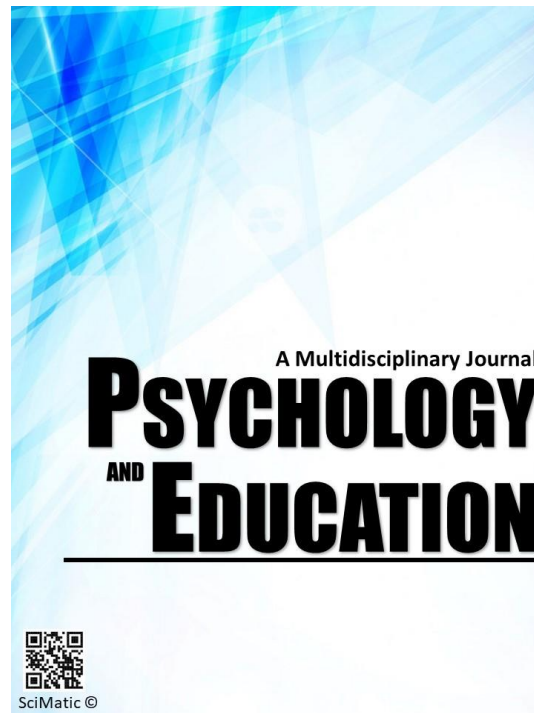


**STRATEGIES OF OVERCOMING FEAR OF  
SPEAKING ENGLISH AMONG THE COLLEGE  
STUDENTS OF NOTRE DAME OF MIDSAYAP  
COLLEGE**



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## Strategies of Overcoming Fear of Speaking English Among the College Students of Notre Dame of Midsayap College

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### Abstract

The study aimed to determine the students' strategies in overcoming fear of speaking English as a second language and the causes of their fear in speaking the English language. The study used descriptive-quantitative research design. It is descriptive because it described the students' strategies in overcoming fear of speaking the English language. This is also quantitative for it used survey questionnaires to gather the needed data. In order to answer the objectives of the study, the researchers made a questionnaire to gather pertinent data. The researchers used stratified random sampling. A simple-random sampling technique is obtained to determine the number of respondents. Out of 172 third-year Education students, the researchers chose randomly 10 students for each major or program for a total of 68 Education students from Notre Dame of Midsayap College. In this study, students have fear in speaking English as a second language and have identified their strategies in overcoming fear of speaking English Language. Findings revealed that students lack of confidence when speaking using English Language. Moreover, most students believed that evaluating how they speak would help them overcome their fear in speaking to themselves and monitoring their errors and progress as a whole.

**Keywords:** Overcoming Fear, Language Fear, Speaking Strategies, Language Anxiety

### Introduction

Speaking skills are one of the most crucial skills that enable us to communicate and converse successfully with others at any moment and in any situation. Thus, students must be taught basic English in school for capital in continuing their careers. According to Tridinanti (2018), speaking is an important thing in life. Especially, for students in school, speaking must be learned more, trained, must be focused on, and mastered by the students using English as a Second Language. Therefore, speaking English is addressed as a common fear due to the lack of opportunities to speak English by native speakers or even with people from their own country for they view speaking events as a potential threat to their credibility, image, and ability to communicate vividly to the audience.

A research conducted at SMK Negeri 4 Bulukumba, a school from Indonesia. Ariska (2019) stated that many students do not have the confidence to make presentation in public. Most students still have difficulties in speaking English, causal factors of these problems are lack of motivation, feeling nervous to speak using English, lack of grammar mastery, lack of vocabulary, feeling afraid of making mistakes, student inhibition, nothing to say, and the use of mother tongue.

Kabigting et al. (2020) stated that the Philippines is one of the countries where English is one of the

official languages. It is therefore a must for educational institutions to promote and propagate the use of English through consistent instruction and communication. Teachers of English are the frontrunners to improve the English language skills of each ESL learner. The academic institutions in the country play the most important role on how to propagate the use of language. Every student may master the art of speaking and writing in English as long as there is constant use of the language inside the school, preferably, elsewhere.

In Notre Dame of Midsayap College, English language has been used as a medium of instruction in different levels, especially in the tertiary. English language plays an essential role in students' lives as it helps in communication. It is important for students as it broadens their minds, develop emotional skills, improve the quality of life by providing many opportunities. Lack of proficiency in English language demonstrates the insufficient commitment of the particular students towards improving the English language skills as the secondary language as well as the means of communication (Alwis, 2020). Thus, the researchers are interested to find out the strategies in overcoming the fear of speaking English language. The aims of this study were two-folds: First, the researchers investigated the various strategies of the college education students in overcoming their fear of speaking English Language. Second, a researcher-made questionnaire was administered and carried out to shed light on the causes of the fear and the strategies

of overcoming fear of speaking English Language among the third year Education students.

### Research Questions

This study focuses on determining the strategies of overcoming fear of speaking English as a second language among tertiary level students of the College of Education. It also aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the causes of fear that hinder the respondents' capability of speaking English as a second language?
2. What are the strategies of the respondents in overcoming fear of speaking English as a second language?

### Literature Review

#### English as a Second Language

English language is the universal language used by people or learners to interact between countries. English is dominant that serves as medium of instruction in the curriculum. Students learn English language skills like reading, writing, speaking and listening to learn topics with the specified curriculum.

According to Hashim, Yunus, and Hashim (2018), English was accepted as the second language and it is widely used as a medium of instruction both in formal and informal setting. The aforementioned statement that explains that English is used in formal setting that requires formal conversation between two or more conversants. English as second language is also used in informal setting like place or environment even in an official situation or context. This is where two or more personalities converse using English language.

#### English Language Skills

Ivo (2021) stated that English language skills need to be developed and enhanced to efficiently facilitate our lives in the globalization era that is occurring now. Actually much can be done to hone and develop it. Some things that the study gave were listening to English music, watching movies in English, using English in daily life, participating in class discussions and recitations, making friends with people who are good at English, joining events in accordance to English, and reading English books. This implies that in order to strengthen the speaking skills of individual listening to the music that has English lyrics could be

helpful. The individual would remember the lyrics and how those lyrics are constructed. The movies that use English language could improve the speaking skills of the individual. In order for the individual to understand the story of the movie, the individual should understand the lines of every character that are stated in English and enables the individual to adopt how those lines were spoken. Speaking English everyday would enhance your speaking skills. It serves as an exercise for proper rules that will be implemented in speaking English. Joining events in English like oratorical speech, extemporaneous speaking, spoken poetry, and public speaking could improve someone's speaking skill. They will be judged and they will receive comments from the judges that will help improve their speaking skills. Moreover, their training along the process is great help in improving their speaking skills. Participating in class discussions and Recitations can help the students develop their speaking skills and also boost their confidence by answering questions that the teacher gives. Moreover, by the use of recitation, the students' perspective on different topics will be showcased and at the same time, their speaking skills will be practised. Reading books would improve the speaking skills of the person. It's because the individual will pronounce the words and it serves as an exercise. They will also see how sentences are constructed correctly where they could apply speaking in English.

#### Causes of Anxiety

There are various causes of anxiety. According to one article, there are various causes of fear in speaking in public using English as a Second Language. The first one is fear of speaking English language because they lack vocabulary and preparation. The second cause of their fear is that they have negative experience while speaking in public, such situations are; they got criticized after speaking in public and got ashamed after delivering their speech due to their speaking skills. The third cause is that students feel inferior of their English speaking skills, they have thought that they feel others are better speakers than them, being compared to others especially to their friends, colleagues and family friends and the lack of trust within themselves in terms of their linguistic capabilities, skills, and competence. (Ayes, 2017)

#### Fear in English as Second Language

In speaking English as a second language there are negative factors that affect students' performance. These negative factors create fear which made the

students refrain from speaking English

Studies had proven that there's fear in speaking English as second language. According to the study of Sadighi and Dastpak (2017), the three most important reasons why there is fear of speaking English among students are "fear of making errors", "fear of failing, "fear of being negatively evaluated", and "limited English vocabulary." This implies that students' fear exists firstly when they commit grammar errors in speaking English as a second language. Second, fear of being evaluated negatively for the reason that they do not want to be judged by other students pertaining to their skills in speaking English as a second language. Third, limited knowledge of vocabulary is also one factor leading the students to prohibit themselves from speaking English.

### **English in Tertiary Education in the Philippines**

Filipinos have achieved proficiency in English through a variety of disciplines and courses via tertiary Education in the Philippines that exclusively used English as a medium of instruction and communication. Turmudi and Hajan (2020) asserted that the goal of the Philippine Educational System is to develop a functionally literate Filipino who can effectively communicate in various situations. In addition, students are encouraged to be communicatively active so that they are exposed to English atmosphere in both indoor (teaching-learning process) and outdoor (communicating with people daily). The Philippine government also grants and promotes English as its second language so that every individual gets the best goal of his or her life. The government also creates a comprehensive education system that includes the entire process of how education is delivered and offered from pre-school to post-graduate education.

### **Dialect Spoken**

According to Romero and Manjarres (2017), Individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture and when someone is learning a foreign language, it is common to make mistakes in pronunciation or grammar as a result of the interference of the first language.

These features play an important role that might be overseen once language teachers start instructing. The first language or L1 (regardless of the country) becomes the first source for a learner to understand how a language works, specially to young learners

who are in the concrete operation phase, as they tend to monitor how they acquire and learn foreign or second language. Interestingly, the learning of second language helps students to understand their native one, and they resort to their schemes of L1 to relate to the L2. In this sense, also, it is stated in his study that the knowing the impact of L1 to L2 is a strategy to overcoming the fear or anxiety in speaking English Language such as translating the ideas from the native language to English language, comparing the meaning of the sentences from the native language to English language if they are connected, and seeing the difference how students pronounce their native language compared to English language.

### **Cognitive Strategies**

A study of the third-semester students of English Education at State Islamic University in Jakarta, Indonesia shows that cognitive strategies solve problems of speech delivery or speaking in general. Rhamawati (2021) study revealed that there are cognitive strategies that the students utilize to improve their speech through repeating/imitating (repeating sentences/expressions), practicing formally with the sound system and writing (focusing more on pronunciation), recognizing (speaking by applying a grammatical structure), recombining (use these combinations to focus differently on meaning), and practice naturally (accustomed to speech). Based on the results of the interviews and observations, it revealed that repetition and imitation is the cognitive strategies that were applied most by the students.

### **Self-Evaluation**

Barnard (2021) stated that public speaking is a common form of anxiety and fear. Over 75% of people experience some degree of anxiety or nervousness when it comes to speaking in front of others. This is a great way of bridging the gap between practicing in front of a mirror to practicing in front of a group of people something that you might avoid altogether depending on your fear of public speaking. As Barnard, (2021) stated in his article, various strategies can be applied in overcoming the fear of speaking English as a Second Language such as recording yourself while speaking and eventually identifying errors and correcting them after; by comparing how you speak to prominent public speakers and integrate their techniques in overcoming fear in public speaking; and by repeatedly speaking to yourself and monitoring the progress as a whole.

### **Affective Strategies**

Speaking is the medium through which a language is practiced, understood, taught, and executed. According to Safitri, Akib, and Hartanti (2018), it is a means through which learners can communicate with others to achieve certain goals and express their opinions, viewpoints, hopes and intentions. Moreover, in order to communicate with other intellectuals in harmony, one should assess one's own learning process and take note of the emotive part of one's learning capabilities. In this note, affective strategy is one of the most crucial strategies in the learning process. The affective side of a learner includes emotion, mood, perception, belief and value (Efriyandi & Syafri, 2017)

### **Self-Motivation**

Based on the research of Efriyandi and Syafri (2017) in IAIN Bukittinggi, Indonesia, it has been concluded that students of the fourth semester of English Department used all of the affective strategies with different percentages. The strategy that was deemed to have the highest percentage is "enhancing one's self-esteem", followed by "encouraging one's self", then "lowering anxiety strategies", and the last and the least preferable "taking emotional temperature strategy."

### **Social Strategies**

Social strategies are defined as strategies which learners use their social environment including the persons around them as reinforcements for their language learning and language speaking. (Rahmayani, 2018) In addition, this strategy involves the individuals in the society specifically those that the speaker can converse to; which means that the speaker can conveniently relay a message, receive feedback, and assess the progress of the one's English language speaking skills.

### **Utilization of Social Media for Speaking Enhancement**

Amin, Rafiq, and Mehmood (2020) asserted that well known instruments, for example, Messaging, websites, Wattpad, Facebook, Messenger, Tweeter, Instagram, Skype, and YouTube can be effectively utilized for learner reading, writing, listening, speaking, and reviewing of exercises and extension exercises. This implies that the use of social media is beneficial when it comes to the four main skills learning English as a second language. The particular reason for this circumstance is that, those social media improves reading, writing, listening and speaking when the communication in social media is in English language.

## **Methodology**

This study used the quantitative-descriptive research design. It is descriptive because it described the strategies of overcoming fear of speaking English language. This study is also quantitative for it used questionnaires or survey in collecting data.

### **Participants**

This study was conducted at Notre Dame of Midsayap College. This institution is located at Poblacion 5, Quezon Avenue, Midsayap Cotabato. The researchers chose 68 respondents from the third-year students of the College of Education Department (CED), Academic Year 2021-2022.

### **Instruments of the Study**

This study made use of a researcher-made questionnaire. This questionnaire is a checklist type of questionnaire. All the items included were based on cited literature and studies. This questionnaire has two major parts.

The first part of the questionnaire contained the respondents' age, sex, and ethnicity. These were answered by having the respondents check the applicable information. The second part of the instrument dwelt on the causes of fear of speaking the English Language and the strategies of overcoming the fear of speaking the English language. This part consisted of 15 items which were answered by checking the appropriate boxes related to the respondents' fears and the strategies of overcoming fear of speaking the English language.

### **Procedure**

This research follows a systematic and orderly procedure as follows: A letter was sent to the office of the Dean of the College of Education as a gesture of protocol in conducting the study.

Upon receiving the approved letter from the Dean, the survey questionnaires were distributed to the respondents. Prior to the distribution of the survey questionnaires, proper guidance and instruction were given to the respondents. The questionnaires were distributed to the respondents through sending the link of the Google form using Facebook messenger. There was 100 percentage retrieval of the questionnaires; fully accomplished by the respondents.

### **Ethical Considerations**





The instrument developed was subjected to content validity. The content and face validity was determined by the adviser and reader. After which, it was pilot tested to first year Education students from different major of Notre Dame of Midsayap College. The statistician used software in getting the frequency and percentage. The result of the test was keenly analyzed which indicated as a reliable instrument.

### Results

This chapter presents the results of the data gathered. The analysis and interpretation of the data presented to each table were based on the objectives of the study in the form of statistical figures.

Table 1 *Fears in Speaking English*

Statements	Frequency	Rank
<b>A. Fears</b>		
<i>1. I have fear using the English language when speaking.</i>		
a. I don't have enough vocabulary.	36	6
b. I am afraid of criticisms.	38	5
c. I have traumatic experience while speaking English	6	15
<i>2. I get nervous and confused in speaking the English language.</i>		
a. I have doubts regarding my English-speaking skills.	23	9
b. I am confused on how to properly utilize words and phrases in a sentence.	39	3
c. I overthink of what others might tell me about my English speaking skills.	29	7
<i>3. I am afraid of judgments and laughter of others when I speak English.</i>		
a. I pronounce and enunciate words incorrectly	27	8
b. I habitually speak English with my native dialect accent.	7	14
c. I lack confidence when speaking using English language.	41	1
<i>4. I feel inferior of my English-speaking skills compared to my classmates and other colleagues.</i>		
a. I think my other classmates/friends are better speakers than me and they might look down on me.	11	12
b. I got compared to my classmates, colleagues, and other family members.	11	12
c. I do not have trust on my linguistic skills and competence.	40	2
<i>5. I have negative experiences while speaking English in public.</i>		
a. I have bad experiences while speaking English in public.	19	10
b. I got criticized after publicly speaking.	11	12
c. I got ashamed during my deliveries of speech because of my speaking skills.	39	4

Table 2. *Strategies of Overcoming Fear of Speaking English*

Statements	Frequency	Rank
<b>A. Strategies</b>		
<i>1. I practice my listening skills to eventually develop my speaking capabilities.</i>		
a. Listening to English podcasts and radio dramas	21	26
b. Watching English movies and series	49	2.5
c. listening attentively during class discussions using English language as a medium of instruction	34	14.5
<i>2. I practice basic and everyday conversations using English.</i>		
a. I talk to my friends, family, and relatives using the English language.	23	24
b. I use English Language when sharing information in social media.	28	17.5
c. I utilize English language when I have conversations through chat and text messages.	41	7
<i>3. I read books to develop my vocabularies.</i>		
a. story books	37	11
b. dictionaries	27	
c. articles or magazine	34	14.5
<i>4. While speaking, I think of what I want to say in my 1st language.</i>		
a. Translating the ideas from my native language to English language	35	12.5
b. I compare the meaning of the sentences from my native language to English language if they are connected.	39	9
c. I differ how I pronounce my native language compared to English language.	19	28
<i>5. I frequently expose myself to oral activities.</i>		
a. Oratorical speech and Extemporaneous speech contests	14	29.5
b. Class discussions and recitations	49	2.5
c. Cooperating on Role Plays or Story telling that utilizes the English language.	21	26
<i>6. I motivate myself to speak more using the English language.</i>		
a. By constantly stating to myself that I need to master speaking English in order to achieve my goals in life (future professions, to go abroad, etc.)	38	10
b. By reminding myself that I need to learn English to communicate efficiently on professional matters and as well as on casual matters such as for making friends, communicating with foreigners, and etc.	40	8
c. By inspiring myself to speak more English so I can feel good about myself.	27	20.5
<i>7. I try to learn more about English by watching movies and listening to songs.</i>		
a. By adapting the way how singers and movie actors deliver their line or dialogues	27	20.5
b. By imitating the forms and structures of lines and dialogues from the singers and movie actors and eventually use them as my bases in communication.	27	20.5
c. By deeply understanding every dialogue, lines, and intended message to be conveyed by those dialogues and lines.	44	5.5
<i>8. I evaluate how I speak.</i>		
a. Recording myself while speaking English and eventually identifying my errors and correcting them.	21	26
b. By comparing how I speak to prominent public speakers. (Celebrities, teachers, MCs on a certain program, etc.)	24	23
c. By repeatedly speaking to myself and monitoring my errors and progress as a whole.	50	1
<i>9. I accept criticisms and feedback to further develop my English-speaking skills</i>		
a. By asking my friends to listen to me as I speak and give comments after.	44	5.5
b. By posting/sending videos of myself via social media and letting the people who may see it critique my speech.	14	29.5
c. By asking for advices and feedbacks from my teacher and other capable public speakers.	35	12.5
<i>10. I watch informative videos that will help me improve my English-speaking skills.</i>		
a. By subscribing to YouTube channels that gives tips, advices, and lessons about English speaking.	47	4
b. By following influencers in TikTok that makes content about English vocabulary, speaking skills, and etc.	28	17.5
c. By reviewing recorded class discussions on Class and Schoology.	31	16

### Discussion

“By repeatedly speaking to myself and monitoring my errors and progress as a whole”, “Watching English movies and series’ and “Class discussions and class recitations” accumulated the highest frequency as the strategies in overcoming the fear of speaking English language. This signifies that these strategies were best applicable for students in impeding the fear of

speaking English language. These findings affirm to Barnard, (2021) that public speaking is a common form of anxiety and fear. People experience some degree of anxiety or nervousness when it comes to speaking in front of people, however, by repeatedly speaking to one's self and monitoring the progress as a whole will help in easing or overcoming the fear in speaking using the English language.

Moreover, this finding is in line with the statement of Fahari (2021), stated that English language skills need to be developed and enhanced to efficiently facilitate our lives in the era that is occurring now. Actually much can be done to hone and develop it. Some things that the study gave were listening to English music, watching movies in English, using English in daily life, making friends with People who are good at English, joining events in accordance to English, and reading English books. The movies that use English language could improve the speaking skills of the individual. In order for the individual to understand the story of the movie, the individual should understand the lines of every character that are stated in English and enables the individual to adopt how those lines were spoken.

In addition, participating in class discussions and recitations can help the students develop their speaking skills and also boost their confidence by answering questions that the teacher gives. Moreover, by the use of recitation, the students' perspective on different topics will be showcased and at the same time, their speaking skills will be practised. (Fahari, 2021)

The result also showed that under the statement 'I frequently expose myself to oral activities' which is the item "Oratorical speech and Extemporaneous speech contest" and under the statement "While speaking, I think of what I want to say in my first language" which is the item "I differ how I pronounce my native language compared to English language" garnered the lowest frequency entailing that these are least treated as strategies in overcoming the fear of speaking the English language. The findings indicated that these items are less likely used by the third year students as strategies in hindering their fear in speaking the English language.

According to Romero and Manjarres (2017), Individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture and when someone is learning a foreign language, it is common to make mistakes in pronunciation or grammar as a result of the interference of the first language.

In contrary to the findings, joining various events in English such as oratorical speech, extemporaneous speaking, spoken poetry, and public speaking could improve someone's speaking skill. They will be judged and they will receive comments from the judges that will help improve their speaking skills. Moreover, their training along the process is great help in improving their speaking skills. Fahari (2021)

## Conclusion

Based on the findings, it was revealed that the learners have fear in speaking the English language having lack of confidence as the major cause why the learners have fear in speaking the English as a Second language. In order to cope with their fear, the learners' evaluated themselves through speaking repeatedly to monitor errors as a strategy in overcoming fear in speaking English as a language.

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