



## English Language Apprehension of Education Student: A Phenomenology

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**Abstract**

Language Anxiety is acknowledged as an impediment in second language learning. In addressing the issue, this study aimed to explore the English language Apprehension among Education Students. This study utilized qualitative design using a phenomenological method involving one focus group discussion with 10 participants and in-depth interviews with eight informants from the College of Teacher Education at the University of Mindanao. The results of this study reveal that the apprehensions experienced by the participants are caused by being measured against a standard, being a laughingstock or a sorry spectacle, being unable to deliver the required performance, and dealing with their insecurities and self-doubt. In coping with the challenges, the participants engage in activities that provide needed exposure, reinforcement through reading and listening to exercises, and being open and positive. Also, they resort to withdrawal and disengagement. The implications of this study must be a well-established intervention program; also, students should improve their skills through constant practice and exposure to the language.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The capacity to convey using a foreign dialect at school, at work, and in a regular daily existence has expanded substantially in the 2000s, together with international systems administration and globalization. Language apprehension has involved a massive exploration group for as far back as many decades. Past examination discoveries on language misgiving have uncovered how uneasiness can hinder unknown dialect execution and its creation. More often than not, language students face a few issues in learning another dialect. Language uneasiness is a snag in second language learning. Khattak, Jamshed, Ahmad, and Baig (2011) announced, "Tension experienced in learning the English language can be weakening and may impact understudies' accomplishments of their objectives."

Globally, as Indicated by an investigation undertaken by Malaysian University, results show that Nigerians, for the most part, are not on edge about talking. Unexpectedly, Iranians and Algerians experience the ill effects of uneasiness given the dread of negative assessment and correspondence trepidation, as per Zhiping and Paramasivam (2013). Furthermore, Del Villar (2010) explored the

uneasiness attributions of students beginning public speaking in the state-run college in the Philippines. Her discoveries uncovered that there are eight factors that students attribute to their tension. These are aspirations, preparation and experience, crowd, self-esteem, dismissal, verbal familiarity, planning, and past enjoyable experience. The vast majority of the understudies additionally accept that they would conquer their tension regarding public speaking.

A study involving pre-university students in Mindanao State University has been thrown with negative criticisms in a local setting because of their failures. They were tagged as a bunch of slow-thinking students, and they are a shame because they failed the system admission examination given by the University. Moreover, they have also found that many pre-university students have moderate to high English test anxiety levels, as Alico and Guimba (2015) studied. There is barely any research concerning language learning nervousness in the other language setting, especially in tuning in/talking set-up accounted for.

Nationally, English functions as a second language, and therefore, it is necessary to research language anxiety. We Filipinos must realize that even though English has been generally utilized, particularly in urban spots, the nearness of pressure among the students despite everything must be tended—concentrating on the English dialect and the learners' subjective practices of communication circumstances in English.

On that premise, it is apparent that students experience fear in utilizing the English language. What is more, apparently, few or no investigations have been done here, especially concerning the Education major students and few scientists have tended to Communication Apprehension from a subjective viewpoint; further, the lived encounters of high CA people have given little voice (Cissna, 2010). Though English is the medium of language in the educational system in the Philippines; we have overlooked the emotions embedded as students grow with the style, and the environment they live in. Taking this into consideration would help in understanding how they feel and how they apply the medium into their daily conversation.

In this study, I aim to evaluate the following. To begin with, why do undergraduate students of Education majors encounter communication apprehension in using the English dialect? The leading question is where the hesitation to communicate in English originated. The second reason is to discover the most anxiety-arousing oral production tasks and exercises for the undergraduate students of Education majors. Besides, to focus on the situational features that make a verbal production task anxiety-arousing address the phenomena, the study will draw on a self-report of very anxious and troubled English learners as a foreign language.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Communication Apprehension**

In the field of communication studies and emotion-related anxiety from communicative scenarios are typically ongoing themes of research in the devotees of communication. Throughout the years of consistent exploration (McCroskey, 2007a; McCroskey, Teven, Minielli, & Richmond McCroskey, 2014), The nervousness of correspondence was as often as possible an examined wonder in the correspondence discipline during the 1970s through the 1990s, and an essential collection of data accumulated. (Byrne, Flood, & Shanahan, 2012; McCroskey, 2011; Morreale, Worley, & Hugenberg, 2010).

These sentiments of uneasiness show up over various informative circumstances, including dyadic and bunch situations. CA could be experienced separately, in regular everyday collaborations with others, or during high nervousness prompting conditions, such as the open talking setting. Enthusiastic markers of CA may incorporate sentiments of restlessness, anxiety, misgiving, or

apprehension (Byrne et al., 2012; McCroskey, 2009). Physical indications of tension may include a hustling heart, sweat-soaked palms, shaking knees, trembling voice, and disfluencies of discourse (McCroskey, 2007a; McCroskey et al., 2014).

## **2.2.Types of Communication Apprehension**

CA saw on a continuum between attributes like CA and situational CA, with setting-based CA and crowd-based CA as focuses along the continuum (McCroskey, 2011). All individuals have some degree of CA, and the variety of CA learning is built upon the speculation that all individuals fall some spot on the continuum (Blume et al., 2013).

Communication Apprehension is a continuum (Richmond et al.,2013) Trait-like CA is an advancing character property where an individual experiences pressure in all or generally authentic and arranged social collaborations. They are the most broadly perceived correspondence tension (Choi et al., 2015; McCroskey & Beatty, 1998). Characteristic like CA is proceeding and increasingly inclined to rehash over an entire individual's lifetime than situational CA (Hazel et al., 2014; Hunter et al., 2014).

While a few specialists believe that trait-like CA might not be relieved or dispensed with, others place that trait-like CA might be changed, restricted, or lessened through successful mediation (Blume et al., 2010). A person with high characteristics like CA may stay quiet during open interactions or decide to keep themselves out of the conversation (Choi et al., 2015; Hazel et al., 2014; McCroskey, 1977).

Summed up, Context CA saw from this disposition speaks to directions toward correspondence inside generalizable settings. The dread of address (stage alarm), the most seasoned CA conceptualizations, is a model. This view perceives that people are frequently anxious about correspondence in one sort of setting while at the same time having less or no worry in another respect. CA saw as a nearly suffering, character-type direction during a given type of importance. McCroskey (1986) distinguishes four typical styles of CA setting: talking, talking in casual gatherings, talking in little gathering conversations, and speaking in dyadic connections (i.e., discussions).

A significant CA level is identified with a combination of maladaptive works, including anomalous measures of self-input, advancing social anxiety, depression, and self-harm. These are ordinary miracle associations and social correspondence (Shahar, Carlin, Engle, Hegde, Szepeswol & Arkowitz, 2012). Besides, CA identified with an elevated level of opposite thinking and adverse perspectives toward self just as others (Shi et al., 2015). While a high CA level can genuinely affect the individual, ebb, and stream, CA, remediation techniques conveyed

## **2.3.Existence of Communication Apprehension**

Various promising exploration has tested the variables adding to students' FLA, with correspondence anxiety being a critical indicator (Rassaei, 2015). It is reasonable to check that understudies with verbal trade anxiety experience vulnerability in communicating in English out in the open because of their phonetic insufficiency. As indicated by Liu and Jackson (2008), in the get some answers concerning Wu (2019), unpracticed people encountering open fear had the subject in detailing their expressions in the objective language and communicating in English before others. Besides, Mak (2011) perceived worry of horrendous assessment as the most apparent factor giving an upward push to talking uneasiness. Focusing on 313 Chinese University undergrads in Hong Kong, finding out about administrating the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) endeavored to situate factors realizing talking in-class tension.

Findings credited understudies' correspondence tension to 5 compelling variables, explicitly the dread of helpless assessment, uneasiness when talking with primary language speakers, latent

inclination towards the language class, absence of certainty, and dread of bombing the tests. Among the five angles, the concern of awful assessment used to be the most prescient in FLA. Understudies' correspondence fear emerges from the sentiment of shame when they are assessed contrarily by utilizing schoolmates. For instance, they may expect their communication in English is complemented and unauthentic (Jin & Dewaele, 2018).

#### **2.4. Existence of Communication Apprehension**

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#### **2.5. Current Communication Apprehension Remediation**

Instructive educational programs for correspondence improvements give a couple of structures to furnish a person with mediation procedures for uneasiness related to correspondence, particularly the worry of the equivocal or implied situational nervousness of having a connection and tension or tension in cooperating during the open conversation (McCroskey, 2009). The extraordinary remediation system is a representation (Ayres & Hopf, 1985; Bodie, 2010; Shi et al., 2015). Individuals imagine events that may likewise conceivably create anxiety, such as an open correspondence, a potential representative get together, the first date, and later, rehearses that may be used in the given situation. Because one's capacity to make anxiety through Imagined Interactions (IIs), VIS might be particularly profitable as a CA remediation, chiefly for people with ordinary propensities to create envisioned communications (Hunter et al., 2014). All the more basically, if an individual has a functioning creative mind, which makes the character have apprehension from expecting or replaying informative situations, VIS can likewise allow a character to utilize the innovation to relieve the nervousness (Honeycutt et al., 2015).

Generally speaking, current CA treatment amid a starting correspondence course appeared to be reasonably powerful in diminishing CA (Bodie, 2010; Emanuel, 2005; Francis & Miller, 2008; Richmond, Wrench, & McCroskey, 2013). The best remediation system is the utilization of a few strategies in combination. This multi-strategy system in correspondence examines as a mixed treatment. It is more viable than any single technique for remediation in both the rapid and long-haul decrease of CA. The combined treatment strategy for utilizing VIS, IIs, SD, ST, and practice is exceptionally viable in diminishing by an extensive CA among early on correspondence course understudies (Honeycutt et al., 2015). Researchers of CA have viably recognized techniques and practices that effectively help to alleviate the impacts of CA inside people; in any case, challenges stay in separating the makes contributing CA.

## **2.6.The Challenge of Communication Apprehension Etiology**

There exists little learning about the causality of Communication Apprehension; most analysts utilize a critical dimension of the theory in CA etiology improvement. The research approach for distinguishing and confining CA indicators and rule factors through controlled situations can be morally sketchy (Dwyer & Davidson, 2012; Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). Causal research is restricted to understanding characteristics like CA etiology (Russ, 2013).

Moreover, keeping in mind that the refinement between attributes like CA and situational CA is helpful for specialists, McCroskey (2011) holds that the bifurcation between CA and situational CA has obfuscated CA understanding and does not serve to address the essential requirement for recognizing CA causality.

## **2.7.Communication Apprehension and the College Students**

Anxiety brought about by CA influences people's day-to-day lives, and the school years are especially hard for understudies with elevated levels of CA (Bodie, 2010; Hazel et al., 2014). The shirking of foreseen social circumstances influences singular understudy conduct and execution, remembering decision for the program of study, scholarly achievement, everyday plan, homeroom commitment, understudy workforce connections, and vast degrees of consistency (Butler, Pryor, & Marti, 2004; McCroskey, Booth-Butterfield, & Payne, 1989). Undergrads have detailed exceptional CA levels, prompting nervousness, language, correspondence issues, and progressing educational issues related to CA. Regardless of many years of exploration and advanced education endeavors, school standards for dependability have not expanded to practically identical four-year organizations. Analysts require a more prominent comprehension of undergrads; It needs more examination to comprehend the school understanding for the high CA understudy (Duggan & Williams, 2010; Hunter et al., 2014).

These individuals may demonstrate negative conduct to an insightful profession, including keeping up a key good way from coursework, lack of common sense for assignments, helpless basic administration, and persistent helpless academic execution (Bodie, 2010). High CA understudies will, in general, be quiet during open situations and, now and again, have progressing scattered intuition designs because of tension (Choi et al., 2015). Moreover, understudies with high measures of CA have a consistent dread of negative appraisals from partners and instructors, which may provoke low academic execution and confined social duty during the class (Francis & Miller, 2008; Hazel et al., 2014). tension related to social discussions has ceaseless ramifications for understudies at the school (McCroskey, 1977; Horwitz, 2002; Hunter et al., 2014).

In conclusion, the developing subject inside the survey of writing is that each experience some degree of CA, and subsequently, the sentiments of mania identified with open situations may serve to make school an unpleasant encounter for prime CA people (Blume et al., 2013; Bodie, 2010; De La Mare, 2014). students with elevated CA levels, similar to CA intercession and current course educational programs with remediation objectives and destinations, particularly inside the attribute highlights of individual CA levels (Hunter et al., 2014; McCroskey et al., 2014; Valenzano et al., 2014).

## **2.8.Research Questions**

The present study addressed the following questions:

1. What apprehensions are experienced by the undergraduate Education students in learning the English Language?
2. How do these students cope with the challenges of the experiences?
3. What insights can the participants share with their peers and with the academe?

## **2.9.Research Design**



This study is a qualitative research approach with the phenomenological technique. Qualitative research was utilized for it answered the need to study a group of undergraduate Education students who are learning the English Language. Qualitative research empowers participants to share their stories, especially those voices that are infrequently heard (Creswell, 2013). Therefore, a qualitative design was an ideal approach in addressing an underexplored domain in both students' research and development in schools. This approach especially helped determine how students' concerns in using the English language intervened in the formation of language apprehension. The researcher traced the occurrences of certain factors in the participants' experiences and determined the relationships between variables, as in quantitative research. Instead, qualitative studies take place in a context-specific setting in which the participants experience the same phenomenon (Ponterotto, 1994).

Qualitative research is a design that best answered this study's open-ended research questions. The study aimed to understand the lived experiences of Undergraduate Education students who delivered undergraduate education courses in the same college. This study's procedure was Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), which studies how individuals made sense of their personal and social world (Smith et al., 2009). It was developed during the mid-1990s by Jonathan Smith, a Psychology professor at the University of London. IPA has its philosophical underpinnings in phenomenology and symbolic interactionism. The phenomenological assumption of IPA stems from Edmund Husserl's (1931) philosophical foundation. The experience theorized as consisting of individuals making meanings in their lived experience (Ashworth, 2003).

Interviews try to reply to general questions to whatever you have experienced in terms of the phenomenon. What contexts have generally stimulated your stories of the event? Other sorts of records, together with documents, observations, and artwork, can also be used. The gathered data are then read and reread then chosen phrases and themes are grouped to form clusters of that means. Through this manner, the researcher will be able to gather the typical, which means the event, condition, or understanding will attain a more profound knowledge of the phenomena

### **2.10. Research Participants**

In this study, 18 enrolled students under the College of Teacher Education in the second semester of the school year 2018-2019, were chosen as respondents by a simple, convenient sampling procedure. Convenience sampling could be a variety of nonprobability or nonrandom sampling were members of the target population that meet specific practical criteria, like easy accessibility, geographical proximity, availability at a given time, or the willingness to participate included for the aim of the study in keeping with Iker, Sulaiman, and Rukayya (2015).

The target participants were college students taking Education courses in the said institution provided they are enrolled in any English course during the interview. These students who participated in this study were recruited through a process—the process produced by ten students for the individual interview and eight students for the focus group discussion. For phenomenological studies, Creswell (1998) recommends five to twenty-five, while Morse (1994) suggests at least six. No compensation or academic credit was offered to these students. Students who voluntarily participated provided several information that may help them understand the current phenomenon of communication apprehension.

### **3. Data Collection**

As to the data collection, the data sources came from the one-hour semi-structured individual interviews and focus group discussion. The participants' verbal answers, which was essential to the study's intent, were recorded and documented by a transcriber. Interview questions provided insights into the core research question, as well as elicited maximum information from the participants on background, perception, feelings, and knowledge about the phenomenon (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012).

Having done with the necessary procedures such as preparing documents and selection, notification of the participants, I asked from the University's Vice President and sought the approval of my adviser and scheduled the focus group discussion (FGD) and in-depth interviews (IDI) with the participants. During the onset of the meeting, an audiotape was made available to record the responses of the participants/informants. Participants in this research shared their perceptions, ideas, and experiences on the apprehension of using the English language as a means for communication inside the classroom.

Each interviewee was assigned with a code. I recorded each interview on a separate audio file and labeled it with the assigned interviewee's code. As a researcher, I repeatedly listened to the audio recording of each meeting to become familiar with the responses of the interviewee /informant. After the interviews, I, together with my colleague, transcribed the data and then presented the said transcription to the participants for confirmation.

Moreover, in reporting their views, Gempes, Sayson, Manalaysay, Mexican, and Noveno (2008) emphasized that there is no universal agreement on the terminology when indicating qualitative inquiry quality. Generalizability is not the goal of qualitative research, though ensuring credibility, dependability, and conformability does produce more generalizable results.

I believe it would also be inappropriate to argue a position that I would be able to fully separate myself from my personal opinions and be completely objective about studying the phenomena in the preview of the participants about communication apprehension. I collected the data in a non-interfering manner without any predetermined constraints or conditions. I was fully aware of my disposition within the research. It was a consideration that I did not want to disregard.

At no point during the research did I manipulate or misrepresent my views to the Education significant students in the opportunity to express their opinion about apprehension in communication using the English language. The emphasis was on narration rather than statistics in the belief that the insights provided would lead to full and detailed data about their own experiences, challenges, and ideas as Education students in their performance inside the classroom during their English class.

The interviews took place from January 29 until January 31 of 2019. Saturation of responses of categories was arrived quickly, possibly because of the relatively homogenous sample presented by the students from the University of Mindanao. I knew sufficient sampling had occurred when the same emergent theme reoccurred and was validated. Fusch and Ness (2015) claim categorically that 'failure to achieve saturation has a bearing on the standard of the research conducted.

#### **4. Data Analysis**

As the researcher, I performed three readings of the transcribed documents to facilitate analysis of the data gathered in the interviews. The first reading allowed me to have an overall understanding of the data. The second reading was dedicated to open coding the data according to the themes manifested therein. The common issues running through the transcribed interviews had served as the unit analyses of the study. As a method proposed by Gibbs (2007), open coding is where the text is reflectively read to identify relevant categories and label them accordingly.

After coding of the entire data is made, they were rechecked for consistency; codes that are repetitive and have nearly the same characteristics are eliminated or grouped as found appropriate. When the codes were finalized, the principle of uniformity and inter-reliability was pursued through the validation of the data analysis by three experts in the field. As defined by Bauer (2000), reliability is an agreement among interpreters. Reliability is considered very high at 90 percent, high at 80 percent, and acceptable in the 66 to 79 percent range.

## 5. RESULTS

### Apprehensions Experienced by the Undergraduate Education Students in Learning the English Language

From the data collected on the experiences of the informants, four main themes were produced as presented in Table 2. These themes guided the researcher to determine which core ideas to present. These themes are: being measured against a standard; being a laughingstock or a sorry spectacle; being unable to deliver required performance; and dealing with insecurity and self-doubt.

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Being Measured Against a Standard	Some students smile or smirk if one commits wrong grammar
	Anxiety in committing mistake and being judged by others
	Many people are too critical of English-speaking abilities
Being a Laughingstock or a Sorry Spectacle	Being mocked by classmates for using wrong English
	Experiences seeing people laughed at because of wrong English
	Grammar might be wrong and cause embarrassment
Being Unable to Deliver Required Performance	Not knowing what to say; how to express ideas and thoughts
	Having mental block during oral recitation
	Concern about inability to meet expectations
Dealing with Insecurity and Self-Doubt	Unsure of language skills; getting mental block
	Getting stage fright when speaking in front
	Lack of exposure in speaking the language
	Not learning much during elementary or high school days

### How Participants Cope with the Challenges of their Experiences

From the narratives elicited coming from the informants of this study, four major themes were revealed as shown in Table 3. These themes help the researcher to have a guide on what main ideas



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should be presented. These are *engaging in activities that provide needed exposure, reinforcement through reading and listening exercises, being open and positive, and withdrawal and disengagement*

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Engaging in Activities that Provide Needed Exposure	Giving tutorial to lower grade level students
	Getting exposure; like when asked to be a master of ceremony
	Preparing a written script, enhancing writing skills
	Preparation is the key
Reinforcement through Reading and Listening Exercises	Reading more to improve fluency and have an edge
	Writing, reading books and watching English movies
	Studying harder to gain confidence
Being Open and Positive	Getting encouragement and appreciation
	Taking courage; trying to stand out and conquer the fear
	Reminding self that others also share the same difficulty
	Focusing on the skills that need to be developed
Withdrawal and Disengagement	Shying away from speaking English
	Avoiding eye contact with teacher
	Scrimping on words (just answering with few words)

**Insights that Participants Can Share to the Academe**

From the data elicited from the experiences of the informants, four main themes were formed as presented in Table 4. These themes guided the researcher to determine which core ideas to present. These themes include, *it would help if teachers are considerate, supportive and sensitive; Schools/English instructors need to provide the necessary support mechanism and learning environment; Proficiency in English is a must for English majors; Filipinos have unrealistically high standards for the language.*

Major Themes	Core Ideas
It Would Help if Teachers are Considerate, Supportive and Sensitive	Teachers should try not to intimidate students
	Teamwork between students and teacher is necessary
	Teachers need to do a one-on-one follow up or intervention
Schools/ English Instructors Need to Provide the Necessary Support	Provide a speech laboratory, improve and upgrade it
	Do exercise in tongue-twisting; speed reading; interviewing

Mechanism and Learning Environment	English teachers should not only be mentors but role models as well
	Group activities like role play, can help ease the apprehension
Proficiency in English is a Must for English Majors.	As teachers, it is important to be proficient in the language medium
	Better be good as people expect a lot from English majors
	Overcome the anxiety to become better English speakers
	Speaking good English will motivate others to learn
Filipinos Have Unrealistically High Standards for the Language	Foreigners use wrong grammar in their speech but are not laughed at
	English is just a language and not a measure of intelligence
	We need to be true to ourselves.
	Filipinos have high regards for those who speak fluent English

## 6. CONCLUSION

Discerning that research is seeking what other people thought were in but nobody else has recognized, it persuaded me to explore on a phenomenology study. My interest aroused by seeing my students as they showed manifestations of anxiety towards the usage of English language. I began to conduct this research having the desire to understand the origin of having anxiety towards the usage of English language and how they overcome it. Personally, the results were able to provide me with information about the English language apprehensions among Education students. I had the option to resolve this with the understudies who would outfit themselves with learning techniques that would help them not exclusively to get familiar with the objective language yet additionally to adapt to their language learning nerves.

The outcomes proposed that these understudies connect with themselves in exercises to uncover themselves in communicating in the language. Additionally, they use jargon methodology to effectively gain proficiency with the English language and adapt to their English class tension. It has discovered that the work of jargon methodology empowers the students to assume responsibility for their learning. This study fills in as their essential guide to learn other full-scale aptitudes in the objective language. Found being estimated against a norm and dread of negative assessment, comprises the learning tensions understudies were encountering.

It may be gathered from the outcomes that remote students experience tension on the off chance assessed by both their companions and their instructors with regard to their presentation in utilizing the objective language. This study established the negative feeling they experience when they were learning the language. They might want to abstain from "losing face" in their English language class—being influential to the students wherein instructors ought to give fundamental intercessions and likewise fill in as good examples to their understudies, to persuade them in learning the language. Similarly, the foundation may provide a helpful learning condition. It very well may be noticed that these procedures fill in as compensatory ways utilized by the understudies to have the option to adapt to correspondence tension that they are encountering their English classes and to improve as an instructor later on.

As a researcher, I was honestly reluctant to conduct a phenomenology study, for I am aware that the process would be arduous from gathering the participants until finishing the transcription and the analysis. However, despite the heavy tasks, I am still grateful for the experience I gained while I

was conducting this study, especially to the participants who willingly shared their insights. With the participants' cooperation and with the help of my colleagues, finishing this study became possible.

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