



ENGINEERING STUDENTS' ENGLISH LANGUAGE ORAL COMMUNICATION ANXIETY AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between English language oral communication anxiety and language learning strategies of 300 engineering students in a private institution in Iloilo City during Academic Year 2024–2025 using a descriptive-quantitative design. Anxiety was analyzed in terms of trait, context, audience, and situation, while strategies included cognitive, affective, and social types. Differences were also determined according to place of origin, economic status, and academic status, as well as the relationship between anxiety and strategy use. Results showed that trait and situation anxiety were generally moderate, while audience anxiety was consistently high across classifications. Context anxiety was moderate overall but varied by academic status, with regular students showing higher anxiety. A significant difference was found only in audience anxiety. Language learning strategies were generally effective, with no significant differences across groups. Moreover, a significant relationship was found between oral communication anxiety and language learning strategies, thus, indicating that students' strategy use is associated with their level of anxiety.

Keywords: *English Language, Oral Communication Anxiety, Language Learning Strategies*

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INTRODUCTION

English serves a significant and vital part in worldwide oral communication. Through excellent communication, students can foster teamwork in the educational and professional setting (Kachru & Nelson, 2022). However, learning a second language is an emotionally charged endeavor for both students and educators, thus making English language teaching and communication a challenging profession requiring a lot of energy, creativity, and inventiveness (Mierzwa-Kamińska, 2021).

Nowadays, the majority of students experience anxiety when they have to respond to a question, speak in English, or give a quick speech. Some students think that they are impervious to criticism from their teachers or classmates Betty and Najiha (2021). According to Sinaga et al. (2020), some students are frightened and hesitant to speak in front of the class because they think other students will make fun of them if they attempt. This may cause some students to decide not to speak. There are numerous contributing factors to this condition, but anxiety is one of the primary reasons.

Anxiety stands in the way of learning English language and oral communication. Anxiety is a crucial factor that is closely linked to language acquisition success. When someone learns or uses a language that is not his mother tongue, he may experience worry and other negative, fear-related emotions. This is known as English language anxiety. Based on Adwas et al. (2019), English language anxiety is caused by a number of things. Some of the features that can cause students to struggle when speaking and increase their anxiety include their inadequate vocabulary, reduced confidence, poor grammar, and fear of committing mistakes.

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Engineering culture is made up of the common knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors that engineers have developed, together with their skill in language and effective communication (Godfrey, 2024). This means that English language plays a crucial function in the field of engineering when it comes to dealing with clients, analyzing and creation of paper works, and presentation of reports. Given the aforementioned, the researcher was interested in finding out more about the elements that contribute to instructional anxiety related to English oral communication. In order to better comprehend the difficulties associated with anxiety in English as a second language, the researcher anticipated learning more about the factors that engineering students perceive as contributing to their concern.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Methodology

This chapter presents the research method, research design, respondents of the study, sampling design, research instrument, and validity of the research instrument, reliability of the research instrument, data-gathering procedure, data analysis, and statistical tools utilized in the study. The goal of this study was to determine the correlation between English language oral communication anxiety and language learning strategies among the engineering students.

Research Method

This study used a descriptive quantitative approach involving survey as a method of investigation with the use of a questionnaire administered to the respondents. Survey is the process of gathering data on a population by posing questions to them and examining the answers. Descriptive quantitative research method in a form of survey is the process of

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gathering data on a population by posing questions to them and examining the answers with inclusion of numerical data (McCombes, 2023).

This research method was deemed appropriate by the researcher because this study determined the engineering students' English language oral communication anxiety and its relationship with their language learning strategies.

Research Design

A descriptive quantitative research design was employed in this study. Research investigations that seek to present static images of circumstances and establish the relationship between various factors using numerical data as the study's outcome employ a quantitative research approach. This method provides a thorough and detailed description that aids in the understanding, categorization, and interpretation of the subject matter (Fowler, 2013). On the other hand, the survey research method looks at the connections between various subjects and variables. Relationships between fixed variables are its main focus without the researcher altering or manipulating them. The scientific process and hypotheses are the foundations of correlational research.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study comprised of students enrolled in the different engineering programs in one of the engineering institutions in Iloilo City.

This study included three-hundred engineering students who were currently enrolled in English courses. The total number of engineering students was obtained from the office of the Dean of the College of Engineering. The obtained total number of engineering students

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was determined using Slovin’s formula with 10% margin of error, and from this, the respondents of the study were selected.

The profile and demographics of the respondents are shown in Table 1. As shown, there were three-hundred (300) engineering students participated in the study, seventy (70) of whom were in civil engineering, forty-eight (48) in computer engineering, sixty-two (62) in electrical engineering, sixty-five (65) in marine engineering, and fifty-five (55) in mechanical engineering.

In terms of their place of origin, one-hundred eighty (180) were from the rural areas while one-hundred twenty (120) were from the urban areas.

In terms of their economic status, one-hundred seventy-one (171) belonged to poor economic status, seventy-six (76) belong to low-income but not poor, twenty-four (24) belonged to low-middle income, thirteen (13) belong to middle income, four (4) belonged to upper-middle income, and twelve (12) belonged to rich economic status.

In terms of academic status, two hundred seventy-four (274) were regular students, twelve (12) were scholars, and fourteen (14) were working students.

Table 1

Profile of the Engineering Student Respondents

Profile Variables	N	n	%
Engineering Programs			
• Civil	450	70	23.33
• Computer	76	48	16
• Electrical	209	62	20.67
• Marine	345	65	21.67
• Mechanical	135	55	18.33

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Total	1,215	300	100
Place of Origin			
• Rural		180	60
• Urban		120	40
Total		300	100
Economic Status			
• Poor		171	57
• Low-income but not Poor		76	25.33
• Low-middle income		24	8
• Middle-income		13	4.33
• Upper-middle income		4	1.33
• Rich		12	4
Total		300	100
Academic Status			
• Regular		274	91.33
• Scholar		12	4
• Working		14	4.67
Total		300	100

Sampling Design

A stratified random sampling technique was used in this study. A popular statistical method, stratified random sampling, divides a population into several subgroups, or strata, according to certain shared traits.

In order to draw conclusions about particular population subgroups, stratification was used to make sure that every stratum is included in the sample (Fleetwood, 2023). The proportionate stratified random sampling formula was also employed in which each stratum from the sample size would be directly proportional to the population size of the whole population of the strata. This means that each stratum sample has the same sampling fraction.

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Research Instrument

The instrument used in the study was a researcher-made questionnaire modified from the questionnaire of Plandano et al. (2023), Horwitz et al. (1986), Cabansag (2020), and Tumarayan et al. (2024), and was utilized in this study to assess the level of English language oral communication anxiety and its relationship with the language learning strategies of the engineering students. The research instrument was submitted to the research adviser for comments then presented to the expert jurors for content validation and pilot tested for reliability. The research questionnaire was divided into three (3) parts, following the Five-Point Likert Scale:

Part I comprised the information on the respondent's name (optional), name of school, and the engineering program in which the student was currently enrolled, place of origin, economic status, and academic status.

Part II focused on the level of the English language oral communication anxiety of the respondents. This section included the various components of the English language oral communication anxiety of the students such as trait anxiety, context anxiety, audience anxiety, and situation anxiety. The level of the English language oral communication anxiety was rated according to the numerical rating and description below:

Numerical Rating	Description and Interpretation
5	Very High
4	High
3	Moderate

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2	Low
1	Very Low

Part III comprised the different language learning strategies of the respondents. This section included the types of language learning strategies of the students such as cognitive strategy, affective strategy, and social strategy. The level of language learning strategy was rated according to the following numerical rating scale and description:

Numerical Rating	Description
5	Strongly Agree
4	Agree
3	Moderately Agree
2	Slightly Agree
1	Disagree

Validity of the Research Instrument

The degree to which an instrument operates as intended and measures what it is intended to measure is known as its validity. Content validity, on the other hand, is the appropriateness of an instrument's content. This would entail selecting representative questions from every unit section and comparing them to the intended results (Fowler, 2013). Generally speaking, validity is measured in degrees because it is rare, if not impossible, for an instrument to be 100% valid. The items of the researcher-made questionnaire were submitted for review and modification by the panel of expert jurors in the field of research. It was validated by providing comments, corrections, and suggestions by the panel of validators

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regarding all the items of the research instrument as a preparation of the final questionnaire before the reliability or the pilot testing.

Reliability of the Research Instrument

After the validation of the research questionnaire, a pilot testing was conducted. Pilot testing, also known as reliability study, is a small-scale trial conducted before implementing a full-scale implementation of the research questionnaire (Fowler, 2013).

The reliability testing was conducted with students in the higher year levels of a private institution, represented by courses included in the study were represented. The adapted questionnaire was tested for reliability with a total of thirty-three (33) students in each engineering program such as civil engineering, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, computer engineering, and marine engineering. These thirty-three (33) respondents in the reliability testing were not included in the final administration of the questionnaire.

The results of the pilot testing were analyzed using the Cronbach's Alpha Test the values of which range from 0 to 1 and higher values indicate greater reliability. The general interpretations of the Cronbach's Alpha values were based on Moran (2024).

The reliability of the questionnaire is accepted if it achieves the coefficient of 0.70 and above. Items from the questionnaire which fail to achieve that certain value should be revised accordingly prior to the final administration of the research instrument. Since the obtained reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was .89, therefore the questionnaire was considered reliable.

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Data Gathering Procedures

The validated and reliability-tested research questionnaire was administered to the selected respondents from the population size. The researcher secured permission from the school administrators as well as from the Office of the College of Engineering to implement the research questionnaire to the respondents. Moreover, the respondents' availability and consent were ensured by the researcher before administering the research questionnaire. The researcher personally distributed the questionnaire to the respondents and gave them sufficient time to answer.

After the distribution and administration of the research questionnaire, the responses of the respondents were gathered and analyzed using accurate descriptive and inferential statistical tools. The data were organized and categorized to generate reliable results. To ensure accuracy of the interpretation of the results, the data were submitted to the statistician. The collected information and the analysis of the statistician helped the researcher to provide answers to the objectives of the study.

Data Analysis

After retrieval of the accomplished questionnaire, the data were gathered, organized, and tabulated using the computer installed with Microsoft Excel and Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software.

The tabulated responses of the respondents for their oral communication anxiety were interpreted using the scale of means and their corresponding description and interpretation shown below:

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Scale of Means	Description and Interpretation
4.21 – 5.00	Very High Anxiety
3.41 – 4.20	High Anxiety
2.61 – 3.40	Moderate Anxiety
1.81 – 2.60	Low Anxiety
1.00 – 1.80	Very Low Anxiety

The responses of the participants for their language strategies were also tabulated, described, and interpreted using the scale of means and their corresponding description and interpretation shown below:

Scale of Means	Description	Interpretation
4.21 – 5.00	Strongly Agree	Highly Effective
3.41 – 4.20	Agree	Effective
2.61 – 3.40	Moderately Agree	Moderately Effective
1.81 – 2.60	Slightly Agree	Slightly Effective
1.00 – 1.80	Disagree	Not Effective

Statistical Tools

Both descriptive and inferential statistical tools were employed in this study. For descriptive analysis, frequency count, percentage, rank, and mean were used. For inferential analysis, One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test, t-test, and Chi-square test were used, set at 0.05 level of significance (p-value).

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Frequency Count. The number of persons who fall into a particular group or the frequency at which a feature occurs is known as the frequency count. Both absolute (actual number) and relative (%) totals are used to explain this computation (Pallant, 2020). This statistical is used to determine the distribution of the respondents in a particular group, who provide their answers and identify which best describe their perspectives.

Percentage. "Out of every 100" is what "percent" signifies. One quantity is divided by another, with the latter rebased to 100, to obtain percentage statistics. The notation for percentages is %. In addition to being very helpful for comparing, this tool is very helpful when examining a difference when compared to a baseline or starting value (Pallant, 2020). This statistical tool was used to find out the percentage of respondents in a particular group.

Rank. Ranking was used in the study to determine the level of English language oral communication anxiety and language learning strategy in every group or component so as to identify the most preferred choice of the respondents in general.

Mean. Mean is the sum of all values in a group of numbers divided by the total number of numbers in the group (Weiss, 2016). Mean was employed to obtain the average scores that described the evaluation of the engineering students regarding level of English language oral communication anxiety and language learning strategy.

One-Way ANOVA test. This was used to ascertain whether statistically significant differences would exist in the means of three or more independent groups and the test is appropriate for ordinal data (ranked data), specifically survey responses scored on a Likert scale, where rank differences are not consistent (Field, 2018). This statistical tool was used

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to determine the significant difference in the perceptions of the engineering students according to the components of English language oral communication anxiety and language learning strategy.

Independent Sample t-test. This was used to ascertain whether statistically significant differences would exist in the means of two independent groups and the test is appropriate for ordinal data (ranked data), specifically survey responses scored on a Likert scale, where rank differences are not consistent (Field, 2018). This statistical tool was used to determine the significant difference between the perceptions of the engineering students according to the components of English language oral communication anxiety and language learning strategy in terms of place of origin (e.g. rural and/or urban).

Chi-Square Test. This is a statistical test used to evaluate the correlation or the relationship between two ranked variables (Field, 2018). This statistical tool was used to find out whether a significant relationship would exist between the levels of English language oral communication anxiety and the language learning strategies among the engineering students.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study was conducted to evaluate the relationship between English language oral communication anxiety of the engineering students and their language learning strategies. This descriptive-survey research involved of three hundred (300) student respondents enrolled in different engineering programs such as the civil engineering, computer engineering, electrical engineering, marine engineering, and mechanical engineering.

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The instrument used a researcher-questionnaire which was validated and conducted for pilot testing to evaluate for its reliability using the Cronbach's Alpha Test.

In the organization, computation, analysis, and interpretation of the collected data from the respondents, all statistical tests were performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software using the following statistical tools: frequency count, percentage, rank, and mean for descriptive analysis; and One-Way ANOVA Test, Independent Sample t-test, and Chi-square Test for inferential analysis set at 0.05 level of significance.

The study yielded the following findings in relation to its specific research questions:

In terms of trait anxiety, the level of anxiety of engineering students when taken as a whole group and classified according to economic status and academic status was moderate, but in terms of place of origin, their level of anxiety was high.

In terms of context anxiety, the level of anxiety of engineering students when taken as a whole and classified according to economic status was moderate. Classified according to academic status, their level of anxiety varied in that regular students had high anxiety, scholars had moderate, while working students had low anxiety but in terms of place of origin, their level of anxiety was high.

The level of anxiety of engineering students in terms of audience anxiety when taken as a whole group and classified according to place of origin, economic status, and academic status was high.

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The level of anxiety of engineering students in terms of situation anxiety when taken as a whole group and classified according to place of origin, economic status, and academic status was moderate.

There was a significant difference in the level of English language oral communication anxiety in terms of audience anxiety but there were no significant differences in terms of trait anxiety, context anxiety, and situation anxiety.

The level of language learning strategies of engineering students in terms of cognitive strategy when taken as a whole group and classified according to academic status was effective. When classified according to place of origin, the result was highly effective, and moderately effective according to economic status.

In terms of affective strategy, the level of language learning strategies of engineering students as a whole group and classified to place of origin and economic status was moderately effective, but their level of language learning in terms of academic status was effective.

The level of language learning strategy of engineering students in terms of social strategy as a whole group and classified according to economic status and academic status is effective, but in terms of place of origin, their level of language learning was moderately effective.

There was no significant difference in the level of language learning strategy of the engineering students in terms of cognitive strategy, affective strategy, and social strategy.

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The level of English language oral communication anxiety of the engineering students had a significant relationship with their language learning strategy.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

Engineering students experience high levels of anxiety when speaking in front of an audience, which directly affects their confidence in oral communication.

Audience-related anxiety stands out as a unique challenge compared to other types of communication anxiety, requiring specific intervention.

Cognitive strategies are the mostly relied upon by engineering students, thus highlighting the need for structured, mentally engaging language activities. The uniform use of language learning strategies suggests that students may benefit from more diverse or personalized strategy training.

Oral communication anxiety has a measurable impact on how students approach learning English, thus indicating a link between emotional state and learning behavior.

Reducing communication anxiety could enhance the effectiveness of language learning strategies among engineering students.

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