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Research Paper

Public Speaking Anxiety and English Language Competency of Bachelor of Secondary Education English Majors

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Abstract

This research aimed to determine the public speaking anxiety and English language competency of the Bachelor of Secondary Education English majors at Laguna State Polytechnic University Los Baños Campus. The study employed a descriptive correlation research design using a validated survey questionnaire to find the relationship between the variables. In the study's findings, the respondents' public speaking anxiety level had a standard deviation of 0.71 and was descriptively interpreted as "agree". The level of English language competency of the students was proficient. The data showed that 70.5% of the respondents have proficient English Language competency while 22.7% were advanced, and 6.8% were approaching. Thus, the study shows no significant relationship between public speaking anxiety and English Language Competency. Based on the results, it is suggested that respondents should enhance their skills in public speaking though it did not affect their language proficiency. Implementing activities that would practice and develop the student's speaking skills is encouraged to future educators to prevent anxiety towards speaking. Since the students' PSA level is high, teachers need to guide the students with their speaking, their delivery and confidence along the process.

Keywords *Competency, Anxiety, Public Speaking, Language Proficiency*

INTRODUCTION

Vitality in human communication is evident in every aspect of human life. Though Filipinos are known for speaking English, not all are fluent and comfortable with it. The Filipino's development in language is a symbol of national unity and identity. According to the Philippine Bilingual Education Policy (1987), it aims to achieve language competency in both English and Filipino. Its goals are to achieve quality education by enhancing learning through two languages. In addition, it also seeks to propagate Filipino as a language literacy.

According to Bradley (2017), language bridges the gap in several scientific disciplines of natural and social as well as in the cultural environment. In addition, public speaking offers numerous benefits to speakers, including professionalism, career advancement, leadership abilities and creativity (Barnard, 2017). Public speaking is a form of communication using the English language. According to Cheng and Kuek (2020), public speaking is a widely popular matter and has become an essential skill that 21st-century learners must possess to achieve career and academic success. According to Thompson (2017), millions of people experience fear of speaking publicly. Students are often exposed to public speaking as it is one of the requirements inside a classroom. Shamsuddin et al. (2021) mentioned that public speaking anxiety is the main obstacle to becoming a better public speaker. This anxiety hinders one from demonstrating speaking skills to their full potential. Yee et al. (2014) argue that public speaking is greatly affected by foreign language anxiety which affects language learning.

Teachers are expected to facilitate the students in acquiring the necessary skills in order for them to nurture their capabilities. Teachers integrate public speaking into their routines in

handling the students. Based on CHED Memorandum Order No. 75., Series of 2017 states that a Bachelor of Secondary Education major in English must use the English language as a global language in a multilingual context as it applies to the teaching of language and literature. English communication is very significant in the teaching of English teachers and those students who are taking up an English major. University students, especially language students, are expected to be good speakers in front of the class. However, not all students are good at public speaking.

Guzman (2020), reported that the Filipino people's English competency in English way 2020 placed seven spots lower on a global proficiency index than last year. According to Mizon et al. (2019), English standards in the Philippines are slipping. This information was compiled in 2019 by IPD Education, an Australian company that offers English language testing for 80 countries intended for professionals, students and other people interested in migrating for job opportunities or pursuing higher education in English-speaking countries.

The researchers have observed that most students struggle with speaking in front of a crowd. Some had experienced stuttering, trembling of hands, sweating, and discouragement. Students who experience public speaking anxiety experience low self-esteem and feel discouraged in any type of presentation. Due to these circumstances, the researchers have decided to conduct research focusing on the public speaking anxiety (PSA) and the English language competency (ELC) of the respondents, which they deemed significant matters in the said field of specialization. The situations above and the observations prompted the researchers to study the respondents' (PSA) and (ELC) levels. In addition, the researchers also aim to determine whether there is a significant relationship between public speaking anxiety and English language competency.

According to Tambunan (2018), the academic guide of the English Language Education Study Program 2012, stated that learners in this program must take an obligatory public speaking course. Hence, this shows that enhancing one's public speaking skills is necessary for future educators, especially those specializing in language courses. Educators must be able to communicate effectively as it is one of the essential characteristics they must possess. Professionals must regularly improve their communication skills. It is also crucial to deal with the fear of public speaking anxiety and communication skills so that it would not affect the professional and personal lives of the people.

The fear of public speaking is the most common phobia ahead of death, spiders, or heights. According to Montopoli (2017) of the National Institute of Mental Health reports that public speaking anxiety, or glossophobia, affects about 40% of the population. The most common reason for this underlying fear is the judgement or negative evaluation by others. There are also times that the size of the audience also plays a crucial role, becoming the reason for the anxiety since many people feel comfortable with just speaking with a small group audience. Hence, as the group size increases, the anxiety levels also rise.

In accordance with Gamston and Wellman (1992), a large audience is perceived as more intimidating. Meaning the larger the audience, the greater the anxiety. Also, public speaking anxiety is considered a social anxiety disorder. With these in mind, it is undeniable that public speaking anxiety is a major problem BSE English Majors face. Several studies have been conducted before to deliver the said issue. However, this study specifically focuses on the students' public speaking anxiety and its relation to their English language competency. This study provided awareness not just for the students but also for the people around them.

The theory anchored in this study was the "Scharter-Singer Two-Factor Theory of Emotion", wherein according to that theory, there are two components: physical arousal and a cognitive label. In simple terms, it is an experience where emotions are involved by first having a physiological response which the mind then identifies. This theory focuses on the interaction between physical arousal and how it is cognitively labelled. In this process, feeling the arousal is not enough;

identifying it would lead to feeling the emotion. The researchers found it appropriate and relevant to the study, as seen in identifying the process that begins with the stimulus, which is the audience, followed by physical arousal that consists of heavy breathing, rapid heartbeat, sweating, and trembling. Afterwards is the cognitive label; as a result, there is a physical reaction to fear, such as the anxiety of speaking, followed by conscious experience, which is the 'public speaking anxiety'. The theory identifies that the immediate environment plays an important role in physical responses and how they are identified and labelled.

Another theory by Goh and Burns (2013) suggested that identifying the students' demands is an effective way to produce a successful speaking program. Moreover, profound and sufficient mastery of the learning context as well as the characteristics of the students will be undeniably significant in choosing and identifying techniques and theories that are relevant to the development of one's oral communication skills, such as public speaking. The mastery of the learning context in this study is the English language; it tackles the students' language competence. Whereas, if there is no sufficient mastery of the subject, then there would be a significant effect on the development of oral communication. Thus, the language competence of the students would create a substantial effect on the students' public speaking skills. The second theory clearly demonstrates its relevance to the topic of this research. Students' demands pertaining to the respondents' anxiety levels are significant in creating a successful speaking program that would help the students' public speaking anxiety.
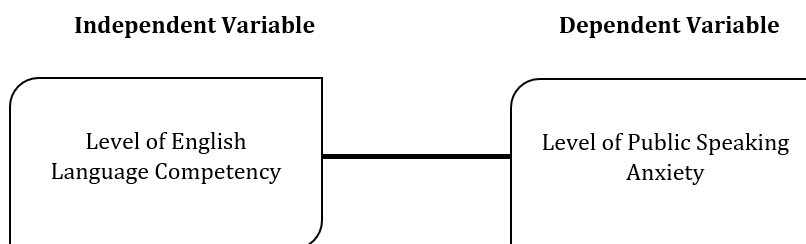
Independent Variable **Dependent Variable**

| Level of English Language Competency | Level of Public Speaking Anxiety |

Figure 1. Research Paradigm

Figure 1. presents the conceptual framework that shows the relationship between the dependent variables that the level of public speaking anxiety (PSA) is identified through one's English language competency, and the dependent variable as it is being affected by the independent variable, which is the ELC.

This study aimed to determine the public speaking anxiety and English language competency of the first-year and second-year English majors at LSPU-LB. Specifically to determine the level of public speaking anxiety and English Competency of students. Also, to find out the significant relationship between the main variables.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Several literature and related studies could support the study based on its viability and validity. According to Gozhiev (2022), public speaking to students is paramount to the child's success. It could improve their self-confidence and critical thinking, create new social connections, and enhance their communication skills. This phenomenon is called foreign language anxiety (Ahmad et al., 2021). In the Philippines, English is considered one of the official languages. English is the medium of instruction used in business meetings, classroom meetings, speeches, and other daily activities. Almost every day, the English language is spoken. The level of fluency when

speaking that language determines their proficiency towards it. However, there are times when one does not speak as fluently and may experience nervousness, trembling, and stuttering, which can be further identified as anxiety. Especially when using another language such as English; hence, it would be called Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) which can also be similar to Public Speaking Anxiety.

According to McCroskey (2014), to understand the notion of stage fright or public speaking anxiety (PSA), it is necessary to define the meaning of fear or anxiety first. Firstly, a common fear or anxiety is the state of a depressed mind that encounters the negative consequences of a particular situation. Secondly, the emotional or physical response significantly triggers public speaking anxiety when public speakers need to perform or deliver their speeches publicly. It is expected that public speakers could find a way to manage their anxiety to overcome it to deliver an effective speech. Lastly, it should be considered that the natural response of anxiety to a particular situation is likely to be dangerous if the speakers cannot control the anxiety properly. Even though some people are good speakers, it does not mean that they do not experience stage fright or anxiety before performing. Also, not all people who experience public speaking anxiety know how to cope or effectively manage it. Ineffective management of anxiety could lead to negative consequences. As stated in the study's conclusion, it should be considered that response to anxiety is likely to be dangerous if not managed, particularly concerning the effects of public speaking anxiety. With that statement alone, it identifies how greatly PSA affects the lives of individuals.

In the study of Spijck (2011), it is amplified that almost eighty out of every hundred people experienced public speaking anxiety at a small or large scale. Every four out of ten people rank public speaking fear as one of their apexes three fears, often a fear more dreadful than death, an irrational fear which could be overcome. Public speaking anxiety has become one of the major issues that people face. Even though it has now become unavoidable since public speaking is used in many events now and then. Many people still experience fear when it comes to speaking publicly, even in a small or large group of people. Many studies have been conducted and showed that the populace in their studies experience and/or have public speaking anxiety. Nevertheless, even though it is a huge issue, some psychologists say it can still be overcome.

Some observations have been made the postgraduate students of the English Language according to the study of Gaibana (2014), in which some of them have experienced public speaking anxiety showed that they were conscious every time they had to speak in front of a crowd. They worry that they might make a mistake and embarrass themselves in front of many people and are scared to be judged by them. Also, they fear that what they might do would not be favourable or interesting for the audience; thus, it aggravates their public speaking anxiety. The result of the study depicts the reasons why students experience PSA. Such as with the other results in studies that have been mentioned, the main reason for PSA is the fear of embarrassment in front of a crowd, even if it is just a small scale. The consciousness of the people makes them anxious about what they are going to say. They are afraid to make mistakes, such as mistakes in grammar, especially when speaking in a second language. Thus, all of these fears only strengthen their anxiety. The study mostly focuses on using English as their public speaking medium and showed a higher level of anxiety towards using that language.

Using Englishes as a lingua franca ('EsLF') or international language among EFL learners in an out-of-class setting induces anxiety, then debilitates the intelligibility and comprehensibility of speakers, according to Wilang and Singhasiri (2017). Public speaking anxiety, or PSA, is one of the most difficult problems in delivering a public speech (Robenstein, 2014). One of the earlier studies mentioned that most Thai students have or experience public speaking anxiety, which is caused by a lack of knowledge of the language used in speaking. The lack of their knowledge is due to the limited number of English language teachers and Public Speaking Anxiety among Thai Post

Graduate Students; the postgraduate students of language teaching do not have perfect speaking performances. The reason for their low performance is the PSA.

College students have to speak publicly if required, especially those majoring in Language Education, who must speak publicly to practice and enhance their language speaking skills. However, there are times wherein oral presentations, the students are expected to be fluent in their speech. This condition might affect some of the students who have low confidence when it comes to oral performance. Public Speaking is commonly done, especially for students majoring in Language Education, such as English Majors in Universities. Since it is a vital part of their course to create students who are effective speakers and communicators, language education students must possess skills such as a great speaker since it is a part of their career in the future to speak almost every day in front of the students with keeping in mind that they should not or they should only have minimal corrections towards their grammar. Public speaking has become a common practice for some language education students for them to be able to enhance their skills. Although this is done for the benefit of the students, it may not always produce a great outcome for some. Some may still experience fear of speaking because of the expectations that teachers have for the students. The expectations may be that they should be fluent in speaking in class and/or presenting (Yaikhong, 2012).

According to Ozturk (2014), it is important to prepare the appropriate content in preparation for the speech. The speakers must express their speeches as the leaders of public speakers while delivering the speech. Clear content is also important to make it easy to understand by audiences. It is suggested that public speakers should get to know their audiences. These are the things that a public speaker must take into consideration in order to perform a speech well.

Raja (2017) explains that one might be an expert on a particular subject, but it will be futile in the teaching process if communication is hindered (Paxton, 2015). On the other hand, Gama et al. (2016) found that one of the widespread issues that college students encounter, which is a subtype of anxiety is public speaking anxiety.

McCroskey (2014) elucidates public speaking anxiety as fear and uneasiness linked with experiences such as interactions towards people. Unlike in other language skills such as reading and writing, anxiety in public speaking is often neglected in academic literature, even though it is a widespread problem for students.

Linguists and language educators focus on investigating language anxiety as it is an effective variable that impedes language acquisition. One of these searches was Horwitz's study about foreign language anxiety. Another form of public speaking anxiety associated with the language is called Foreign Language Anxiety. An individual experiences anxiety towards speaking especially when using the English Language which can also be a major problem especially to Language Education students who may experience PSA. Furthermore, Shamsuddin et al. (2021) demonstrate that foreign language anxiety can be associated with communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation.

According to Kaufman (2017), English has almost become the official language in most highly progressive countries. It has made its significance and gained prominence in almost all fields of endeavour worldwide. If you were to work internationally or in a global workforce, then learning and speaking English is a must. Speaking English is also indicated as a sign of intelligence by other people since it is not easy to speak a foreign language such as English. Since it is a universal language, one must possess knowledge of the language. Speaking fluently in that language proves one's proficiency. In the Philippines, if an individual is fluent in English, they view that individual as intelligent. English has become a standard for humans to identify one's intelligence (even if it is not). Learning English is significant to most people since it is used in the workplace, especially if one plans to work internationally. Having good English proficiency is then considered a must.

Furthermore, students who have difficulties communicating in English may be unable to perform in school effectively. When a student's language proficiency in English is high, it will create an impact and improve their academic performance, and students who do have low proficiency when it comes to the English language may relegate their performance in any academic setting. Lack of communication skills will hurdle the students' academic performance. English language skills play a significant role in one's development inside a classroom. A study found that social and public speaking anxiety can negatively impact students' engagement in oral communication assessments. Moreover, the result discusses that students are expected to receive assistance during transition, achievement, and success through constructive alignment that considers one's competencies and mitigates psychological distress (Pamila, 2004).

The definition of communication and public speaking as well as how they are related to each other came from Raja (2013) and Verderber et al. (2011). They described public speaking as an interaction between people that is a form of human communication. According to them, this skill is also significant as it enhances one's communicative skills. Ahmad et al. (2021) stated the importance and status of speaking publicly skills inside an English Foreign Language classroom. He also discusses the relevance of foreign language anxiety in most cases of public speaking.

In action research conducted by Tananuraksakul (2011), he found out that students are afraid of judgement and embarrassment when they are going to perform using the English language. According to McCroskey (2014), it is essential first to define the anxiety itself, then understand the emotional or physical response, and lastly, to consider the danger that public speaking anxiety may bring (Spijck, 2011). The results have found that about eighty out of every hundred people experienced public speaking anxiety in small or large groups. Even though this matter has been considered as a widespread issue, psychologists believe that this can still be overcome.

Yaikhong (2012) and Academic Guide of English Language Education Study Program 2012, emphasized the importance of public speaking in students enrolled in language courses. This is supported by a study according to Public Speaking Anxiety among Thai Post Graduate Students, which showed that some postgraduate English Language Teaching students who want to pursue EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers of English in one of the leading universities in Thailand. According to Ozturk (2014), one of the things that must be considered when giving a speech is to organize its contents, he also added that knowing the audience would help in managing and successfully performing a speech. With this information about public speaking and the risk of anxiety it holds. Kaufman (2017) discusses the language used in this matter. He stated that most highly progressive countries use English as their official language. He also added how English fluency mirrors one's intelligence as viewed from the perspectives of many Filipinos.

Several students experience Public Speaking Anxiety. Particularly, when they have to present themselves in front of others such as their peers, classmates, and teachers. Students experience Public Speaking Anxiety even on a small scale. As emphasized by McCroskey and Gaibana (2014) and Tananuraksakul (2011), in which the statements above are greatly similar. The respondents of his study had a high level of Public Speaking Anxiety and it stated that the reason for that anxiety was the use of the English Language in their speeches. The respondents stated that learning English speaking created a high level of anxiety for them. It can be supported by the study Public Speaking Anxiety among Thai Post Graduate Students, which showed that Thai students have or experience public speaking anxiety, and it is caused by a lack of knowledge of the language used in speaking. The lack of their knowledge is due to the limited number of English language teachers. Both studies showed the relation between the use of the English Language with the students' Public Speaking Anxiety which concludes with their low language competency.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed the descriptive correlational quantitative research design. According to Sousa et al. (2007), descriptive correlation describes the variables and the relationships that occur naturally between and among them. Among the quantitative research methods, a survey was used in data gathering by administering Google Forms. This approach can be used in collecting and analyzing numerical data to find patterns and averages, test causal relationships, make predictions, and generalize results in wider populations.

The respondents of this study were the Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in English at Laguna State Polytechnic University Los Baños Campus, with 24 first-year and 20 second-year students, with a total of 44 respondents. They were enrolled during the Academic Year 2021-2022. In this study, the sampling technique was used in purposive sampling. Crossman's (2012) purposive sample is known as selective, judgmental, and subjective sampling. It is a non-probability sample that selects a population with the same characteristics to fit into one profile and is appropriate for the study's objective.

The researchers involved all the first- and second-year students taking up BSEd-English as respondents to this study. They were purposely chosen to participate in this research. This study aimed to determine the public speaking anxiety and English language competency of the BSE English majors. In addition, one of the research objectives is to know if there is a significant relationship between the two variables. Furthermore, the researchers believe that the students enrolled in language courses are the most appropriate respondents for the research's objectives. It was also easier to communicate and contact them because they were also in the same organization where the researchers were engaged.

The research instrument consisted of three parts. The first part was used to identify the respondents' demographic profiles, such as; sex, age, and year level. The second part of the survey was intended to test each individual's public speaking anxiety levels. The last part of the survey included a questionnaire to test the respondents' English language competency levels. In order to test the levels of PSA and ELC of the learners, the researchers adapted questionnaires from above mentioned. The former used the Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety (PRPSA) designed by McCroskey (1970). The latter came from online grammar exercises at an advanced level. The respondents' scores were determined through an indicator of; 1-10 as the beginning, 10-20 as developing, 21-30 as approaching, 31-40 as proficient, and 41-50 as advanced. Cronbach's Alpha was used to test the instrument's reliability. The computed value of 0.645 for PRPSA indicated an acceptable internal consistency, revealing that the questionnaire was reliable. The main instruments were validated by professional teachers specializing in English.

After conceptualizing and crafting the research proposal, the researchers prepared themselves for the presentation by studying the paper and brainstorming activities. After the proposal had been approved, the research questionnaires were administered using google forms. In order to ensure that complete data were collected, the researchers created a group chat together with their participants for updates, as well as for communication purposes. In order to answer the statement of the problems, the data were statistically treated through descriptive statistics. To find out the PSA, mean, and standard deviation was used. As for the ELC level, frequency and percentage were used, while Pearson r identified the relationship between the two variables.

To describe the PSA and the ELC, the researchers used mean and standard deviation for the PSA, while ELC was described through frequency and percentage. Pearson r was used to determine the relationship between public speaking anxiety and the English language competency of the students.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the data gathered, data analysis and interpretation of the results and findings. It is presented in tables following the sequence of the specific research problem regarding the students' Public Speaking Anxiety and English Language Competency.

Table 1. Level of Public Speaking Anxiety

Indicators	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. While preparing to give a speech, I feel tense and nervous.	3.07	0.66	Agree
2. I feel tense when I see words "speech" and "public speech" on a course outline while studying.	2.73	0.79	Agree
3. My thoughts become confused and jumbled when I am giving a speech.	2.84	0.68	Agree
4. Right after giving a speech, I felt that I had a pleasant experience.	3.41	0.73	Agree
5. I get anxious when I think about a speech coming up.	2.98	0.70	Agree
6. I have no fear of giving a speech.	2.18	0.66	Disagree
7. Although I am nervous just before starting a speech, I soon settle down after starting and feel calm and comfortable.	3.14	0.70	Agree
8. I look forward to giving a speech.	2.91	0.64	Agree
9. When the instructor announces a speaking assignment in class, I can feel myself getting tense.	2.80	0.76	Agree
10. My hands tremble when I am giving a speech.	2.84	0.78	Agree
11. I feel relaxed when I am giving a speech.	2.36	0.72	Disagree
12. I enjoy preparing for a speech.	2.70	0.73	Agree
13. I am in constant fear of forgetting what I prepared to say.	2.93	0.79	Agree
14. I get anxious if someone asks me something about my topic that I do not know.	2.89	0.78	Agree
15. I face the prospect of giving a speech with confidence.	2.68	0.71	Agree
16. I feel that I am in complete possession of myself while giving a speech.	2.68	0.67	Agree
17. My mind is clear when giving a speech.	2.52	0.63	Agree
18. I do not dread giving a speech.	2.57	0.62	Agree
19. I perspire just before starting a speech.	2.82	0.58	Agree
20. My heart beats very fast just as I start a speech.	3.30	0.63	Agree
21. I experience considerable anxiety while sitting in the room just before my speech starts.	3.20	0.59	Agree
22. Certain parts of my body feel very tense and rigid while giving a speech.	3.07	0.72	Agree
23. Realizing that only a little time remains in a speech makes me very tense and anxious.	2.95	0.75	Agree
24. While giving a speech, I know I can control my feelings of tension and stress.	2.93	0.70	Agree
25. I breathe faster just before starting a speech.	2.93	0.82	Agree
26. I feel comfortable and relaxed in the hour or so just before giving a speech.	2.59	0.79	Agree
27. I do poorly on speeches because I am anxious.	2.52	0.82	Agree
28. I feel anxious when the teacher announces the date of a speaking assignment.	2.86	0.63	Agree
29. When I make a mistake while giving a speech, I find it hard to concentrate on the parts that follow.	2.68	0.74	Agree
30. During an important speech I experience a feeling of helplessness building up inside me.	2.64	0.84	Agree

31. My heart beats very fast while I present a speech.	3.09	0.64	Agree
32. I feel anxious while waiting to give my speech.	2.93	0.66	Agree
33. While giving a speech, I get so nervous I forget facts I really know.	2.66	0.71	Agree
Grand Mean	**2.83**	**0.71**	**Agree**

Legend: 1.00-1.50 Strongly Disagree; 1.51-2.50 Disagree; 2.51-3.50 Agree; 3.51-4.00 Strongly Agree

Table 1 shows the respondents' level of public speaking anxiety with an overall mean of 2.83 and the standard deviation of 0.72 and its verbal interpretation is "agree". This means that they agreed themselves that they have with level of public speaking anxiety though they are English majors.

As shown in this table, the students agree with the indicative statement 1, "while preparing to give a speech, I feel tense and nervous," with a mean of 3.07, and a standard deviation of 0.66. The indicative statement 2, "I feel tense when I see words "speech" and "public speech" on a course outline while studying," has a mean of 2.73 and a standard deviation of 0.79 in which the students agree. The students also agree with the indicative statement 3, "my thoughts become confused and jumbled when I am giving a speech," with a mean of 2.48 and a standard deviation of 0.68. Indicative statement 4, "right after giving a speech I felt that I had a pleasant experience," resulted to the highest mean of 3.41 with a standard deviation of 0.73 in which the students agree. "I get anxious when I think about a speech coming up," Is the indicative statement 5 with a mean of 2.98 and a standard deviation of 0.70 where the students agree.

The students disagree with the indicative statement 6, "I have no fear of giving a speech," with a mean of 2.18 and a standard deviation of 0.66. Indicative statement 7 "although I am nervous just before starting a speech, I soon settle down after starting and feel calm and comfortable," the results show that students agree with a mean of 3.24 and a standard deviation of 0.70. "I look forward to giving a speech," indicative statement 8 has a mean of 2. 91 mean with a standard deviation of 0.64 in which students agree. Students agree with the Indicative statement 9, "when the instructor announces a speaking assignment in class, I can feel myself getting tense," has a standard deviation of 2.80 and a standard deviation of 0.76.

"My hands tremble when I am giving a speech," is the indicative statement 10 with a mean of 2.84 and standard deviation of 0.78, this is verbally interpreted as agree. The verbal interpretation of indicative statement 11, "I feel relaxed when I am giving a speech, "is disagree with a mean of 2.36 and a standard deviation of 0.72. Indicative statement 12, "I enjoy preparing for a speech," has a mean of 2.70 and a standard deviation of 0.73 with a verbal interpretation of agree. The indicative statement number 13 "I am in constant fear of forgetting what I prepared to say," has a mean of 2.93 and a standard deviation of 0.79 is verbally interpreted as agree.

"I get anxious if someone asks me something about my topic that I do not know," is the indicative statement 14 with a mean of 2.89 and a standard deviation of 0.78 with a verbal interpretation of agree. Indicative statement 15 "I face the prospect of giving a speech with confidence," has a mean of 2.68 and a standard deviation of 0.71 which has a verbal interpretation of agree. Indicative statement 16 is verbally interpreted as agree, "I feel that I am in complete possession of myself while giving a speech," which has a result of 2.68 mean and 0.67 standard deviation. "My mind is clear when giving a speech," is the indicative statement 17 which has 2.52 mean and 0.63 standard deviation with verbal interpretation of agree. Indicative statement 18 consists of "I do not dread giving a speech," which has a mean of 2.57 and 0.62 for mean and standard deviation, its verbal interpretation is agree.

"I perspire just before starting a speech," is the indicative statement 19 with a mean and standard deviation of 2.82 and 0.58 that is verbally interpreted as agree. The indicative statement

number 20, "My heart beats very fast just as I start a speech," with a mean of 3.30 and a standard deviation of 0.63 is verbally interpreted as agree. The indicative statement 21 "I experience considerable anxiety while sitting in the room just before my speech starts," has a mean of 3.20 and a standard deviation of 0.59 is verbally interpreted as agree. "Certain parts of my body feel very tense and rigid while giving a speech," is the indicative statement 22 with a mean of 3.07 and a standard deviation of 0.72 which is verbally interpreted as agree.

Indicative statement 23 "realizing that only a little time remains in a speech makes me very tense and anxious," with a mean of 2.95 and a standard deviation of 0.75 is verbally interpreted as agree. Indicative statement 24, "while giving a speech, I know I can control my feelings of tension and stress," receives a 2.93 mean and 0.70 standard deviation, its verbal interpretation is agree. "I breathe faster just before starting a speech," serves as the indicative statement 25 that receives a mean of 2.93 and 0.82 standard deviation with a verbal interpretation of agree. Indicative statement 26, "I feel comfortable and relaxed in the hour or so just before giving a speech," has a mean of 2.59 and a standard deviation of 0.79, it is shown in the table that students verbally interpreted this item as agree. Students agree with the indicative statement 27, "I do poorly on speeches because I am anxious," with a mean of 2.52 and a standard deviation of 0.82. "I feel anxious when the teacher announces the date of a speaking assignment," or indicative statement 28 has a verbal interpretation of agree, its mean is 2.86 while the standard deviation is 0.63. It is visible in the table that indicative statement 29 "when I make a mistake while giving a speech, I find it hard to concentrate on the parts that follow," has a mean of 2.68 and standard deviation of 0.74 which has resulted to verbal interpretation of agree.

"During an important speech I experience a feeling of helplessness building up inside me," is the indicative statement 30 with a mean of 2.64 and a standard deviation of 0.84 which is verbally interpreted as agree. Indicative statement 31 "my heart beats very fast while I present a speech," has a mean of 3.09 and standard deviation of 0.64 which students agree. Students also agree with "I feel anxious while waiting to give my speech," as indicative statement 32, it has a mean of 2.93 and a standard deviation of 0.66. Indicative statement 33, "while giving a speech, I get so nervous I forget facts I really know," has a mean of 2.66 and a standard deviation of 0.71 which is verbally interpreted as agree. According to Moneva (2020), the students have anxiety in oral recitation and the students' level of anxiety is slight to extremely anxious.

Table 2. Level of English competency of students

Level	f	%
Beginning	0	0
Developing	0	0
Approaching	3	6.8
Proficient	31	70.5
Advance	10	22.7
Total	**44**	**100**

Table 2 reveals the students' English competency level based on a 1-50 item grammar test with the beginning, developing, approaching, proficient, and advanced indicators. Out of 44 students, 6.8% or 3 students received a score of 20-30 with a level of approaching. 31 of them who are 70.5% are proficient and scored 31-40. While the remaining 10 respondents, the remaining 22.7%, were at an advanced level with a score of 40-50.

Gomez and Gomez (2021) stated that the Bachelor of Secondary Education and B.S. in Psychology had an overall proficiency level interpreted as an Upper-Intermediate proficiency level. The rest of the programs fell under the Intermediate Proficiency Level.

Table 3. Relationship between student's public speaking anxiety and their English language competency

Variables	df	r – value	P – value	Decision	Remark
Public Speaking Anxiety	42	- 0. 134	0.387	Accept Ho	Not Significant
English Language Competency					

The computed r – value of -0.134 shows a weak correlation between the identified variables, while the P-value of 0.387 is higher than the 0.05 significant level. Thus, the students' public speaking anxiety is unrelated to their English language competency. Furthermore, the data revealed that a student with high public speaking anxiety does not guarantee a low level of English language competency. Conversely, a student with low public speaking anxiety does not guarantee a high level of English language competency.

Jugo (2020) concluded that the results confirmed that speaking activity, error correction, and communicating with English speakers are sources of high anxiety for Filipino learners, while writing activity, negative self-perception, and non-comprehension are sources of moderate anxiety. Furthermore, these sources of anxiety have a significant negative relationship with second language anxiety.

In addition, foreign language anxiety is a significant predictor of English proficiency. However, further analysis of the specific sources of anxiety using multiple regression analysis identified speaking activities anxiety as the only significant predictor of English proficiency.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the accumulated results, it is concluded that the students' public speaking anxiety was verbally interpreted as "agree" since most respondents likely answered "agree" on the items where they experience having PSA attacks. Most of the respondents have proficient English Language Competency. The hypothesis that stated there is no significant relationship between the students' public speaking anxiety and level of English language competency is hereby accepted.

LIMITATION & FURTHER RESEARCH

The study was conducted during the pandemic, and there were difficulties in administering data gathering, such as problems with internet glitches and contacting respondents. However, the result of the study attained the main objective and suggested that further studies with similar topics need to research a wider range of students from all levels to determine the public speaking anxiety of the other students in different curriculum programs.

Recommendation

Based on the results of the study, the researchers recommended the following:
1. Implementation of activities that would practice and develop the student's speaking skills is encouraged by educators to prevent anxiety towards speaking.
2. Since the students' PSA level is high, teachers need to guide the students with their speaking, their delivery and confidence along the process.
3. Students need better preparation and understanding of the topic to avoid the chance of

making a mistake

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