



English Communication Apprehension and Communicative Competence among Secondary Preservice Teachers: A Quantitative Study

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Abstract. Communicative competence (CC) enables students and educators to express their thoughts effectively, leading to effective communication in the field of education. However, communication apprehension (CA) has emerged, hindering effective communication. This descriptive, quantitative, correlational, cross-sectional research design seeks to identify the following objectives: (1) what are the communication apprehension (CA) and communicative competence (CC) of secondary preservice teachers (PSTs), (2) what are the significant differences in the CA and CC among secondary PSTs and gender, and (3) what is the significant relationship between the level of CA and CC among secondary PSTs. The study utilized online survey questionnaires divided into three parts and was distributed to 170 secondary PSTs. On the basis of the analysis, secondary PSTs generally exhibit varying levels of CA across different social contexts. They also exhibit strong CC, suggesting great communication skills. According to the analysis, gender does not significantly influence either CA or CC. There was also a weak positive correlation between CA and CC. Therefore, it is still important to find interventions to further enhance communicative competence and reduce communication apprehension, helping future educators to be efficient.

Keywords: *Communication Apprehension (CA), Communicative Competence (CC), Secondary Preservice Teachers (PSTs), Quantitative study, Education.*



Introduction

In the field of education, communication is a significant element of the learning process (Mahdi, 2023). Effective communication between teachers and students, as well as between students and their peers, plays a crucial role in creating a learning environment that enhances and supports the learning outcomes of students (Gibson, 2009; Guilherme, 2019; Jacinto & Alieto, 2020; Lucas et al., 2024). Thus, speaking is one of the most essential skills that must be enhanced and improved by an individual for effective communication to occur (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). Communicative competence (CC), a concept defined by Hymes (1972), refers to an individual's ability to participate in society not only as a speaking member but also as an effective communicator (Remache, 2016). This ability not only helps individuals communicate effectively but also helps them express ideas clearly and create deeper connections with others and the world. Therefore, enhancing speaking skills can help individuals engage with society and foster good communication competence.

Speaking is also one of the most challenging skills to learn as many individuals struggle with expressing themselves due to communication apprehension which hinder one's ability to express thoughts effectively in various social, academic, and professional settings. Concurrently, in the field of education, speaking is also one of the most challenging skills to learn, as learners encounter problems expressing themselves using a foreign language (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). Therefore, speaking anxiety has emerged and is considered a significant challenge in the area of English as a foreign language (Bozkurt & Aydin, 2023) and is also believed to be extremely detrimental in the context of foreign language learning (Lucas, 2008). Aligned with this, a term for anxiety or fear of speaking, known as communication apprehension (CA), emerged. This concept, defined by McCroskey (1977), refers to an individual's level of anxiety and fear associated with either real or anticipated communication with another individual. It is considered a widespread phenomenon affecting approximately 20% of the general population and significantly impacts personal and professional relationships (Sawyer, 2018). Therefore, communication apprehension is considered a barrier to success in education and work in today's global context (Blume et al., 2013) and in communication, especially speaking (Rimkeeratikul, 2023).

However, despite the growing recognition of the importance of communication apprehension and communicative competence in language learning, research in these areas remains limited, particularly in the field of education on second language acquisition. Given that effective communication is a fundamental skill for students across all disciplines, understanding the relationships among these concepts is essential for achieving better learning outcomes. Most existing studies focus primarily on university students' perceptions of their communicative competence in a second language and the levels of their communication apprehension. These investigations often consider various influencing factors, including gender, academic programs, and duration of university experience. Additionally, researchers have explored the significant relationship between communicative competence or the ability to express oneself clearly and effectively and communication apprehension, which refers to the anxiety or fear associated with speaking in a second language. Moreover, these studies often consider variables such as gender, course or program, years of university experience, and the relationship between communicative competence and communication apprehension. While these studies have provided valuable insights into how students handle second language communication challenges, their findings have not always been consistent. Some studies suggest a strong correlation between communicative competence and apprehension, whereas others indicate that external factors such as individual personality traits, the academic environment, and teaching strategies play more

significant roles in shaping students' confidence and proficiency. (Hussin & Makmur, 2021; Kurnaz & Ozbay, 2020; Ramos et al., 2019; Sayan, 2020; Yufrizal, 2017; Morreale, 2007).

Due to the unique findings and limitations of previous studies, further research is needed to develop a more comprehensive understanding of how second language learners experience and overcome communication barriers in educational settings. Therefore, the present study intends to explore the levels of communication apprehension and communicative competence of university students, specifically secondary preservice teachers, both those who are language majors and nonlanguage majors, and the relationship between communication apprehension and communicative competence in English. The present study intends to use the literature to further understand and analyze perceptions regarding the correlation of these two concepts. The findings of this study can also help education students and educators understand their relationships and effects in the communication process.

Research Questions:

The present study intends to explore the levels of communication apprehension (CA) and English communicative competence (CC) of secondary preservice teachers and determine the overall effect of communicative competence on their communication apprehension. With this aim, the present study seeks to provide answers to the following questions:

1. What is the communication apprehension of the respondents?
2. What is the communicative competence of the respondents?
3. Is there a significant difference in the communication apprehension among secondary preservice teachers when data are grouped according to gender?
4. Is there a significant difference in the communicative competence among secondary preservice teachers when data are grouped according to gender?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the level of communication apprehension and the level of communicative competence among the respondents?

Conceptual Framework

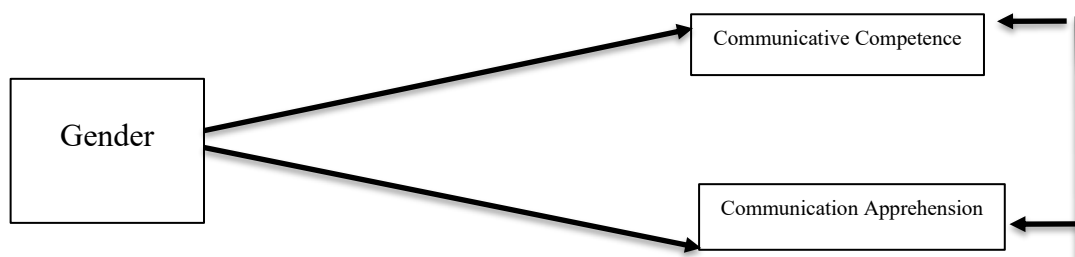


Figure 1.0. Interplay of Variables

In this discussion, Figure 1 represents the conceptual framework of the current study and serves as the visual representation of the research questions. The independent variable is gender, which refers to the variable that may or may not influence the other variables. On the other hand, the dependent variables are communication apprehension and communicative competence, which are variables that may or may not be affected by the independent variable. In the presented conceptual framework, the variables presented on the right side are the dependent variables, whereas the variable presented on the left side is the independent variable. Furthermore, various indicators are also presented in the Balneg. 2026. English Communication Apprehension and Communicative Competence among Secondary Preservice Teachers: A Quantitative Study



framework, including a single-headed arrow that shows the differences among the variables and a double-headed arrow that shows the relationship between the variables.

Methodology

Research Design

The study employed a descriptive, quantitative, correlational, cross-sectional research design that aimed to explore the relationship between communication apprehension and the communicative competence of secondary preservice teachers in addition to examining the levels of communication apprehension and communicative competence, including gender, course, and year level. According to Cresswell (2014), a descriptive design was utilized to systematically characterize phenomena or communities. In the present study, this design was utilized as a way to describe the communication apprehension and communicative competence of the respondents through the gathered data. A quantitative research design was also employed in the present study, as it was designed to quantify variables (Kothari, 2004). This design was utilized to quantify the variables of the study, which were communication apprehension and communicative competence. Additionally, the use of a quantitative research design involves gathering measurable data for statistical analysis (Cresswell, 2014; Williams, 2007). Furthermore, the data were collected through the utilization of a one-time data gathering procedure via a survey questionnaire (Zyadin et al., 2012) and a scaling framework (Halder et al., 2010), which makes it a cross-sectional study. In the present study, survey questionnaires utilizing a five-point Likert scale were used to gather and measure the communication apprehension and communicative competence of the respondents.

Respondents

The study utilized stratified random sampling to ensure proper representation of all groups within the population and increased statistical efficiency (Patten & Newhart, 2018). Additionally, studies summarizing characteristics such as abilities, perceptions, and preferences require at least 100 respondents for the obtained results to be reliable (Fraenkel et al., 2012). Therefore, a total of 170 tertiary students, specifically secondary preservice teachers who were currently enrolled in the second semester at the College of Teacher Education under a state-managed institution, including 114 (67.1%) women and 56 (33%) men, were involved in the current study. This finding revealed that females (67.3%) composed the largest sample in this study, which may be related to the dominance of females taking up teacher education programs (Abequibel et al., 2021; Alieto, 2019; Alieto et al., 2019; Buslon, et al. 2020; Ricohermoso et al., 2019). Careful consideration was also given to ensure that the respondents were given diverse representations in terms of gender, course/program, and year level. The respondents were gathered from various courses/programs, including 56 (32.9%) from the Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSED) major in English, 34 (20%) from the Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSED) major in Filipino, 40 (23.5%) from the Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSED) major in Science, and 40 (23.6) from the Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSED) Major in Mathematics. The respondents were also drawn from various years: 32 (18.8%) were first-year students, 49 (28.8%) were second-year students, 51 (30%) were third-year students, and 38 (22.4%) were fourth-year students. Additionally, the respondents were 18-29 years old, with a mean score of 20.17 (SD – 1.61).

Research Instruments

The study employed meticulously crafted research instruments divided into three sections to comprehensively capture the experiences of the respondents. These sections consist of the participant information from requesting the respondents' demographic details, such as their age, gender, and Balneg. 2026. English Communication Apprehension and Communicative Competence among Secondary Preservice Teachers: A Quantitative Study



educational background; an adopted version of the “Personal Report of Communication Apprehension” scale; and an adopted version of the “Communicative Competence” scale.

The Personal Report of Communication Apprehension Scale (PRCA) was the first research instrument used in this study. It was developed by McCroskey (1982) and was utilized to determine the level of communication apprehension of an individual. This instrument consists of 24 items and can be answered using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). This instrument measures overall communication apprehension and provides insights into four specific dimensions. Public speaking apprehension (PSA) refers to the uneasiness experienced by an individual when speaking in front of a group. Meeting and Group Discussion Apprehension (MGDA) pertains to an individual's discomfort in participating in meetings and group discussions. Interpersonal communication apprehension (ICA) involves an individual's apprehension related to one-on-one interactions. Small group communication apprehension (SGCA) focuses on apprehension within small group settings. The respondents are categorized into low, moderate, or high communication apprehension to interpret the results. For the reliability analysis of the instrument used in the present study, the Cronbach's alpha value for the entire scale was 0.94. For the subdimensions, the values are 0.82 for Group Discussion, 0.86 for Meetings, 0.85 for Interpersonal, and 0.87 for Public Speaking.

The second research instrument used was the Communicative Competence Scale (CCS) which was developed by Wiemann (1977) to assess an individual's level of proficiency in various aspects of communicative competence. This instrument consists of 36 items and can be answered via a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Wiemann (1977) reported a coefficient alpha of 0.96 for the 36-item instrument. Instead of dividing the scale into subscales, Perotti and DeWine (1987) recommended using the instrument as an overall metric of communication skills. Therefore, the scale was analyzed as unidimensional in the present study, and the Cronbach's alpha value for the 36-item instrument was found to be 0.89.

Data Gathering Procedure

To achieve the aims of the study, the data were gathered from the online survey questionnaires answered by secondary preservice teachers at the College of Teacher Education at a state-managed institution during the end of the first semester and the beginning of the second semester of the academic year of 2024-2025. The questionnaires were distributed online through the use of Google Forms and the link of this online survey questionnaire, and the respondents were given three weeks to answer it. The survey questionnaire consisted of a letter of consent to participate in the study, its brief background and a letter ensuring the confidentiality of their responses to ensure the reliability of the study. The respondents also took approximately 15–20 minutes to answer the online survey questionnaire. After the respondents willingly participated in the study, they were first asked to provide their demographic details, such as their age, course/program and year level. After providing the necessary information, the respondents were then redirected to two parts of the survey. The first part consisted of a 24-item questionnaire on communication apprehension and a 36-item questionnaire on communicative competence. The data gathering procedure started on December 15, 2024, and continues until January 27, 2025. During the process of data gathering, the researcher contacted and reminded the respondents to ensure that they were able to answer the given online survey questionnaire. A total of 250 students received the online questionnaire; however, only 170 of them answered and participated.

Coding and Data Analysis Procedure

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Before the collected data were analyzed, the data collected from Google Forms were retrieved through Microsoft Excel and coded accordingly before they were transferred to IBM SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) Statistics 25. Before conducting the descriptive statistical analysis, the data gathered were checked by following the assumptions of the statistical tools utilized. To check the normality of the data, Kolmogorov–Smirnov tests were employed to check whether the data were normally distributed. This value was greater than 0.05, which indicates the normality of the data. Additionally, histogram graphs were also generated. After ensuring the normality of the tests, various statistical tools were used to measure various constructs.

In the demographic information section, the coding procedure was for gender (1 for males and 2 for females) and course/program (1 for Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in English, 2 for Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in Filipino, 3 for Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in Science, and 4 for Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in Mathematics). However, other information such as age and year level were written in figure form. Additionally, descriptive statistics were performed to determine the levels of communication apprehension and communicative competence of the respondents. To determine this, a scale was utilized to interpret the data as follows: 1.00–1.79 (very low), 1.80–2.59 (low), 2.60–3.39 (neutral), 3.40–4.19 (high), and 4.20–5.00 (very high). To determine the difference in the effects of communication apprehension and communicative competence across genders, an independent-sample t-test was subsequently performed. Finally, the Pearson product moment coefficient (Pearson r) was used to test the correlation between communication apprehension and communicative competence in secondary preservice teachers.

Scope and Limitations

This study focused on investigating the relationship between communication apprehension and communicative competence among secondary preservice teachers at a state-managed university. The research included students enrolled in the second semester at the College of Teacher Education, including 114 female and 56 male students aged 18-29 years. The scope included identifying the levels of communication apprehension experienced in four specific communication contexts, such as public speaking, meetings and group discussions, interpersonal communication, and small group communication. Additionally, the present study assessed communication apprehension and communicative competence through self-assessment surveys on the perception of communicating in different contexts and communication skills.

While this study provided valuable insights, it was still subject to various limitations. First, the data gathered were limited to only secondary preservice teachers at a state-managed university, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other courses, age groups or regions. Second, the data collection relied on subjective measures such as self-assessment surveys, which may introduce bias due to respondents' self-perceptions. Finally, external factors influencing communication apprehension and communicative competence, such as previous exposure to English, access to educational resources, or psychological factors, are beyond the scope of this study.

Ethical Considerations

The personal information acquired during the research process undergone a defined lifecycle, which researchers were obligated to supervise and protect at every stage. Researchers must explicitly delineate the roles and responsibilities of individuals who currently have, or may gain, access to personal and sensitive information in the future. This data protection strategy ensures strict adherence to ethical principles in handling participant information, thereby safeguarding the privacy and confidentiality of respondents throughout the entire research process.



Data Protection Plan

Ethical Considerations and Data Collection Procedures

Results and Discussion

The data gathered from the surveys were tabulated through the utilization of spreadsheets. After the answers of the respondents were tabulated, the raw data were entered, and descriptive and inferential statistics were utilized to analyze the gathered data.

Communication Apprehension of secondary preservice teachers

Descriptive statistics were utilized to measure frequent responses through reviewing the mean score and standard deviation of each item from the adopted questionnaire on overall communication apprehension, which was divided into four subcategories, as presented in Table 1.0 to Table 4.0.

Table 1.0. Descriptive Statistics on Group Discussion Apprehension (GDA)

Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
I do not like participating in group discussions. (N)	4.12	0.86	High
I usually feel comfortable participating in group discussions. (P)	3.91	0.90	High
I become tense and nervous when participating in group discussions. (P)	3.41	1.11	High
I like to take part in group discussions. (P)	4.07	0.77	High
Being in a group discussion with new people makes me nervous and irritable. (N)	3.24	1.02	Neutral
I am relaxed and calm when participating in group discussions. (P)	3.61	0.79	High
Overall	3.73	0.91	High

Table 1.0 provides the sample size, mean score and standard deviation of the six items for the first subcategory of group discussion apprehension. The positive items show favorable or positive attitudes toward group discussions, which indicate comfort, whereas the negative items suggest challenging or negative attitudes, which suggest discomfort and apprehension. The table shows that the item "Being in a group discussion with new people makes me nervous and irritable" had the lowest mean score of 3.24, indicating that some students generally experienced higher levels of communication apprehension during group discussions than others did. Therefore, for some of the respondents, group discussions with new people are less anxiety-inducing. However, the item "I do not like participating in group discussions," which obtained the highest mean score of 4.12, indicates that students generally experience higher levels of communication apprehension when they are participating in group discussions.

Additionally, the item "I like to take part in group discussions" had the lowest standard deviation of 0.77, indicating that the respondents had more consistent answers and viewpoints for this item. This shows that the majority of the respondents have relatively similar opinions in terms of participating in group discussions, whether they feel low or high levels of apprehension. While at the same time, the item "I become tense and nervous when participating in group discussions" obtained the highest standard deviation of 1.11, which indicates that the respondents who participated had various viewpoints regarding this item and that some students had greater apprehension when they participated in group discussions, whereas other students did not.

Furthermore, Table 1.0 also shows the overall mean score and standard deviation of the first category. The overall mean score is 3.73, which suggests that there is a high level of apprehension in



this situation. This finding indicates that secondary preservice teachers generally experience high levels of communication apprehension during group discussions.

Table 2.0. Descriptive Statistics on Meeting Apprehension (MA)

Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
When I have to attend to a meeting, I am often nervous. (N)	2.93	1.03	Neutral
Mostly, I am calm and relaxed when attending meetings. (P)	3.25	0.85	Neutral
I am afraid to express myself in meetings. (N)	3.05	0.97	Neutral
I am very calm and relaxed when invited to a meeting to express an idea. (P)	2.60	0.86	Neutral
Communicating in meetings often makes me uncomfortable. (N)	3.40	0.91	High
I feel very comfortable answering questions in a meeting. (P)	3.18	0.83	Neutral
Overall	3.07	0.91	Neutral

Table 2.0 provides the sample size, mean score and standard deviation of the six items for the second subcategory on meeting apprehension. The positive items show favorable or positive attitudes toward meetings, indicating comfort, whereas the negative items suggest a challenging or negative attitude, suggesting discomfort and apprehension. The table shows that the item "I am very calm and relaxed when invited to a meeting to express an idea" had the lowest mean score of 2.60, indicating that students generally have apprehension and do not feel calm and relaxed during meetings. However, the item "Communicating in meetings often makes me uncomfortable" obtained the highest mean score of 3.40, indicating that students generally agree with this item. This suggests that the respondents experienced higher levels of communication apprehension when communicating in meetings.

Moreover, the item "I feel very comfortable answering questions in a meeting" had the lowest standard deviation of 0.83, indicating that the respondents had more consistent answers and viewpoints in this item. This shows that the respondents have a relatively similar level of apprehension in terms of participating in meetings, whether it is positive or negative. At the same time, the item "When I have to attend a meeting, I am often nervous" obtained the highest standard deviation of 1.03, which indicates that the respondents have diverse perspectives regarding this item. This finding indicates that some students have greater communication apprehension when they attend meetings, whereas other students do not.

Finally, Table 2.0 shows the overall mean score and standard deviation of the second category on meeting apprehension. The overall mean score is 3.07, which suggests that in this situation, students' communication apprehension levels are neutral. This indicates that secondary preservice teachers have balanced or uncertain opinions on apprehension during meetings. Therefore, respondents may experience neutral levels of communication apprehension, whether high or low, when they attend meetings.

Table 3.0. Descriptive Statistics on Interpersonal Communication Apprehension (ICA)

Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
I feel very nervous when chatting with someone I just met. (N)	3.11	1.10	Neutral
I am not afraid to express myself clearly in dialogues. (P)	2.65	1.00	Neutral
I am often nervous during a dialogue. (N)	3.26	0.96	Neutral
I am usually calm and relaxed during a dialogue. (P)	3.42	0.83	High
I feel very comfortable when communicating with someone I just met. (P)	3.08	0.96	Neutral
Overall	3.10	0.97	Neutral

Table 3.0 provides the sample size, mean score and standard deviation of the five items for the third subcategory of interpersonal communication apprehension. The positive items indicate favorable or positive attitudes toward interpersonal communication, which indicates comfort, whereas the Balneg. 2026. English Communication Apprehension and Communicative Competence among Secondary Preservice Teachers: A Quantitative Study



negative items indicating challenging or negative attitudes suggest discomfort and apprehension. The table shows that the item “I am not afraid to express myself clearly in dialogs” had the lowest mean score of 2.65, indicating that the students generally disagreed with this item and that the students experienced higher levels of communication apprehension when they were attempting to communicate interpersonally. However, the item “I am usually calm and relaxed during a dialog” had the highest mean score of 3.42, indicating that the students generally agreed with this item and that the respondents experienced lower levels of communication apprehension when communicating interpersonally.

Furthermore, the item “I am usually calm and relaxed during a dialogue” had the lowest standard deviation of 0.83, indicating that the respondents had more consistent answers and viewpoints in this item. This shows that the majority of the respondents have relatively similar opinions in terms of feeling calm and relaxed during dialogues. At the same time, the item “I feel very nervous when chatting with someone I just met” obtained the highest standard deviation of 1.10, which shows that the respondents who participated had various viewpoints regarding this item. This finding indicates that some students have higher levels of apprehension when communicating with a new individual, whereas other students have lower apprehension levels.

Table 3.0 shows the overall mean score and standard deviation of the third category. The overall mean score is 3.10, which suggests that there is a neutral outlook or moderate level of apprehension and ease in this situation. This finding indicates that, on average, secondary preservice teachers may experience neutral levels of communication apprehension during conversations and social situations, whether high or low.

Table 4.0. Descriptive Statistics on Public Speaking Apprehension (PSA)

Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
I am afraid to express myself clearly in dialogues. (N)	2.73	0.84	Neutral
I am not shy or afraid of speaking. (P)	3.02	1.07	Neutral
While giving a speech, I feel very tense in some parts of my body. (N)	2.37	1.05	Low
I feel comfortable giving a speech. (P)	2.91	0.90	Neutral
My mind gets confused and my thoughts become confused while speaking. (N)	2.91	0.94	Neutral
I can speak confidently. (P)	3.09	0.94	Neutral
I get so anxious during a conversation that I forget facts I actually know. (N)	2.45	1.01	Low
Overall	2.78	0.96	Neutral

Table 4.0 provides the sample size, mean score and standard deviation of the seven items for the last subcategory of public speaking. The positive items show favorable or positive attitudes toward public speaking, which indicates comfort, whereas the items show challenging or negative attitudes, which suggest discomfort and apprehension. The table shows that the item “While giving a speech, I feel very tense in some parts of my body” had the lowest mean score of 2.37, indicating that students generally experienced lower levels of communication apprehension, including physical tension, when giving speeches. Therefore, the majority of the respondents feel more at ease and physically relaxed when giving a speech. However, the item “I can speak confidently” obtained the highest mean score of 3.09, indicating that most students feel comfortable and confident when speaking, indicating lower levels of communication apprehension when giving speeches.

Finally, the item “I am afraid to express myself clearly in dialogues” had the lowest standard deviation of 0.84, indicating that the respondents had more consistent answers and viewpoints in this item. This shows that the majority of the respondents have relatively similar opinions in terms of giving speeches. At the same time, the item “I am not shy or afraid of speaking” obtained the highest standard deviation of 1.07, which indicates that the respondents have diverse perspectives regarding this item.

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Therefore, some students have greater apprehension when they participate in group discussions, whereas other students do not.

Finally, Table 4.0 shows the overall mean score and standard deviation of the fourth category for public speaking apprehension. The overall mean score is 2.78, which suggests that there is a neutral outlook or moderate level of apprehension in this situation. This finding indicates that secondary preservice teachers may experience neutral levels of communication apprehension, whether high or low, during speeches.

Communicative Competence of secondary preservice teachers

Descriptive statistics were also employed to measure the common responses through examining the mean score and standard deviation of each item from the adopted questionnaire on communicative competence presented in Table 5.0.

Table 5.0. Descriptive Statistics on Communicative Competence

Table with 4 columns: Items, Mean, Standard Deviation, Interpretation. It lists 30 items related to communicative competence with their respective mean scores and standard deviations, and an overall summary row.

Table 5.0 provides the sample size, mean score and standard deviation of each item for the second subcategory on meeting apprehension. The table shows that the item "I do not follow the conversation very well" had the lowest mean score of 2.61, indicating that students generally feel



confident in following conversations and that the respondents have high levels of communicative competence that can be demonstrated during conversations. However, the item “I ignore other people's feelings” obtained the highest mean score of 4.39, indicating that students generally agree with this item and that students generally tend to disregard others’ emotions while communicating.

Furthermore, the item “I pay attention to a conversation” has the lowest standard deviation of 0.57, indicating that the respondents have more consistent answers and viewpoints in this item. This shows that the majority of the respondents have relatively similar perceptions regarding attentiveness in a conversation, whether it is positive or not. At the same time, the item “I enjoy social gatherings where I can meet new people” obtained a higher standard deviation of 1.05, which indicates that the respondents had various viewpoints regarding these items. Therefore, students have varying levels of comfort with social gatherings; some may enjoy social gatherings enjoyable, whereas other students do not and may enjoy solitude or smaller groups.

Table 5.0 shows the overall mean score and standard deviation for the communicative competence of the respondents. The overall mean score is 3.80, which suggests that there is a high level of communicative competence, which indicates that secondary preservice teachers are generally proficient and possess great communication skills.

Communication Apprehension across genders

The level of communication apprehension and gender were analyzed through the use of inferential statistics. The means, standard deviations, and p values of the variables were collected through the use of the independent-sample t test to determine the significant differences in communication apprehension across genders.

Table 6.0. Significant differences in communication apprehension across genders

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	p value	Interpretation
Communication Apprehension	Male	56	67.88	8.87	0.17	Not significant
	Female	114	66.11	7.18		
Overall		170	66.99	8.02		

Table 6.0 shows the analysis of communication apprehension across genders. An independent-sample t test revealed that the mean score for gender differed according to its category. The mean scores of communication apprehension among males and females were 67.88 (SD-8.7) and 66.11 (SD-7.18), respectively. This suggests that in terms of secondary preservice teachers, on average, male secondary preservice teachers experience greater communication apprehension than female secondary preservice teachers do.

Additionally, as shown in Table 6.0, the level of significance or p value was 0.17, suggesting that the level of communication apprehension and gender is not significant, supporting the findings of Kulusakli and Gelc (2024), who highlighted gender not as a significant factor in communication apprehension. This finding indicates that gender does not play a significant role in determining the communication apprehension of secondary preservice teachers.

Communicative Competence across genders



The levels of communicative competence and gender were also examined. The means, standard deviations, and p values of the variables were collected through the use of the independent-sample t test to obtain significant differences in communicative competence across genders.

Table 7.0. Significant differences in communicative competence across genders

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	P value	Interpretation
Communicative Competence	Male	56	125.16	12.30	0.06	Not significant
	Female	114	127.96	11.79		
Overall		170	126.56	12.05		

Table 7.0 shows the analysis of communicative competence across genders. An independent-sample t test revealed that the mean score for gender differed according to its category. The mean scores for communicative competence among males and females were 125.16 (SD-12.30) and 127.96 (SD-11.79), respectively. This finding indicates that the respondents, specifically female secondary preservice teachers, have greater communicative competence than male secondary preservice teachers do.

Additionally, Table 7.0 shows that the level of significance or p value was 0.06, implying that the level of communicative competence and gender is also not significant, supporting the findings of Eren (2023) that gender is not a significant factor in measuring communicative competence, unlike significant factors such as multilingualism. Therefore, gender also does not play a significant role in determining the communicative competence of secondary preservice teachers.

Respondents' Communication Apprehension and Communicative Competence

Table 8.0. Relationship between the respondents' levels of Communication Apprehension and Communicative Competence

Variables		P value	R value	Interpretation
Communication Apprehension	Communicative Competence	0.01	0.22	Significant

*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 8.0 presents the results of the Pearson correlation analysis performed to examine whether there is a significant relationship between communication apprehension and communicative competence among secondary preservice teachers. The level of significance or p value, which is 0.01, indicates that there is a significant relationship between communication apprehension and communicative competence.

Furthermore, the closer the correlation coefficient is to 0, the weaker the correlation is; therefore, the r value of 0.22 for the correlation coefficient of communication apprehension and communicative competence shows that even though there is a significant relationship between these variables, there is generally a weak positive correlation. This finding indicates that while communication apprehension and communicative competence are significantly related, the relationship is not strong enough to predict or link the variables without deeper analysis.

Conclusion

In the field of education, communication is a significant element of the learning process; therefore, communicative competence is an important part of language learning. Moreover, speaking is one of the most challenging skills to learn; therefore, apprehension in communication is considered to Balneg. 2026. English Communication Apprehension and Communicative Competence among Secondary Preservice Teachers: A Quantitative Study



be a significant challenge in learning English. The present study explored the levels of communication apprehension (CA) and communicative competence (CC) of secondary preservice teachers, both of whom are language majors and nonlanguage majors, and determined the relationship between communicative competence and communication apprehension, including gender.

After analyzing the data gathered, the findings show that in the analysis of communication apprehension, secondary preservice teachers exhibit varying levels of communication apprehension across different social contexts. The analysis of communicative competence revealed that secondary preservice teachers also exhibit strong communicative competence, which suggests that the respondents are generally proficient and possess great communication skills. Additionally, gender does not significantly influence either communication apprehension or communicative competence, indicating that both male and female secondary preservice teachers generally have different levels of communication apprehension and communicative competence, regardless of gender. Furthermore, the findings also revealed a weak positive correlation between communication apprehension and communicative competence, which indicates that even though the relationship between communication apprehension and communicative competence is significantly related, it is still important to find interventions to further enhance communicative competence and reduce communication apprehension, which can help future educators be effective and efficient. These findings can help contribute to the progress and collection of literature in the field of education, specifically in English language learning and communication.

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