

Oral Participation Challenges and Strategies Among English Major Students at Mindanao State University-Sulu

¹Mutmainna W. Ayyub, ²Raugda J. Julhamid

¹Mindanao State University-Sulu, ²Sulu State University
gs@sulustatecollege.edu.ph

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Corresponding Email:
gs@sulustatecollege.edu.ph

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Abstract. This study examined the oral participation challenges and strategies among 132 English major students at Mindanao State University-Sulu during the School Year 2025-2026. Utilizing a descriptive-correlational research design, the study assessed the extent of student-related and teacher-related challenges, as well as the strategies students employed to enhance their oral English proficiency. Demographic data revealed that the majority of respondents were aged 21-23, predominantly female, and came from low-income households with college-educated parents. The findings indicated that student-related challenges, particularly linguistic concerns like pronunciation ($\bar{x} = 3.05$) and grammatical errors ($\bar{x} = 3.03$), were generally experienced by respondents (Total $\bar{x} = 2.8561$), whereas teacher-related challenges were only moderately perceived (Total $\bar{x} = 1.8879$). Despite these difficulties, students actively engaged in self-directed improvement strategies (Total $\bar{x} = 3.2091$), such as self-correction ($\bar{x} = 3.38$), reading for comprehension ($\bar{x} = 3.36$), and reading books for vocabulary ($\bar{x} = 3.32$). Statistical analyses using T-tests and ANOVA showed no significant differences in challenges or strategies based on age, gender, or parents' educational attainment. However, a significant difference was found in teacher-related challenges when respondents were grouped by parents' average monthly income ($p = 0.043$). Correlation analysis revealed no significant relationship between student-related challenges, teacher-related challenges, and the strategies employed. The study concludes that internal linguistic and psychological factors are the primary barriers to participation, rather than instructional practices, and recommends that administrators and teachers implement supportive programs and interactive strategies to build student confidence.

Introduction

Acquiring good communication skills is the key to a learner's academic achievement and future professional life, with the oral skill being an especially essential element in language acquisition. As McMillan (2021) proposes, communication is possibly the most important life skill, and students with poor communication skills risk falling behind or becoming emotionally overwhelmed. In addition, Kaufman (2022) notes that gaining fluency in a language is attributable to the size of one's vocabulary and how much practice is done in speaking. This confirms the role of oral communication as the most essential skill in language learning. Participation in the class by mouth is an effective way of developing a student's ability to speak and fostering independent learning (Barrios & Garay, 2020). Nevertheless, encouraging students to use this approach, particularly when speaking English, usually poses great challenges. For English majors—students whose main course of study is the language itself—the burden of speaking effectively in English is high, but they often face challenges. Research such as Oducado et al. (2018) suggests English proficiency has a direct impact on learning outcomes in other fields, so a mastery of the language is necessary for these learners to excel. Literature has determined that student participation in verbal engagement is highly affected by an intersection of difficulties. One of the main impediments is Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA), known to hinder verbal participation (Weda and Sakti, 2018; Horwitz, 2010; Li & Gasser, 2020). Oral participation among students is also directly proportional to vocabulary; lack of vocabulary tends to lead to a struggle for fluency even for more advanced learners (Pawlak, 2015). It shows that not just affective issues, but also linguistic limitations lead to difficulties. In addition, pedagogical practice is a key factor. The

questioning approaches of a lecturer can directly influence students' courage to speak up (Fitriati, Isfara, and Trisanti, 2017), implying that classroom practices are key in obtaining communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980). Difficulty in obtaining this competence is common among Filipino pre-service teachers, a subgroup directly connected to the target population of this research (Dulay, 2018). This research targeted specifically the problems of oral participation among a certain population: English major students in Mindanao State University-Sulu. This specific population is at the critical point where they are consolidating their linguistic competence and usually gearing up for professional practice. With this, it is crucial to conduct a study of the problem—like anxiety, limited words, and incorrect pronunciation—and the strategies used to counter it. The researchers thought that it is only through identifying both the academic and affective hindrances and the efficient coping and self-improvement mechanisms that one can create more effective instructional settings. The eventual objective of this research was to generate useful knowledge to enhance English oral participation, which can immediately benefit English majors in MSU-Sulu and contribute to their preparedness as effective users of language and future teachers. The researchers identified challenges in oral participation regarding the use of the English language among English major students and the ways to enhance their verbal participation at MSU-Sulu.

Research Questions:

This study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the English major student at Mindanao State University- Sulu, in terms of:
 - 1.1 Age
 - 1.2 Gender
 - 1.3 Parent's Educational Attainment; and
 - 1.4 Parent's Average Monthly Income?
2. What are the extent challenges among English major students at Mindanao State- Sulu in their oral participation in the context of: Student-related challenges; and
 - 2.1 Teacher-related challenges?
 - 2.2 Student Strategies in improving their use of English in Oral Participation
3. Is there a significance difference in the extent challenges and strategies among English major students at Mindanao State University- Sulu when data are grouped according to their demographic profile in terms of:
 - 3.1 Age;
 - 3.1 Gender;
 - 3.2 Parent's Educational Attainment; and
 - 3.3 Parent's Average Monthly Income?
4. Is there a significance correlation among the subcategories subsumed under the extent of challenges and strategies among English major at Mindanao State University- Sulu

Null Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference in the extent of challenges and strategies in improving oral participation among English Students when data are grouped according to their profile.
2. There is no significant relationship between the challenges encountered and the strategies employed by the English Students to improve their oral participation.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

This study is largely based on two core theories of second language learning and acquisition psychology to have a comprehensive insight into the interaction between the oral participation challenges and strategies of English students: Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural Theory (SCT) and Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (AFH). The research drew on the tenets of Socio-Cultural Theory (SCT), as mainly expounded by Lev Vygotsky, to situate oral participation as a social and dynamic activity in which learning happens. According to this view, higher mental functions such as the use of complex language like oral communication evolve through practical activity and social interaction in a societal context. SCT suggests that learners build their knowledge and skills interactively, i.e., oral competence is not learned in isolation but is co-built through discussion with peers and teachers. One of SCT's most important concepts, the ZPD, is the distance between what a learner can do alone and what she/he can do with help from a more proficient peer or teacher. In the context of the present study, an effective oral participation strategy is one that can direct a student in her/his ZPD, making a challenging oral activity one that is feasible and contributes to learning. SCT conceptualizes the classroom setting in MSU-Sulu as an essential cultural context in which oral participation strategies (i.e., group discussion, role-playing, and teacher scaffolding) serve as mediational tools of language acquisition. Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (AFH). The second theory supporting this framework is Stephen Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (AFH), which is instrumental in explaining the challenges encountered by the students. The AFH is one of the five main hypotheses within Krashen's Monitor Model of language

acquisition. This hypothesis is that a "filter" "a fictional obstacle within the learner's minds is affected by affective factors like motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety. When the filter is "high," it stifles comprehensible input from traveling to the language acquisition device, basically stopping learning. The frequent challenges to oral participation, e.g., shyness, concern over making mistakes, and lack of confidence, are expressions of a high affective filter. These negative feelings prevent the students from starting or participating in necessary oral activities. As a result, successful strategies—both the teachers (e.g., creating a non-threatening environment) and the students' (e.g., use of self-management skills)—are those intended to reduce the affective filter, enabling the student to become more open to the input and more inclined to speak. This study is essentially explored how oral participation is mediated by social interaction and how it's influenced by the psychological state of the students. English students' problems are explained in terms of a high Affective Filter, which is caused by anxiety and low self-esteem. The strategies evaluated in this research are those which, in compliance with the Socio-Cultural Theory, facilitate effective, interactive communication whilst, at the same time, reducing the Affective Filter, hence creating a positive and interactive environment for oral competence to be developed in the MSU-Sulu setting.

Methodology

Research Design

This research employed a quantitative, descriptive-correlational design to investigate the oral participation challenges and strategies among English major students at MSU-Sulu. Data were collected through a structured survey administered to a representative sample of current English major students, gathering information on their language proficiency, communication apprehension, and perceptions of the classroom environment. A descriptive research design is aimed at systematically obtaining information to describe a phenomenon, situation, or population. More specifically, it helped to answer the what, when, where, and how questions regarding the research problem rather than the why (Team, 2023). Additionally, relevant course syllabi and instructional materials were reviewed to gather information about the types of oral participation activities used in English major courses. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics to describe the demographic characteristics of the student population and correlational analysis to examine the relationships between language proficiency, communication apprehension, perceptions of the classroom environment, instructor strategies, and the level of student oral participation. Statistical tests will be used to identify significant differences in oral participation based on demographic characteristics. This research design will allow for a comprehensive exploration of the factors influencing oral participation, contributing valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities at MSU-Sulu. The findings of this study will contribute to a better understanding of the current state of oral participation among English majors at MSU-Sulu, identify key challenges and opportunities for improvement, and provide insights into the role of instructors and the classroom environment in supporting student success in oral communication.

Research Environment

This study was conducted at Mindanao State University-Sulu, Philippines, focusing on the experiences and perceptions of English major students regarding oral participation. The choice of this University as the primary research locale was motivated by their relevance to the study's specific focus on understanding and addressing oral participation challenges among English majors in a particular educational context within the Sulu province. MSU-Sulu was selected based on factors such as the size of their English programs, their willingness to participate, and their accessibility for data collection.

Respondents

The respondents of this study were the English major students enrolled at the MSU-Sulu. The study gathered data from a representative sample of these students, ensuring that the findings could be generalized to the broader population of English majors at the selected school. The student respondents represented a diverse range of backgrounds, experiences, and language proficiency levels.

Sampling Procedure

This study utilized a stratified random sampling technique to select a representative sample. The target population was divided into strata (subgroups) based on relevant characteristics, such as gender or self-reported English proficiency level, to ensure the sample reflected the distribution of these characteristics within the overall population. The appropriate sample size for each stratum was calculated to achieve the desired level of confidence. Once the sample size was determined, participants were randomly selected from within each stratum, ensuring each group was proportionally represented. This method guaranteed that the study findings were accurate and applicable to the broader student body.

Research Instrument

The researcher used a paper-pencil questionnaire to gather data from the English major Students. The questionnaire consisted of items using a Likert scale to assess challenges and strategies in oral participation. The questionnaire underwent validation to ensure the validity and reliability of the data. The instrument comprised three sections, using a Likert scale to gather the data needed for this study. The first section collected the respondents' demographic information, including age, gender, parent's educational attainment, and parent's average monthly income. Providing names will be optional, the researcher looks steps to protect the students' personal information. Part 1.1 This section focused on student-related challenges in oral participation among English major students. Challenges assessed included anxiety, lack of vocabulary, poor pronunciation, inappropriate language choices, self-confidence, students' beliefs about the material, nervousness, unfavorable body language, negative thoughts, emotional issues of humiliation and fear, and grammatical mistakes. This section was adapted from the Public Speaking Class Anxiety Scale (PCAS) developed by Kriangkrai and Siriluck (2012). The PCAS aims to measure anxiety in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) public speaking in class and includes components of communication apprehension, test anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, and comfort in using English in a public speaking class. Part 1.2 This section focused on students' perceptions of teacher-related factors that may contribute to difficulties in students' oral participation. These included the lecturer's role in the classroom, the lecturer's communication style, the teacher's critical remark, unfavorable body language, teacher's knowledge, and the teacher's attitude. Part 2 focused on strategies students use to improve their oral participation, including reading aloud, extensive reading, self-motivation, and self-practice. Part 1.2 and 2 were developed by the researcher based on a review of relevant literature. The survey instruments are designed to be clear, concise, and easy to understand before being administered to the full sample to ensure their effectiveness and reliability.

Data Gathering Procedure

The data gathering procedure began with obtaining permission from the Graduate Studies office and institutional approval from MSU-Sulu. A detailed proposal outlining the objectives and ethical considerations was submitted and granted approval. Once access was granted, structured survey instruments were developed and administered. Throughout the process, data confidentiality was maintained, ensuring the anonymity and protection of all participant information.

Statistical Treatment

In this study, The Statistical treatment of data was strictly governed by the research questions. First, Frequency and Percentage were employed to detail the demographic profile of the English major students, including their age, gender, parent's educational attainment (PEA), and parent's average monthly income (PAMI). Second, to determine the extent of oral participation challenges—specifically student-related and teacher-related challenges—and the extent of student strategies used, the Weighted Mean and Standard Deviation were calculated to describe the average magnitude and variability of the responses. Third, to investigate whether there was a significant difference in the challenges and strategies when data were grouped according to the demographic profile, the T-test was conducted to compare the means of two independent groups, such as gender, while the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to compare the means across three or more independent groups, such as age or income levels. Finally, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (Pearson r) was utilized to determine the strength and direction of the linear relationship between the subcategories of challenges and the strategies employed by the students. These analyses collectively ensured that the data directly addressed all the hypotheses and objectives set forth in the study.

Results and Discussion

Table 1.1 presents the demographic profile of the English major student respondents at Mindanao State University–Sulu in terms of age. The data show that out of 132 respondents, 88 students (66.7%) are aged 21–23 years old, 22 students (16.7%) are 18 years old and below, 19 students (14.4%) are aged 24–26 years old, and 3 students (2.3%) are 27 years old and above. This indicates that the majority of the respondents fall within the 21–23 age bracket, comprising more than half of the total sample, while only a small proportion belong to the older age group of 27 years old and above.

Age	Number of respondents	Percent
18 years old and below	22	16.7%
21-23 years old	88	66.7%
24-26 years old	19	14.4%
27 years old and above	3	2.3%
Total	132	100%

Table 1.1 Demographic Profile of the English major student at Mindanao State University- Sulu in Terms of Age

Table 1.2 presents the demographic profile of the English major student respondents at Mindanao State University–Sulu in terms of gender. The data show that out of 132 respondents, 73 students (55.3%) are female, 51 students (38.6%) are male, and 8 students (6.1%) prefer not to say. This indicates that the majority of the respondents are female, comprising more than half of the total sample, while male students represent a smaller proportion, and only a few respondents chose not to disclose their gender.

Gender	Number of respondents	Percent
Male	51	38.6%
Female	73	55.3%
Prefer not to say	8	6.1%
Total	132	100%

Table 1.2
Demographic Profile of the English major student at Mindanao State University- Sulu in Terms of Gender

Table 1.3 presents the demographic profile of the English major student respondents at Mindanao State University–Sulu in terms of parents’ educational attainment. The data show that out of 132 respondents, 69 students (52.3%) have parents who reached college level or are college graduates, 26 students (19.7%) have parents with elementary level or elementary graduate education, 24 students (18.2%) have parents with high school level or high school graduate education, 7 students (5.3%) have parents with post-graduate degrees, and 6 students (4.5%) have parents with no formal education. This indicates that the majority of the respondents come from families where parents have attained college education, while only a small proportion come from households where parents have post-graduate degrees or no formal education.

Parents’ Educational Attainment	Number of respondents	Percent
Elementary level/elementary graduate	26	19.7%
High school level/high school graduate	24	18.2%
College level/college graduate	69	52.3%
Post graduate degree (master doctorate)	7	5.3%
No formal education	6	4.5%
Total	132	100%

Table 1.3 Demographic Profile of the English major student at Mindanao State University- Sulu in Terms of Parents’ Educational Attainment

Table 1.4 presents the demographic profile of the English major student respondents at Mindanao State University–Sulu in terms of parents’ average monthly income. The data show that out of 132 respondents, 86 students (65.2%) come from families with an average monthly income of 10,000 pesos and below, 22 students (16.7%) belong to the 20,001–30,000 pesos income bracket, 14 students (10.6%) fall within the 30,001–40,000 pesos range, and 10 students (7.6%) come from families earning 40,001 pesos and above. This indicates that the majority of the respondents come from low-income households, while only a small proportion belong to higher income groups.

Parents’ Average Monthly Income	Number of respondents	Percent
10,000 pesos and below	86	65.2%
20,001 - 30,000 pesos	22	16.7%
30,001 – 40,000 pesos	14	10.6%
40,001 pesos and above	10	7.6%
Total	132	100%

Table 1.4 Demographic Profile of the English major student at Mindanao State University- Sulu in Terms of Parents’ Average Monthly Income

Table 2.1 presents the extent of challenges among English major students at Mindanao State University–Sulu in their oral participation in the context of student-related challenges. The results show a total weighted mean of 2.8561 with a standard deviation of 0.45971, which corresponds to an overall rating of Agree. This indicates that the respondents generally experience student-related difficulties that affect their oral participation in English. Among the indicators, the highest mean score is observed for the statement “I am concerned about my pronunciation when speaking English” ($\bar{x} = 3.05$), followed by “I hesitate to speak in English because I worry about making grammatical errors” ($\bar{x} = 3.03$) and “Even when I practice, I sometimes forget what I want to say when speaking in class” ($\bar{x} = 3.00$), all interpreted as Agree. These findings suggest that linguistic concerns such as pronunciation and grammar significantly influence students’ confidence in oral

participation. Meanwhile, slightly lower but still agreeable mean scores are noted for “I experience anxiety and sometimes ‘blank out’ when called upon for oral participation” ($\bar{x} = 2.87$), “I struggle to construct grammatically correct sentences when speaking English” ($\bar{x} = 2.86$), and “I feel nervous, which sometimes causes me to stutter during oral participation” ($\bar{x} = 2.81$), indicating that psychological factors such as nervousness and anxiety also affect participation. The lowest mean scores are reflected in “I tend to choose the wrong words when speaking English” ($\bar{x} = 2.58$) and “I often avoid oral participation because I feel nervous speaking in front of the class” ($\bar{x} = 2.55$), though these remain within the Agree level. The results imply that both linguistic limitations and affective factors contribute to students’ hesitation in oral participation. This finding aligns with related studies which emphasize that lack of vocabulary, poor pronunciation, and grammatical difficulties are common barriers to speaking engagement (Khan et al., 2018; Rahmon, 2024). Furthermore, emotional factors such as anxiety and fear of making mistakes were also found to hinder students’ participation (Weda & Sakti, 2018; Jugo, 2020).

	Statements	Mean	S.D	Rating
1	I feel nervous, which sometimes causes me to stutter during oral participation.	2.81	.848	Agree
2	Even when I practice, I sometimes forget what I want to say when speaking in class.	3.00	.630	Agree
3	I often avoid oral participation because I feel nervous speaking in front of the class.	2.55	.795	Agree
4	I experience anxiety and sometimes "blank out" when called upon for oral participation.	2.87	.635	Agree
5	I hesitate to speak in English because I worry about making grammatical errors.	3.03	.771	Agree
6	I find it difficult to participate in English discussions due to my limited vocabulary.	2.92	.706	Agree
7	I am concerned about my pronunciation when speaking English.	3.05	.770	Agree
8	I struggle to construct grammatically correct sentences when speaking English.	2.86	.663	Agree
9	I tend to choose the wrong words when speaking English.	2.58	.721	Agree
10	I often compare my English-speaking ability to that of other students.	2.89	.879	Agree
Total Weighted Mean		2.8561	.45971	Agree

Legend: (4) 3.50-4.00=Strongly Agree; (3) 2.50-3.49=Agree; (2) 1.50- 2.49=Neutral; (1) 1.00- 1.49=Disagree

Table 2.1 Challenges Among English Major Students at Mindanao State- Sulu in their Oral Participation in the Context of Student-Related Challenges

Table 2.2 presents the extent of challenges among English major students at Mindanao State University–Sulu in their oral participation in the context of teacher-related challenges. The results show a total weighted mean of 1.8879 with a standard deviation of 0.51881, which corresponds to an overall rating of Neutral. This indicates that teacher-related factors are not strongly perceived as major barriers to students’ oral participation in English. Among the indicators, the highest mean score is observed for the statement “The teacher is strict at teaching the language” ($\bar{x} = 2.07$), followed by “The teacher uses an ineffective teaching method that does not polish the students’ use of the English language” ($\bar{x} = 1.98$) and “The teacher has a dictator-type attitude that hinders the students’ engagement in oral participation” ($\bar{x} = 1.94$), all interpreted as Neutral. These findings suggest that while some instructional approaches may occasionally influence participation, they are not consistently perceived as problematic by the respondents. Meanwhile, slightly lower mean scores are noted for “The teacher does not correct the students’ grammatical lapses in oral participation” ($\bar{x} = 1.92$), “The teacher talks all the time and does not give opportunities for the students to speak” ($\bar{x} = 1.87$), and “The teacher has an improper approach of correcting the lapses of the student” ($\bar{x} = 1.86$), indicating that such concerns are only moderately experienced. The lowest mean score is reflected in “The teacher shows inappropriate body language, and it makes the student uncomfortable” ($\bar{x} = 1.77$), suggesting that this is least perceived as a challenge. The results imply that teacher-related factors are not the primary source of difficulty in students’ oral participation. This finding aligns with related literature in which emphasizes that while teaching practices can influence student engagement, the presence of supportive and communicative classroom environments can mitigate anxiety and encourage participation (Barrios & Garay, 2020; Rahmon, 2024).

	Statements	Mean	S.D	Rating
1	The teacher is strict at teaching the language.	2.07	.723	Neutral
2	The teacher shows inappropriate body language, and it makes the student uncomfortable. Disagree	1.77	.697	Neutral
3	The teacher does not give speaking activities to improve the student's oral participation.	1.78	.734	Neutral
4	The teacher has an improper approach of correcting the lapses of the student.	1.86	.753	Neutral
5	The teacher gives the students difficult speaking activities that are not easy to follow.	1.86	.718	Neutral
6	The teacher does not correct the students' grammatical lapses in oral participation.	1.92	.807	Neutral

7	The teacher talks all the time and does not give opportunities for the students to speak.	1.87	.785	Neutral
8	The teacher has a dictator-type attitude that hinders the students' engagement in oral participation.	1.94	.817	Neutral
9	The teacher uses an ineffective teaching method that does not polish the students' use of the English language.	1.98	.781	Neutral
10	The teacher's command of the English language is inadequate.	1.83	.746	Neutral
Total Weighted Mean		1.8879	.51881	Neutral

Legend: (4) 3.50-4.00=Strongly Agree; (3) 2.50-3.49=Agree; (2) 1.50- 2.49=Neutral; (1) 1.00- 1.49=Disagree

Table 2.2 Challenges Among English Major Students at Mindanao State- Sulu in their Oral Participation in the Context of Teacher-Related Challenges

Table 2.3 presents the extent of challenges among English major students at Mindanao State University–Sulu in their oral participation in the context of strategies in improving their use of English in oral participation. The results show a total weighted mean of 3.2091 with a standard deviation of 0.52849, which corresponds to an overall rating of Agree. This indicates that the respondents generally employ various strategies to enhance their oral participation in English. Among the indicators, the highest mean score is observed for the statement “I am doing self-correction when I make grammatical mistakes so that I can lessen or reduce the possibility of being wrong again” (\bar{x} = 3.38), followed by “I am practicing reading to develop my understanding and comprehension of words so that I can use them properly when I am speaking or participating in class using the English language” (\bar{x} = 3.36) and “I am reading books to learn new vocabulary that can help me construct sentences” (\bar{x} = 3.32), all interpreted as Agree. These findings suggest that students actively engage in self-directed practices such as self-correction and reading to strengthen their linguistic competence. Meanwhile, slightly lower but still agreeable mean scores are noted for “I am watching English movies to improve my fluency” (\bar{x} = 3.24), “I read stories aloud to improve my pronunciation and fluency” (\bar{x} = 3.22), and “I let my friends correct my grammar errors” (\bar{x} = 3.20), indicating that peer support and exposure to authentic language materials also play a role in improving oral skills. The lowest mean score is reflected in “I am listening to English music to enhance my vocabulary and pronunciation” (\bar{x} = 3.04), although it still falls within the Agree level. The results imply that students are proactive in adopting both cognitive and practical strategies to improve their speaking abilities. This finding aligns with related studies which emphasize that strategies such as reading, exposure to media, and self-practice contribute to the development of vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency (Isanaini & Aminatun, 2021; Shadieff & Wang, 2022).

	Statements	Mean	S.D	Rating
1	I am reading books to learn new vocabulary that can help me construct sentences.	3.32	.691	Agree
2	I am listening to English music to enhance my vocabulary and pronunciation.	3.04	.805	Agree
3	I watch speaking activities online and repeat the way they pronounce their words.	3.12	.699	Agree
4	I am practicing speaking the English language in front of the mirror to improve my confidence in speaking.	3.11	.797	Agree
5	I let my friends correct my grammar errors to improve my command of English.	3.20	.728	Agree
6	I am watching English movies to improve my fluency and make me sound more native when speaking English.	3.24	.753	Agree
7	I am practicing reading to develop my understanding and comprehension of words so that I can use them properly when I am speaking or participating in class using the English language.	3.36	.621	Agree
8	I read stories aloud to improve my pronunciation and fluency in speaking the English language.	3.22	.734	Agree
9	I initiate conversations in English with friends, classmates, or teachers to practice speaking.	3.09	.659	Agree
10	I am doing self-correction when I make grammatical mistakes so that I can lessen or reduce the possibility of being wrong again.	3.38	.660	Agree
Total Weighted Mean		3.2091	.52849	Agree

Legend: (4) 3.50-4.00=Strongly Agree; (3) 2.50-3.49=Agree; (2) 1.50- 2.49=Neutral; (1) 1.00- 1.49=Disagree

Table 2.3 Challenges Among English Major Students at Mindanao State- Sulu in their Oral Participation in the Context of Strategies in Improving their Use of English in Oral Participation

Table 3.1 presents the differences in the extent of challenges and strategies among English major students at Mindanao State University–Sulu when the data are grouped according to their demographic profile in terms of age. The table shows the computed F-values and corresponding significance (Sig.) values for the three domains, namely student-related challenges, teacher-related challenges, and student strategies in improving their use of English in oral participation. For student-related challenges, the computed F-value is 0.554 with a significance value of 0.646, which is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the extent of student-related challenges when respondents are grouped according to age. In terms of teacher-related challenges, the computed F-value is 1.870 with a significance value of 0.138, which is also higher than the 0.05 level of significance. This result shows that there is no significant difference in the extent of teacher-related challenges when respondents are grouped according to age. For student strategies in improving their use of English in oral participation, the computed F-value is 2.005 with a significance value of 0.116, which is likewise greater than 0.05. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the extent of strategies employed by the students when grouped according to age. The findings reveal that age does not significantly influence the extent of challenges and strategies in oral participation across the domains of student-related challenges, teacher-related challenges, and student strategies. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that “There is no significant difference in the extent of challenges and strategies in improving oral participation among English students when data are grouped according to their profile in terms of age” is accepted.

Sources of Variation		Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Description
Student-Related Challenges	Between Groups	.355	3	.118	.554	.646	Not Significant
	Within Groups	27.33	128	.214			
	Total	27.69	131				
Teacher-Related Challenges	Between Groups	1.481	3	.494	1.870	.138	Not Significant
	Within Groups	33.780	128	.264			
	Total	35.261	131				
Student Strategies in improving their use of English in Oral Participation	Between Groups	1.643	3	.548	2.005	.116	Not Significant
	Within Groups	34.947	128	.273			
	Total	36.589	131				

Note. Significant at alpha 0.05

Table 3.1 Difference in the Extent Challenges and Strategies Among English Major Students at Mindanao State University-Sulu When Data are Grouped According to their Demographic Profile in Terms of Age

Table 3.2 presents the differences in the extent of challenges and strategies among English major students at Mindanao State University–Sulu when the data are grouped according to their demographic profile in terms of gender. The table shows the computed F-values and corresponding significance (Sig.) values for the three domains, namely student-related challenges, teacher-related challenges, and student strategies in improving their use of English in oral participation. For student-related challenges, the computed F-value is 1.003 with a significance value of 0.370, which is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the extent of student-related challenges when respondents are grouped according to gender. In terms of teacher-related challenges, the computed F-value is 1.510 with a significance value of 0.225, which is also higher than the 0.05 level of significance. This result shows that there is no significant difference in the extent of teacher-related challenges when respondents are grouped according to gender. For student strategies in improving their use of English in oral participation, the computed F-value is 0.960 with a significance value of 0.386, which is likewise greater than 0.05. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the extent of strategies employed by the students when grouped according to gender. The findings reveal that gender does not significantly influence the extent of challenges and strategies in oral participation across the domains of student-related challenges, teacher-related challenges, and student strategies. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that “There is no significant difference in the extent of challenges and strategies in improving oral participation among English students when data are grouped according to their profile in terms of gender” is accepted.

Sources of Variation		Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	z	Sig.	Description
Student-Related Challenges	Between Groups	.424	2	.212	1.003		.370	Not Significant
	Within Groups	27.26	129	.211				
	Total	27.69	131					
Teacher-Related Challenges	Between Groups	.807	2	.403	1.510		.225	Not Significant
	Within Groups	34.454	129	.267				
	Total	35.261	131					

Student Strategies in improving their use of English in Oral Participation	Between Groups	.536	2	.268	.960	.386	Not Significant
	Within Groups	36.053	129	.279			
	Total	36.589	131				

Note. * Significant at alpha 0.05

Table 3.2 Difference in the Extent Challenges and Strategies Among English Major Students at Mindanao State University-Sulu When Data are Grouped According to their Demographic Profile in Terms of Gender

Table 3.3 presents the differences in the extent of challenges and strategies among English major students at Mindanao State University-Sulu when the data are grouped according to their demographic profile in terms of parents' educational attainment. The table shows the computed F-values and corresponding significance (Sig.) values for the three domains, namely student-related challenges, teacher-related challenges, and student strategies in improving their use of English in oral participation. For student-related challenges, the computed F-value is 0.155 with a significance value of 0.960, which is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the extent of student-related challenges when respondents are grouped according to parents' educational attainment. In terms of teacher-related challenges, the computed F-value is 0.396 with a significance value of 0.811, which is also higher than the 0.05 level of significance. This result shows that there is no significant difference in the extent of teacher-related challenges when respondents are grouped according to parents' educational attainment. For student strategies in improving their use of English in oral participation, the computed F-value is 1.218 with a significance value of 0.307, which is likewise greater than 0.05. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the extent of strategies employed by the students when grouped according to parents' educational attainment. The findings reveal that parents' educational attainment does not significantly influence the extent of challenges and strategies in oral participation across the domains of student-related challenges, teacher-related challenges, and student strategies. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that "There is no significant difference in the extent of challenges and strategies in improving oral participation among English students when data are grouped according to their profile in terms of parents' educational attainment" is accepted.

Sources of Variation		Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Description
Student-Related Challenges	Between Groups	.135	4	.034	.155	.960	Not Significant
	Within Groups	27.55	127	.217			
	Total	27.69	131				
Teacher-Related Challenges	Between Groups	.435	4	.109	.396	.811	Not Significant
	Within Groups	34.826	127	.274			
	Total	35.261	131				
Student Strategies in improving their use of English in Oral Participation	Between Groups	1.352	4	.338	1.218	.307	Not Significant
	Within Groups	35.237	127	.277			
	Total	36.589	131				

Note. * Significant at alpha 0.05

Table 3.3 Difference in the Extent Challenges and Strategies Among English Major Students at Mindanao State University-Sulu When Data are Grouped According to their Demographic Profile in Terms of Parents' Educational Attainment

Table 3.4 presents the differences in the extent of challenges and strategies among English major students at Mindanao State University-Sulu when the data are grouped according to their demographic profile in terms of parents' average monthly income. The table shows the computed F-values and corresponding significance (Sig.) values for the three domains, namely student-related challenges, teacher-related challenges, and student strategies in improving their use of English in oral participation. For student-related challenges, the computed F-value is 0.277 with a significance value of 0.842, which is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the extent of student-related challenges when respondents are grouped according to parents' average monthly income. In terms of teacher-related challenges, the computed F-value is 2.80 with a significance value of 0.043, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance. This result shows that there is a significant difference in the extent of teacher-related challenges when respondents are grouped according to parents' average monthly income. For student strategies in improving their use of English in oral participation, the computed F-value is 1.326 with a significance value of 0.269, which is greater than 0.05. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the extent of strategies employed by the students when grouped according to parents' average monthly income. The findings reveal that parents' average monthly income significantly influences teacher-related challenges but does not significantly affect student-related challenges and student strategies.

Therefore, generally, the null hypothesis stating that “There is no significant difference in the extent of challenges and strategies in improving oral participation among English students when data are grouped according to their profile in terms of parents’ average monthly income” is accepted.

Sources of Variation		Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Description
Student-Related Challenges	Between Groups	.179	3	.060	.277	.842	Not Significant
	Within Groups	27.51	128	.215			
	Total	27.69	131				
Teacher-Related Challenges	Between Groups	2.168	3	.723	2.80*	.043	Significant
	Within Groups	33.093	128	.259			
	Total	35.261	131				
Student Strategies in improving their use of English in Oral Participation	Between Groups	1.103	3	.368	1.326	.269	Not Significant
	Within Groups	35.486	128	.277			
	Total	36.589	131				

Note. * Significant at alpha 0.05

Table 3.4 Difference in the Extent Challenges and Strategies Among English Major Students at Mindanao State University-Sulu When Data are Grouped According to their Demographic Profile in Terms of Parents' Average Monthly Income

Table 4 presents the correlations among the sub-categories subsumed under the extent of challenges and strategies among English major students at Mindanao State University-Sulu. The computed Pearson correlation coefficients (r) indicate that there are no statistically significant relationships among the pairs of variables based on a sample size of 132 respondents. These findings suggest that the sub-categories—Student-Related Challenges, Teacher-Related Challenges, and Student Strategies in improving their use of English in Oral Participation—are not significantly interrelated, as reflected by the low correlation coefficients and significance values greater than the 0.05 level. Therefore, the hypothesis which states, “There is no significant correlation among the subcategories subsumed under the extent of challenges and strategies among English major at Mindanao State University- Sulu,” is accepted.

Dependent	Independent	Pearson r	Sig.	N	Description
Student-Related Challenges	Teacher-Related Challenges	.060	.498	132	Not Significant
	Student Strategies in improving their use of English in Oral Participation	.059	.500	132	
	Teacher-Related Challenges	-.122	.164	132	

Note. **Correlation coefficient is significant at alpha .01, *Correlation coefficient is significant at alpha .05
Correlation Coefficient Scales Adopted from Hopkins, Will (2002):
= Nearly Zero; 0.1-0.3 = Low; 0.3-0.5 = Moderate; 0.5-0.7 = High; 0.7-0.9 = Very High; 0.9-1 = Nearly Perfect.

Table 4 Correlation Among the Subcategories Subsumed Under the Extent of Challenges and Strategies Among English Major at Mindanao State University- Sulu

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

1. The English major students at Mindanao State University-Sulu are predominantly within the 21-23 age group, are mostly female, and largely come from families where parents have attained college education and belong to low-income households. This suggests that students come from varying socio-economic and educational backgrounds that may influence their confidence and exposure to English communication. Research has shown

that family background and educational exposure can affect language learning readiness and participation (Jugo, 2020; Ahmad, 2021)

2. Student-related challenges are commonly experienced, while teacher-related challenges are not strongly perceived as barriers, and students actively use strategies to improve their oral participation. This implies that oral participation difficulties stem more from internal linguistic and psychological factors than from instructional practices. This supports the findings of Khan et al. (2018), who emphasized that limited vocabulary and pronunciation difficulties are primary barriers to speaking.
3. Demographic variables such as age, gender, parents' educational attainment, and parents' average monthly income do not significantly influence the extent of challenges and strategies in oral participation. This suggests that oral participation difficulties are universally experienced among English major students regardless of personal background. This aligns with the findings of Maquidato (2021), which showed that speaking anxiety is common among students regardless of demographic characteristics.
4. Student-related challenges, teacher-related challenges, and student strategies are not significantly correlated. This indicates that the challenges experienced by students do not necessarily determine the strategies they employ to improve oral participation. This supports the findings of Theriana and Setiyana (2023), which emphasized that strategies for improving speaking are influenced by individual cognitive and self-management practices rather than solely by experienced difficulties.

Recommendations

1. School administrators of Mindanao State University–Sulu may consider developing support programs that encourage oral participation, such as organizing English-speaking activities, workshops, or peer mentoring sessions to help students build confidence in using the language.
2. Deans and Department Heads may review and strengthen curriculum practices by integrating more structured speaking opportunities such as guided discussions, presentations, and collaborative tasks that promote safe and supportive communication environments.
3. Teachers may adopt supportive instructional approaches such as positive reinforcement, constructive feedback, and interactive classroom strategies that reduce anxiety and encourage students to participate orally without fear of making mistakes.
4. Students may engage in regular self-practice strategies such as speaking with peers in English, reading aloud, or utilizing accessible media like English videos and music to gradually improve fluency and confidence.
5. Future researchers may include additional variables such as exposure to English-speaking environments or classroom interaction styles to further understand factors affecting oral participation.
6. Local education stakeholders and community partners may support initiatives that promote English communication skills among students through community-based learning activities, language clubs, or public speaking opportunities that prepare students for professional engagement.

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Data Availability Statement

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analyzed in this study; all data used were obtained from previously published sources as cited in the reference list.

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Appendices

No appendices are attached to this study.