communicative competence [35]. On the other hand, test anxiety, though ranked lowest among factors, remained a contributor to public speaking anxiety. This is particularly notable during performance-based speaking tasks. Its consistent standard deviation suggested that pre-service

teachers may experience this anxiety with a relatively consistent pattern in a less intense manner as compared to the highest-ranked factor. Studies conducted by [38, 39], confirmed that test-related worries may also contribute to public speaking

anxiety, often associated with a lack of preparation and insufficient linguistic knowledge. Moreover, infrequent speaking practice and fear of making mistakes during evaluative contexts also contribute to heightened anxiety levels.

Table 5: The Relationship between Pronunciation Anxiety and Public Speaking Anxiety

Variables	R	P-Value	Descriptive Interpretation
Pronunciation Anxiety	0.61855	<0.01	Moderate Positive Correlation
Public Speaking Anxiety			

Table 8 reveals the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson R) of the two types of language anxiety. As presented above, pronunciation anxiety and public speaking anxiety showed an r-value of 0.61855. This value is interpreted as a moderate positive correlation. It also has a p-value of <0.01, which indicates a statistically significant association between the two variables. This also further suggests that the observed correlation is not due to random variation. The moderate positive correlation implies that as one variable increases, the other will also increase. Moreover, if one variable decreases, the other will also tend to decrease. The result supports the researchers' hypothesis, stated as lower pronunciation anxiety in pre-service teachers will lead to better performance in public speaking. Hence, the positive moderate correlation of the two variables reflected in the table above indicates that lower pronunciation anxiety also means lower public speaking anxiety, which aligns with the expectation of having better performance in public speaking activities.

On top of that, the results were consistent with prior studies that found out that individuals who have lower or lacking confidence in their speaking skills, including skills in pronunciation, were more susceptible to experiencing heightened anxiety and difficulties during oral tasks [40, 37]. Further, these studies reinforce the idea that heightened anxiety impacts the success of oral communicative performances. Moreover [41], also emphasized that reduced anxiety, especially in public speaking activities, is associated with improved speaking performance, which implies a relationship between anxiety and communicative success, especially in public speaking activities.

However [42], presented findings that contrast the results of this study. The previous study

reported a negative correlation between anxiety and performance, which suggested that lower anxiety does not always guarantee better speaking performance or outcomes. The said contrasting findings highlight the complexity of anxiety's role in speaking performance and communication, and further suggest that while anxiety reduction can be beneficial to pre-service teachers, it may not be the sole determinant of a better performance quality.

Moreover, the findings in the quantitative phase are consistent with the Second Language Anxiety Theory proposed by McIntyre and Garner (1989). The theory established that anxiety associated with the second language may manifest in different forms. In this study, pre-service teachers utilized English in various instructional and public speaking contexts. Such utilization of the language increases their vulnerability to experiencing anxiety associated with the said language. Therefore, both public speaking and pronunciation anxiety were not only a result of performance pressure but also reflected the internalized linguistic beliefs and standards and self-perceptions associated with the use of English.

Recurring trends and themes that encapsulate the varied experiences of pre-service teachers during public speaking activities were derived by the researchers upon conducting a close examination of the interview transcripts from seven participants. The qualitative data were synthesized through a comprehensive thematic analysis, which allowed the identification and condensation of ideas and patterns into themes representing lived experiences from public speaking activities. To show how anxiety in public speaking and pronunciation are experienced by pre-service teachers and to offer an understanding of them, the themes provide context for the interconnected nature of challenges and experiences posed by the two.

Table 6: Themes and Core Ideas of the Experiences of Pre-service Teachers during Public Speaking Activities

Emerging Themes	Significant Statements
The Shackles of Judging Eyes	I feel nervous and afraid that I might make mistakes or not deliver my message properly. (PTSAPA1_Q6_6.1)
	That is what I am afraid of, their opinion about me. (PTSAPA3_Q6_6.2)

Emerging Themes	Significant Statements
	I feel like people will judge me for everything I do and everything I say. (PTSAPA5_Q6_6.1)
	I lose my self-confidence to speak in public just because of the people around who might give a comment. (PTSAPA7_Q6_6.1)
The Weight of Spotlight's Pressure	I avoid making eye contact with my audience because it makes me forget what I am going to say during public speaking. (PTSAPA1_Q6_6.1)
	I feel anxious and hesitant because speaking in front of people is nerve-wracking. (PTSAPA3_Q6_6.1)
	Being on stage in front of many people makes me anxious and hesitant because I tremble, my heart beats fast, and I constantly try to stop myself from being nervous. (PTSAPA5_Q6_6.1)
	I stutter, feel nervous, and experience a mental block when I am in front of people. (PTSAPA6_Q6_6.1)
The Echoes of Unforgettable Humiliation	The experience was not just about embarrassment, but also a personal failure that kept replaying in my mind. (PTSAPA1_Q6_6.2)
	My fear of being embarrassed again was so intense that I even said I would rather die than repeat that humiliation. (PTSAPA2_Q6_6.2)
	I forgot my lines and froze in front of the class, and my classmates laughed at me, which became a trauma I have carried until now. (PTSAPA6_Q6_6.1)
	Being judged and corrected for my pronunciation and grammar left a lasting sense of fear and self-doubt, affecting my willingness to speak. (PTSAPA7_Q6_6.1)
The Doubtful Tongue	The thought of speaking English in front of many people makes me feel embarrassed because I feel doubtful about my speaking skills. (PTSAPA1_Q6_6.2)
	I often feel like I have said something wrong. (PTSAPA2_Q6_6.1)
	I feel like I cannot deliver my talk properly because my English tends to get rumbled. (PTSAPA4_Q6_6.1)
	I feel nervous because I struggle to pronounce certain words and doubt my ability to articulate them correctly. (PTSAPA7_Q6_6.1)

The Shackles of Judging Eyes was the first emerging theme after rigorous analysis, which collectively captures pre-service teachers' experiences in public speaking activities. This theme talks about the internal struggle, specifically experiencing a feeling of discomfort from being watched and negatively evaluated. As most of the participants expressed, they shared that speaking in front of a crowd always makes them feel examined with their gestures and even the exact words they will say. These specific experiences, as claimed by them, heighten the preoccupation with thinking about others' possible judgment and self-doubt about one's speaking capability. They were observed to pause mid-explanation, projecting the same self-consciousness they described being in. Going further, they attribute their mistakes to personal inadequacy, as they believe that their performance defines their competence.

The findings of this theme indicate that pre-service teachers' anxiety is strongly shaped by their fear of negative evaluation, mirroring patterns reported in prior research [21-38], similarly found that fear of ridicule and negative comments intensifies emotional discomfort during speaking tasks. This finding confirms the accounts of participants who feel scrutinized, which leads to an

intense fear of making mistakes. Moreover, this implies that the audience's expectations as an evaluative pressure becomes a significant triggering factor of speaking anxiety [2-43].

Further, the theme that comes after the tension of being scrutinized is *The Weight of the Spotlight's Pressure*, which expounds the struggles experienced by pre-service teachers in handling their emotions and bodily reactions during speaking performances. An overwhelming combination of physiological and cognitive disruptions were disclosed by the participants, which includes trembling hands, rapid heartbeats, and mental blocks. This specified reaction became apparent as they recounted these moments, as many participants tend to release small breaths due to pressure. As implied in this theme, public speaking anxiety among pre-service teachers is evident in their performance itself, as it manifests emotionally and physically. This theme implies that the pressure to engage in speaking tasks without errors makes public speaking a stressful task that influences their confidence in teaching.

This pressure that becomes evident in participants' reactions reflects similarity in published studies in studies related to language anxiety. This

theme can be related to the study of [33], about communication apprehension often causes learners to freeze, stutter, or experience mental blocks during oral communication tasks. Similarly, [20], found that speaking apprehension among pre-service teachers increases when they feel pressure to perform well or sense the weight of teaching expectations placed upon them. Involvement in public speaking activities, although common in the field of education, can be emotionally struggling for teachers, affecting their expressive capabilities and threatening their sense of competence.

In addition, suffering from persistent pressure to talk around people due to receiving constant destructive criticism from people leaves *The Echoes of Unforgettable Humiliation*. This theme explores the experiences of pre-service teachers that affected them negatively, which left a persistent memory within them. They recalled the moments vividly when they were laughed at, scolded, and publicly humiliated by their audience or instructor after committing a mistake. As they continued to narrate their unforgettable memories, some lowered their gaze, and their voices became less audible as though they would hear criticism from the researchers. It was entailed that their willingness to participate in future speaking activities was influenced by these memories, considered as lingering emotional wounds. Some even shed tears while sharing, implying that their self-worth is reduced.

Related studies that look into the repercussions of negative evaluation in spoken communication are in line with these painful recollections. It was reported that fear of criticism significantly discourages learners from participating in speaking tasks, often leading them to avoid

engaging or just be silent to protect themselves [44]. This has been identical to how participants described avoiding speaking opportunities and isolating themselves after experiencing humiliation. This withdrawal was claimed not to be momentary, but it causes a lasting emotional burden that shapes how individuals perceive their capabilities [45, 46].

Moreover, coming after the pain of humiliation, speakers tend to be more cautious with their speaking skills, having *The Doubtful Tongue*, which reveals the uncertainty of pre-service teachers in terms of their language usage and capabilities that heighten their inhibitions to engage in communication. The use of the English language triggers speakers to think they might make mistakes. Most of the time, they question their competence as they frequently feel that their words come out wrong during public speaking. Additionally, they also shared that they are dissatisfied with their performance as their thoughts become jumbled, making their English sound “rumbled.” On top of that, they also mentioned their difficulty in pronouncing certain words, which further intensified their hesitation to speak.

Decreased efficacy in the usage of the English language is caused by having concerns related to one's speaking performance, which can be considered as a form of linguistic inferiority. The tendency to constantly monitor results for insecurity and over-attention to correctness prevents the most efficient way of expressing [37]. These resonated with the descriptions given by participants that their thoughts became disorganized and their speech sounds unclear. These findings, consistent with the other studies, confirm that public speaking is also a linguistic challenge, where uncertainty about English usage undermines their confidence and discourages active participation.

Table 7: Themes and Core Ideas of the Perception of Pre-service Teachers during Public Speaking Activities

Emerging Themes	Significant Statements
Deafening Cacophony of Insecurity	My speaking performance are affected because I mispronounce English words due to being unsure of my pronunciation skills (PTSAPA1_Q7_7.1)
	When it comes to English pronunciation, I feel unsure, less capable, and hesitant, which affects my fluency and confidence. (PTSAPA2_Q7_7.1)
	The delivery of my speech is affected because my English does not sound fluent. (PTSAPA6_Q7_7.1)
	I feel afraid knowing that there are people around me who are good at English pronunciation. (PTSAPA6_Q7_7.1)
	I prefer to speak in Bisaya as I can express my ideas better without struggling to find words to say and being insecure about pronunciation (PTSAPAQ7_7_7.1)
Drowning Beneath the Depths of Anxiety	My performance is affected because the message may not be clearly understood by students. (PTSAPA1_Q7_7.2).
	Whenever I worry about mispronouncing words, my hands get cold, shake uncontrollably, and my legs tremble. (PTSAPA2_Q7_7.1).
	I get nervous and start to ramble, making it hard to deliver my message because my emotions overpower what I want to say. (PTSAPA4_Q7_7.2).

Emerging Themes	Significant Statements
	I hesitate or go blank when I am unsure how to pronounce unfamiliar words. (PTSAPA6_Q7_7.1).
	Because of nervousness, I mispronounce words, my ideas get mixed up, and I cannot express what I want to say in English. (PTSAPA7_Q7_7.2).
Chasing the Illusion of Perfection	I need to build my fluency in English as educators because we are expected to be proficient in speaking (PTSAPA1_Q7_7.2).
	I pressure myself to sound perfect because I believe pronunciation shows speaking efficiency. (PTSAPA4_Q7_7.2).
	It affects my speaking performance because I concentrate more on pronouncing words correctly instead of focusing on the message. (PTSAPA6_Q7_7.1).
	I feel dissatisfied pronouncing words because I believe an American-like pronunciation is important as a good speaker. (PTSAPA3_Q7_7.1).
	When I am trying to speak straight English, nervousness takes over since we are expected to be well-articulated in delivering our topics. (PTSAPA7_Q7_7.2).
Hiding from the Eyes of Scrutiny	I lose focus on delivering my topic even if I am well-prepared, because I might be judged or embarrassed by the audience. (PTSAPA1_Q7_7.2)
	When I mispronounced a word, others corrected me immediately, I chose to stay silent rather than risk saying it wrong again.(PTSAPA2_Q7_7.1)
	I feel shy and embarrassed, especially when many people witness my mistakes, especially those who are really good at speaking English. (PTSAPA3_Q7_7.1)
	It affects how I deliver my speech because I feel embarrassed, and I get afraid of being judged. (PTSAPA4_Q7_7.1)
	I might say something wrong, and other people can be very judgmental. (PTSAPA7_Q7_7.1)

Deafening Cacophony of Insecurity emerged as the first theme from participants' narratives, which relates to their uncertainty in pronunciation. Even more so, this uncertainty becomes a factor that contributes to influencing the confidence and fluency of an individual. According to the participants, they become more observant of the probability of mispronouncing some words instead of communicating an idea, which shifts their attention to accuracy rather than successfully communicating the intended message. Self-monitoring produces a sense of linguistic inadequacy as a result of feeling less capable each time these participants speak the English Language. Physically, this insecurity came through when most of the participants during the interview did not maintain eye contact; instead, they looked away in the middle of the sentence as if looking for the right term to use.

The fear related to mispronunciation causes physical and emotional reactions that interfere with speech production, as found in this study coincides with [47, 32]. The trembling sensation and mid-sentence pauses clearly depict these effects. Moreover, these findings can also be connected to the study of [29], which revealed that learners who perceive their language ability as inadequate often experience hesitation and disrupted message flow. According to [48], stronger self-belief in one's ability to pronounce words correctly enhances performance by minimizing anxiety and increasing communicative confidence. On the contrary, the participants in this

study have demonstrated low pronunciation self-efficacy, which means that their persistent insecurity contributes to reduced fluency observed in their speech.

In addition, many ideas from the participants further aggravate their anxiety as they are often *Chasing the Illusion of Perfection*, hinged on the internalized belief that good speakers, especially educators, should have perfect pronunciation. On the other hand, linguistic perfection has been an aspiration of participants as they consider it an aspect of their competency. With this said, according to them, they tend to exhibit excessive self-correction, rehearsals over and over, and dissatisfaction. Therefore, speaking is no longer about communicating meaning but about avoiding perceived imperfections. The effort they put into striving for "ideal pronunciation" often makes them reiterate the way they responded to the questions during the interview, reflecting their careful effort to control every word that comes from the mouth.

This theme shows that participants' belief that future educators must demonstrate flawless pronunciation leads them to overcorrect, rehearse excessively, and prioritize accuracy over meaningful communication. Their negative self-beliefs and hesitation are consistent with [27], who found that pronunciation-related beliefs strongly shape anxiety. The participants' act of comparing to ideal standards also aligns with [49]. The participants' comparison

with ideal standards is consistent with Subekti's discussion. Linguistic expectation burdens pre-service teachers, specifically with the pressure to sound professional [50, 51]. All in all, spaces should be given to normalize imperfection in pronunciation.

Further, looking beyond these internal standards is the belief of perfection from the audiences, leading pre-service teachers *Hiding from the Eyes of Scrutiny*. According to them, their choice to engage less in public speaking is shaped by moments of being publicly corrected in a form of destructive criticism of their pronunciation. In this sense, speaking becomes a critical moment that must be done well in order to avoid being a subject for evaluation. Signals of discomfort during the interview were evident as some showed attempts to soothe themselves by frequently touching personal items and clenching their hands together.

However, the theme hiding from the Eyes of Scrutiny is parallel to the study of [52], found that strong sensitivity to criticism heightened anxiety. Additionally, the fear of evaluation in case mispronunciation occurs hinders speech delivery [32]. Speech avoidance moments, as shared by the participants, also relate with the findings of [42], further implying that receiving negative evaluation and corrective feedback means people are more observant of every mistake. These connections together suggest how perceived scrutiny strongly influences the engagement of pre-service teachers in speaking tasks, sustained by reluctance and withdrawal.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the study aimed to discover the perceived pronunciation and public speaking anxiety of pre-service teachers. The results revealed consistently high levels across both variables. The Pearson correlation results also revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between the two, which indicates that as one variable increases, the other also increases. In line with this, the researchers accepted the hypothesis stated as, lower pronunciation anxiety in pre-service teachers will lead to better performance in public speaking. Considering the correlation between the two variables, it can be understood that reducing pronunciation anxiety is one of the ways to improve the communicative competence and public speaking performance of pre-service teachers.

Additionally, the qualitative phase also revealed how these two forms of linguistic anxiety are multifaceted and cover a deeply layered experience among participants. The themes revealed in the study include four for the sixth research question, namely, the shackles of judging eyes, the

weight of spotlight's pressure, the echoes of unforgettable humiliation, and the doubtful tongue. Moreover, there are also four themes for the seventh research question, namely, the deafening cacophony of insecurity, drowning beneath the depths of anxiety, chasing the illusion of perfection, and hiding from the eyes of scrutiny. Overall, the derived themes express the issue behind communicative and linguistic-related anxiety, further entailing that it is not merely a temporary barrier to speaking performance, but rather, it is a complex experience that affects the individual's confidence, identity, and perceived competence of the participants.

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