

# STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF FEEDBACK IN REDUCING SPEAKING ANXIETY

Zeah Joyce P. Ignacio<sup>1</sup>; Ana Lou Pudalan<sup>2</sup>; Joan Vasquez<sup>3</sup>;  
Vinmae Dingal<sup>4</sup>; Mariano Montebon<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>School of Teacher Education, Biliran Province State University, Naval, Biliran, Philippines

<sup>2</sup>Cebu Normal University, Cebu City, Philippines

<sup>3</sup>Sto. Tomas College, Danao City, Inc., Philippines

<sup>4</sup>Central Visayan Institute Foundation, Bohol, Philippines

<sup>5</sup>Education Program Supervisor in English, DepEd Talisay City, Cebu, Philippines

<sup>1</sup>[zeahjoyceignacio.15@gmail.com](mailto:zeahjoyceignacio.15@gmail.com); <sup>2</sup>[analoupudalan@gmail.com](mailto:analoupudalan@gmail.com); <sup>3</sup>[joanyang13@gmail.com](mailto:joanyang13@gmail.com);

<sup>4</sup>[vinmaeberou@gmail.com](mailto:vinmaeberou@gmail.com); <sup>5</sup>[montebonm@cnu.edu.ph](mailto:montebonm@cnu.edu.ph)

DOI: 10.47760/cognizance.2025.v05i01.019

**Abstract:** This study investigates the levels of speaking anxiety and the perceptions on the different types of feedback on reducing speaking anxiety on Grade 10 students in the Visayas region, using a mixed-methods approach, specifically an explanatory sequential design. Data were gathered by simple random sampling from 50 students in Bohol, Biliran, and Cebu for the survey questionnaires and 20 students for the interview, and analyzed using descriptive statistics, ordinal regression, and thematic analysis. Findings reveal that many students experience moderate to high levels of speaking anxiety, indicating that current teaching strategies may be insufficient. Positive feedback boosts learners' confidence, while constructive feedback helps improve their speaking skills. However, negative feedback increases stress and self-doubt, leading to avoidance of speaking activities. The study also highlights how learners use feedback to build confidence, apply it practically, perceive its potential, and experience its impact. Strategies to mitigate speaking anxiety include fostering a supportive environment, reducing performance pressure, focusing on practical speaking skills, providing clear guidance and feedback, and implementing anxiety-reduction techniques. The study underscores the need for more tailored strategies in teaching to reduce speaking anxiety and improve language skills among English learners in the Visayas.

**Keywords:** speaking anxiety, feedback, constructive, negative, positive, English as second language

## I. INTRODUCTION

English plays a vital role in both education and communication. While it is predominantly used in Western countries, it is also widely adopted worldwide as a means of international communication. This global lingua franca facilitates understanding among nations, complementing the diverse dialects and local languages spoken by people from various cultures and nationalities. According to Kilickaya (2009), English is currently seen as the best option for communication among people from different language backgrounds, thereby being labeled as 'English as an International Language (EIL)' or 'English as a Lingua Franca'. However, English extends beyond communication. Several countries also use it as the medium of instruction in elementary, secondary, and higher education. Initially taught as a foreign language (EFL), English has become the medium for academic subjects like science, mathematics, geography, medicine, and English itself. This approach is seen in countries where the majority of the population's first language (L1) is not English (Dearden, 2014).

Even though English is widely used as a medium of instruction and communication in the world, some learners still face anxieties in learning and acquiring the language. According to Brown (2000), anxiety is characterized as a mental state associated with feelings of unease, frustration, self-doubt, or worry. This emotional condition fosters sensations of inadequacy, hesitation, depression, and threat (Liu & Jackson, 2008). Anxiety can disrupt various forms of learning, but when it pertains to acquiring a second or foreign language, it is referred to as 'second/foreign language anxiety.' Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope's Theory of Foreign Language Anxiety, introduced in 1986, characterizes FLA as a specific type of anxiety tied to a unique classroom language learning experience. They describe it as a complex mix of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors that arise due to the distinct challenges of learning a new language in an academic setting (Horwitz et al., p. 128). This explains that anxiety specific to learning or using a second language can negatively impact a learner's performance and outcomes. According to Tanveer (2007), language teachers must recognize and address the anxiety reactions of learners in order to help them reach their desired proficiency in the target language.

This language anxiety is evident in the study conducted by Hashemi (2011) who investigated the causes of language anxiety among Iranian learners both in classrooms and social contexts. He identified various sources of anxiety, such as self-perception, language learning challenges, cultural differences between learners and the target language, social status disparities, and fears of losing self-identity. The study also highlighted the importance of exploring language teachers' beliefs and perceptions about teaching and learning a second or foreign language. Various coping strategies were also suggested to manage this anxiety.

In the case of the Philippines, the basic education curriculum follows DepEd Order No. 36, s. 2006: Implementing Rules and Regulations on Executive Order No. 210 (Establishing the Policy to Strengthen the Use of the English Language as a Medium of Instruction in the Educational System). This discusses that in line with Executive Order No. 210, English will be taught as a second language starting from Grade I. According to the 2002 Basic Education Curriculum, it will serve as the medium of instruction for English, Mathematics, Science and Health beginning in Grade III. For secondary education in both public and private schools, including laboratory, experimental, and vocational/technical institutions, English will be the primary medium of instruction. This means that at least 70% of instructional time across all subjects must be conducted in English.

Despite English being one of the mediums of instruction in the Philippine educational system, speaking in English remains the most anxiety-inducing classroom activity (Atas, 2015). Second-language learners continue to feel significant anxiety when using English (Chiu et al., 2010). For these learners, speaking in their second language often triggers anxiety and other negative emotions (Salim et al., 2017). A study conducted by Maquidato (2021) titled "The Experience of English Speaking Anxiety and Coping Strategies: A Transcendental Phenomenological Study" explores the anxiety faced by Filipino second language learners when speaking English and the methods they use to manage it. The results indicate that students experience emotional stress, physical symptoms, and cognitive challenges due to their fear of negative evaluation and embarrassment. To cope with their anxiety, students use strategies such as reading English literature, consulting dictionaries, writing down their thoughts, and being receptive to teacher feedback. These approaches help them to overcome shyness and enhance their English-speaking abilities.

Given that speaking English is considered anxiety-provoking for students, the role of feedback hasn't been emphasized in many studies. However, being receptive to teacher feedback is identified as one key strategy for managing language anxiety. This gap in research highlights the crucial role feedback can play in alleviating learners' anxiety. Thus, this study aims to explore the impact of feedback on the English-speaking anxiety of learners and how they utilize feedback to overcome these anxieties. According to Shute (2008), feedback is the information communicated to the learner that is intended to modify his or her thinking or behavior for the purpose of improving learning. In a highly influential educational article, Hattie and Timperley (2007) characterized feedback as "among the most significant factors affecting learning" (p. 81) but only if learners can make use of it (Winstone et al., 2017).

Feedback helps students understand their strengths and areas for improvement, which can boost their confidence and reduce feelings of inadequacy and hesitation. When feedback is delivered in a supportive, encouraging, and

timely manner, it can transform the learning experience, making students feel more competent and less threatened by speaking in English. This in turn can lead to improved academic performance and progress in their language journey.

Hence, this critical issue has led to the conduct of this research investigation, aiming to explore the levels of anxiety of learners in speaking the English language and how different types of feedback (positive, negative, and constructive) impact the language anxiety of learners in a second language acquisition context. By understanding these dynamics, the study seeks to provide insights into effective teaching strategies that can mitigate language anxiety through giving feedback and enhancing language learning outcomes.

### Statement of the Problem

The main objective of the study is to explore how second language learners perceive feedback in reducing speaking anxiety on the English language. To achieve the objective of this study, the following questions will be answered:

1. What are the levels of speaking anxiety experienced by English language learners in the Visayas region?
2. How do students perceive feedback in reducing their speaking anxiety?
  - 2.1 Constructive
  - 2.2 Positive
- 2.3 Negative
3. How do learners utilize the given feedback in terms of:
  - 3.1 overcoming their anxieties; and
  - 3.2 Improving their speaking performance?
4. Based on the findings of the study, what strategies or measures may be taken to lessen the anxiety of students in speaking the English language?

Speaking anxiety is a prevalent issue among second language learners, particularly in the Visayas region of the Philippines. Understanding the nuances of this anxiety and the impact of feedback can significantly inform instructional practices and enhance learner outcomes. This review examines the types of speaking anxieties experienced by learners, the role of different feedback types, and the strategies students utilize to mitigate anxiety and improve their speaking performance.

## II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### A. *On Common Types of Speaking Anxieties Experienced by English Language Learners*

Speaking anxiety manifests in various forms, significantly hindering learners' willingness to participate in language activities. Maquidato (2021) identifies common types of speaking anxieties, including emotional stress, cognitive disruptions, and physiological symptoms such as sweating and a racing heart. The fear of negative evaluation—where learners worry about being judged for their mistakes—is a central factor contributing to these anxieties. Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) conceptualized foreign language anxiety as a complex interplay of self-perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors.

Chiu et al. (2010) note that even in English-speaking educational contexts, learners in the Philippines frequently experience significant anxiety. This anxiety often leads to avoidance behaviors, such as refraining from class discussions, ultimately limiting opportunities for practice and language improvement. Liu and Jackson (2008) found that Chinese university students experienced speaking anxiety primarily due to fears of making mistakes in front of peers. Similarly, Woodrow (2006) highlighted that language learners often report anxiety in oral assessments stemming from concerns about their proficiency levels and performance pressure.

Furthermore, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) emphasize that students may feel apprehensive about their ability to communicate effectively in the target language, leading to avoidance of speaking opportunities altogether. Cheng et al. (1999) identified a strong correlation between anxiety levels and students' willingness to communicate in a second language, underscoring the need for supportive educational environments.

### B. *On Impact of Different Types of Feedback on Speaking Anxiety*

Feedback is a crucial component of the learning process, significantly influencing how learners perceive their abilities and manage their anxiety. Various types of feedback—constructive, positive, and negative—have distinct impacts on learners' experiences and responses.

- 1) *Constructive Feedback*: This type of feedback emphasizes improvement and provides actionable insights, which can alleviate speaking anxiety. Atas (2015) highlights its importance in creating a supportive learning environment. By offering specific suggestions for improvement, teachers can empower students and reduce anxiety associated with language tasks. Maquidato (2021) supports this notion, noting that students receiving regular constructive feedback feel more confident and less anxious, viewing mistakes as part of the learning process rather than failures. Hattie and Timperley (2007) found that specific and actionable feedback leads to better learning outcomes by promoting student engagement and motivation. Rindal (2018) further emphasizes that constructive feedback enhances learners' self-efficacy and reduces anxiety, while Tsai *et al.* (2017) demonstrate that such feedback encourages students to take risks in speaking activities, thereby improving overall performance.
- 2) *Positive Feedback*: Positive feedback, focusing on learners' strengths and achievements, plays a vital role in reducing anxiety. Yang *et al.* (2021) found that students receiving positive feedback reported higher motivation and lower anxiety levels. Positive reinforcement shifts focus from potential mistakes to learners' progress, mitigating the fear of negative evaluation (Horwitz *et al.*, 1986). Lee (2017) demonstrated that positive reinforcement significantly boosts learners' self-efficacy, increasing participation in speaking activities. Dörnyei and Csizér (2002) highlight the importance of positive feedback in motivating language learners, arguing that acknowledging efforts enhances engagement and reduces anxiety. Additionally, Kormos (2000) found that positive feedback helps students develop a more positive self-image and increases their willingness to communicate in English.
- 3) *Negative Feedback*: Conversely, negative feedback can exacerbate speaking anxiety. Horwitz *et al.* (1986) suggest that overly critical feedback reinforces learners' fears of judgment and inadequacy. Chiu *et al.* (2010) observed that students exposed to negative feedback often withdraw from language activities, perpetuating a cycle of anxiety and underperformance. Lyster and Ranta (1997) emphasize that feedback focusing primarily on errors without constructive suggestions leads to discouragement and increased anxiety among students. Cheng and Hwang (2019) found that negative feedback can lead to feelings of shame and embarrassment, further hindering learners' willingness to participate in speaking activities. Zhang (2017) reported that students receiving predominantly negative feedback often develop a fear of speaking in class, negatively impacting their overall language proficiency.

#### C. *On Utilizing Feedback to Overcome Anxieties and Improve Performance*

Learners employ various strategies to cope with speaking anxiety, many of which are informed by the feedback they receive. Maquidato (2021) indicates that students often engage in self-directed learning, such as reading English literature or practicing speech independently, to build vocabulary and confidence. MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) identified that learners developing personal coping strategies—like self-affirmation and positive visualization—can significantly reduce their speaking anxiety.

Feedback is vital not only for addressing anxieties but also for enhancing learners' speaking performance over time. Yang *et al.* (2021) demonstrate that constructive feedback promotes self-regulation, enabling students to adjust their study habits and speaking practices. Shute (2008) found that timely and relevant feedback leads to enhanced learning outcomes, helping learners actively engage in language development. Tseng *et al.* (2016) emphasize that learners effectively utilizing feedback are more likely to engage in reflective practices, improving language skills and reducing anxiety levels. This reflective practice allows students to internalize feedback and make necessary adjustments in their speaking performance.

#### D. *On Strategies to Reduce Speaking Anxiety*

Given the challenges associated with speaking anxiety, several strategies can support learners in improving their performance. Maquidato (2021) advocates for self-study techniques, such as independent reading and practice, as effective methods for building confidence. Atas (2015) emphasizes creating a supportive classroom environment where constructive feedback fosters a sense of security among students. Chiu *et al.* (2010) recommend prioritizing communication over perfection and encouraging participation in language activities without the fear of judgment.

Studies by Gregersen and Horwitz (2002) suggest that creating a supportive classroom atmosphere where learners feel comfortable expressing themselves significantly reduces speaking anxiety. Their research emphasizes the role of teacher empathy and encouragement in fostering a positive learning environment that promotes language use. Additionally, MacIntyre (1999) indicates that fostering a sense of community in the classroom can help reduce anxiety, as students feel more supported by their peers. Zhan *et al.* (2021) highlight

the importance of mindfulness and relaxation techniques—such as deep breathing exercises and visualization—in helping learners approach speaking tasks with a calmer mindset.

This review underscores the complex interplay between speaking anxiety, feedback, and learners' strategies for improvement. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for educators seeking to enhance the learning experiences of second language learners, particularly in the context of the Visayas region. By addressing speaking anxiety and providing constructive feedback, teachers can significantly improve students' confidence and performance in speaking English.

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. *Research Design*

A mixed-methods approach—a combination of quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews—specifically an explanatory sequential design, was utilized to investigate this study. This combination allowed a comprehensive exploration of the relationship between feedback and speaking anxiety. The mixed-methods design offered several benefits for approaching complex research issues as it integrated philosophical frameworks of both post-positivism and interpretivism (Fetters, 2016), interweaving qualitative and quantitative data in such a way that research issues were meaningfully explained. It also offered a logical ground, methodological flexibility, and an in-depth understanding of smaller cases (Maxwell, 2016). A quantitative research design was utilized to explore the students' perceptions on feedback on their speaking anxiety using survey questionnaires. This research design entailed gathering data that could be measured and analyzed statistically (Creswell, 1994). The researchers deemed this design suitable for identifying language anxieties and how feedback influenced these speaking anxieties. In the qualitative phase, semi-structured interviews with 20 participants were conducted, allowing an in-depth exploration of their experiences regarding feedback and its emotional impacts.

#### B. *Research Instrument*

To gather comprehensive data on the impact of feedback on the speaking anxieties of second language learners, this study employed a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire and a semi-structured interview guide. This questionnaire is developed by Yaikhong and Usaha (2012) and the items were further adopted and modified from previous scales: Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) by Horwitz et al. (1986); Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA-24) and Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety (PRPSA-34) by McCroskey (1970); and Speaker Anxiety Scale (SA) by Clevenger and Halvorson (1992). The questionnaire directly assessed participants' ideas, while the interviews allowed for an in-depth exploration of their experiences and perspectives. To ensure content and face validity, language experts were consulted to review and refine both the questionnaire and interview guide.

#### C. *Research Participants and Environment*

This study was participated by 50 junior high school students in Bohol, Cebu, and Biliran Province. They were chosen as the research respondents in consideration that they have learned English for several years and are capable of representing their perceptions related to the statement of the problem. Simple random sampling was used to select the respondents, ensuring that participants were specifically chosen based on particular characteristics that align with the study's objectives.

The respondents of this study who were junior high school students were selected based on the following criteria:

- residents in Bohol, Cebu, and Biliran Province;
- students in the 10th-grade level; and
- ages between 14 to 17 years old, regardless of gender.

Students who meet the inclusion criteria are then eligible to participate in the study.

The locales for this study are in Bohol, Cebu, and Biliran in the Visayas Region. These are the chosen locales of the study for the reason that the authors of this study would like to identify the students' perceptions on feedback on reducing their speaking anxiety in their respective localities. This study was conducted between August to December 2024.



**D. Data Gathering Procedure**

The researchers secured ethical approval from the institutional review board at Cebu Normal University (CNU), which is the Ethics Review Committee. Subsequently, after receiving approval from the committee, the researchers secured another approval from the individuals who were directly involved in the study. Each key participant answered a 5-point Likert scale. The selected 20 participants underwent interviews using a semi-structured interview guide. The planned time interval for data gathering was approximately 30 minutes for each participant to answer the survey and another 30 minutes for the interview.

The data transcripts collected in this research were anonymized and securely stored in both physical and electronic storage locations to protect sensitive information from unauthorized access. The researcher generated backup copies of the data transcripts in order to provide easy follow-up in the event of future inquiries about the research and to prevent loss or deterioration. Additionally, the researcher managed the permissions and implemented access controls to restrict data access to authorized individuals.

**E. Data Analysis**

To establish associations between speaking anxiety levels and various feedback types in the quantitative phase, the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and ordinal regression. An 18-item questionnaire measured speaking anxiety levels, employing a 5-point Likert scale, with total scores ranging from 18 to 90. Scores above 72 indicated high speaking anxiety, scores from 54 to 72 indicated moderate speaking anxiety, and scores below 54 indicated low speaking anxiety (Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2014). Additionally, learners' perceptions of the different feedback types were assessed by calculating the median. Descriptive statistics were applied to determine the respondents' anxiety levels and their perceptions of different types of feedback. To evaluate the impact of different feedback types on students' speaking anxiety, ordinal logistic regression was employed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Thematic analysis, specifically Braun and Clark's Data Analysis Process, was also used to analyze the data in the qualitative phase to identify recurring patterns or themes related to feedback and speaking anxieties (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This method consisted of six phases: (1) familiarization of data; (2) generation of codes; (3) combining of codes into themes; (4) reviewing themes; (5) determining the significance of themes; and (6) writing up and reporting of findings.

**F. Ethical Considerations**

This research study was committed to adhering to the highest ethical standards to protect the rights and well-being of participants. Researchers conducted the study in a truthful, objective, and legal manner, ensuring participant rights and well-being. Informed consent was obtained, and participant privacy was protected. The study was designed to minimize harm and provide support to participants as needed. Post-study discussions were offered to address any concerns and intellectual property was protected. Additionally, the study was conducted with cultural sensitivity and appropriate data security measures. The results of the study were disseminated in a way that protected participant privacy and avoided misrepresentation. By following these guidelines and taking proactive steps to minimize harm, researchers aimed to create a safe and respectful research environment for the participants.

**IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**A. Frequency and Median of Speaking Anxiety Statements Among English Language Learners**

Statement	5	4	3	2	1	Md
1. I feel nervous speaking English in front of my classmates.	16 (32%)	18 (36%)	10 (20%)	4 (8%)	2 (4%)	4.00
2. I worry about my pronunciation being incorrect.	24 (48%)	17 (34%)	4 (8%)	3 (6%)	2 (4%)	4.00

3. I feel anxious when participating in group discussions in English.	10 (20%)	14 (28%)	14 (28%)	8 (16%)	4 (8%)	3.00
4. I get nervous when I have to answer questions in English.	9 (18%)	17 (34%)	10 (20%)	10 (20%)	4 (8%)	4.00
5. I worry that my classmates will judge my speaking ability.	20 (40%)	14 (28%)	11 (22%)	2 (4%)	3 (6%)	4.00
6. I am afraid that other students will laugh at me while I am speaking English.	18 (36%)	17 (34%)	8 (16%)	3 (6%)	4 (8%)	4.00
7. I feel stressed when presenting in front of the class using the English language.	15 (30%)	10 (20%)	14 (28%)	8 (16%)	3 (6%)	3.50
8. I worry about forgetting words when I speak.	23 (46%)	14 (28%)	9 (18%)	3 (6%)	1 (2%)	4.00
9. I feel nervous during oral exams or speaking tests.	20 (40%)	15 (30%)	9 (18%)	2 (4%)	4 (8%)	4.00
10. I feel relaxed while I am speaking English.	4 (8%)	7 (14%)	22 (44%)	8 (16%)	9 (18%)	3.00
11. I worry about not being able to express my ideas clearly in English.	14 (28%)	25 (50%)	10 (20%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	4.00
12. I get anxious when discussing unfamiliar topics in English.	18 (36%)	16 (32%)	11 (22%)	4 (8%)	1 (2%)	4.00
13. I worry about not meeting my teacher's expectations when speaking.	15 (30%)	17 (34%)	9 (18%)	7 (14%)	2 (4%)	4.00
14. Fear of negative evaluation impacts my speaking English.	19 (38%)	15 (30%)	11 (22%)	4 (8%)	1 (2%)	4.00
15. I dislike using my voice and body expressions while I am speaking English.	12 (24%)	9 (18%)	17 (34%)	10 (20%)	2 (4%)	3.00
16. Fear of making grammatical mistakes affects my willingness to speak English.	19 (38%)	21 (42%)	7 (14%)	2 (4%)	1 (2%)	4.00
17. My teacher's attitude influences my confidence in speaking English.	21 (42%)	19 (38%)	3 (6%)	6 (12%)	1 (2%)	4.00
18. I fear being corrected when speaking English.	23 (46%)	11 (22%)	7 (14%)	7 (14%)	2 (4%)	4.00

**Note:** The values in columns 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 represent the frequency and percentage of respondents who Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree, respectively. **Md** indicates the median, which is the middle value of responses.

The table above reveals significant insights into the levels of speaking anxiety experienced by English language learners in the Visayas region. The median, which represents the middle value of responses, consistently scored 4.00 for several key statements, signifying that the majority of learners either agreed or strongly agreed with these anxiety-provoking situations.

Specifically, the statement "I feel nervous speaking English in front of my classmates" had a median of 4.00, supported by 32% of respondents strongly agreeing and 36% agreeing. Similarly, "I worry about my pronunciation being incorrect" recorded a median of 4.00 reflecting a strong consensus that pronunciation errors contribute to speaking anxiety. These findings underscore the substantial role that social and peer-related

pressures play in heightening speaking anxiety among students. The high median scores and significant percentages of agreement for statements about nervousness when speaking in front of classmates and concerns over pronunciation mistakes suggest that these factors are critical contributors to students' anxiety. This implies that being aware of how social dynamics and peer perceptions can influence their anxiety is crucial. Peer pressure negatively impacts students' academic performance and contributes to speaking anxiety. Students often feel judged by their peers, which can lead to increased anxiety (Sjaifullah, 2019).

Statements such as “I worry that my classmates will judge my speaking ability” and “Fear of negative evaluation impacts my speaking English” also recorded medians of 4.00. The moderate variability here suggests that while the majority agree with these statements, a small portion of learners experience slightly differing levels of anxiety related to evaluation and judgment. Notably, “Fear of making grammatical mistakes affects my willingness to speak English” also had a median of 4.00. This highlights the significant impact of perceived errors on learners' anxiety levels. This implies that social evaluation (Elmenfi & Gaibani, 2016) and the fear of making mistakes (Aydin, 2008) are critical factors contributing to their speaking anxiety. As a result, students may feel less confident and more hesitant to participate in speaking activities, which can impede their language learning progress.

Other areas of concern include performance pressure and error correction. The statement “I fear being corrected when speaking English” had a median of 4.00 indicating that while most learners agreed, there was slightly higher variability in responses, possibly reflecting individual differences in sensitivity to correction. “I get nervous when I have to answer questions in English” also recorded a median of 4.00, suggesting that the pressure of spontaneous speaking tasks is a significant anxiety trigger for most but may vary among individuals. It is practical for English teacher education programs to include training in improvisation for students. Such training can foster the development of a "spontaneous speech mindset" (Zondag, 2023). This implies that it is crucial to recognize and address individual differences in sensitivity to correction and spontaneous speaking pressure.

In contrast, statements with lower medians (e.g., 3.00) such as “I feel relaxed while I am speaking English” and “I dislike using my voice and body expressions while I am speaking English”, reflect less agreement. These suggest that while some learners are less anxious in these contexts, they are not the primary sources of anxiety. This implies that the primary sources of anxiety for learners are more closely related to social evaluation and fear of making mistakes, rather than the physical act of speaking itself. Thus, efforts to reduce speaking anxiety should focus more on addressing these social and evaluative concerns to be most effective.

The data indicate that speaking anxiety in the English language is a widespread issue among learners, requiring significant attention and intervention. This prevalence of anxiety related to pronunciation, judgment, and correction underscores the need for a more supportive and non-judgmental learning environment. In summary, the medians reveal that the most significant anxiety triggers relate to fear of peer judgment, performance pressure, and making mistakes. These findings highlight the need for targeted interventions to reduce anxiety, such as fostering a supportive and non-threatening classroom environment to address learners' concerns about judgment, mistakes, and evaluations.

*B. Distribution of Respondents by Anxiety Levels*

<b>Anxiety Level</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
Low level	7	14%
Moderate level	22	44%
High Level	21	42%

The results from table B suggest that most students experience moderate to high levels of speaking anxiety, which has significant implications for their language learning journey. With 44% of participants reporting moderate anxiety, it indicates that nearly half of the learners face noticeable yet manageable anxiety when speaking English. This level of anxiety, while significant, suggests that these students can still function and participate but may require additional support to fully engage.



However, the fact that 42% of respondents experience high levels of anxiety is alarming. This indicates that almost as many learners are severely hindered by their anxiety, which can negatively impact their language performance and participation. Addressing this high level of anxiety is crucial for helping these students overcome their fears and improve their speaking abilities.

Conversely, only 14% of respondents reported low anxiety levels, showing that a small minority of learners feel relatively comfortable speaking English. This suggests that current teaching strategies may not be fully effective for the majority of students, necessitating a more supportive and anxiety-aware approach to teaching English speaking skills.

*C. Learners' Perceptions of Constructive Feedback*

Constructive Feedback	5	4	3	2	1	Md
1. Constructive feedback helps reduce my anxiety about speaking English.	17 (34%)	24 (48%)	8 (16%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	4.00
2. Constructive feedback encourages me to improve my English-speaking skills.	19 (38%)	18 (36%)	11 (22%)	2 (4%)	0 (0%)	4.00
3. Constructive feedback makes me more aware of my strengths and weaknesses in speaking English.	21 (42%)	18 (36%)	10 (20%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	4.00
4. Constructive feedback helps me understand how to improve my speaking.	24 (48%)	16 (32%)	9 (18%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	4.00
5. Constructive feedback provides clear guidance on how to enhance my speaking abilities.	23 (46%)	17 (34%)	8 (16%)	2 (4%)	0 (0%)	4.00
6. Constructive feedback helps me set goals for improving my English-speaking skills.	22 (44%)	19 (38%)	8 (16%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	4.00

**Note:** The values in columns 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 represent the frequency and percentage of respondents who Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree, respectively. **Md** indicates the median, which is the middle value of responses.

Table C illustrates students' perceptions of the impact of constructive feedback on their English-speaking skills with the median (Md) score for all statements being 4.00, indicating a general agreement among the students. The responses indicate that a significant majority of students find constructive feedback highly beneficial in reducing anxiety, encouraging improvement, increasing awareness of strengths and weaknesses, understanding how to improve, providing clear guidance, and setting goals for better English-speaking skills. This aligns with the study of Maquidato (2021) who noted that students receiving regular constructive feedback feel more confident and less anxious, viewing mistakes as part of the learning process rather than failures.

*D. Learners Perceptions of Positive Feedback*

Positive Feedback	5	4	3	2	1	Md
1. Positive feedback makes me feel more confident about speaking English.	29 (58%)	16 (32%)	4 (10%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	5.00
2. I feel less nervous speaking English after receiving positive feedback.	22 (44%)	14 (28%)	10 (20%)	4 (10%)	0 (0%)	4.00
3. Positive feedback motivates me to participate more in English-speaking activities.	23 (46%)	18 (36%)	8 (16%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	4.00
4. I feel more comfortable speaking English when I know I will receive positive feedback.	23 (46%)	17 (34%)	9 (18%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	4.00
5. Positive feedback from my teacher boosts my confidence in speaking English.	23 (46%)	17 (34%)	9 (18%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	5.00
6. Positive feedback makes me proud of my English-speaking progress.	28 (56%)	15 (30%)	5 (10%)	2 (4%)	0 (0%)	5.00

English with the median (Md) scores indicating a high level of agreement among the students. This implies that positive feedback plays a crucial role in enhancing students' confidence, reducing nervousness, motivating participation, increasing comfort, boosting confidence from teachers, and fostering pride in their English-speaking progress. This is emphasized in the study of Dörnyei and Csizér (2002) who highlighted the importance of positive feedback in motivating language learners, arguing that acknowledging efforts enhances engagement and reduces anxiety.

*E. Learners Perceptions of Negative Feedback*

Negative Feedback	5	4	3	2	1	Md
1. Negative feedback increases my anxiety when speaking English.	16 (32%)	17 (34%)	9 (18%)	4 (8%)	4 (8%)	4.00
2. Negative feedback makes me hesitate to speak English in class.	19 (38%)	14 (28%)	9 (18%)	4 (8%)	4 (8%)	4.00
3. Negative feedback lowers my self-esteem when speaking English.	20 (40%)	11 (22%)	11 (22%)	5 (10%)	3 (6%)	4.00
4. Negative feedback makes me avoid speaking English as much as possible.	16 (32%)	12 (24%)	13 (26%)	4 (8%)	5 (10%)	4.00
5. Negative feedback from my classmates makes me anxious about speaking English.	17 (34%)	15 (30%)	9 (18%)	5 (10%)	4 (8%)	4.00
6. Negative feedback impacts my motivation to continue improving my speaking skills.	17 (34%)	11 (22%)	15 (30%)	4 (8%)	3 (6%)	4.00

**Note:** The values in columns 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 represent the frequency and percentage of respondents who Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree, respectively. **Md** indicates the median, which is the middle value of responses.

Table E presents students' responses to various statements regarding the impact of negative feedback on their English-speaking abilities with the median (Md) score for each statement being 4.00, indicating a general agreement among the students. This implies that negative feedback has a profound impact on students, increasing anxiety levels, hesitation, and avoidance while lowering self-esteem and motivation. These findings coincide with the studies of Cheng and Hwang (2019) who found that negative feedback can lead to feelings of shame and embarrassment, further hindering learners' willingness to participate in speaking activities and Zhang (2017) who reported that students receiving predominantly negative feedback often develop a fear of speaking in class, negatively impacting their overall language proficiency.

Table 2.4 represents the ordinal logistic regression analysis that examines the impact of feedback types—constructive, positive, and negative—on learners' speaking anxiety levels, categorized as Low, Moderate, and High.

*F. Ordinal Logistic Regression Results for Speaking Anxiety Levels*

Predictor	Estimate (B)	Std. Error	Wald X <sup>2</sup>	p-value	Odds Ratio (Exp (B))	95% CI (Lower-Upper)
Constructive Feedback	0.545	0.407	1.792	0.181	1.725	0.776-3.831
Positive Feedback	0.214	0.467	0.209	0.647	1.239	0.496-3.094
Negative Feedback	0.972	0.295	10.829	0.001**	2.644	1.481-4.717

The results indicate that these feedback types significantly contribute to explaining variability in speaking anxiety, as evidenced by the significant model fit ( $\chi^2(3) = 16.483, p = .001$ ). The model fit was confirmed by goodness-of-fit tests, which showed no significant issues (Pearson Chi-Square,  $p = .137$ ; Deviance Chi-Square,

$p = .381$ ). Additionally, the model explains about 28.1% to 32.5% of the variance in speaking anxiety levels, based on Pseudo R-squared values (Cox & Snell, Nagelkerke).

### Logit(Speaking Anxiety Level)

$$= 0.545 \cdot \text{Constructive feedback} + 0.214 \cdot \text{Positive feedback} + 0.972 \text{ Negative feedback}$$

This equation describes how each type of feedback affects the log-odds of being in a higher anxiety category. Negative feedback emerged as the only significant type of feedback ( $B = 0.972$ ,  $p = .001$ ) with an odds ratio of 2.644, indicating that a one-unit increase in negative feedback increases the odds of being in a higher anxiety category (e.g., Moderate or High) by approximately 2.6 times. This highlights the strong, detrimental impact of negative feedback on speaking anxiety. Conversely, constructive feedback ( $B = 0.545$ ,  $p = .181$ ) and positive feedback ( $B = 0.214$ ,  $p = .647$ ), although suggested as potentially beneficial, were not statistically significant. This indicates that while they may help to some extent, their impact is less pronounced compared to the negative feedback. Although their odds ratios (1.725 and 1.239, respectively) suggest potential trends, these relationships are inconclusive within this dataset. The findings imply that educators must be cautious about the type of feedback they provide, as negative feedback can greatly heighten students' speaking anxiety.

For students, this means that the feedback they receive can play a crucial role in either mitigating or increasing their anxiety levels. Constructive and positive feedback should be emphasized to create a supportive learning environment. Educators should focus on providing feedback that encourages and builds confidence while minimizing criticism that can increase anxiety. This approach can help students feel more comfortable and confident in their speaking abilities, ultimately enhancing their language learning experience.

This section outlines the themes derived from analyzing the data in relation to how learners utilize feedback to overcome their anxieties and enhance their speaking performance. To support these themes, the most representative quotes from the respondents' answers were included.

- A. *How do learners utilize the given feedback in terms of overcoming their anxieties?*  
1) *Building confidence through feedback:*

Providing feedback in English language classrooms helps students recognize their strengths and areas for improvement, which reduces speaking anxiety and enhances their confidence in using English effectively. The analyzed data indicates that the respondents utilize feedback as a confidence-building factor in overcoming their speaking anxiety, as noted by the responses below.

*"Yes, I find it very helpful for me because it inspires me to improve and do better in speaking and helps me build confidence somehow." (Interviewee 2)*

*"Yes, Ma'am. Feedback helps me overcome my fears and build confidence, and improve my English-speaking skills." (Interviewee 9)*

*"Yes, feedback helps me a lot. When I know what I need to improve, I feel more confident and less nervous about speaking." (Interviewee 15)*

This statement highlights the crucial role of feedback in boosting learner's confidence and view it as a source of inspiration and motivation, encouraging learners to strive for better performance and reducing their anxiety about speaking.

*"Yes, feedback is helpful because it shows me that I still have room for improvement and boosts my confidence." (Interviewee 11)*

*"Yes, Ma'am, feedback is helpful in overcoming my fear because I use it as motivation me to speak better in front of others." (Interviewee 13)*

*"Yes, feedback is helpful. Whether it's positive or negative, it can motivate me be confident and to be more mindful of my English language use." (Interviewee 10)*

*"Yes, feedback is helpful. It makes me feel like I'm improving and more confident and helps calm my nerves and fears about speaking." (Interviewee 18)*

Moreover, these responses underscore the reassuring nature of feedback. By clearly identifying areas for improvement, feedback helps learners feel more prepared and competent, which in turn reduces their anxiety. Knowing what to work on gives learners a sense of control and direction, making them feel more confident in their abilities. This is supported by the study by Jo and Park (2021) who investigated the impact of teacher corrective feedback on elementary students' English-speaking confidence in an online learning environment.

The findings revealed that consistent feedback from the teacher significantly boosted students' self-assurance and language proficiency.

## 2) *Applying feedback practically:*

The practical application of feedback is another recurring theme among learners, who find it instrumental in making tangible improvements in their speaking skills. Feedback is not just a passive reception of criticism or praise; it is an active tool that learners use to enhance their abilities over time. Applying feedback practically involves taking constructive comments and suggestions and implementing them in a way that improves performance or outcomes.

*"Yes, it is very helpful for me because I can actually apply it the next time around and learn eventually. I can also teach it to others who have the same struggles as me." (Interviewee 3)*

This highlights the cyclical nature of learning and teaching—feedback helps learners improve, and in turn, they can pass on their newfound knowledge to peers, creating a supportive learning community.

*"For me, feedback is helpful for me to overcome my fear and I use it to improve my speaking skills, grammar, and pronunciation." (Interviewee 4)*

*"Yes, Ma'am. Feedback helps me overcome fear and learn English grammar and pronunciation." (Interviewee 8)*

This indicates that feedback provides specific, actionable insights that can be directly applied to improve various aspects of speaking. By focusing on concrete elements like grammar and pronunciation, learners can systematically address their weaknesses and build upon their strengths.

*"Even though the feedback might be harsh, I know my friend intends to help me improve my skills. By pointing out my errors, they're helping me avoid making the same mistakes in front of our teachers." (Interviewee 14)*

*"When I first gave a presentation in high school, I was really nervous, but my teacher said I needed to focus on my pronunciation. Since then, I've worked on it." (Interviewee 16)*

These responses illustrate the transformative power of specific feedback. By receiving targeted advice, the learners were able to focus on a particular area or skill and make significant improvements over time. This process not only eased their initial nervousness but also in committing the same mistakes again. A cluster strategy comprising practice, feedback, and self-directed efforts with a culminating phase of oral self-reflection is highly effective in developing speaking skills in engineering students (Nandagopal & Philip, 2023). This approach, integrated into an online learning environment, has been shown to enhance students' perception of their speaking abilities and their overall language proficiency.

## 3) *Perceiving the potential of feedback:*

This theme focuses on recognizing feedback's potential benefits, even among those who have not received much of it. Learners exhibit a forward-looking mindset, anticipating positive outcomes from constructive

feedback. Perceiving the potential of feedback involves valuing constructive criticism and suggestions for personal and professional growth. It means viewing feedback not as a negative critique, but as an opportunity to understand how others perceive your performance, and to identify areas where you excel and those needing improvement.

*"Yes, I find the feedback helpful to overcome my anxiety and improve even though I haven't received one yet." (Interviewee 5)*

*"Feedback is helpful for me." (Interviewee 12)*

*"I haven't received feedback, but I think it would help a lot." (Interviewee 20)*

This statement underscores a belief in the inherent value of feedback, suggesting that learners see it as a crucial component of their growth and improvement, regardless of their current level of experience with it.

*"I haven't gotten much feedback, but I think it would help me feel less anxious and more sure of what to improve." (Interviewee 17)*

*Yes, I think receiving feedback would be helpful to improve my speaking skills in the English language. (Interviewee 7)*

These responses highlight the confidence learners place in the feedback process. They believe that feedback would offer clarity on areas needing improvement, thereby reducing uncertainty and anxiety. This anticipation of feedback's benefits reflects a positive expectation that feedback will provide the necessary guidance and reassurance to enhance their speaking abilities.

The perceived potential of feedback also points to an understanding among learners that feedback is an essential tool for their development. Even in the absence of frequent feedback, learners recognize its role in pinpointing specific areas for enhancement and providing direction. This foresight suggests that learners value feedback not just for immediate correction but for its long-term benefits in overcoming their anxieties and fostering continuous improvement. A study by Chekol (2020) found that peer feedback significantly boosts EFL students' speaking skills, particularly in grammar, fluency, and vocabulary. However, pronunciation improvements were less evident, and student engagement in pronunciation feedback was lower. This highlights the importance of active student participation for maximizing learning outcomes. The study suggests that teachers should guide students in providing effective feedback, and students need to embrace their role as active contributors in the learning process.

#### 4) *Experiencing the subjective impact of feedback:*

Feedback does not generally reduce speaking anxiety for all learners, especially negative feedback. This highlights its subjective nature and the importance of individual perceptions and the way feedback is delivered. Experiencing the subjective impact of feedback involves personal emotional responses, self-reflection, behavioral changes, and shifts in perception, highlighting how feedback uniquely influences individual growth and development.

*"For me, I don't think feedback helps in overcoming my fear of speaking English. After I received it, I was still afraid to speak in other subjects or lessons." (Interviewee 1)*

For instance, Interviewee 1 expressed that feedback did not help in overcoming their fear of speaking English. This perspective underscores that feedback, even when given, might not be sufficient to alleviate anxiety if it does not address the specific fears or is not perceived as helpful by the learner.

*"If ever I receive feedback such as positive, I would appreciate it. If it is negative, I would accept it and turn it into my strength instead of weakness, and if it is constructive, I would accept, remember, and apply." (Interviewee 6)*



*"I really appreciate the positive feedback, like when teachers say my pronunciation is good. But sometimes, negative feedback makes me feel discouraged, especially when they say I need to be more confident." (Interviewee 19)*

These responses expressed a detailed view, noting that positive feedback was appreciated, but negative feedback could be discouraging. This mixed reaction shows that the type of feedback—whether positive, negative, or constructive—greatly impacts its effectiveness. Positive feedback can enhance confidence and provide validation, while negative feedback, if not given constructively, can increase anxiety and self-doubt. These subjective perspectives highlight the importance of how feedback is delivered. Constructive feedback, which is specific and aimed at improvement without damaging confidence, is crucial. It should be balanced, showing both strengths and areas for improvement, to make learners feel supported rather than criticized. The way feedback is given—its tone, context, and specificity—can either empower or discourage learners. Martin and Alvarez Valdivia (2017) explored how anxiety influences preferences for corrective feedback (CF) in online foreign language learning. Their study revealed that students with higher anxiety levels favored indirect feedback methods, such as recasts and metalinguistic feedback, and valued teacher feedback more than other sources. This study suggests that addressing learner anxiety and preferences for feedback can be crucial for optimizing online language learning experiences.

B. *How do learners utilize the given feedback in terms of improving their speaking performance?*

1) *Applying and practicing feedback:*

The analyzed data indicates that a recurring theme among learners is their proactive approach to feedback, actively incorporating it into their practice routines. Applying and practicing feedback involves taking the constructive comments and suggestions received and integrating them into one's actions and behaviors. This process requires understanding the feedback, setting specific goals based on it, and making deliberate changes to improve performance or outcomes.

*"I always replay in my mind the aspects or areas that need improvement based on the feedback and apply it. After receiving the feedback that was given to me, I try to memorize or construct lines and practice first before speaking or reciting using the English language." (Interviewee 2)*

*"I take the feedback seriously and work on improving the areas my teacher suggests, like pronunciation. For example, I practiced more before the competition to ensure I spoke clearly." (Interviewee 16)*

*"After I received certain feedback, I practice speaking more slowly and pay attention to my grammar when I prepare for presentations or practice speaking exercises." (Interviewee 18)*

*"I focus on practicing the specific areas my teacher pointed out, like pronunciation, and make sure to speak more clearly whenever I get the chance." (Interviewee 15)*

*"When I get feedback, I try to speak more confidently and remind myself not to worry about making mistakes." (Interviewee 19)*

These statements highlight a deep engagement with the feedback received. By mentally revisiting the feedback, this learner ensures that the necessary improvements are internalized. Memorizing or constructing lines, paying attention to grammar and pronunciation, and avoiding mistakes based on the feedback also shows practical application, ensuring that when the time comes to speak, the learner is well-prepared and confident in their abilities.

*"After I listen and apply the feedback, I usually apply it and self-assess if there are changes after I use the feedback. I record myself speaking and observe if there are improvements or none." (Interviewee 3)*

This statement emphasized the importance of self-assessment in the feedback process. This self-reflective practice is crucial as it allows learners to gauge the effectiveness of the feedback and their application of it. By recording themselves, learners can objectively assess their progress and identify any persistent issues

that need further attention. This iterative process of applying feedback, self-assessing, and refining their skills is fundamental to continuous improvement.

2) *Selectively applying feedback based on relevance:*

Some learners prefer to carefully evaluate the feedback they receive to ensure its relevance before applying it. Selectively applying feedback based on relevance involves evaluating the feedback received, determining which parts are most pertinent to your goals or situation, and implementing only those suggestions. This approach ensures that the feedback you use is aligned with your specific needs and can lead to meaningful improvements.

*"Assuming that I received feedback, I would assess first if the feedback suits me before I apply it to myself." (Interviewee 5)*

This selective approach is important because it allows learners to tailor the feedback to their specific learning goals and personal context. By assessing the relevance of the feedback, learners can ensure that the advice they are incorporating is both appropriate and effective for their individual needs. This careful consideration helps maximize the impact of the feedback on their speaking performance. However, not all learners find it easy to apply feedback.

*"I just listened to it but still did not apply because of fear or anxiety." (Interviewee 1)*

This hesitation highlights a significant barrier to the effective use of feedback—*anxiety*. For some learners, the fear of making mistakes or the anxiety associated with speaking can prevent them from implementing the feedback they receive. The selective application of feedback and the emotional responses to it illustrate the complex interplay between cognitive and affective factors in language learning.

3) *Utilizing external resources:*

Learners supplement feedback with external resources to improve their speaking performance, demonstrating a proactive and resourceful approach to language learning. Utilizing external resources to improve speaking performance involves seeking out additional tools and support, such as videos, movies, online courses, books, dictionaries, or mentors, to better understand and implement the feedback received.

*"Yes, ma'am. I watch YouTube videos to learn about correct grammar usage and pronunciation." (Interviewee 8)*

*"To improve my English, I try to study more. During my free time, I read dictionaries or books." (Interviewee 10)*

*"I use feedback to my English language learning by reading English books." (Interviewee 11)*

*"I enjoy reading historical books. I often encounter complex words that I look up in the dictionary. These words stick in my mind and I can use them in the future. It's also helpful to have someone to converse with." (Interviewee 13)*

These indicate that learners are not solely relying on feedback from their instructors but are actively seeking additional learning materials to enhance their skills. By watching YouTube videos and reading English books and dictionaries, learners can access a wide range of content tailored to specific aspects of language learning, such as grammar and pronunciation.

*"I incorporate feedback into my English learning by reading and watching English movies." (Interviewee 12)*

*"I often watch public speaking videos. Once, my teacher asked me to compete and deliver an oration. However, the speech was quite lengthy and in English, so I declined to avoid potentially damaging our school's reputation. Since then, I've studied more and noticed improvement in my skills." (Interviewee 14)*

These responses highlight the use of diverse tools to complement the feedback received. Reading and watching movies in English exposes learners to authentic language use, helping them to improve their comprehension, vocabulary, and pronunciation. These activities also provide context for the feedback they receive, making it easier to understand and apply. Ishida et al. (2024) examined the factors affecting Japanese elementary students' ideal L2 self in English learning, focusing on younger learners. They found that external resources or experiences, such as international travel or attending English cram schools, significantly influenced students' aspirations for English proficiency, while merely living abroad did not. School, home, and foreign media influences were identified as the main contributors to shaping the ideal L2 self, potentially encompassing the impact of travel and cram schools. This suggests that a stimulating learning environment, both inside and outside of school, can significantly impact students' aspirations for English language proficiency (Ishida et al., 2024). In summary, these responses, along with supporting studies, demonstrate that learners who supplement feedback with external resources are more likely to improve their speaking performance.

4) *Engaging in independent study and self-improvement:*

In the absence of direct feedback, many learners turn to independent study and self-assessment to improve their speaking performance, as noted by three respondents. This approach underscores the importance of self-motivation and personal responsibility in language learning. By dedicating time to practice and refine speaking skills, individuals can enhance their speaking performance and address areas of weakness effectively.

*"I study diligently to learn grammar rules." (Interviewee 9)*

*"Since I haven't received much feedback, I try to self-assess and practice speaking on my own. I also listen to native speakers and teachers to improve my pronunciation." (Interview 17)*

These statements highlight a proactive strategy where learners take charge of their improvement by critically evaluating their own performance and seeking external models for reference.

*"Since I haven't received feedback yet, I plan to focus on improving my speaking by practicing more and paying attention to areas that need improvement, like fluency." (Interview 20)*

This illustrates a commitment to self-improvement and an understanding that regular practice is essential for progress. The theme independent study and self-improvement emphasizes the significant role of self-motivation, personal responsibility, and resourcefulness in language learning. Learners who engage in self-assessment, practice regularly and utilize a variety of educational resources can impact their speaking skills, even in the absence of frequent feedback.

However, three out of twenty respondents mentioned that they haven't received any feedback yet. As a result, they haven't had the opportunity to use feedback to improve their speaking performance. The specific responses highlighting this are noted below:

*"None." (Interviewee 4)*

*"None because I have not received any yet." (Interviewee 6)*

*"I do not have any experience yet in using the feedback I received." (Interviewee 7)*

Based on the findings of the study, several strategies can be employed to mitigate the anxiety of students in speaking the English language. The data indicate that speaking anxiety is widespread among learners, necessitating significant attention and intervention. Suggested measures and strategies to reduce students' anxiety in speaking English include:

- 1) *Fostering a supportive environment:* Given that students experience moderate to high levels of anxiety as stated on the findings of this study, fostering a supportive classroom environment is crucial for reducing their speaking anxiety. Establishing a non-judgmental and encouraging atmosphere can greatly enhance learners' confidence

and willingness to participate. This can be achieved by consistently emphasizing positive reinforcement and providing constructive feedback that focuses on students' strengths and areas for improvement without harsh criticism. For instance, teachers can acknowledge students' efforts and progress, celebrating small victories to build their self-esteem. Constructive feedback should be specific and actionable, guiding students on how to improve their speaking skills. By minimizing negative criticism, teachers can create a safe space where students feel comfortable taking risks and making mistakes, knowing that these are part of the learning process. This supportive environment not only reduces anxiety but also fosters a more engaged and motivated classroom dynamic. For students, this means they can focus on learning and improving without the fear of judgment, leading to better language acquisition and a more positive educational experience overall. In a supportive environment, students are more likely to actively participate, engage in speaking activities, and take constructive feedback to heart. They can develop a growth mindset, viewing challenges as opportunities to learn rather than as threats to their self-esteem. This positive classroom climate can also promote peer support, where students encourage and assist each other, further reducing anxiety.

- 2) *Reducing performance pressure and focusing on practical speaking skills:* Mitigating students' speaking anxiety can be achieved by reducing performance pressure through practical speaking activities that mirror real-world situations, such as informal discussions, role-playing, giving presentations, participating in group discussions, and spontaneous exercises. These activities focus on participation and effort rather than accuracy, allowing students to practice and build confidence without the fear of harsh grading. Over time, gradually introducing more formal speaking tasks can help students become comfortable with performance situations, making the transition less intimidating. This approach helps students become more comfortable with speaking the language, reducing their anxiety as they gain experience and confidence. By practicing in contexts that resemble what they might encounter outside the classroom, students find the learning process less intimidating. Practical exercises not only enhance their speaking abilities but also boost their confidence in using English in various settings. This hands-on experience prepares them for real-life interactions, making them more competent and comfortable in speaking the language. With reduced performance pressure and focused on practical speaking skills, they are more likely to actively participate in speaking activities, creating a dynamic and interactive classroom environment. They can experiment with language, make mistakes, and learn without fearing negative consequences. This supportive practice environment encourages students to take risks and develop their speaking skills at their own pace.
- 3) *Providing clear guidance and feedback:* Providing clear guidance and feedback is essential for effective learning and reducing student speaking anxiety. Constructive feedback should not just point out mistakes but also highlight what students are doing well. For instance, if a student gives a speech, a teacher might praise their strong opening and good eye contact while also suggesting they work on speaking more slowly to improve clarity. This approach ensures that students recognize their strengths, which builds their confidence, and understand precisely where they can improve, which helps them develop their skills. It's important that this feedback is delivered in a supportive and motivating manner. This means avoiding harsh criticism that might discourage students. This kind of feedback encourages students to see their learning journey as a series of positive steps toward improvement rather than a list of failures to be corrected. When feedback is clear and supportive, students are more likely to stay motivated and engage actively in their learning process. They can better understand their strengths and areas for improvement, making it easier for them to set achievable goals and work towards them.
- 4) *Implementing anxiety-reduction techniques:* Implementing anxiety-reduction techniques is essential for helping students manage their speaking anxiety. Teaching and incorporating methods such as mindfulness, deep breathing exercises, and relaxation strategies can be highly effective. Mindfulness involves being present in the moment and aware of one's thoughts and feelings without judgment, which can help students stay calm and focused. Deep breathing exercises, like taking slow, deep breaths, can reduce physiological symptoms of anxiety by calming the nervous system. Relaxation strategies, such as progressive muscle relaxation or visualization, can help students feel more at ease before and during speaking activities. These techniques can be integrated into regular classroom routines to make them a natural part of the learning environment. For example, starting each class with a few minutes of deep breathing or mindfulness practice can set a calm tone. Encouraging students to use these techniques before presentations or speaking tasks can help them manage their

anxiety more effectively. By learning and practicing these anxiety-reduction techniques, students can gain better control over their anxiety, leading to improved performance and greater confidence in speaking activities. These skills not only benefit their language learning but also provide valuable tools for managing stress in other areas of their lives.

## V. CONCLUSION

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

1. Speaking anxiety is prevalent among English language learners in the Visayas region. Main causes of anxiety include:
  2. Fear of peer judgment
  3. Worries about pronunciation and grammar
  4. Performance pressure
3. A significant number of students experience moderate to high anxiety levels.
4. Feedback is crucial in reducing speaking anxiety:
  - Positive feedback boosts confidence.
  - Constructive feedback guides improvement.
  - Negative feedback increases stress and self-doubt.
5. Learners use feedback to overcome anxiety by:
  - Building confidence through feedback
  - Applying feedback practically
  - Perceiving potential in feedback
  - Experiencing subjective impact of feedback
6. Learners improve speaking performance by:
  - Applying and practicing feedback
  - Selectively applying relevant feedback
  - Using external resources
  - Engaging in independent study and self-improvement

## VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study suggested several strategies to mitigate the speaking anxiety that learners experience in the English language:

- Fostering a supportive environment.
- Reducing performance pressure and focusing on practical speaking skills.
- Providing clear guidance and feedback.
- Implementing anxiety-reduction techniques.

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