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| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Public Speaking Classroom Anxiety and Oral Language Performance of Senior High School Students

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ABSTRACT

Public speaking anxiety is a typical problem for language learners, particularly those pursuing academic careers in their second language. This study generally aimed to determine the public speaking classroom anxiety and oral language performance of language learners. The descriptive-correlational method was used in the study. The study was comprised of 58 students who were selected through purposive sampling. Based on the results gathered by the researcher, it was found that the students generally experienced a moderate level of public speaking classroom anxiety. Physiological factors such as pounding hearts and trembling during speaking tasks were prevalent, which is attributed to a lack of preparation. Furthermore, low levels of selfconfidence and the pressure of being on the spot were some of the indicators of public speaking classroom anxiety. Meanwhile, in the speaking activity done by the respondents, they achieved a "satisfactory" rating in their oral language performance, indicating that the respondents were able to deliver an excellent attention-grabber and provide a solid introduction to the topic. However, there was a lack of clarity in the main points due to the minimal evidence that backs up the assertions made by the respondents. Furthermore, it was revealed that public classroom speaking anxiety and oral language performance had a significant relationship. It indicated that as public speaking anxiety increases, the oral language decreases. The indicators of this assumption can be drawn from factors such as panic when speaking without preparation, nervousness, fear of being laughed at, anxiety when asked to speak, discomfort in using expressive body language, and anxiety despite preparation. It is recommended that diverse speaking activities such as would you rather, think pa think-pair-share, and roleplays, which can be considered low-pressure activities, be integrated into class to develop confidence and gradually increase the difficulty through the incorporation of activities such as impromptu speaking, talk shows, and conversational dialogues to help students hone their communication skills by speaking spontaneously.

KEYWORDS

Public speaking classroom anxiety, oral language performance, negative evaluation.

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

Indrianty (2016) stated that among the four macro skills of language learning, speaking had been regarded as the most difficult to master because it requires interaction among students. Public speaking classroom anxiety refers to a phenomenon in which students are overly concerned about receiving criticism from their audience, which may heighten their discomfort because of a lack of self-confidence, particularly when they are the center of attention during oral language performance.

Students are constrained to be quiet and shy (Mwamba, 2005), hesitant to communicate and share what they have in mind (Faulin & Soefendi, 2013), uninterested in demonstrating their speaking ability in every classroom engagement, and feel unconfident (Marzuki et al., 2016) and uncomfortable in any English classroom. Likewise, students are hesitant to talk with their teachers or

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peers, afraid to interact in every learning activity, and anxious to participate as a whole (Bastida & Yapo, 2019). As a result, students' progress in second language learning and acquisition is hampered by their fear of speaking. Numerous studies have identified fear of negative evaluation as one of the components that contribute to public speaking anxiety. Sinaga et al. (2020) found that the majority of third-grade students experienced moderate to severe levels of speaking anxiety, with fear of unfavorable evaluation being the most common rationale.

Furthermore, various studies point out that even students who excel in written exams will feel anxious when tasked with speaking in public. It was supported by Sutarsyah (2017), who mentioned that anxiety is a crucial variable that can significantly affect language proficiency. As a result, it has drawn the interest of numerous researchers whose aim is to investigate this phenomenon. Public speaking anxiety is one of the strongest predictors of language learning success and has crippling effects on the language learner (Liu & Jackson, 2008). Depending on how severe it is, language anxiety can either improve or hinder a person's performance. However, despite the overwhelming amount of statistical information and theoretical explanations for this phenomenon, there are few resources available regarding the prevalence of speaking anxiety in the Philippines. In this regard, it is important to explore this phenomenon in the context of the Philippine classroom (De Costa, 2015).

While most studies focus on public speaking anxiety as one of the challenges faced by students during oral language performance, there are not enough studies that venture into authentic or performance-based assessment in evaluating the students' oral language performance and communication skills inside and outside the classroom setting. As a result, there is limited research on how public speaking classroom anxiety is associated with and corroborated by an actual language performance assessment. Hence, this study generally aims to determine the public speaking classroom anxiety and oral language performance of language learners.

2. Literature Review

Public speaking anxiety is a typical problem for language learners, particularly those pursuing academic careers in their second language. Students' perceived competency, exposure to the language, attitude toward the language, communication apprehension, and fear of negative evaluation are some of the factors that contribute to this problem.

Several research determined factors that influence speaking anxiety in Filipino students; for instance, Jugo asserted that English language anxiety and English proficiency have a negative correlation with one another. This indicates that an apprehensive learner will most likely have a poorer performance in English proficiency. This is the usual scenario in their English class, where Filipino students are more anxious when tasked to speak in class. Del Villar (2010) discovered in her study that another concern for students before a public speaking occasion was self-evaluation. Fears varied from concerns about their physical appearance to self-worth, insecurity, and the possibility that the audience might mock them. In the context of the Philippines, intercultural or interethnic conversation can also cause communication anxiety. When a person meets people from various cultures and encounters cultural differences, he or she is more likely to regard them as strangers. (Lucas et al., 2011).

In connection, studies have repeatedly demonstrated a negative correlation between speaking anxiety and students' academic performance in the Philippines. Based on the research findings and discussion, it is reasonable to conclude that anxiety influences student performance, with students with high anxiety performing poorly and students with low anxiety performing well in speaking. These indicators are fear of negative evaluations and test anxiety. (Christy et al., 2021; Montano, 2022). It was also strengthened by Mak (2011), who found similar factors leading to speaking-in-class anxiety in Chinese ESL learners, such as speech anxiety and fear of negative evaluation, uncomfortableness when speaking with native speakers, negative attitudes towards English classroom, negative self-evaluation and fear of failing the class. These results are in line with earlier studies that have demonstrated a connection between speaking anxiety and subpar performance on oral exams, presentations, and other speaking tasks (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991).

Furthermore, Basaran and Cabarogli (2014) discovered that learners with limited English competence have lower self-efficacy to learn a foreign language properly. Another factor that can greatly induce speaking anxiety among students is exposure to the language. Training and exposure can be a factor that induces speaking anxiety among students. As asserted by Santoso (2022), many of the participants did not feel that teachers were one of the significant sources of their speaking anxiety. However, students still thought that the way the teachers asked questions made them anxious. This can happen because the teachers might tend to choose the students randomly to answer questions. Therefore, they might feel that they are unprepared to answer questions. Another possibility is that the teachers may not allow them to use their mother tongue to answer questions.

Public speaking anxiety is a widespread problem that affects many people in both academic and professional contexts. Localized research can shed light on the cultural, socioeconomic, and environmental aspects that contribute to public speaking anxiety in a certain country. Much of the existing research on public speaking anxiety has come from Western countries, primarily the United States. It is difficult to establish targeted interventions that address the particular needs of affected individuals without an in-depth

knowledge of the distinct elements that contribute to public speaking anxiety in a given region. There is little emphasis on how the data on public speaking fear may be used to improve the educational approach, which should be adapted to the needs of Filipino students.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study will use the descriptive-correlational method of research as it aims to determine the correlation between the level of public speaking classroom anxiety of Grade 11 students and their oral language performance. The research will include 58 students from the different strands of Grade 11 Senior High School at the University of La Salette, Incorporated, who were selected through purposive sampling.

3.2 Table 1. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The study will employ inclusion-exclusion criteria to ensure the validity of the data that will be gathered from the respondents. These criteria aim to create a study group that represents a wide range of performance in oral communication among Grade 11 students, providing a comprehensive understanding of how the level of public speaking anxiety of the students affects their oral language performance.

INCLUSION CRITERIA					
	Respondents with grades of 75,85 95 in their oral communication will be inclu				
Academic Performance:	ensure that there is a diverse representation of the performance level.				
	Respondents should provide a consent form signed by their parents to be part of the study.				
Consent and Willingness:	They should also express a willingness to engage in impromptu speaking.				
PSEP Trainings:	Trainings: Respondents who do not have prior experience or have not undergone training				
connection with public speaking will be included in the study.					
	EXCLUSION CRITERIA				
	Respondents with grades below 75 and above 95 in oral communication will be excluded				
Academic Performance:	to focus on a specific performance range.				
	Respondents who were not able to provide a consent form signed by their parents to be				
Consent and Willingness:	part of the study will be excluded.				
_	Respondents who have prior experience or have undergone training in public speaking				
PSEP Trainings:	will be excluded from the study.				
Medical Conditions	Respondents who have medical conditions that inhibit them to perform well during oral				
	language performance will be excluded from the study.				

3.3 Data Gathering Instrument

The researcher will administer two instruments to gather pertinent information from the respondents. First, a structured questionnaire will be administered to the respondents, consisting of their profile as described in Part 1 of the questionnaire (sex, mother tongue, and types of reading materials used). The second part is a self-report questionnaire known as Public Speaking Classroom Anxiety. Since the main goal of the study is to determine Grade 11 students' level of public speaking classroom anxiety, the Public Speaking Classroom Anxiety Scale by Yaikhong and Usada (2012) will be fully adopted in the study.

The 17 items in the PSCAS were adapted and adopted from previous scales, namely the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) by Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA-24) and Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety (PRPSA-34) by McCroskey (1970), Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986), and the Speaker Anxiety Scale (SA) by Clevenger, Halvorson, and Bledsoe (1992).

The second instrument in the study is an impromptu speech rubric, which is crafted to evaluate the respondents' oral language performance. It was peer-validated to ensure alignment with the target competency of the language performance. It was used to evaluate a two-minute impromptu speech on a specific topic assigned to the students.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Public Speaking Classroom Anxiety Level of the Respondents

Indicators		Public Speaking Classroom Anxiety	
		Mean	Description
1.	I never feel quite sure of myself while I am speaking English.	3.41	Very Anxious
2.	I start to panic when I have to speak English without preparation in advance.	3.69	Very Anxious
3.	In a speaking class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.	3.74	Very Anxious
4.	I feel confident while I am speaking English.	3.31	Moderately Anxious
5.	I get nervous and confused when I am speaking.	3.57	Very Anxious
6.	I am afraid that other students will laugh at me while I am speaking English.	3.59	Very Anxious
7.	I get nervous when the English teacher asks me to speak English, which I	3.03	Moderately Anxious
	have prepared in advance.		
8.	I have no fear of speaking English.	2.88	Moderately Anxious
9.	I can feel my heart pounding when I am going to be called on.	3.98	Very Anxious
10.	I feel relaxed while I am speaking English.	2.79	Moderately Anxious
11.	It embarrasses me to volunteer to go out first to speak English	3.21	Moderately Anxious
12.	I face the prospect of speaking English with confidence.	3.26	Moderately Anxious
13.	Certain parts of my body feel very tense and rigid while I am speaking	3.57	Very Anxious
	English.		
14.	I feel anxious while I am waiting to speak English.	3.45	Very Anxious
15.	I dislike using my voice and body expressively while I am speaking English.	2.69	Moderately Anxious
16.	I have trouble coordinating my movements while I am speaking English.	3.10	Moderately Anxious
17.	Even if I am very well prepared, I feel anxious about speaking English.	3.67	Very Anxious
Weighted Mean 3.34 Moderately			

4.21-5.00 – Extremely Anxious (EA); 3.41-4.20 – Very Anxious (VA); 2.61-3.40 – Moderately Anxious (MA); 1:81-2.60 – Mildly Anxious (MIA); 1:00-1.80 – Not Anxious (NA)

From the data collected above, it can be perceived that the respondents have a moderate level of speaking classroom anxiety, with a weighted mean of 3.34. This implies that respondents are most likely to experience a moderate level of public classroom anxiety due to factors like fear of judgment, lack of confidence, and lack of preparation for speaking activities. This affirms Taqwa (2022), who claims that a moderate level of speaking anxiety is triggered by fear of negative evaluation, low self-perception, and a lack of preparation.

They rated seven (7) out of seventeen (17) statements as "Moderately Anxious" with a mean rating from 2.69 to 3.31, while the ten (10) statements were rated as "Very Anxious" with a mean rating of 3.45 to 3.98.

Specifically, as can be gleaned from the table, respondents experienced the highest level of anxiety when they felt their heart pounding because they were going to be called on, as evidenced by the highest mean rating of 3.98 with a verbal description of "Very Anxious." It can be inferred that the respondents often get nervous or apprehensive, most specifically during classroom recitations or performance tasks in their oral communication class, where they are put on the spot because of pressure and no preparation was given to them. This supports the claim of Lungay (2023) that public classroom speaking anxiety is often manifested by some psychological symptoms, which include but are not limited to a pounding heart and trembling of the body, particularly body parts like hands, mouth, or feet, which gets worse when they are tasked to answer questions on the spot during recitations or oral performance as little time is given to them to compose their thoughts.

Meanwhile, the respondents also experienced a high level of anxiety when they forget things they know in a speaking class because of feeling nervous, as revealed by the mean rating of 3.74 with a verbal description of "Very Anxious", confirming that public classroom speaking anxiety has a detrimental effect on oral language performance as it can lead to forgetfulness or difficulty in recalling information, which is often attributed to pressure during oral performance making it challenging to communicate effectively.

The findings aligned with Kral'ova and Petrova (2017), who stated that communication apprehension is characterized and goes beyond fear of speaking. Struggling to understand and be understood in class triggers the classroom speaking anxiety of the students, resulting in fear of missing key phrases, proving that speaking is one of the most stressful skills to master, especially in a second language where the existing speaking classroom anxiety may be amplified.

In the same light, the respondents often start to panic when they must speak English without preparation in advance, as evidenced in the mean rating of 3.69 with a verbal description of "Very Anxious". This also shows that the respondents usually experience public speaking classroom anxiety when they are tasked to speak in English without thinking of what they are going to say beforehand. This indicates that they are not confident using the language, especially when asked to speak spontaneously. With this, Albore (2019) emphasized that preparing beforehand is essential to ensure good oral performance, which implies that failure to prepare and lack of knowledge of the topic can provoke anxiety in public classroom speaking.

4.2 Oral Language Performance of the Students

Table 4. Oral Language Performance of the Students

Scores	Qualitative Description	Frequency (n=58)	Percent
0-10	Needs Improvement	7	12.06
11-20	Satisfactory	25	43.10
21-30	Good	17	29.31
31-40	Excellent	9	15.51

It was revealed that most of the respondents, corresponding to 25 or 43.10%, scored an 11–20, indicating a satisfactory oral performance. The respondents were able to provide an attention-grabber that piqued the interest of the audience. However, a lack of clarity was evident in the main points because of the minimal evidence that proves the assertions made by the respondents. Furthermore, some confusion arose because of the use of the English language and pauses, as well as natural nonverbal expressions exhibited by the respondents. This is parallel to the findings acquired by Tabasa and Candilas (2023), who revealed that the professional completion of numerous speaking activities is an indication of the acquisition of the necessary skills for oral communication, which can be attributed to regular practice in the oral communication class.

17 or 29.31% of respondents received a score between 21 and 30, indicating a good oral performance, showcasing that they were able to provide a well-structured delivery as evidenced by a well-explained main idea but with minimal evidence. However, although the respondents were confident, certain mannerisms were committed. Additionally, the respondents' body language, gestures, and facial expressions improved their delivery. Meanwhile, 9 or 15.51% of respondents who received a score between 21 and 30 had excellent oral performance, indicating that the respondents were able to provide a well-structured delivery as evidenced by a well-explained main idea supported by evidence.

The remaining 7 out of the total respondents, or 12.06%, received a score between 0 and 10, indicating that the students' oral performance requires improvement. This is demonstrated by the student's inability to provide well-supported main points, their tense nonverbal cues that result in contradicting messages, their monotonous tone, and their abrupt speech ending. Correspondingly, Palmero (2019) revealed that the utilization of conversation discourse, elimination of fillers, modulation of voice, and employment of appropriate pauses were signs of oral communication proficiency.

4.3 Relationship between the Level of Public Speaking Anxiety of the Students and Their Oral Language Performance

	r2	Sig.
I never feel quite sure of myself while I am speaking English.		0.22
I start to panic when I have to speak English without preparation in advance.		0.00
In a speaking class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.	-0.34*	0.01
I feel confident while I am speaking English.		0.03
I get nervous and confused when I am speaking.		0.14
I am afraid that other students will laugh at me while I am speaking English.	-0.32*	0.01
I get nervous when the English teacher asks me to speak English, which I have prepared in advance.	-0.40*	0.00
I have no fear of speaking English.	0.28*	0.03
I can feel my heart pounding when I am going to be called on.	-0.07 ns	0.58
I feel relaxed while I am speaking English.	0.24 ns	0.07
It embarrasses me to volunteer to go out first to speak English	-0.20 ns	0.13
I face the prospect of speaking English with confidence.	0.39*	0.00
Certain parts of my body feel very tense and rigid while I am speaking English.	-0.15 ns	0.25
I feel anxious while I am waiting to speak English.		0.93
I dislike using my voice and body expressively while I am speaking English.	-0.28*	0.03
I have trouble coordinating my movements while I		0.05
am speaking English.		
Even if I am very well prepared, I feel anxious about speaking English.	-0.30*	0.02

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) ns Correlation is not significant

As gleaned from Table 9, there is a significant relationship between some of the indicators of public speaking classroom anxiety and the oral language performance of the respondents. This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant relationship between the level of public speaking anxiety of the students and their oral language performance.

Panicking when speaking English without preparation has a moderately negative association with oral language ability, as evidenced by the correlation value of -045, which posits that panic can usually make respondents stutter and give little to minimal responses, especially when tasked with speaking spontaneously, resulting in a poorer oral language performance. Dana and Aminatun (2022) revealed additional characteristics such as poor speaking abilities, increased anxiousness, and a lack of preparedness in classrooms. They urge teachers to use effective teaching strategies to alleviate speaking anxiety.

Furthermore, as indicated by the correlation value of -0.32, there is a moderately negative correlation between oral language skills and the fear that other students will make fun of them when they speak English, which conveys that students will most likely converse less and limit their participation because of fear of negative evaluation which leads to a lower oral language performance. As stated by Altun (2022), high levels of speaking anxiety can make students reluctant to participate in speaking assignments because they are afraid of performing poorly since they have low self-esteem.

In addition, as reflected in the correlation value of -0.34, nervousness that arises when the English teacher asks students to speak English, which leads to forgetting things they know, is somewhat negatively correlated with oral language performance. This implies that the more respondents get nervous, the more they will exhibit lower language performance. This verified the results acquired by Jugo (2020), who pointed out that one of the significant sources of anxiety for Filipino learners is the fear of committing mistakes rooted in the fear of being negatively evaluated by their teachers or peers.

Whereas, as indicated by the correlation value of -0.28, not enjoying the expressive use of voice and body when speaking has a moderately negative relationship with oral language performance. This reveals that the more uncomfortable students are in exhibiting an expressive voice, the lower their oral language performance will be. It coincides with the findings made by Lucas et al. (2011), who discovered that the cultural norms here in the Philippines often discourage being expressive. Thus, resulting in low self-esteem.

Additionally, feeling anxious about speaking English, even if well-prepared, has a moderately negative association with oral language ability, as evidenced by the correlation value of -0.30. This signifies that the respondents will most likely deliver a hesitant answer during speaking tasks, stemming from a lack of confidence leading to poor oral language performance.

Raymundo (2023) asserted that the inhibition felt by ESL learners can be attributed to their inadequate vocabulary and lack of macro skills fluency needed for them to speak out whatever it is in their minds.

On the contrary, speaking English confidently has a moderately positive association with oral language ability, as confirmed by the correlation value of 0.39. It confirms that confidence plays a significant role in leading to a better expression of ideas during oral language performance. As asserted by Bagalay et al. (2021), the anxiety experienced by students is rooted in a lack of self-confidence, leading to a lower oral language performance.

Similarly, not being afraid to speak English also has a moderate positive relationship with oral language performance, as evidenced by the correlation value of 0.28. This posits that students who do not fear speaking English are deemed to be more natural and confident during actual oral language performance. This claim was strengthened by Satriani (2019), who discovered a positive correlation between self-esteem and speaking performance in EFL.

Finally, facing the prospect of speaking confidently has a moderately positive association with oral language performance, as perceived by the correlation value of 0.39. This exemplifies that having a positive mindset toward speaking tasks can result in better language performance. According to Sutarsya (2017), who corroborated these results, those with lower anxiety levels typically do better verbally than those who have greater anxiety levels. This shows that giving an excellent oral presentation is linked to less anxiety, which reflects increased performance confidence.

5. Conclusion

This paper provided insights into the public speaking classroom anxiety and oral language performance of language learners. Based on the data acquired from the respondents. It was unraveled that the respondents typically experienced a moderate level of public speaking classroom anxiety derived from a lack of preparation, low self-confidence, and pressure to do well to avoid negative evaluation.

The findings demonstrated that the majority of respondents performed satisfactorily during the oral performance because they could effectively draw the audience in and give a thorough overview of the subject. However, because there was little proof to support the claims, the essential issues were unclear. Moreover, the participants failed to provide a significant conclusion. Some confusion arose from the use of language; distracting vocalized pauses were observable, and the non-verbal expressions of the respondents were unnatural.

As to finding the relationship between public speaking classroom anxiety and oral language performance, the data showed a significant relationship between the main variables. It indicated that as public speaking anxiety increases, the oral language decreases. The indicators of this assumption can be drawn from factors such as panic when speaking without preparation, nervousness, fear of being laughed at, anxiety when asked to speak, discomfort in using expressive body language, and anxiety despite preparation. Conversely, a positive correlation description is drawn from other factors such as confidence while speaking, absence of fear, and facing speaking prospects with confidence. These results suggest that as confidence in speaking increases, oral language performance also increases. Students with lower public speaking classroom anxiety tend to perform better.

It is recommended that diverse speaking activities such as would you rather, think-pair-share, and roleplays, which can be considered low-pressure activities, be integrated into class to develop confidence and gradually increase the difficulty through the incorporation of activities such as impromptu speaking, talk shows, and conversational dialogues to help students hone their communication skills by speaking spontaneously.

The paper offers valuable insights into the oral language performance and public speaking classroom anxiety of the respondents; however, it is crucial to acknowledge the limitations of the study, including the small sample size that raises concern for the generalizability of the research findings. The small sample size has made it difficult to draw conclusions that can be applied with confidence outside of the studied group because it may not have captured important variations. Therefore, it is advised that this field be tested and investigated in subsequent studies using a different, wider scope of sample and research locale.

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