==

Pronunciation Anxiety And Capability To Communicate Of Grade 11 Students In UM DIGOS

Mary Angel Ann Kirit[1*], Bernadette Fabroa[2], Ana Mae Monteza[3]
[1]Department of Teacher Education, University of Mindanao Digos College, Philippines
[2]Department of Teacher Education, University of Mindanao Digos College, Philippines
[3]Department of Teacher Education, University of Mindanao Digos College, Philippines

Corresponding author's email:maryangelannkirit14@gmail.com

Abstract
Pronunciation anxiety is one of the problems encountered by the students. They are hesitant to speak the second language because they fear mispronouncing it, affecting their communication skills. Thus, this study aimed to determine the students' pronunciation anxiety level and its relationship to their communication ability. We used a descriptive-correlational research design in the study, which included the 161 Senior High School Grade 11 students of UMDC. Consequently, findings revealed that respondents sometimes feel anxious when pronouncing words yet are highly communicative with others. Also, results showed a significant relationship between the students' levels of pronunciation anxiety and their capability to communicate, which indicates that the pronunciation anxiety of the students affects their ability to communicate. After thorough analysis, the researchers recommended that the school administrators may conduct a student's self-evaluation and may implement different intervention programs. Additionally, teachers may use speaking activities to help students boost their confidence in communication. Moreover, students may encourage themselves to be calm when pronouncing words. Lastly, this study may be a reference for other researchers to explore other factors related to students' moderate achievement in overcoming pronunciation anxiety.

Keywords: pronunciation anxiety; capability to communicate; SHS Students; quantitative

INTRODUCTION

Instructors frequently focus on preparing students for exams that assess language knowledge rather than language skills like oral communication (Ha & Murray, 2021). Despite spending a lot of time and effort learning English, many students need help with oral communication due to the professors' emphasis on linguistic form in the classroom. Also, the student's emotions, such as anxiousness, impact how well they communicate. According to Bitsko, Holbrook, Ghandour, Blumberg, Visser, Perou, and Walkup (2018), anxiety has recently drawn the attention of specialists in undergraduate education due to its increasing prevalence among students and its association with active learning pedagogies in undergraduate science courses.

On the other hand, because it permeates all aspects of human life where the speaker and the hearer collaborate to make and understand each other's utterances

(Foote & Trofimovich, 2018), pronunciation is an essential element of communicative competence (Jones, 2018). Learners of second languages (L2) who experience pronunciation issues and anxiety are less likely to be understood verbally (Thomson & Derwing, 2015). Moreover, pronunciation helps students understand spoken English more quickly (Seyedabadi et al., 2015). In this way, clear pronunciation lays the groundwork for further oral skill improvement in L2 learners.

Exploring the relationship between pronunciation and communication is vital to note that pronunciation training affects students' lives in practically all contexts and circumstances (Darcy, 2018). For instance, the teachers in Couper's (2017) research stated that pronunciation is a crucial component of learning English and aids in their students' success in communication. This result is consistent with a prior study that demonstrated that teachers place a high value on pronunciation in ESL instruction since it influences students' communication skills (Zielinski & Yates, 2015). Interestingly, Nguyen's (2019) study's teacher participants stated that pronunciation was the most crucial language competence, which suggests that if a student experiences pronunciation anxiety, they would also experience language communication anxiety.

Theoretically, the theory of willingness to communicate in a language (L2WTC), as proposed by MacIntyre, Clement, Dornyei, and Noels (1998), as cited in the study of Baran-Lucarz (2014), emphasizes the readiness of learners to engage in communication as a result of the interaction between immediate situational factors, such as the desire to speak to a specific person or knowledge of the topic, and more long-lasting influences, such as the study's theoretical underpinnings. They propose that people should instead believe in themselves and start reading phrases they had problems pronouncing because they explain that "anything that increases state anxiety will diminish one's self-confidence and, consequently, one's willingness to and capability to communicate."

Research on learners' perceptions of language education, in general, has increased over the past several decades, but little is known about how pronunciation anxiety affects communicative ability in tertiary English (Nguyen et al., 2021). As a result, the researchers at UM Digos College are encouraged to conduct a study to determine whether students in senior high school are reluctant to speak a second language because they are concerned about mispronouncing it. Therefore, they will find it challenging to communicate using the language, leading to low self-esteem.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Fear of Negative Evaluation

According to Baran-Lucarz (2014), as he stated that learners experience fear of negative evaluation caused by anticipating that other speakers will have negative opinions about one based on one's pronunciation. This is also supported by Dornyei (2015), learners may also fear being judged negatively by others, like their classmates and teachers, if they consider their pronunciation different from or at a lower level than that of the majority; if their pronunciation does not meet their pre-set goals or if they hold

beliefs that acquiring a native-like accent is necessary, I always possible to achieve or is expected by significant others.

Self-assessment

Pronunciation anxiety has been suggested as a situation-specific type of anxiety; it was also believed to have a trait-like nature, most probably shaped by several individual-learner differences, particularly personality (Baran-Łucarz, 2014). This anxiety comprises self-perceptions and beliefs related to foreign language learning. Worrying about one's pronunciation can be an essential source of language anxiety and willingness to communicate (MacIntyre, 2017).

Level of Students' Capability to Communicate

There are other potential benefits from more frequent contact with the authentic target language. First, learners with higher levels of communication capability, having experienced practical communicative situations, may reveal more realistic beliefs about the importance of pronunciation in communication, realizing, for example, that even accented pronunciation can be intelligible (Baran-Łucarz, 2014). And, students who are more eager to speak outside and inside the classroom may expose themselves to more input and offer more practice in the perception and production of words. Though this may not guarantee higher levels of pronunciation (Derwing &Munro, 2015).

Self-confidence

According to Zhang, Beckmann, and Beckmann (2018), self-confidence is also rooted in the culture one is brought up in. This seems particularly important in light of Gregersen and MacIntyre's (2015) claim that "researchers have consistently found that high FL anxiety and low TL self-confidence are the greatest predictors of a learner's unwillingness to communicate."

Motivation

As cited by Duong, Hung, and Nguyen (2021), most students (18/24) said that there are factors that arouse learners' interest in classroom learning. The students' responses suggest that the classroom atmosphere influences their interest and motivation in learning and practicing pronunciation. Reflecting on their recent experience, the students believed that communicative tasks create a more relaxing atmosphere via arranging communicative tasks, making learners more willingly involved in classroom learning.

METHOD

Respondents

The respondents to this study were the 161 senior high school grade 11 students of UM Digos College. The SHS students who responded were specifically the Grade 11 students because they have an oral communication subject in which they could easily connect and understand the questions being asked to them to answer the problem of the

study. Moreover, the respondents must be enrolled during the first semester of the school year 2021-2022 with strands in STEM, HUMSS, and ABM. Additionally, the study used random sampling to determine the appropriate sample size. Lastly, the listings of the respondents were obtained from the principal of the senior high school at UM Digos College.

Based on Table 1, the data revealed that most of the participants were students under the strand of Humanities and Social Science (HUMSS) (f = 64; 39.8%) and to be followed by the students under Accountancy, Business Management (ABM) (f = 58; 36.0%). Lastly, the least number of participants or students were under the strand of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) (f = 39; 24.2%).

Table 1. *Characteristics of 161 Senior High School students included in the study*

Profile	f	%
Strand		
Accountancy, Business Management (ABM)	58	36.0
Humanities and Social Science (HUMSS)	64	39.8
Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)	39	24.2

Instruments

To quantify the level of pronunciation anxiety, the researchers constructed a survey duly validated by English language experts. The survey instrument was composed of 20 items for the pronunciation anxiety indicator adapted from the study of Baran-Lucarz (2014) entitled "Pronunciation Anxiety and Willingness to Communicate in the Foreign Language Classroom" and ten items for the capability to Communicate indicator adapted from the study of Borges (2014) entitled "Pronunciation Beliefs and other Predictors of Phonological Performance" to evaluate or assess students' performance in communication specifically. The questionnaires were administered to the Senior High School Grade 11 students of UM Digos College.

The rating scale below shows how the respondents rate their pronunciation anxiety.

Numerical Scale	Range of Means	Descriptive Level	Descriptive Interpretation
5	4.21 – 5.00	Very High	This indicates that pronunciation anxiety in students' communication occurs constantly.

4	3.41 – 4.20	High	This indicates that pronunciation anxiety in students' communication often occurs.
3	2.61 – 3.40	Moderate	This indicates that pronunciation anxiety in students' communication sometimes occurs.
2	1.81 – 2.60	Low	This indicates that pronunciation anxiety in students' communication seldom occurs at times.
1	1.00 – 1.80	Very Low	This indicates that pronunciation anxiety in students' communication never occurs.

The following range was used to describe the level of capability to communicate with the Grade 11 students.

Numerical Scale	Range of Means	Descriptive Level	Descriptive Interpretation
5	4.21 – 5.00	Very High	This indicates that the capability to communicate of Senior High School students of UMDC is excellent.
4	3.41 – 4.20	High	This indicates that the capability to communicate with Senior High School students of UMDC is very satisfactory.
3	2.61 – 3.40	Moderate	This indicates that the capability to communicate with Senior High School

			students of UMDC is satisfactory.
2	1.81 – 2.60	Low	This indicates that the capability to communicate with Senior High School students of UMDC is poor.
1	1.00 – 1.80	Very Low	This indicates that the capability to communicate with Senior High School students of UMDC is very poor.

Design and Procedure

The researchers used descriptive-correlational, with the study survey as the virtual device for information assortment. It will be carried out using Google Forms on several internet platforms. Creswell (2003) describes the variables and the relationships that occur naturally between and among them. It concentrates on get-together numerical information and summing it up crosswise over gatherings of individuals to disclose to specific wonder. The design is appropriate in this study for it deals with gathering essential data to determine the relationship between pronunciation anxiety and the capability to communicate with Grade 11 students.

Moreover, in gathering data, the researchers asked permission by means of a letter to conduct a study addressed to the Director. After the approval, copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the target respondents. Then After the retrieval of the administered instrument, data were collated and subjected to statistical processing to answer the questions deemed by the researchers in the study. Lastly, when the data obtained from the questionnaire were collated and statistically processed, the said data were analyzed and interpreted to answer the research problem.

The following statistical treatment tools were used and interpreted to obtain valid and reliable results based on the 0.05 significance level. Mean was used to determine the level of pronunciation anxiety and communication capability of the Grade 11 students in UM Digos College. Meanwhile, Spearman's Rho determines the significant relationship between pronunciation anxiety and the communication capability of the Grade 11 Students in UM Digos College.

FINDINGS

Level of Pronunciation Anxiety of the Grade 11 Students

Table 2 present the 161 respondents' level of pronunciation anxiety in terms of fear of negative evaluation and self-assessment. Based on the descriptive analysis, the fear

of negative evaluation dimension ($x=3.09$; $SD=0.740$) got the highest level of pronunciation anxiety, while the self-assessment dimension ($x=2.93$; $SD=0.766$) got the lowest level. In general, it was described that the respondents sometimes feel anxious in pronouncing words ($x=3.01$; $SD=0.681$). This implies that pronunciation anxiety in students' communication sometimes occurs, which is not good because there is still the presence of anxiety that the students must not possess. This could also be associated with a weak factor affecting the students' pronunciation.

This is supported by the views of Baran-Lucarz and Lee (2021); most previous empirical data have revealed that language anxiety (LA) has a detrimental effect on both foreign language (FL) learning and its use. One type of anxiety experienced by FL learners, along with speaking, reading, writing, and listening anxiety, is pronunciation anxiety (PA). As cited by Derwing & Munro, 2015), the source of anxiety mentioned most frequently by learners is their "great embarrassment" because they believe that they have a terrible accent.

Moreover, the results for each indicator will be revealed in the subsequent paragraph:

Table 2. *SHS students' level of pronunciation anxiety, n = 161*

Indicators	x	SD
Fear of Negative Evaluation	3.09	0.740
Self-assessment	2.93	0.766
Overall	3.01	0.681

Level of Students' Capability to Communicate

Table 3 presents the 161 respondents' capability to communicate regarding self-confidence and motivation. Based on the descriptive analysis, the motivation dimension ($x=3.91$; $SD=0.850$) got the highest level of students' capability to communication capability- confidence dimension ($x=3.37$; $SD=0.850$) got the lowest level. In general, it was described that the respondents are highly communicative with others ($x=4.12$; $SD=0.419$). This indicates that the capability to communicate with Senior High School students of UMDC is very satisfactory, which is essential to promote better understanding and eliminate anxiety in speaking.

Students more eager to talk outside and inside the classroom may expose themselves to more input and offer more practice in the perception and production of words. Though this may not guarantee higher levels of pronunciation (Derwing & Munro, 2015), there are other potential benefits from more frequent contact with the authentic target language. Learners with higher levels of communication capability, having experienced practical communicative situations, may reveal more realistic beliefs about the importance of pronunciation in communication, realizing, for example, that even accented pronunciation can be intelligible (Baran-Łucarz, 2014). Moreover, the results for each indicator will be revealed in succeeding paragraphs.

Table 3. *SHS students' communication capability, n = 161*

Indicators	$\underline{x}$	SD
Self-confidence	3.37	0.832
Motivation	3.91	0.850
Overall	3.64	0.761

Table 4. *Correlation matrix between pronunciation anxiety and capability to communicate*

Pronunciation Anxiety	Capability to Communicate		
	Self Confidence	**Motivation**	**Overall**
Fear of Negative Evaluation	0.35	.195*	.109
	(0.685)	(.013)	(.168)
Self-assessment	.208**	.252*	.229**
	(.008)	(.001)	(.004)
Overall	.161*	.258**	.208**
	(.041)	(.001)	(.008)

*p<0.05

*p<0.01

DISCUSSION

Significant Relationship Between Pronunciation Anxiety and Capability to Communicate of the Senior High School Students

Table 4 shows the correlation of the variables in this study. The results indicate a significant relationship between the Grade 11 students' levels of pronunciation anxiety and capability to communicate (df =n-2) = .208, p = .008. This indicates that the fear of negative evaluation and self-assessment positively affects the capability to communicate with the Grade 11 students in UMDC. Hence, with these results, it rejects the null hypothesis. Hence, this generally implies that the students' pronunciation anxiety is one factor that influences their communicative competence. If they are anxious and doubt their pronunciation skills, their communication process with others will negatively be affected, which might result in misunderstanding.

Additionally, it can be observed that only some indicators for pronunciation anxiety are significantly related to communication capability. For instance, in fear of negative evaluation, the communication capabilities P-value is .013, less than the .05 significance level. Another one is the pairing of self-assessment and self-significance leveled p-value is .008, which is lesser than .01. The third pairing is self-assessment and motivation, the computed p-value is .001 which is lesser than .01. The fourth pairing is all of the indicators of the capability to communicate and self-assessment, the computed P-value is .004 which is lesser than .01. Moreover, the fifth pairing is all of the indicators of pronunciation anxiety and self-confidence, the computed p-value is .041 which is lesser than .05. The sixth pairing is all of the indicators of pronunciation anxiety and motivation, the computed p-value is .001 which is lesser than .01. And the last pairing is all of the indicators of the capability to communicate and all of the indicators of pronunciation anxiety, the computed P-value is .008 which is lesser than .01. Overall, there is a correlation between the two variables. This indicates that pronunciation anxiety might affect the capability to communicate with the Grade 11 students in UMDC.

This is supported by Baran-Łucarz (2014), who also examined the relationship between the student's capability to communicate and pronunciation anxiety among Polish university students, and the results pointed to the high correlation between these two constructs. This is supported by Derwing & Munro (2015), who said pronunciation and learning are emotional. The fear of negative evaluation caused by pronunciation is among the central component of pronunciation anxiety. Hence, according to Dewaele and Dewaele (2017), fun, laughter, good rapport among students, a positive classroom atmosphere, and a feeling of confidence and security during teaching language lessons can help lower participants' pronunciation anxiety levels which helps students to improve their communication skills.

In addition, the theory of MacIntyre, Clement, Dornyei, and Noels (1998), as cited in the study of Baran-Łucarz (2014), also supports the study's finding that anything that raises anxiety levels will make a person feel less confident, which will affect their willingness and capability to communicate with others. In the context of this study, based on the result, there is a correlation between the two variables. Hence, it implies that pronunciation anxiety affects the ability of an individual to communicate with others.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to determine the students' pronunciation anxiety level and its relationship to their communication ability. Based on the result, the researchers concluded that most respondents were students in the Humanities and Social Science strand. Moreover, the respondents sometimes feel anxious about pronouncing words, which implies that pronunciation anxiety in students' communication is sometimes manifested, which is not still good. There is still the presence of anxiety that the students must not possess. Additionally, the respondents were highly communicative with others, which implies that their capability to communicate is very satisfactory, which is essential to promote better understanding and eliminate anxiety when speaking. On the other hand, there was a significant relationship between the students' levels of pronunciation anxiety and their ability to communicate, which indicates that pronunciation anxiety positively affects the student's ability to communicate at UMDC. Hence, with these results, it rejects the null hypothesis.

REFERENCES

Agboola, D. I., & Evans, H. (2015). The relationship between anxiety and academic performance of postgraduate international students in a British University: A cross-sectional quantitative design. Science Journal of Public Health, 3(3), 331-338.

Holbrook, J. R., Ghandour, R.M., Blumberg, S. J., Visser, S. N., Perou, R., & Walkup, J.T. (in press). Epidemiology and impact of health care providers–diagnosed anxiety and depression among US children. *Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics*. Retrieved from https://journals.lww.com/jrnldbp/Abstract/publishahead/Epidemiology _and_Impac t_of_ Health_Care.99305.aspx

Broeckelman-Post, M., Johnson, A., & Schwebach, J.R. (2016). Calling on students using notecards: engagement and countering communication anxietY in large lectures.Journal of College Science Teaching, 45(5), 27-32. Retrieved from: https://doi.org/10.2505/4/jcst16_045_05_27 last December 8, 2022.

Baran-Lucarz (2014). Pronunciation anxiety and willingness to communicate in the foreign language classroom. Proceedings of the International Symposium on the Acquisition of Second Language. University of Wroclaw. Speech Concordia Working Papers in Applied Linguistics.

Clement, R., Baker, S. C. & MacIntyre, P. D. (2003). Willingness to communicate in a second language: The effects of context, norms, and vitality. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, *pp.22, 190-209.*

Elmenfi, F. & Gaibani, A. (2016). The Role of Social Evaluation in Influencing Public Speaking Anxiety of English Foreign Language Learners at Omar Al-Mukhtar University. Retrieved from https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED564038.

Gregersen, T., & Horwitz, E. K. (2002). Language Learning and Perfectionism: Anxious and Non-Anxious Learners' Reactions to Their Own Oral Performance. Modern Language Journal, 86, 562- 570. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/1540-4781.00161

Guiora, A. (1972). Construct validity and transpositional research: Toward an empirical study of psychoanalytic concepts. *Comprehensive Psychiatry,* 13(2), 139-150*.*

Ha, X. V., and Murray, J. C. (2021). The impact of a professional development program on EFL teachers' beliefs about corrective feedback. System 96:102405. Doi: 10.1016/j.system.2020.102405

Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. & Cope, J. A. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety.Modern Language Journal, 70, 125-132

MacIntyre, P. D., Clément, R., Dörnyei, Z. & Noels, K. A. (1998). Conceptualizing willingness to communicate in an L2: A situational model of L2 confidence and affiliation. Modern Language Journal, 82, 545-562.

MacIntyre, P. D. (2017). An overview of language anxiety research and trends in its development. In C. Gkonou, M. Daubney & J.-M. Dewaele (Eds.), *New Insights*

into Language Anxiety: Theory,   Research and Educational Implications (pp. 11–30). Bristol: Multilingual Matters

Mestan, T. (2017). Speaking Anxiety among Different Grades of K12: 6th,   8th, 10th, and 12th   Grades.   Retrieved   at   https://doaj.org/article/3e204f4cedc24f0aba0151712e888434

Pekrun, R. (1992). The impact of emotions on learning and achievement: Towards a theory of cognitive/motivational mediators. Applied   Psychology: An International   Review,   41(4),   359-376.   https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1464-0597.1992.tb00712.x

Seyedabadi, S., Fatemi, A. H., & Pishghadam, R. (2015). Towards better teaching   of pronunciation: A review of literature in the area. Mediterr. J.   Soc. Sci. 6, 76–81. Doi: 10.5901/mjss. 2015.v6n4s1p76

Singh, K. (2015). Anxiety, stress, depression, and psychosocial functioning   of Indian adolescents*. Indian Journal of Psychiatry, 57(4), 367-374.*

Szpyra-Kozlowska,   Jolanta.   (2015).   Pronunciation   in   EFL   Instruction.   A   Research-`   Based Approach. Multilingual Matters. 264 pages.

Han, A. S. Tanriöver & S. Ö. Sahan (2016). EFL Students' and Teachers' Attitudes   toward Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety: A Look at   NESTs and Non-NESTs