

Understanding Speaking Difficulties of Accountancy Business and Management Students

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Abstract:

This paper explored understanding the speaking difficulties of Grade 11 and 12 Accountancy, Business and Management students at Leyte National High School, Tacloban City. Respondents were 239 grade 11 and 170 grade 12 ABM students. During class recitation, students have difficulties in expressing their thoughts and ideas using the English language. Though, results presented that majority of the ABM students are having moderate anxiety in speaking the English language, which means that in general they do not feel anxious about speaking the English language, although they are still anxious in certain situations. On the other hand, grade 11 and 12 ABM students are having specific difficulties in grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. They also fear of making mistakes and that they lack confidence. Moreover, poor grammar skills, poor pronunciation skills and lack of vocabulary are considered major factors affecting speaking difficulties for grade 11 ABM students. While grade 12 ABM students considered lack of vocabulary and poor grammar skills as major factors affecting speech difficulties

Keywords: English language anxiety, speaking difficulties

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background and Rationale

The ability to communicate in English is vital. English language is the language used in the business and professional world. It is the medium that most subjects use in school. But Filipino learners are unable to communicate in English effectively due to language obstacles that is why Filipino learners opt not to use English as a conversational language (Mansila and Hosina,2019).

Aside from Philippines, many nations include English as a second language in their school curricula, and learners begin learning the language at a pretty young age. However, language teachers view the instruction of English as a difficult career decision since they deal with several issues, such as learners' nervousness in studying the desired language (Gatcho, 2019).

According to Berova (2018) as cited in Gatcho and Hajan (2019) although English has become the de facto language of communication in the Philippines Filipino students face challenges because of the vast linguistic ongoing difficulties in picking up a second language.

Research have shown that language anxiety is one reason that affect the speaking difficulties of learners. Moreover, a strong association exists between a high level of language anxiety and poor performance in language acquisition. The extent and nature of language anxiety experienced can vary among learners. As

noted by Ying (2008), this anxiety stems from various factors, including personal and interpersonal elements, learner beliefs about language learning, teacher beliefs about language anxiety, teacher-learner interactions, classroom procedures, and language testing. Furthermore, anxiety is heightened when learners face elevated expectations to communicate and speak in public. The fear of not meeting these expectations can act as a barrier to effective learning (Rajanthran et al., 2013).

The mental health and wellbeing of pupils might be negatively impacted by persistent speaking anxiety. Stress, low self-esteem, and even aversion to social situations may result. Examining this matter might assist in identifying learners who could want assistance and intervention to enhance their mental health.

For a student to have a successful future profession, communication skills are crucial. Business communication abilities are the trait that employers look for the most in today's competitive environment. Students should focus on reading, writing, and careful listening as their three main communication skills. Effective communication is important in both academic and personal and professional settings. In school, learners can learn strategies for recognizing and managing their speaking anxiety that will be helpful for the rest of their life. The causes of this nervousness may be determined, and then instructors can create plans to help them become more competent and confident public speakers.

Yet very few studies on language anxiety have been conducted in the Philippines, hence the conduct of this study to understand the language of anxiety of the learners and devise strategies to effectively help the learners. Moreover, conducting this study shed light on the specific difficulties faced by these students, with the ultimate goal of enhancing English language education and promoting more effective communication skills in this academic domain.

Statement of the Problem

This research aimed mainly to assess the level of anxiety and the specific field of speaking difficulties of Grade 11 and 12 Accountancy Business and Management students of Leyte National High School during the school year 2023-2024. Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of anxiety of grades 11 and 12 ABM learners?
2. What are the specific difficulties in speaking English of ABM grades 11 and 12 learners?
3. What are the factors that affect the speaking difficulties of Grade 11 and 12 ABM learners?

Scope and Limitations

This present study will focus on the assessment of the selected ABM grades 11 and 12 learners of Leyte National High School on the level of anxiety and their specific difficulties in speaking English during the school year 2023-2024. Though this study is using a mixed method, known as explanatory mixed method design, to explain further the numeric findings obtained from the quantitative data collection, this study remains limited to students level of English language anxiety and therefore does not include other sources of information like the parents, teachers, and school personnel, and also limits its scope to one (1) school, that is, the Leyte National High School.

Significance of the Study

Results of this study will contribute to the body of knowledge and will provide significant information for the development of school policies that will improve the current practice in developing learners who are communicatively competent. It is therefore anticipated that the results of this study will be of significant value to teachers and school administrators, most especially to the learners who are the intended

beneficiaries of this policy/program/project. Specifically, results of this study will be beneficial to the following:

Learners. As main recipients of this policy, by recognizing and addressing speaking difficulties, educators can create a more inclusive learning environment. This ensures that all students, including those with speech difficulties, have an equal opportunity to succeed in the classroom.

Teachers. As facilitators of learning, results of this study will provide them with valuable data that may be used to improve the current practice and understand the common speaking difficulties students face can inform professional development for educators. It equips them with knowledge and strategies to better support the learners.

School Administrators. As school managers, the findings of the study can inform curriculum development by highlighting areas where language and communication skills can be integrated more effectively into the educational program. The study's findings can help to develop education policies that prioritize addressing speaking difficulties. This could include allocating resources for teacher training, special education programs, and support services.

Definition of Terms

For clarity and univocal understanding, the following terms are defined according to how they are being used in the study:

English language anxiety. This term, as used in the study can be defined as a psychological condition or emotional state characterized by feelings of unease, apprehension, or fear experienced by individuals when they need to communicate or interact in the English language. This anxiety may manifest in various ways, such as nervousness, self-doubt, a fear of making mistakes, or avoidance of English language situations.

Speaking difficulties. This term, as used in the study, refers to challenges in speaking, such as pronunciation, fluency, grammar, lack of experience using the language and mother-tongue influence.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

This chapter presents the reviewed relevant concepts, ideas and findings from various literatures, which have provided necessary information and valuable insights to the topic under investigation.

Language Anxiety

Anxiety, as a broad phenomenon, is an intricate and diverse emotional encounter that inundates our entire being, influencing various facets of our existence (Sanders and Wills, 2003 as quoted in Sadiq, 2017). Over the past few decades, a significant amount of research has focused on language anxiety as a distinct component of language learning. Language anxiety is widely acknowledged as a hindrance in the process of acquiring a second or foreign language. According to Rajitah and Alamelu (2020), language anxiety refers to a sense of unease, nervousness, or fear experienced by individuals when learning or using a second language. This anxiety manifests as fear, disturbance, or emotional conflict during language-related activities. Many students grapple with language anxiety for various reasons.

The hindrance of language anxiety in second language learning has been recognized for a long time. MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) state that individuals learning both foreign and second languages are likely to encounter language anxiety. This anxiety can potentially create challenges, as it may disrupt the process of acquiring, retaining, and expressing the new language (Gatcho and Hajan, 2019).

Moreover, the concept of English-speaking anxiety is further substantiated by Stephen Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1982). Krashen emphasizes that anxiety, among other affective factors, significantly influences the acquisition of a second language. When an individual's anxiety is high (resulting in a high affective filter), it hampers the learning process by interfering with cognitive functions. This heightened anxiety leads to negative emotions and impacts performance, especially in speaking. Conversely, when anxiety is low (resulting in a low affective filter), optimal learning conditions are created, promoting long-term retention and meaningful learning experiences. Students with high anxiety tend to perform worse than those with low anxiety (Cao, 2011).

To a significant extent, Edward Thorndike's Law of Effect (1932) aligns with the central premise of this paper. Thorndike posited that learning is reinforced when accompanied or followed by a pleasurable state or feeling, while it weakens when associated with unpleasant emotions (SHIFT eLearning, 2020). The emotional state of second language learners is a critical determinant in either facilitating or hindering language learning. Therefore, in teaching and instruction, it is vital to prioritize rewards and recognition over punishments. Providing positive feedback, acknowledging students' efforts, and offering educational guidance nurture their motivation to excel in their second language education. On the contrary, when negative emotions prevail, it impairs the learning process (Pabro-Maquidato, 2021).

A strong association exists between a high level of language anxiety and poor performance in language acquisition. The extent and nature of language anxiety experienced can vary among learners. As noted by Ying (2008), this anxiety stems from various factors, including personal and interpersonal elements, learner beliefs about language learning, teacher beliefs about language anxiety, teacher-learner interactions, classroom procedures, and language testing. Furthermore, anxiety is heightened when learners face elevated expectations to communicate and speak in public. The fear of not meeting these expectations can act as a barrier to effective learning (Rajanthran et al., 2013).

Speaking Anxiety

Speaking, a fundamental aspect of language learning holds immense importance in second or foreign-language education. Speaking anxiety detrimentally impacts learners' performance. This anxiety often stems from a lack of self-confidence. According to Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986), as cited by Sadiq (2017), speaking is arguably the skill most susceptible to the effects of language anxiety.

Speaking anxiety, identified as a critical emotional factor influencing the acquisition of a foreign language, significantly impacts students' oral English proficiency (Melough, 2013). It ranges from mild nervousness to a high level of fear and manifests through symptoms such as handshaking, shivering, sweating, fear, forgetfulness, mental block, stomach fluttering, dry mouth and throat, rapid heartbeat, and a trembling voice. The intensity of anxiety varies based on an individual's physical and psychological condition as well as the demands of a given situation.

In the Philippines, English has been widely adopted as a lingua franca due to the country's diverse linguistic landscape (Wa-Mbaleka, 2014). However, Filipino students consistently encounter challenges in learning and speaking this second language (Berowa, 2018). Learning English as a second language poses difficulties due to its intricate nature involving complex psychological and social aspects (Berowa, 2016). Therefore, it's essential to investigate the factors that may impede or adversely impact English language learning among Filipino students.

Factors Causing Anxiety While Speaking

Many studies have been conducted to analyze the factors causing anxiety while speaking. Researchers have identified various factors that are responsible for speaking anxiety. Many factors such as linguistic, psychological, physiological, and cultural factors affect and cause second language-speaking anxiety.

Speaking in a public setting, especially in a classroom, stands out as a major trigger for anxiety among students, as noted in research (Rumiyati & Seftika, 2018). Additionally, other stressors such as pronunciation challenges (Qzurk & Gurbuz, 2014), fear of making errors (Dornyei, 2001), apprehension of negative evaluation (Ansari, 2015; Mak, 2011; & Kondo & Yong, 2003), deficiencies in vocabulary and grammar (Mukminin, 2015), lack of preparedness (Jackson, 2002), and even the attitude of teachers (Choi, 2016) in the language learning environment significantly contribute to the pervasive issue of language speaking anxiety, exacerbating the challenge for learners (Pabro-Maquidato, 2021).

Apart from the student-connected factors, many other external sources are also involved in language anxiety, i.e., lack of proper support from teachers, learners' insensitive personality, and individual attention. (Day & Gu, 2013; Siyli & Kafes, 2015). Ellis (2015) pointed out that due to a lack of linguistic knowledge, the learner's anxiety level might go high.

In 2013, Kayaoglu and Saglanel's interview session with 30 Turkish EFL students proved that linguistic issues faced by the learners' (word power, grammatical and pronunciation difficulties) increased the level of language anxiety. The anxiety level of the students increases due to various reasons such as not interesting activities, lack of cooperation, improper teaching style, highly challenging and conditioned classroom ambiance, time management reasons, and irrelevant content of teaching (Zia & Norrihan, 2015). McCroskey (2015) described that a lack of confidence in an individual's skill and hesitation to be engaged in communication or interaction are interlinked as it is due to fear of peer evaluation.

In the Philippines, Del Villar (2002), as cited by Kabigting and Nanud (2020), identified verbal fluency, or the lack thereof as a major cause of anxiety. Vocabulary and pronunciation were other aspects found to be related to verbal fluency. Past research indicated that language training led to proficiency in its use. For instance, children who were at ease using English in the classroom were likely those who frequently used the language at home and in previous schools.

In another study, Del Villar (2010) delved into the anxiety attributions of beginning public-speaking students in a state-run university. Her findings revealed that students attributed their anxiety to eight factors: expectation, training and experience, audience, self-worth, rejection, verbal fluency, preparation, and previous positive experiences. A majority of the students believed they would overcome their public speaking anxiety. Furthermore, they considered practice, confidence, and exposure to be the most significant remedies (Kabigting and Nanud, 2020).

Canceran and Malenab (2018) investigated the attitude of Grade 12 SHS academic track students toward speaking in English. The findings showed that students generally possess a favorable attitude towards speaking in English, perceiving it as significant overall. However, a substantial number of students harbor fear when it comes to speaking English, primarily due to the apprehension of being mocked or ridiculed for errors in their speech. This fear often stems from a lack of self-assurance in their conversational skills, discouraging them from actively engaging in the language. Nonetheless, they believe that with ample opportunities for practice, they can enhance their English-speaking proficiency and gain confidence in their abilities.

Educators typically have two primary approaches in dealing with anxious students: 1) aiding them in learning to manage the anxiety-inducing situation; or 2) altering the learning environment to reduce stress.

However, before either option can be effectively employed, teachers must first acknowledge the existence of second language anxiety. Teachers often observe negative anxiety-related effects in their students, where extremely anxious students exhibit a strong motivation to avoid participating in classroom activities, they fear the most, sometimes appearing unprepared or disinterested. Therefore, teachers should always consider the possibility that anxiety may underlie these behaviors, rather than solely attributing poor student performance to a lack of ability, inadequate background, or low motivation (Horwitz et al., 1986).

Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)

Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) introduced the construct of Foreign Language Anxiety, which has gained widespread acceptance and utilization ever since. They developed a five-point Likert scale encompassing 33 items, named the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), to investigate anxiety-related factors within the foreign language learning environment.

In their early work, Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) emphasized that a lack of anxiety measures specific to foreign language learning contributed to an unclear relationship between anxiety and achievement in foreign language learning (Tran, 2012). They defined foreign language anxiety (FLA) as a comprehensive construct encompassing self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to the language learning process within the classroom, acknowledging its distinct nature. Horwitz et al. (1986) were pioneers in identifying three interconnected factors prevalent in foreign language classrooms: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. Communication apprehension signifies the fear associated with communicating with others, while test anxiety relates to the fear of performing poorly in language assessments.

Sadiq (2017) conducted a case study focusing on the English language learning anxiety of learners in Saudi Arabia. The research data was collected using the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale, which was developed by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986). The instrument comprised 35 items, with 2 items about personal information and 33 items focused on foreign language classroom anxiety. Responses were rated on a five-point Likert scale: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neither Agree nor Disagree (3), Agree (4), and Strongly Agree (5). A pilot study was conducted to assess the effectiveness of the instruments, and it demonstrated high reliability. The reported reliability of the instrument was 0.85. The scores for language anxiety were categorized into three levels: low mean score, moderate mean score, and high mean score. The results of this study indicate that EFL students encounter a moderate level of anxiety. In light of these findings, the following recommendations were proposed: (1) Faculty and staff should recognize and address the significance of language anxiety among EFL learners, (2) EFL learners should be motivated to engage in English language practice both within and outside the classroom, and (3) EFL learners should be encouraged to interact with native speakers in less formal settings, such as on social networking platforms.

Another study that utilized the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale was conducted by Kamarulzaman et al. (2013). The study delves into the realm of English language anxiety among gifted learners in an ESL context. It surveyed 119 gifted learners at the PERMATApintar National Gifted Center (PpNGC), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. The findings demonstrate that gifted learners experience a certain degree of language anxiety in an English language environment. Furthermore, the study highlights a negative correlation between language anxiety and the English language performance of gifted learners. It also reveals that female gifted learners tend to experience higher levels of language anxiety compared

to their male counterparts. Lastly, the paper offers valuable insights to mitigate language anxiety among gifted learners within an English language learning environment.

In the Philippine context, Gatcho and Hajan (2019) examined the English language learning anxiety of Filipino college students wherein they employed the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Survey adapted from Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986). The study aimed to assess students' anxiety levels regarding fear of negative evaluation, communication apprehension, fear of tests, and anxiety related to English classes. Additionally, it sought to determine the primary factor causing anxiety among them. The results revealed varying levels of anxiety across the four factors, with the majority of students providing responses ranging from neutral to strongly agree. Notably, fear of negative evaluation and communication apprehension emerged as the most likely factors to induce anxiety. The study holds practical implications for L2 teachers, offering insights on how they can assist students in overcoming English anxiety, ultimately leading to successful language acquisition.

Mamhot, Martin, and Masangya (2013) conducted a comparative study focusing on the language anxiety experienced by Filipino learners of English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) from two educational institutions within the country. The study's objective was to assess language anxiety levels and explore the causes and impacts of these anxieties. The study involved a total of 40 participants, evenly split between ESL and EFL students. Data were collected using a two-part questionnaire: one section featured the 33-item FLCAS (Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale) developed by Horwitz et al. (1986), and the other part consisted of a 2-item questionnaire adapted from Williams and Andrade (2008). The findings indicated that Filipino ESL learners demonstrated a neutral level of language anxiety, particularly in the fear of negative evaluation related to low self-perceived linguistic competence. On the other hand, EFL learners reported no language anxiety. Both groups acknowledged their role in the language anxiety they experienced.

In another local study within the Philippines, Berowa (2018) examined the levels of language anxiety among learners of English as a second language (ESL) in Davao del Norte. The research aimed to investigate any significant relationship between anxiety and variables such as gender and year level that could influence English learning outcomes. The study encompassed 60 university students and utilized a two-part questionnaire, incorporating Park's (2014) modified version of the 33-item Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). The results revealed a neutral level of language anxiety among respondents across all areas. Additionally, no significant correlation was found between English language anxiety and both gender and year level of the students. This balance in anxiety levels suggests a positive learning and teaching environment, as a neutral level of anxiety can motivate learners to maintain their efforts in language learning.

Synthesis

Overall, the cited studies consistently highlight the significant impact of anxiety on second language learning and acquisition. Specifically, in the context of speaking, anxiety often leads to reduced fluency and diminishes the quality of verbal expression in the second language. This anxiety can result in inhibition, where learners fear criticism, mockery, or judgment from others when attempting to communicate in English. This fear can escalate to a point where students withdraw from engaging in communication, making speaking in English a daunting and threatening task for them. Recognizing and effectively addressing English language anxiety is essential for successful language instruction. Therefore, language instructors must acknowledge the presence of English language anxiety to provide the necessary

support for students in their language learning journey, ultimately boosting their confidence in language usage.

The available literature on anxiety in foreign language learning has not adequately explored the specific context of second language anxiety in the Philippines. Previous studies primarily focused on participants enrolled in intensive English courses with similar language backgrounds, leaving gaps in understanding anxiety predictors among second-language English learners in a multicultural setting.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study, as shown in Figure 1, presents the concepts under investigations. It displays the flow of the study. As may be seen in Figure 1, this study is focused on understanding the level of English language anxiety of learners. This study also includes learners specific speaking English difficulties.

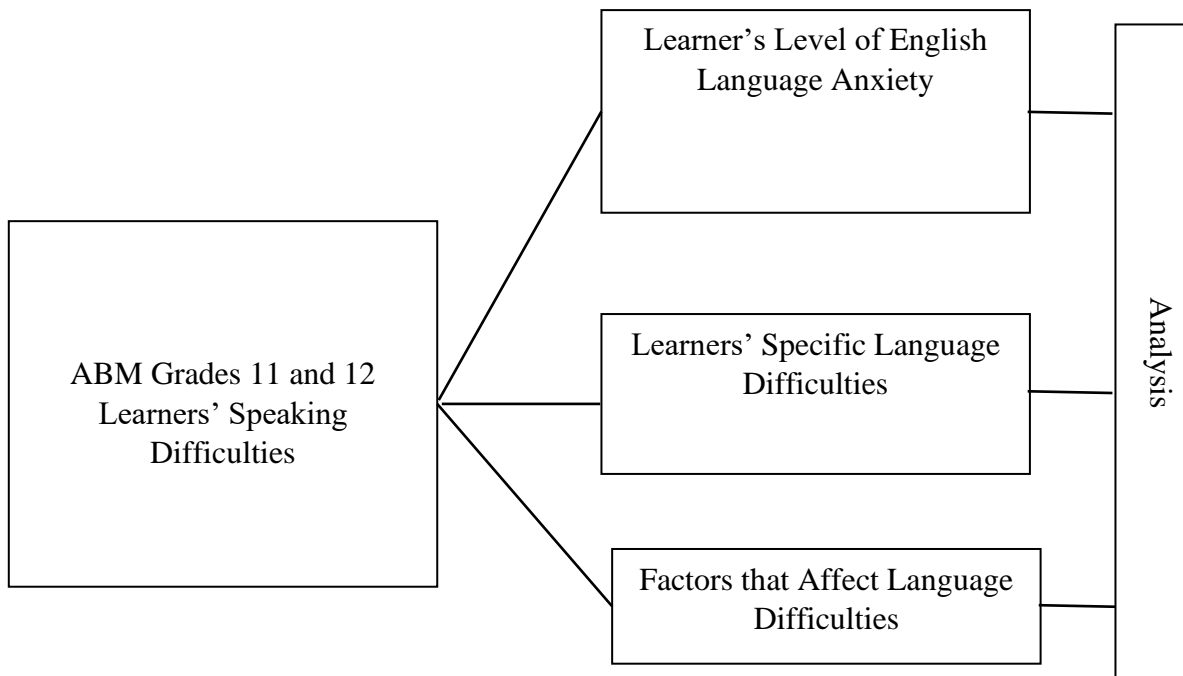


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

After the assessment phase as perceived and measured by the learners themselves, the data will be analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively to determine possible inputs for improvement, and then proposed solutions will be drawn based on the findings of the study. The proposed solution or interventions will then be adopted and implemented with the hope that actions will improve the programs. This also shows a cyclical process to continually improve the program.

**CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY**

The methods used to answer the research questions in this study are discussed extensively in this section which includes the research design, locale of the study, selection of respondents and participants, ethical considerations, sampling techniques, data collection methods and analysis. The data collected will be subjected to statistical treatment for quantitative data and thematic analysis for qualitative data.

Research Design

The study employed a descriptive-quantitative research design. The use of such design in this study was due to the purpose of the present research to provide quantitative description of students' English language learning anxiety in the English language classroom and identify the specific language difficulties of learners. By using this research design, it was expected that the results of the study could offer clear insights about the factors influencing the English language learning of the students. Survey instruments were utilized to collect the data from the grades 11 and 12 learners of Leyte National High School during the first semester of school year 2023-2024.

Locale of the Study/Environment

This study was conducted at Leyte National High School (LNHS), formerly a provincial high school of Leyte established in 1905, located at Gonzaga Avenue, Tacloban City, Leyte, Philippines. Since 2016, LNHS is classified as an Integrated Senior High School with 1 principal and 3 assistant principals, with department heads and subject group heads, and now with an estimated number of 9,000 learners for both junior and senior high school. As of the First Quarter of SY 2023-2024 ABM grade 11 has 268 and grade 12 has 263 students and a total enrolment of 531.

Research Respondents and Participants

This research was limited to grades 11 and 12 ABM students who are currently enrolled for the first semester of SY 2023-2024.

Ethical Considerations

Understanding the ethical standards in research is a vital consideration. Thus, information obtained from related materials are properly cited and recognized. Collected data were properly treated and organized to avoid misinterpretations and bias. The names of respondents and participants were not revealed, numbers were used to remove personal identifiers. The respondents were treated with utmost respect and the data shared by respondents were treated with strictest confidentiality.

Data Collection Methods

The data were obtained using a survey questionnaire. The survey was a self-administered questionnaire which students had to accomplish through forms. After answering the survey forms, the participants returned them personally to the researcher.

The questionnaire was the main instrument used for this study. The questionnaire was adapted from Horwitz (1983) Likert scale. The questionnaire consists of 33 items in a 5-point Likert scale that range from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". The first part was about the demographic data of the respondents. The last part was about the identifying the specific speaking difficulties and factors affecting speaking difficulties which was adapted from Yimam (2019) An Assessment of Factors That Affect Students Speaking Skill The Case of First Year English Major Students at Debre Markos University.

Data Gathering Procedure

To ensure high rate of participation, the survey instrument was personally administered to the

respondents. The respondents were encouraged to be truthful in their responses so results will be reliable and assured them that data will be treated with utmost confidentiality and anonymity.

The data were obtained using a survey questionnaire. The survey was a self-administered questionnaire which students had to accomplish through forms. After answering, the survey forms, the participants returned them personally to the researchers. However, prior to the collection of data, approval to conduct the study was sought from the school principal and the senior high school assistant principal for academics, and informed consent was secured first from the respondents.

Methods of Scoring and Analysis

Since this study aimed at describing English language learning anxiety of the students, the researchers utilized descriptive statistics to analyze the data.

Data were first tabulated using Microsoft Excel and then analyzed using frequency count in order to describe specific anxiety students mostly experienced in learning the English language. The sample size was calculated using Slovin’s formula in order to take into account the confidence level and margin of error.

Slovin’s Formula:

$$Sample\ size = \frac{N}{(1 + Ne^2)}$$

Where;

N= Population size

e= error tolerance

Percentage

$$P = \frac{F}{n}$$

Where;

P= percentage

F= frequency of cases

n=total number of cases

The students’ levels of anxiety were divided into three levels: high, moderate and low. High level was determined from the mean values from 1.00 to 2.50. As for the moderate level of anxiety, the mean value was taken from the range of 2.51 to 3.50 while the low level, covered the mean of 3.51 to 5.00. The anxiety levels and the range of mean values are shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1 Mean Value for Anxiety Level

Anxiety Level	Mean Value (Range)
High	From 1.00 to 2.50
Moderate	From 2.51 to 3.50
Low	From 3.51 to 5.0

Results and Discussion

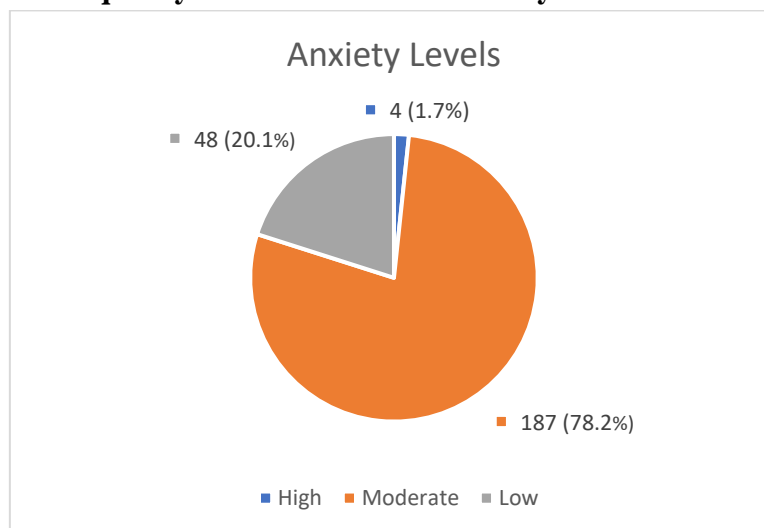
In this part the researcher analyzed and interpreted the data which was collected through questionnaires. The data analyzed and interpreted as follows.

Table 2: Frequency and Percent Distribution of Students (n=391)

Profile	Frequency	Percentage
Grade 11		
Sex		
Male	68	28.5 %
Female	171	71.5 %
Total	239	100 %
Age		
15	22	9.2 %
16	182	76.2 %
17	29	12.1 %
18	6	2.5 %
Total	239	100 %
Grade 12		
Sex		
Male	51	30.%
Female	119	70.%
Total	170	100 %
Age		
16	11	7.2 %
17	124	72.9 %
18	28	16.5 %
19	5	2.6 %
21	2	1.3 %
Total	170	100 %

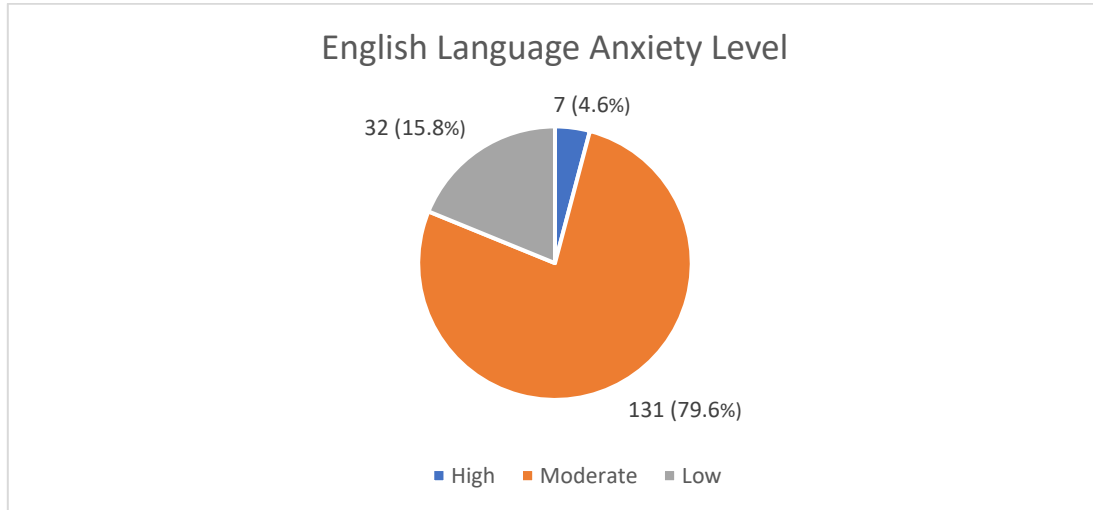
The table 2 shows that number of participants by grade level and by sex. It shows that there are more females than males in grades 11 and 12 students of ABM Strand. Most of the student respondents from grade 11 are 16 years old while 17 years old from grade 12.

Figure 1: Presents the Frequency distribution of the anxiety levels of Grade 11 students (n=239).



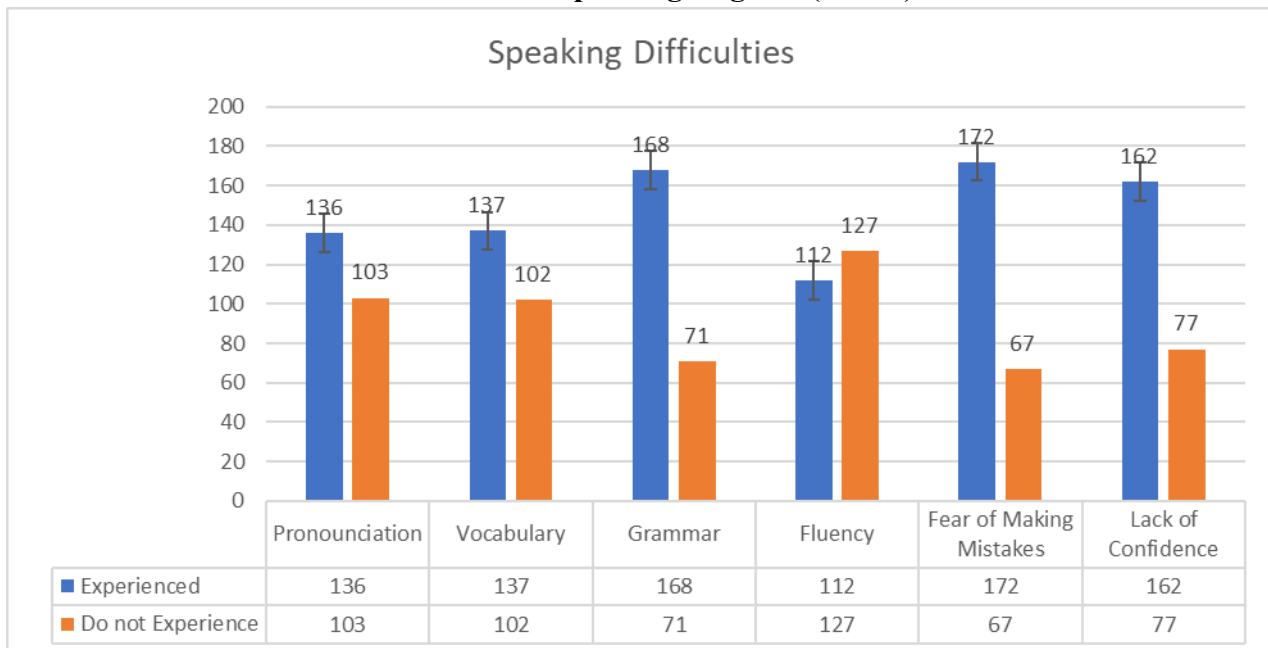
The findings in figure 1 shows that out of 239 grade 11 ABM students, 78% or majority are experiencing moderate anxiety level in speaking English language. This presents that in general they do not feel too anxious about speaking the English language, although they are still anxious in certain situations.

Figure 2: Presents the Frequency distribution of the anxiety levels of Grade 12 students (n=170).



The findings in Figure 2 shows that majority of grade 12 ABM students which is 79.6% experience moderate anxiety level in speaking English language. In general, they do not feel too anxious about speaking English language yet at some point they are still anxious about it.

Figure 3: Presents the Frequency distribution of the specific difficulties experienced of Grade 11 students when speaking English. (n=239).



As shown in figure 3, most grade 11 ABM students experience difficulties in pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fear of making mistakes and lack of confidence than those who do not experience. Yet, more students say that fluency is not their problem where out of 239 grade 11 students, 112 say they experience fluency problem but 127 say they do not experience it.

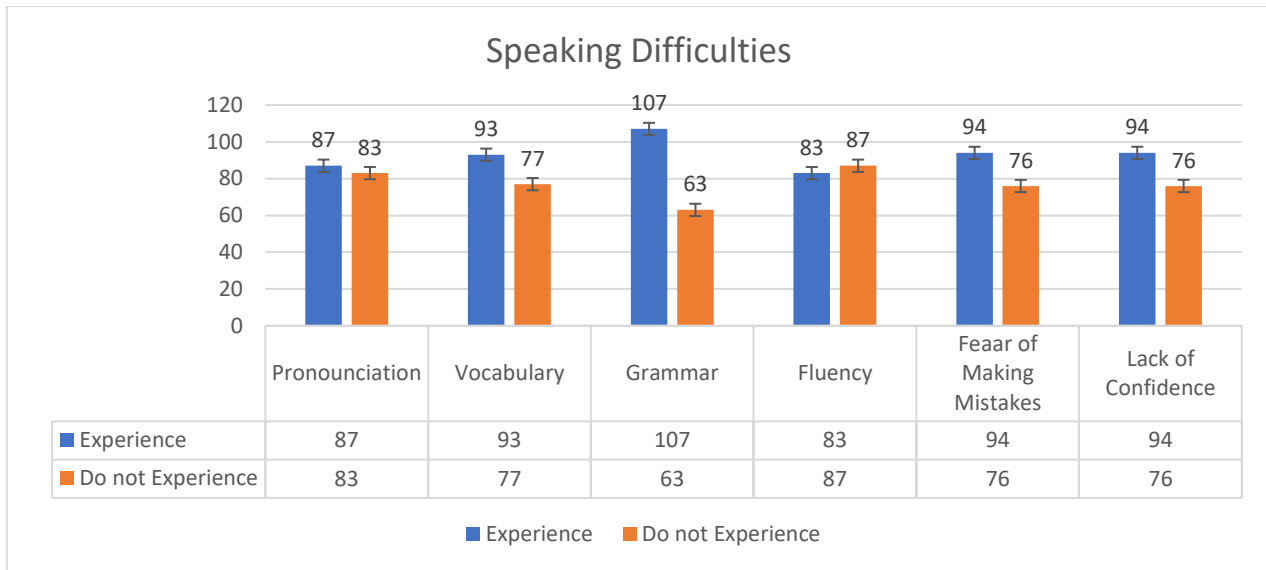
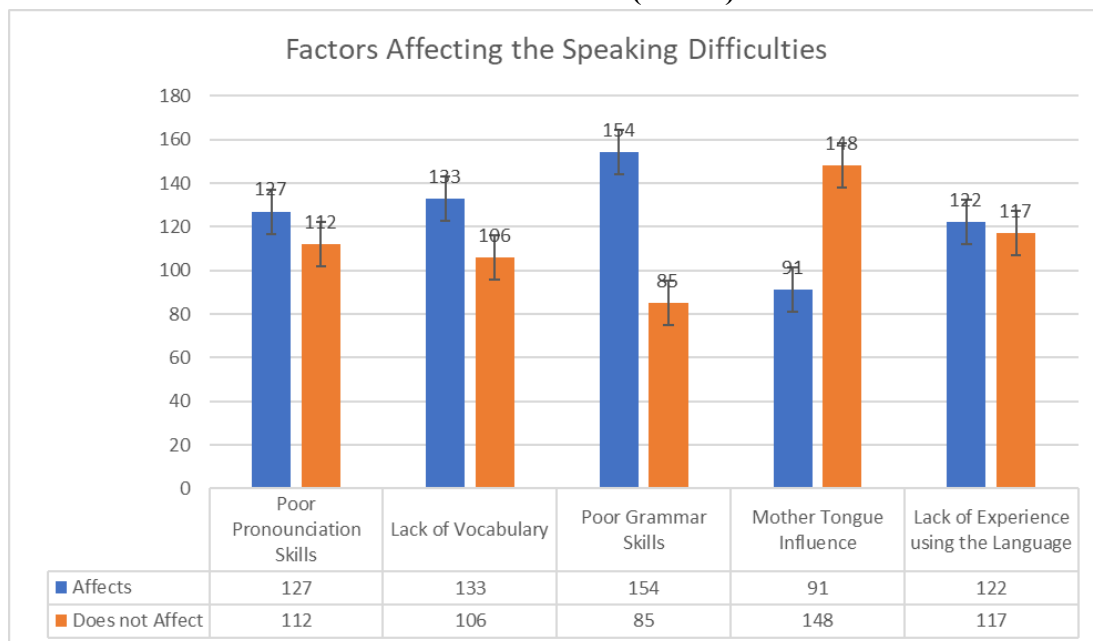


Figure 4: Presents the Frequency distribution of the specific difficulties experienced of Grade 12 students (n=170).

As shown in figure 4, out of 170 grade 12 ABM students, grammar is the major problem of their speaking difficulty where 107 students say they experience it. Next are vocabulary and lack of confidence where 94 students experience them as problems Third is vocabulary where 93 students experience it as a difficulty. On the contrary, students believe that fluency is not their problem. Yet, one cannot attain fluency if they have problems with grammar, vocabulary and and most specially if they fear from making mistakes and that they lack confidence.

Figure 5: Presents the Frequency distribution of the factors affecting the speaking difficulties of Grade 11 students. (n=239).



The above figure depicts that that major factors which affect speaking difficulties of grade 11 ABM students are poor grammar skills where 154 students identified it as a factor, lack of vocabulary where 133

students selected it, poor pronunciation skills where 127 students consider it and lack of experience where 122 students say it affects. While 148 students say Mother Tongue does not affect their speaking difficulty and only 91 say it does.

Figure 6: Presents the Frequency distribution of the factors affecting the speaking difficulties of Grade 12 students. (n=170).

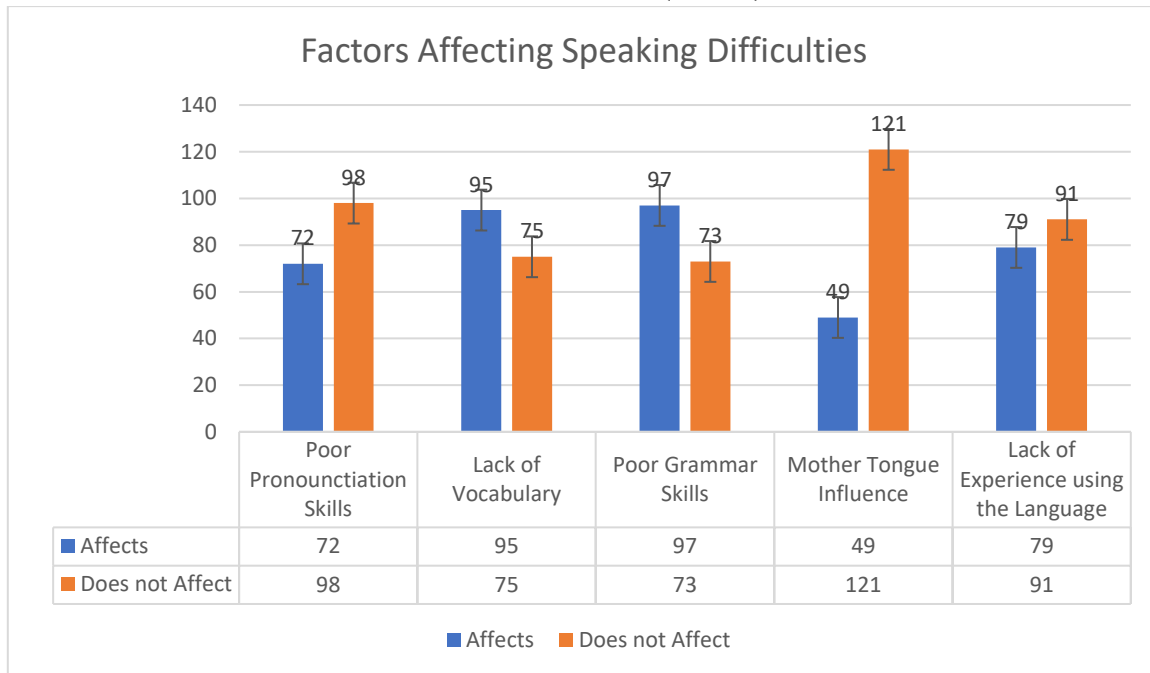


Figure 6 shows that the factors affecting speaking difficulties of grade 12 ABM students are lack of vocabulary and poor grammar skills. On the other hand, most students do not view mother tongue as a factor affecting their speaking difficulties.

Conclusion

The findings of this study suggest that grade 11 and 12 ABM students experience moderate level of anxiety. Majority of them are not too anxious in speaking English language in class but in certain situations they do experience anxiousness. Grade 11 and 12 ABM students are having difficulties in grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. They also fear of making mistakes and that they lack confidence. Yet, majority of both grade levels do not consider fluency a problem. Bailey (2003) as cited in Sashini (2017) defines fluency as using language quickly and confidently, with limited hesitations, unnatural pauses, etc. With this said, students' perception on what seems to be their difficulty differs to what they experience.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, there are several recommendations that can be suggested so that the teachers and school administration will be able to provide learning environment that help the students reduce their level of anxiety while in English language class and improve their speaking skills. Devise engaging activities where students can improve their pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. In an English class let the students feel welcome where bullying should be discouraged when someone commit mistakes when speaking the English language. Encourage students to have vocabulary notebook and let them practice using new words in class discussions.

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