

RESEARCH ARTICLE

English Language Competence, Communicative Competence, and Public Speaking Anxiety of Pre-service Teachers

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ABSTRACT

This research sought to investigate the pre-service teachers' English language competence, communication competence, and public speaking anxiety. These competencies are vital skills in delivering adequate instructions. The study utilized a quantitative method through survey questionnaires. The result provides significant insights on the pre-service teachers as follows: some pre-service teachers are confident about their ability to communicate in English; however, many still suffer from speaking anxiety. The PSCAS revealed that anxiety happens in specific situations, such as when pre-service teachers are called to speak without preparation. Physiological effects like increased heart rate and sweaty palms are common symptoms of public speaking anxiety that affect their speaking presentation. Lastly, pre-service teachers fail to retain information learned and remain calm while delivering public speech despite the long academic exposure. However, this study faced limitations, including a relatively small sample size and only relying on self-reported data, which introduced bias. Despite this limitation, the researchers recommend structured intervention to enhance the pre-service teachers' English, communicative, and public speaking competence, particularly in light of the evolving educational trend.

KEYWORDS

Communicative Competence, Speaking Anxiety, English Language Competency, Pre-service Teacher.

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1. Introduction

Public speaking continues to be one of those many are afraid of, including Education students in pre-service teachers' training. Besides, their expected responsibility as teachers is to be articulate communicators so that their class presentations may be effective. However, there is severe anxiety concerning public speaking, which may affect their performance and confidence in the classroom. This study is concerned with pre-service teachers' English language competence, communicative competence, and public speaking classroom anxiety to determine what influences their speaking ability. The speaking confidence of teacher education, one of the crucial factors, is vital in the Philippines due to the high expectations given to proficiency in the English language.

Naturally, pre-service teachers are still under training through observation and guidance from their advisers, so they have to face severe difficulties developing their communicative competence and conquering public speaking anxiety. While highly structured training programs regarding pre-service teachers are put in place in countries like the Philippines, these include theoretical coursework together with teaching practicalities; still, a majority of these pre-service teachers need help with speaking confidence, especially in the case of public speaking. This can be blamed on several factors, to wit:

- Limited opportunities for practice

- Fear of negative evaluation
- High levels of anxiety associated with public speaking

In addition, people have high expectations from teachers to be proficient in English, as many schools impose the medium of instruction in the English language in many subjects, including English, Mathematics, Science, MAPEH, Values Education, Technology and Livelihood Education, and Information and Communication Technology.

Communicative competence refers to the appropriate use of socially and culturally acceptable language varieties that cover various aspects : grammatical, vocabulary, pronunciation, and sociolinguistic skills (Hymes,1972; Canale & Swain, 1980). Communicative competence relates to more than just transferring information; it also relates to interpreting messages. To the pre-service teacher, communicative competence is essential to establishing rapport with students, creating a positive learning environment, and clearly explaining complex ideas.

Previous research revealed that classroom public speaking anxiety must be a shared experience among students and pre-service teachers (Han & Tulgae, 2019)). Symptoms of the problem include physiological responses, such as increased heart rates, sweating, and trembling. Cognitive and emotional responses include fear of negative evaluation, self-doubt, and avoidance behavior (Leigh & Clark, 2018). Public speaking anxiety has severe implications for the sufferer's performance and self-esteem in academic environments where oral presentations are a regular requirement. These concepts apply to various individuals, such as college students, language learners, and professionals (Raja, 2017). Despite some studies revealing a positive correlation between communicative competence and confidence in public speaking, such as Chen & Chen (2018), others have claimed that even high levels of communicative competence cannot conquer anxiety such as Horwitz (2000). The relationship between these two constructs is complex. Individual personality traits, cultural background, training and drills, and educational experiences may moderate it.

One factor affecting pre-service teachers' English language competence, communicative competence, and public speaking classroom anxiety is the worldwide pandemic affecting education (Yuniarti et al., 2024). The sudden shift to online or modular learning and the disruption of traditional face-to-face settings have affected the speaking development of pre-service teachers. Disruption of face-to-face interaction and real-time feedback restricted the growth of the English language and communicative competence. It heightened speaking anxiety levels among pre-service teachers (Nayapoy et al., 2021). The pandemic also highlighted restructuring the training to improve communicative competence in teacher education programs. Several key issues have arisen from different studies into the pandemic's effects on pre-service teacher education.

Among these, the most significant concerns are the reduced opportunities given to pre-service teachers to practice in front of a crowd, which is one of the requirements for developing speaking confidence and communicative competence. Shifting to online learning with no physical audience increased the anxiety of pre-service teachers, and struggling with new instruction and communication methods is also one of the factors that distress the development of communicative competence (Ugalingan et al., 2021). These encounters require interventions that help the pre-service teachers develop this vital competence they need in their teaching careers.

However, with the literature presented, there are some gaps in the studies of communicative competence and public speaking anxiety. An easily noticeable gap is that this focuses specifically on pre-service teachers, whose expectations and challenges differ somewhat from those of other groups studied thus far. a) Communicative competence concerning public speaking anxiety may be moderated by the particular speaking context, by the magnitude of language proficiency, and by the possible support by mentors; b) there is a lack of knowledge about appropriate strategies that help in mitigating public speaking anxiety in pre-service teachers, especially those having a lower magnitude of communicative competence. Despite the vast challenges that pre-service teachers face, there is a lack of proper sets of strategy concepts that would effectively enhance speaking confidence and overcome anxiety in public speaking.

Most of the studies have identified the factors that cause speaking anxiety, including fear of negative evaluation, lack of preparation, and limited opportunities to practice. However, more research on practical interventions and programs that will enable pre-service teachers to overcome challenges in developing speaking confidence is still needed. One of the ways through which pre-service teachers can ease public speaking anxiety is by drawing on peer support and collaborative learning to develop speaking confidence.

Research suggests peer mentoring and group activities may lessen speaking anxiety and enhance communication ability overall. By setting such a supportive and cooperative learning environment, teacher education programs will help pre-service teachers develop confidence and proficiency to help them rise in their future careers. Thus, the researchers proposed an intervention program to enhance pre-service communicative competence and alleviate the public speaking classroom anxiety to enhance the delivery of lessons to the students. Speaking Training for Future Educators (Project Sta. FE) is proposed to improve communicative competence and alleviate pre-service teachers' public speaking classroom anxiety. The program includes a series of speaking training sessions to enhance their confidence in speaking and develop their critical thinking skills.

The development of speaking confidence, apart from professional success, holds a great place in the lives of pre-service teachers concerning well-being as future educators. This reiteration of the high level of speaking anxiety will result in a heightened degree of stress and burnout that may have very negative implications for the mental health and job satisfaction of the concerned teachers. According to Agyapong et al. (2022), increased stress and burnout can negatively affect the mental health and job satisfaction of

concerned teachers. Therefore, these issues must be addressed as early as possible in teacher education to ensure long-term success and well-being among pre-service teachers. Building up speaking confidence and decreasing public speaking anxiety are, therefore, the most significant concerns in teacher training.

With the gaps presented, particular interventions and innovative approaches to teacher education students are called for due to the challenges pre-service teachers present due to the COVID-19 situation in the Philippines. These are some of the challenges we have to address. By so doing, we shall be able to create a platform that shall enable the pre-service teachers to develop the confidence and skills they need for later successes in their careers and contribute towards bettering the quality of education service delivery in the Philippines. Thus, this study aimed to identify pre-service teachers' English language competence, communicative competence, and public speaking classroom anxiety.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Public Speaking Anxiety among Language Learners

Fear of public speaking is widespread among language learners. According to Dwyer and Davidson (2012), public speaking is one of the most frequent fears among college students. Various terms describe this fear, including communication apprehension (McCroskey, 1977), public speaking anxiety (Bodie, 2010), and glossophobia (Hancock et al., 2010). These terms refer to situations where students feel uneasy, worried, or afraid about speaking in public.

Several factors can trigger public speaking anxiety. Aida (1994) identifies circumstances such as fear of poor assessment given by teachers, fear of negative feedback from audiences, and fear of previous failures. Toubot, Seng, and Abdullah (2017) add six more factors: heredity, reinforcement, inadequate skill development, lack of appropriate role models, shame, and other external variables. Wang et al. (2020) categorize public speaking anxiety into trait anxiety and state anxiety, perceiving that those with high levels of anxiety are more likely to experience physical symptoms like sweaty hands, racing heartbeats, or quivering speech. Public speaking anxiety is divided into internal and external worries (Lefebvre et al., 2018). Internal concerns relate to speakers' perceptions of their oral delivery and personal feelings. At the same time, external anxieties involve the audience's focus during the speech.

Grieve et al. (2021) conducted qualitative research on anxieties about oral presentations and public speaking among forty-six university students at West of England University in Bristol. The study revealed that public speaking assignments negatively influence students' learning and understanding. Common concerns include being judged and uncertainty about the topics. Despite their fear, most respondents recognized the importance of practice and preparation. The results also highlighted a lack of comprehensive support for students terrified of public speaking (Ibrahim et al., 2021).

Dansieh (2021) researched to investigate public speaking anxiety among forty-six ESL students in Ghana. The study used both qualitative and quantitative research methods. However, a survey was an important instrument used by many final-year secretarial students at Dr. Hilla Limann Technical University. It was also established that the students appreciated the importance of public speaking. However, glossophobia at times obstructs them from impressing the audience. Barriers to speaking in English in public included poor self-confidence, a lack of regular speaking experience, inadequate preparation, and fear of making mistakes and being criticized (Dansieh et al., 2021). Results indicate that lecturers and professors can help through interactive approaches and proper communication strategies to cultivate positive attitudes and build students' confidence.

Grieves et al. (2021) and Dansieh et al. (2021) also support the claim that instructors are significant in helping learners overcome their fear of public speaking. It is, hence, essential to recognize different ways of learning and build a supportive and inspiring classroom environment to ensure L2 students have equal opportunities for success. According to Mahmood (2020) and Singh (2021), the hands-on assistance in smaller group workshops explained authenticity, let go of perfection, and focused on content over style. Students overcome fears of public speaking.

Meanwhile, even with this support, more holistic help is needed to help students overcome anxieties about public speaking. Current research commonly fails to present situational, cognitive, and behavioral factors or ways these characteristics interact with learners. Further investigation is needed on how the students perceive current support and how to offer more effective supporting strategies.

2.2. Understanding Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety

Measuring students' speaking anxiety helps language teachers understand the nature of their students' anxiety concerning the foreign language, especially regarding speaking, and seek means of minimizing their students' speaking anxiety. Speaking anxiety students often exhibit difficulty when speaking and describe feelings of fear, apprehension, and discomfort during speaking in class. They believe that one should speak only correct English, then look at and compare their skills with the natives of the target language and feel apprehensive that their pronunciation needs to be amended.

According to Yaikhong and Usaha (2012), anxiety in communication is created by a lack of chances for students to contribute to the classroom, the lack of confidence in communicating English in the school, and by such affective factors as interpersonal evaluation, class activities, and methodological aspects, self-esteem. These mentioned factors, taken together, make up the cognitive source of anxiety acquired by learners when speaking a foreign language.

Language learning will be less enjoyable when students are anxious (Gregersen (2005). Students who are uncomfortable learning a foreign language lose self-confidence and develop negative notions about the language learning process if the process of

learning the language frustrates them in engaging in the activities that help them learn the language. Suppose pre-service teachers are not confident in learning the language. In that case, they will also have difficulty using it in their instruction. Thus, losing confidence in the use of language will also affect the teaching and learning process of the students.

2.3. Pre-service Teachers during the Covid-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic affected various dimensions of education, primarily the English language and communicative competency of pre-service teachers in the Philippines, in conjunction with public speaking anxiety. Relevant literature synthesized in this review shall attempt to explore these effects. Undoubtedly, the transition from face-to-face traditional learning to online education is one change brought about by the pandemic. Kan's scoping review identifies challenges that brought about such a change: "effective online teaching strategies" and "development of digital competencies among student teachers." The pressure of change challenged the already established structure and responsiveness in educational institutions, which has often been inadequate to meet the previous pace of change (Ugalingan et al. (2021). As a result, many pre-service teachers faced a lack of confidence and preparedness to teach since they had a lot to adjust to pedagogical demands made by this new change order (Kenneyd & Gill, 2023)

The pandemic has intensified the pre-service teachers' extant problems concerning competency in the English language. With less face-to-face interaction, language, and peer collaboration opportunities were not available, which are fundamental elements of language learning (Ugalingan et al. (2021). The online learning environment affects the effectiveness of communicative competence, reducing language competency among pre-service teachers (Ugalingan et al. (2021). Moreover, shifting towards the use of computers or the internet has frequently caused a problem of less exposure to speaking face-to-face. It relies more on written skills than an interactive language teaching method (Maulimora, 2019).

The overall aim for communicative competence and adequate expression in various situations is adversely affected. That implies one of the simple methodologies for teaching language, such as ESL. Kulusaklı's study shows that communicative competence is more than just linguistic knowledge but also the ability to perform well in social interactions (Kulusaklı & Genç 2024). The restrictions on social interactions imposed by the pandemic have resulted in limited opportunities for pre-service teachers to practice and hone their communicative skills in natural settings. This will increase anxiety and apprehension when communicating, especially in a second-language context. It has been reported that most pre-service teachers experience public speaking anxiety through the fear of negative evaluation (Kulusaklı & Genç 2024).

The dynamics of classroom interactions have changed in the online learning environment and often increase anxiety levels in a situation where one has to speak in front of his or her peers or teachers. Some find themselves in a contradiction where they feel comfortable presenting in virtual formats but fail to cope because of the lack of physical presence and on-the-spot feedback. Thus, this anxiety could restrain such students from effective communication at all times, making their communicative competence suffer Kulusaklı & Genç (2024).

Moreover, pre-service teachers who have had online internships have found extensive difficulties in public speaking. Online settings do not allow face-to-face supervision and mentoring, which enables constructive critique over speaking skills. Consequently, several pre-service teachers claimed they were not ready and nervous to utilize the public speaking skills that form the backbone of their practice teaching (Maulimora, 2019).

The pandemic has also compelled consideration of teacher preparation programs and the support required to mitigate the challenges brought about by this pandemic. Napanoy's research finds that mentorship and support programs are critically important for the pre-service teacher in addressing the intricacies of teaching online and acquiring communicative competencies (Napanoy et al., 2021). Introducing practical communication strategies into teacher education curricula will boost the pre-service teachers' confidence and anxiety.

In the end, the pandemic has immensely affected the English language competence, communicative competence, and anxiety in the public speaking of pre-service teachers. Online education brought a new normal that posed problems, reduced opportunities for the practice of the use of the target language, increased anxiety, and ineffectiveness of mentorship. Such issues call for cooperation from educational institutions to improve support systems and integrate practical communication training into teacher education programs.

Public speaking anxiety is one of the common problems that language learners encounter, hindering the educational experience and their communicative competence. Researchers claim that the fear of negative evaluation, lack of preparation, and insufficient skills in speaking are causes of public speaking anxiety (Miskam & Saidalci, 2018). Other contributing factors that worsen this situation include heredity, reinforcement, and external pressure (Li, 2020; Alhazmi et al., 2022). Research suggests that specific public speaking fear may appear as subjective anxiety regarding the person in question's performance and objective anxiety over the kind of perception it has for their audience (Hasibuan & Irzawati, 2020; Mörtberg et al., 2018).

The COVID-19 pandemic has worsened the challenge because distance learning has minimized interactivities, thus limiting the scope for developing some communication skills and creating more anxiety among novice teachers (Hancock et al., 2010; Kamath & Shenoy, 2017). Despite clearly understanding the role of practice and preparation, most students do not receive support in dealing with their fears (Heeren et al., 2013). There is a need to create successful support systems in schools that involve mentorship

and interactive workshops to ensure a positive learning environment (Megawati, 2023; Plandano et al., 2023). In addition, practical communication strategies in teacher education curricula increase confidence but reduce student anxiety.

In conclusion, educators can approach this through psycho-support, skill acquisition, and practical experience to combat public speaking anxiety among language learners. The education institution must create an environment that encourages practice so that valuable comments from the learners lead them to become communicatively competent.

3. Methodology

This chapter presents the method used in this study. Specifically, the following are included: research design, sampling design, the role of the researcher, data sources, data gathering procedure, instruments, data analysis, ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

The researchers utilized a quantitative approach to data collection, which focuses on numerical data collections and analysis to gather information on the self-assessed English competence, communicative competence and public speaking anxiety of the pre-service teachers (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). They distributed a survey questionnaire to gather numerical data through Google Forms. Such a method will most effectively quantify the self-assessed English language competence, self-perceived communication competence, and public speaking classroom anxiety among pre-service teachers. The researchers used the results obtained to determine the level of English language competence and communicative competence in various situations and its relation to the public speaking classroom anxiety of the pre-service teacher.

3.2 Participants

The researchers chose the fourth-year Bachelor of Secondary and Elementary Education students of Northeastern College using purposive sampling to identify the respondents. Purposive sampling involves critically selecting useful information and criteria (Kelly, 2010). This selection technique is particularly applicable in this study since this study will only focus on pre-service teachers who will be using English as a medium of instruction. Pre-service teachers were selected since they can provide the most relevant insights about English language competence, communicative competence in various situations, and public speaking classroom anxiety since they are trained to apply these competencies in their internship. The researchers used inclusion and exclusion criteria to filter the respondents of this study.

Table 1: Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria	
Program Requirement	This study includes all fourth-year Bachelor of Secondary Education students specializing in English, Mathematics, Sciences, and Bachelor of Elementary Education at Northeastern College. The researchers chose them to be the respondents because they will be using English as the medium of instruction in their chosen subject matter.
Course Requirement	Students enrolled in Field Study 2 (Participation and Teaching Assistantship) and have completed all the necessary course requirements, including General Education Courses, Professional Education Courses, and Major Subjects, are included in this study.
Exclusion Criteria	
Program Requirement	Students who are earning Certificate in Professional Education courses and Filipino majors are excluded from this study because CPE students have experience working in different fields, have developed their communicative competence, and are more exposed to public speaking. Similarly, Filipino majors are excluded from this study because English will not be used as their medium of instruction in teaching.
Course Requirement	Students who have failed subjects from GEC, ProfEd, and major subjects and are currently enrolled in FS 2 and back subjects are not considered respondents.

Table 2: Respondents of the Study

Program	Number of Respondents
BSEd – English	31
BSEd – Mathematics	11
BSEd – Science	8
BEEd	22

TOTAL**72**

Table 2 shows the number of respondents by major after applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria. It revealed 72 respondents: 31 from the English major, 11 from the math major, eight from the science major, and 22 from the elementary major. The researchers have chosen these respondents in this study because their insight on the self-assessed English language competence, self-perceived communicative competence, and public speaking classroom anxiety will be beneficial in developing a program that would enhance their English-speaking skills would help future teachers to be more confident in using English as a medium of instruction.

3.3 Instruments of the Study

The researchers have used a three-part questionnaire. The first part contained questions on the respondent's data: sex, program, high school category (private or public), and frequency of using English in a conversation. The second part is the Self-assessed English Language Competency adopted from the study of Manalastas (2023). This survey identifies the degree of the respondents' communicative competence, focusing on their linguistics and discourse competence. Communicative competence is the ability to select appropriate communicative behaviors to achieve interpersonal goals while respecting the social context and the dignity of others involved (Wiemann, 1977). This is vital in teaching and delivering instructions effectively.

The third part is the Public Speaking Classroom Anxiety Scale from Yaikhong and Usaha, 2012. It is adapted to measure public speaking anxiety in an EFL classroom setting (Yaikhong & Usaha, 2012). This scale is designed to measure various dimensions of public speaking anxiety, communications apprehension, test anxiety, the fear of negative evaluation, and comfort in using English within a public speaking class. For its internal validity, the final version of PSCA was found to be .84, using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient administered to 76 participants. Table 3 below shows the Likert-scale interval and qualitative interpretation for Self-assessed English Language Competency and Public Speaking Classroom anxiety.

Table 3: Likert Scale Interpretation

Likert-Scale Interval	Linguistic and Discourse Competence	Public Speaking Classroom Anxiety
1.00-1.80	Very Incompetent	Not Anxious
1.81-2.60	Incompetent	Mildly Anxious
2.61-3.40	Moderately Competent	Moderately Anxious
3.41-4.20	Competent	Very Anxious
4.21-5.00	Very Competent	Extremely Anxious

The final part of the questionnaire is the Self-Perceived Communication Competence Scale designed by McCroskey and McCroskey (1988). This scale will measure an individual's perceived competence in a variety of contexts and with a variety of different kinds of receivers. Respondents can define their communication ability by highlighting that impressions must originate from them, not from outside observers. Communicative competence in various contexts is significant since people's perceptions influence their communication choices. It is vital to emphasize that the scale does not assess the subject's competency but their perceived competence (Bautista & Del Valle, 2023). This scale is reliable, with estimates more significant than .85 and excellent face and predictive validity. The respondents estimated their communication skills in different settings on a 5-point Likert scale and then calculated the average. To compute the sub-scores, add the percentages for each element and divide by the number, as shown below.

Table 4: Self-perceived Communicative Competence Scale Interpretation

Communication Context	Computation	Interpretation
Public	1+8+12; divide by 3	>86 High SPCC <51 Low SPCC
Meeting	3+6+10; divide by 3	>86 High SPCC <51 Low SPCC
Group	4+9+11; divide by 3	>90 High SPCC <61 Low SPCC
Dyad	2+5+7; divide by 3	>93 High SPCC <68 Low SPCC
Stranger	1+4+7+10; divide by 4	>79 High SPCC <31 Low SPCC
Acquaintance	2+4+9+12; divide by 4	>92 High SPCC <62 Low SPCC
Friend	3+5+8+11; divide by 4	>99 High SPCC <76 Low SPCC
Total		>87 High SPCC <59 Low SPCC

3.4 Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers sought permission from the Dean of the College of Education by signing a formal letter approving the survey's conduct to the Northeastern College's pre-service teachers. The survey method used in this research is a questionnaire. All the participants were given informed consent that explained the purpose of the study and ensured confidentiality of their responses.

The researchers obtained informed consent from all the respondents before the conduct of the survey. In the questionnaires used in this study, the respondents were asked to provide their responses to the questions in as much detail as possible. The data collected during the data collection period were compiled by the researchers, who tabulated and analyzed it using appropriate statistical methods. Then, the researchers interpret and discuss the data collected with the existing studies and literatures.

4. Results and Discussion

This chapter presents the outcome of the quantitative analysis of the research questions answers. The results are presented based on the questionnaire answered by the respondents.

4.1. Self-assessed English Language Competency : Grammatical Competence

Table 5: Grammatical Competence

	Grammatical Competence	Mean	SD	Qualitative Interpretation
1	I can express myself in English fluently	3.07	0.81	Moderately Competent
2	I never make a grammatical mistake in speaking English.	2.79	0.90	Moderately Competent
3	I can speak English that is consistent with the standard English language pronunciation, accent, and diction.	2.86	0.89	Moderately Competent
4	I can write a good academic paragraph in English.	3.19	0.82	Moderately Competent
5	I can logically organize my ideas when I write English paragraphs.	3.32	0.85	Moderately Competent
6	I can logically support and develop my main point when I write a paragraph in English.	3.25	0.78	Moderately Competent
7	I can write using proper academic style and tone in English.	3.01	0.80	Moderately Competent
8	I can use appropriate vocabulary and word forms in writing in English.	3.15	0.78	Moderately Competent
9	I can use appropriate spelling, capitalization, and punctuation when writing in English.	3.74	0.86	Competent
10	I can prepare/draft professional correspondence in English (business letters, reports)	2.99	0.85	Moderately Competent
11	I am able to adjust my English language level usage to suit my audience, whether I am talking to teachers, close friends, or others.	3.68	1.00	Competent
12	I can defend personal opinions about social and cultural topics using English.	3.00	0.90	Moderately Competent
13	I can express myself in English spontaneously.	3.11	0.88	Moderately Competent
14	I can lead the direction of the discussion in English (friendly, controversial, collaborative).	3.43	0.85	Competent
15	When writing English compositions, I can edit my writing to improve the wording, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.	3.71	0.98	Competent
16	I can effectively write compositions/ essay in English under time constraints.	3.08	0.85	Moderately Competent
17	When writing English compositions, I can identify problems in my writing and see what should be improved.	3.49	0.90	Competent
GRAND MEAN		3.19	0.93	Moderately Competent

Table 5 presents the self-assessed grammatical competence of respondents. The respondents assessed their grammatical competence as moderately competent, with a grand mean of 3.19 and a standard deviation of 0.93. The result indicates that the pre-service teachers are generally confident in their grammatical competence with room for improvement. The table also revealed the top 3 highest mean in the pre-service teachers' grammatical competence. Pre-service teachers revealed in statement number nine (9) they can use appropriate spelling, capitalization, and punctuation when writing in English ($M=3.74$, $SD=.86$). The result indicates that the respondents feel competent in using the correct mechanics important in their careers as future teachers. Correct spelling, proper capitalization, and appropriate punctuation are vital skills that enhance understanding in written communication (Haggag, 2018; Helal, 2023).

The result also revealed that revision in the writing process is essential, in statement number fifteen (15), "When writing English compositions, I can edit my writing to improve the wording, grammar, punctuation, and spelling ($M=3.71$, $SD=0.90$). In addition,

the result suggests that pre-service teachers can identify problems in their writing and see what should be improved. The skills in editing written text are essential to developing clear and coherent texts; this expertise is vital for teachers who are the model of good writing practices for their students (Harun et al., 2017; Kilic, D. 2016).

Furthermore, in the statement number eleven (11), "I am able to adjust my English language level usage to suit my audience, whether I am talking to teachers, close friends, or others (M=3.68, SD= 1.00). The result shows that the pre-service teachers can adjust their English language level; this is an essential skill in teaching. Teachers communicate with different audiences; thus, knowing how to communicate effectively with various audiences is essential; this can help teachers craft their teaching strategies and student interaction (Rodriguez, 2023; Amelia et al., 2017)

The three competencies with the lowest self-assessed grammatical competencies are also highlighted. Statement number two (2), "I never make a grammatical mistake in speaking English (M=2.79, SD=0.90), received the lowest mark from the respondents. The result recommends that pre-service teachers need more confidence in their grammar when speaking English. The finding is similar to the analysis of Reforsado and Ramundo, in which many students are struggling with the fundamental aspects of grammar that are very important in effective communication (Raymundo & Reforsado, 2024). In a teaching context, grammar is crucial for effective communication; it provides clarity (Chamalaun et al., 2022; Cigan & Kordic, 2013).

Moreover, the statement number three (3) "I can speak English that is consistent with the standard English language pronunciation, accent, and diction" revealed a mean of 2.86 and a standard deviation of 0.89, which proposes that the pre-service teachers perceived that there is a lack of exposure or training in English spoken activity. Strong command and proper pronunciation are imperative for effective teaching, especially for teachers who are teaching using English as the medium of instruction (Prystai, 2022; Aliazas & Velasco, 2023)

To conclude, professional writing, such as letters, emails, posts, and others, is crucial because teachers must communicate with parents, colleagues, administration, and other professionals. This contradicts the result shown in the statement number ten (10), "I can prepare/draft professional correspondence in English (M=2.99, SD=0.85). The result indicates substantial training is needed to fill this gap; professional correspondence will be important in their professional development (Suskaesih, 2023; Botchwey, 2023).

4.3. Self-assessed English Language Competency : Discourse Competence

Table 6: Grammatical Competence

	Discourse Competence	Mean	SD	Qualitative Interpretation
1	I can effectively write compositions/ essay in English under time constraints.	3.08	0.85	Moderately Competent
2	When writing English compositions, I can identify problems in my writing and see what should be improved.	3.49	0.90	Competent
3	I can understand spoken and written English with ease.	3.76	0.81	Competent
4	I can state details using the English language in a coherent presentation.	3.26	0.79	Moderately Competent
5	I can recognize the underlying meaning of English texts/ statements.	3.51	0.75	Competent
6	I can explain in clear, and detailed manner on a wide range of topics using the English language.	3.08	0.76	Moderately Competent
7	I can explain in clear, and detailed manner on a wide range of topics using the English language.	3.08	0.71	Moderately Competent
8	I can speak my opinions using English on topics which are familiar or of personal interest.	3.43	0.93	Competent
9	I can describe my own experiences and events using the English language.	3.65	0.84	Competent
10	I can introduce myself using the English language.	4.18	0.91	Competent
11	I can introduce others using the English language.	3.99	0.93	Competent
12	I can ask questions about personal details in English.	3.97	0.95	Competent
13	I can answer questions about personal details in English.	3.83	0.95	Competent
14	I can understand and use familiar expressions and very basic phrases in English everyday	3.79	0.96	Competent
15	I can give detailed information in English about my family, my house, and my community.	3.94	0.85	Competent
16	I can describe my immediate plans and hopes in English.	3.56	0.85	Competent
17	I can take and give simple messages over the telephone or leave a message on voice mail using English.	3.79	0.92	Competent

18	I can restate the facts of what I have seen recently on English television news or read in an English news article.	3.42	0.82	Competent
19	I can talk about a trip or some other everyday event that happened in the recent past or that will happen soon in English.	3.43	0.89	Competent
20	I can understand and comprehend conversations in English.	3.88	0.90	Competent
21	I can write an accurate summary of information that I have read in English.	3.46	0.85	Competent
22	I can write an accurate paraphrase of information that I have read in English.	3.44	0.90	Competent
23	I can find important details in written English materials such as textbook, handouts, technical manuals, and other course materials quickly by skimming and scanning (reading quickly).	3.79	0.87	Competent
24	I can guess the meaning of unfamiliar English words or idioms (set phrases) in my textbooks or other course materials without using a dictionary.	3.07	0.81	Moderately Competent
25	I can understand the main ideas of lectures, professional presentations and spoken reports in English that are connected to my field of specialization.	3.63	0.74	Competent
26	I can understand the English in non-subtitled English video tutorials/lessons on topics that are connected to my field of specialization.	3.49	0.86	Competent
27	I can understand English words and basic phrases concerning myself, my family and my community.	4.01	0.85	Competent
28	I can understand English words and phrases that consist of everyday or job-related language.	3.63	0.78	Competent
29	I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities using the English language.	3.81	0.80	Competent
30	I can use simple English phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know.	4.13	0.90	Competent
31	I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions using the English language.	3.51	0.96	Competent
32	I can fill in forms in English with personal details, for example entering my name, nationality and address on a hotel registration form.	4.24	0.88	Very Competent
33	I can understand basic notices, instructions, or information in English.	4.40	0.78	Very Competent
34	I can understand information within a known area, such as on products and signs and simple textbooks or reports on familiar matters in English.	4.04	0.91	Competent
35	I can understand documents, correspondence, and reports, including the finer points of complex texts that are written in English.	3.83	0.84	Competent
36	I can understand lectures in English even when my teacher speaks very fast.	3.44	0.89	Competent
GRAND MEAN		3.67	0.92	Competent

Table 6 revealed an insight into the discourse competence of the pre-service teachers in various aspects of English language use. The statement number thirty-three (33) "I can understand basic notices, instructions, or information in English" was clear as the highest ($M=4.40$, $SD=0.78$). The result implies that pre-service teachers feel confident in understanding important information, which is essential for effective communication in an educational setting. Yang et al. (2022) and Toom et al. (2021) affirmed that understanding instructions is essential in teaching and learning because it directly affects student engagement.

Another notable key point from the result is the pre-service teachers' perception of filling forms in English with personal details in the statement number thirty-two (32), which was the second highest in the survey ($M=4.24$, $SD=0.88$). School forms are included in teachers' responsibilities in the Philippine context; thus, the skill of completing forms and keeping records is necessary for future educators (Kafyulilo et al., 2013; Pantic & Wubbels, 2010). Moreover, pre-service teachers understand English words and phrases concerning oneself, family, and community ($M=4.01$; $SD=0.85$). This result highlights the importance of appropriate use of language in different contexts; this will help the receiver relate and understand the message effectively (Guomundsdottir & Hatlevik, 2017; Cebi & Reisoglu, 2020).

On the other hand, the table also notes the pre-service teachers' least three discourse competencies. The result shows that pre-service teachers struggle to compose essays in English under time constraints ($M=3.08$; $SD=0.85$). This result indicates that the pre-service teachers have difficulty in writing composition when they are being timed. Writing is a vital skill that teachers must possess; it helps them craft an assessment and other professional papers (Kim & Kwak, 2022; Tondeur et al., 2018). The respondents assessed their competence in guessing the meaning of unfamiliar English words or idioms without using a dictionary as moderately competent. This item specifies that pre-service teachers must be exposed to more vocabulary acquisition activities. Unlocking unfamiliar words in context is very important in language development and comprehension; this will help the pre-service teachers to help students in developing their vocabulary (Keser et al., 2015; Geckin, 2022)

Lastly, pre-service teachers are also moderately competent in clearly and detailed explaining a wide range of topics using the English language ($M=3.08$; $SD=0.76$). This result shows that there is room for improvement in presenting thoughts effectively; this competency is necessary for teaching to promote a more effective student-teacher interaction (Cohen, 2018; Toscano et al., 2019) The data presented revealed the need for an intervention program focusing on the development of language proficiency pedagogical skills. The highlighted competencies not only help them grow professionally in their careers but also help them present an effective learning environment inside the classroom.

4.3. Self-Perceived Communicative Competence of Pre-Service Teachers

Table 7: Self-Perceived Communicative Competence of Pre-Service Teachers

SPCCS Public		Mean	SD	Average	Qualitative Interpretation
1	Present a talk to a group of strangers.	3.28	0.86	65.56	
2	Present a talk to a group of friends.	3.81	0.90	76.11	
3	Present a talk to a group of acquaintances.	3.18	0.86	63.61	
GRAND MEAN		3.42		68.43	Moderately Competent
SPCCS Meeting		Mean	SD	Average	Qualitative Interpretation
1	Talk in a large meeting of friends.	3.60	0.83	71.94	
2	Talk in a large meeting of acquaintances.	3.15	0.94	63.06	
3	Talk in a large meeting of strangers.	2.78	0.98	55.56	
GRAND MEAN		3.18		63.52	Moderately Competent
SPCCS Group		Mean	SD	Average	Qualitative Interpretation
1	Talk in a small group of strangers.	3.43	0.96	68.61	
2	Talk in a small group of acquaintances.	3.50	0.87	70.00	
3	Talk in a small group of friends.	3.85	0.83	76.94	
GRAND MEAN		3.59		71.85	Moderately Competent
SPCCS Dyad		Mean	SD	Average	Qualitative Interpretation
1	Talk with an acquaintance.	3.69	0.82	73.89	
2	Talk with a friend.	4.44	0.73	88.89	
3	Talk with a stranger.	3.14	1.05	62.78	
GRAND MEAN		3.76		75.19	Moderately Competent
SPCCS Stranger		Mean	SD	Average	Qualitative Interpretation
1	Present a talk to a group of strangers.	3.28	0.86	65.56	
2	Talk in a small group of strangers.	3.43	0.96	68.61	
3	Talk with a stranger.	3.14	1.05	62.78	
4	Talk in a large meeting of strangers.	2.78	0.98	55.56	
GRAND MEAN		3.16		63.13	Moderately Competent
SPCCS Acquaintance		Mean	SD	Average	Qualitative Interpretation
1	Talk with an acquaintance.	3.69	0.82	73.89	
2	Talk in a small group of strangers.	3.43	0.96	68.61	
3	Talk in a small group of acquaintances.	3.50	0.87	70.00	
4	Present a talk to a group of acquaintances.	3.18	0.86	63.61	
GRAND MEAN		3.45		69.03	Moderately Competent
SPCCS Friend		Mean	SD	Average	Qualitative Interpretation
1	Talk in a large meeting of friends.	3.60	0.83	71.94	
2	Talk with a friend.	4.44	0.73	88.89	

3	Present a talk to a group of friends.	3.81	0.90	76.11
4	Talk in a small group of friends.	3.85	0.83	76.94
GRAND MEAN		3.92	78.47	Moderately Competent

The result presented in Table 7 indicates that pre-service teachers are moderately competent in different communicative contexts, with a notable strength in communicating with friends, with an average of 78.47. The finding implies that pre-service teachers are more comfortable conversing with their friends. On the contrary, pre-service teachers find it a bit more challenging to communicate in front of strangers, with an average of 63.13; the result implies that even pre-service teachers trained to communicate with various people are still challenged to deal with strangers. The finding indicates that there must be a program that will alleviate anxiety in speaking with strangers. Eugenio & Raymundo (2024) proposed the Conversational English Enhancement Program, which provides opportunities for students, including pre-service teachers, to practice and improve their conversational skills with strangers (Eugenio & Raymund, 2024). The intervention program should incorporate peer conversation as a central component, as the result suggests that pre-service teachers are more comfortable talking with their friends.

4.4. Public Speaking Classroom Anxiety Scale

Table 8 : Public Speaking Classroom Anxiety Scale

Public Speaking Classroom Anxiety Scale		Mean	SD	Qualitative Interpretation
1	I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my English class.	2.96	0.83	Moderately Anxious
2	I start to panic when I have to speak English without a preparation in advance	3.60	1.16	Very Anxious
3	In a speaking class, I can get nervous I forget things I know.	3.58	1.02	Very Anxious
4	I feel confident while I am speaking English.	3.11	0.94	Moderately Anxious
5	I get nervous and confused when I am speaking English.	3.39	1.04	Moderately Anxious
6	I am afraid that other students will laugh at me while I am speaking English.	3.36	1.39	Moderately Anxious
7	I get nervous when the English teacher asks me to speak English which I have prepared in advance.	3.25	1.25	Moderately Anxious
8	I have no fear of speaking English.	2.67	0.99	Moderately Anxious
9	I can feel my heart pounding when I am going to be called on.	3.67	0.89	Very Anxious
10	I feel relaxed while I am speaking English.	2.85	0.90	Moderately Anxious
11	It embarrasses me to volunteer to go out first to speak English.	2.99	1.00	Moderately Anxious
12	I face the prospect of speaking English with confidence.	3.06	0.84	Moderately Anxious
13	Certain parts of my body feel very tense and rigid while I am speaking English.	3.43	0.89	Very Anxious
14	I feel anxious while I am waiting to speak English.	3.29	0.97	Moderately Anxious
15	I dislike using my voice and body expressively while I am speaking.	2.65	1.06	Moderately Anxious
16	I have trouble to coordinate my movements while I am speaking English.	3.00	0.99	Moderately Anxious
17	Even if I am very well prepared, I feel anxious about speaking English.	3.40	1.18	Moderately Anxious
GRAND MEAN		3.19	1.07	Moderately Anxious

The result of the Public Speaking Classroom Anxiety Scale presented in Table 8 gives a notable understanding of the anxiety level of the pre-service teachers when engaging in public speaking using the English language. The finding reveals the situations where pre-service teachers feel comfortable and where they feel anxious. The pre-service teacher indicated that they are least anxious in the following situations. The lowest mean among the statement is item number 8 ($M=2.67$, $SD=0.99$); this shows that the pre-service teachers have no fear of speaking English, which reveals that they are confident in using the English language in speaking, despite that there is still a significant number of people who still feel anxious in using the English language. This result suggests that the self-esteem of the pre-service teachers is not normally distributed (Chamalaun et al., 2022; Cigan & Kordic, 2013). In addition, item number 15, "I dislike using my voice and body expressively while I am speaking" ($M=2.65$; $SD=1.06$), revealed a moderate level of anxiety. Body language and proper voice intonation are essential in communication; this will help the receivers understand the message (Botchwey, 2023). In teaching presentations, using body language and voice variation helps students

engage in the teaching and learning process; feeling discomfort when speaking in front of the audience will affect the audience (Sukaesih, 2023). In this connection, the findings revealed in item number 10 that the respondents do not feel at ease when speaking English ($M=2.85$, $SD=0.90$). Suppose pre-service teachers have difficulty using English as a medium of instruction. In that case, it will cause a problem in teaching instruction. English-speaking apprehension can hinder the students' engagement in the classroom (Prystai, 2022).

A distinguishing reflection point has also been presented from the result concerning the pre-service teachers' Public Speaking Classroom Anxiety Scale. The highest mean will be presented in this discussion. Notably, the pre-service teachers still feel anxious about the different indicators despite having training on becoming a teacher. The highest among these indicators is from statement number nine (9), indicating that pre-service teachers can feel their heart pounding when called ($M=3.67$, $SD=0.89$). The result indicates that public speaking affects physiological symptoms of anxiety, even in pre-service teachers. Awareness of the physical symptoms of speaking, like heart pounding, can intensify anxiety that would affect the development of speaking confidence (Rodrigues, 2023; Amelia et al., 2017).

It is also noteworthy that pre-service teachers start to panic when they have to speak English without preparation in advance ($M=3.60$, $SD=1.16$), as reflected in statement number 2; this indicates that pre-service teachers are more spontaneous in speaking when they have ample preparation and practice before delivering a speech. The result contradicts a teacher's skill, wherein teachers are expected to communicate effectively in real-time situations (Haggag, 2018; Helal, 2023).

Lastly, statement number three (3), with a mean of 3.58 and a standard deviation of 1.02, is marked as very anxious, suggesting pre-service teachers forget things they know in speaking class when they get nervous. The result is mainly considered a problem in pre-service teachers, who are expected to have a strong memory retention of information to deliver precise and effective instructions (Harun et al., 2017).

In summary, the findings of this survey suggest that the College of Education must craft a program for training pre-service teachers to develop confidence in speaking the English language to address the problem of public speaking anxiety. Promoting a supportive learning environment and providing strategies that enhance the speaking confidence of the pre-service teachers can improve their career and professional path as teachers (Mufida, 2019).

5. Conclusion

This study examines pre-service teachers' English language competence, communicative competence, and public speaking classroom anxiety. The results are as follows: some pre-service teachers are confident about their ability to communicate in English, while many suffer from severe anxiety. The results from the Public Speaking Classroom Anxiety Scale reveal that peak anxiety happens in such specified situations, especially at the time when pre-service teachers were called by their instructors without prior notice or preparation to speak. Signs like an increased heart rate give evidence of the depth with which anxiety affects their practice. Even after academic exposure, most pre-service teachers fail to retain the information learned and remain calm while delivering a public speech.

Thus, it has arisen as a fundamental concern from the results: speaking anxiety permeates a lot of pre-service teachers as a concern. It bodes ill for the level at which they may present and instruct when eventually released. Some radiate self-confidence, but speaking apprehensions do manifest elsewhere that undermine all their apparent show of self-confidence when their speech delivery is more spontaneous and depends more for its momentum on retrieval success in the area of memory, with heartbeat acceleration and palpitation trouble acting as more or less simultaneous correlates.

The only way the College of Education can mitigate these hindrances is by drafting focused programs that will enhance the public speaking skills of pre-service teachers. These should include: (1) Deliver interactive workshops focusing on strategic preparation, improvisation skills, and public speaking practice activities to boost confidence. (2) Class environment where practice and positive feedback prevail, and the fear of public speaking is diminished. (3) Use relaxation techniques, such as mindfulness practice, to facilitate effective coping with the physiological responses of anxiety. (4) Peer-led practice that builds student confidence through repeated exposure and support from peers. (5) Reflective activities whereby students can evaluate their speaking experiences and develop a personal strategy for enhancing individual development and increasing confidence. These suggestions will thus equip pre-service teachers with the ability to enhance their confidence and prepare them with the capabilities to engage in public speaking in a later career effectively.

5.1. Study Limitations and Future Research

This research provides valuable insights into enhancing the preparation of future educators, particularly in building English language competence, communication competence and reducing public speaking anxiety. The study's limitations, especially the tiny sample size, raise concerns about the generalizability of the research results. Because of the limited sample size, it is difficult to draw conclusions that can be extended to groups of pre-service teachers other than the respondents analyzed since significant variance may be missed. As a result, a broader variety of samples and study locations should be used.

Another limitation of this study is the different personality traits and profiles of the respondents that influence the English language competency, communicative competence, and public speaking confidence. This research does not delve into the factors of perception of these competencies in terms of sex, frequency of using English in communication, program, and other factors that

affect the use of the English language and communicative competence of the pre-service teachers. Thus, it is recommended that future researchers include the significant differences in English language competency, communicative competence, public speaking anxiety based on sex, frequency of using English in conversation, program, and other factors.

Furthermore, this study does not propose nor test a specific intervention that enhances English language or communicative competence and develops the speaking confidence of the pre-service teachers. Hence, it is suggested that a program or strategy be proposed or tested to enhance the pre-service teachers' English language competence, communicative competence, and public speaking confidence.

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