



COMMUNICATION NEEDS OF ENGLISH PRESERVICE TEACHERS: BASIS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract:

This study aimed to examine the communication skills, challenges, learning experiences, and needs of English Preservice Teachers (EPSTs) as a basis for proposing an intervention program. Using a descriptive research design with a needs analysis approach, the study gathered qualitative data through focus group discussions. The participants consisted of selected EPSTs from selected local colleges who provided insights into their current level of communication proficiency, the difficulties they encounter, and the types of support they need to improve their skills. Findings revealed that while EPSTs demonstrate strengths in pronunciation, fluency, and the ability to express ideas, their overall communication skills remain unstable due to anxiety, nervousness, and hesitation in public speaking situations. Common challenges identified include fear of making mistakes in speaking, stage fright, time constraints, and difficulties in speaking. Despite these challenges, EPSTs reported that learning experiences such as demonstration teaching, reporting, and public speaking activities can contribute positively to their skill development. However, these experiences were not sufficient to fully address the affective barriers that hinder effective communication. Moreover, the study found that EPSTs have a strong need for instructional materials that incorporate interactive

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communication activities focusing on pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and confidence-building. They also emphasized the importance of integrating technology in language learning and receiving constructive feedback to support their development. Based on these findings, an intervention program was proposed to address the identified needs and enhance the communication proficiency of EPSTs. The results of the study may serve as a basis for designing targeted instructional materials and improving teacher preparation programs to better equip future educators with essential communication skills.

Keywords: needs analysis, communication proficiency, English preservice teachers, Philippines

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Efficient communication is fundamental to successful teaching and learning, with communication skills playing a pivotal role in facilitating student engagement and participation (Kurniawan, 2025). In the classroom settings, effective communication abilities of educators are essential for the academic success of students and successful career achievements because teachers provide additional verbal instructions to students in the classroom (Tariq & Ullah, 2024; Khan *et al.*, 2017). Specifically, for English preservice teachers, developing proficient communication abilities is essential, as these skills directly influence their capacity to connect with students and create dynamic learning environments (Ghufron *et al.*, 2022). However, a growing concern has emerged regarding the inadequacy of English communication skills among preservice teachers. According to Jaca and Javines (2020), many preservice teachers lack the necessary communication proficiency to meet the professional demands of the classroom. Additionally, the communication proficiency difficulty experienced by college students needs to be revisited, as it profoundly impacts the future careers of practice teaching students (Taye & Teshome, 2025). This communication dilemma poses a significant challenge to their teaching effectiveness and hinders their readiness for the profession (Mabanag *et al.*, 2024).

In Australia, communication is a skill that needs to be mastered to gain competence and be able to teach holistically and comprehensively (Burns, 2019). Preservice teachers are also experiencing challenges in speaking due to linguistic problems such as vocabulary development, grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and content of the language, which greatly influence their teaching quality (Bui Thi Thuy Ha & Pham Huu Duc, 2024).

Mohamad *et al.* (2023) noted that pre-service teachers in the Philippines experience speaking challenges due to heightened levels of anxiety, particularly in contexts requiring public speaking or presentations in the classroom. In Surigao del Norte, Philippines, a study examined teachers' 21st-century skills in English Language Teaching

to analyze the needs for developing language teachers. The concern about a lack of emphasis on speaking skills in teacher training programs is another significant issue. Almoite (2019) found that pre-service teachers at Quirino State University, Maddela Campus, struggled with communication issues such as incorrect vowel and consonant pronunciation. Apat *et al.* claimed that numerous teacher preparation programs in the Philippines prioritize written evaluations and lesson planning over oral communication practice, resulting in pre-service teachers being inadequately equipped for the speaking requirements of the classroom. Consequently, these teachers may enter the workforce with limited speaking abilities, which could impact their ability to communicate subject content effectively and engage students in meaningful ways (2023).

In addition to the Philippine context, many pre-service teachers also find it challenging to translate their theoretical knowledge into practical classroom communication scenarios. Kabilan *et al.* pointed out that preservice English teachers often struggle with spontaneous and interactive communication, which is crucial for engaging students and fostering a productive learning environment. Their struggle to effectively negotiate meaning, pose clarifying questions, or manage classroom discussions hinders their ability to facilitate student learning and cultivate a communicative classroom environment (2020).

Despite previous research emphasizing the importance of communication in language teaching, there is a lack of studies examining the production and implementation of interventions used in the classroom, particularly in preparing English preservice teachers. At a local college, an English proficiency test based on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for languages was conducted to assess the current situation of English preservice teachers. According to the European Council, in order to teach the English language effectively, one should at least reach a proficient level. Alarmingly, none of the respondents reached the proficient level. Most of them are at a low-intermediate to high-intermediate level, and there were a few who are at a low-intermediate to beginner/elementary level. Additionally, the researcher conducted interviews with experienced teachers in selected schools in the Davao Region, who observed that English preservice teachers need to improve their communication skills.

Furthermore, Punongbayan *et al.* suggest that a learning module or instructional material specialized for communication enhancement is needed (2025). Therefore, this study aims to add to the existing body of literature by exploring relevant intervention programs by determining the communication needs of English preservice teachers and proposing an intervention to address the current problem experienced in the local colleges in the Davao Region, Philippines.

2. Research Questions

This study generally aims to determine the issues in the communication proficiency of English preservice teachers (EPSTs). Specifically, it seeks to answer the following question:

1. What are the needs of the EPSTs in speaking to improve their communication proficiency in terms of:
 - 1.1. vocabulary;
 - 1.2. fluency; and,
 - 1.3. pronunciation?
2. What intervention program can be proposed to address the needs of the EPTs in speaking to improve their communication proficiency?

2.1 Significance of the Study

This study provides significant information and insights regarding the chosen topic from the respondents, recent studies, and related sites, needed for the expected importance to the individual, as follows:

2.1.1 Preservice Teachers

This study, through its findings, encourages preservice teachers to hone their speaking skills to achieve teaching success. Understanding the relationship between their involvement and how they communicate with others will significantly affect their communication skills. Through this study, preservice teachers can gain valuable insights into developing their speaking skills through field practice, which is crucial for their professional endeavors.

2.1.2 Teachers

Teachers in basic education, such as cooperating teachers, and in higher education can gain insights from this study that can be beneficial for them to hone preservice teachers' communication skills. Teachers can also modify activities and development programs that are appropriate and essential for the teaching experience of the preservice teachers.

2.1.3 School Administrators

The results of this study can greatly benefit the school administrators. They can gain insights from this study, such as enhancing the focus of preservice teaching evaluation programs and adjusting the communication competence of preservice teachers. Additionally, school administrators can tailor the development programs they provide to preservice teachers based on the results of this study.

2.1.4 Future Researchers

The results of this study are beneficial to future researchers who will study the same topics. The contents of this study can provide valuable insights for future studies. By exploring the study, they can expand its scope, give focus to new ideas, and further research on important, timely, and relevant phenomena.

2.2 Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study considers limitations and delimitations. Firstly, this study focused only on the English preservice teachers (EPST). The ESPTs came from local colleges. In other words, the ESPTs from private colleges and universities were not included. Likewise, ESPTs from state colleges and universities were not included in this study.

Secondly, this study was conducted in Davao Region with three local colleges offering Bachelor of Secondary Education major in English, namely Governor Generoso College of Arts, Sciences and Technology (GGCAST) in Davao Oriental, Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology (KCAST) in Davao del Norte, and Kolehiyo ng Pantukan (KNP) in Davao de Oro. Other local colleges not mentioned were not included in this study.

2.3 Definition of Terms

In this study, specific terminologies were used and defined contextually and operationally.

2.3.1 English Preservice Teachers EPSTs

EPSTs are those enrolled in the Bachelor of Secondary Education specializing in English. They are also called practice teachers in the field of secondary education or high schools.

2.3.2 Communication Proficiency

Communication skills refer to the ability to communicate and articulate ideas, thoughts, and information effectively verbally. These skills encompass several competencies, including clarity of speech, correct pronunciation, fluency, appropriate vocabulary usage, and the ability to engage in conversations. Communicating effectively requires not only the transmission of information but also active listening, suitable responses, and adapting one's communication style to the audience and situation (Rimkeeratikul, 2023). In this study, it is defined as the ability of preservice teachers to communicate verbally using correct content, grammar, fluency, vocabulary, and pronunciation among their peers, cooperating teachers, and students.

2.3.3 Intervention Program

An intervention program refers to a structured, planned, and systematic approach designed specifically to address a particular problem through support, continuous education, or services for individuals experiencing empirical challenges (Mishchenko *et al.*, 2016). In this study, the intervention program is designed to address the challenges in the communication proficiency of the English preservice teachers (EPSTs). Specifically, an instructional material will be produced, tailored to the speaking needs of the EPSTs.

3. Review of Related Literature and Its Framework

This chapter provides a comprehensive discussion about the previous readings and literature on the topics presented in this study. In this study, the communication proficiency of English preservice teachers is examined. It is beneficial to have a deep understanding of the definitions, components, and functions of the concepts in communication skills for future teachers. Numerous topics and concerns have been explored in previous studies. Thus, it is important to incorporate readings and literature in this study to better explore how communication plays a significant role in teaching.

3.1 Communication Skills of Preservice Teachers

People would always describe communication as a vital means of connection between individuals. This can occur on a day-to-day basis, in academia, or in the profession. Teachers are expected to be good communicators. That's why they believe numerous enhancement activities could elevate their communication skills. Communication skills training among preservice teachers is a vital component of their professional development, as effective communication is essential to their teaching practices. Preservice teachers frequently encounter difficulties in oral communication due to a lack of opportunities for practicing and acquiring feedback in authentic settings (Güngenci & Yıldız, 2024). The problem remains among tertiary institutions in producing proficient communicative teachers, even if teacher education programs emphasize the theoretical and practical training in teaching, especially in developing English preservice teachers' communication in diverse classrooms (Mufidah, 2019). It also remains a challenge among preservice teachers to express instructional content clearly and confidently, hindering their ability to effectively establish connections among their students (Kurnaz & Özbay, 2020). Therefore, it is essential to integrate the development of speaking skills into teacher education to improve teachers' communication competencies and overall effectiveness in teaching.

Additionally, Jaca and Javines pointed out that the capacity to communicate effectively in the classroom influences not only how well preservice teachers convey academic material but also how they build connections with their students (2020). Susilo discussed in a previous study that preservice teachers who possess good speaking skills are generally closer to developing stronger relationships with their students, thereby creating a more inclusive and supportive learning environment (2019).

In a study by Navarro in Calamba, Philippines, it was found that preservice teachers teaching English in public schools develop anxiety and low self-esteem, thereby leading to low-level performance during demonstrations (2025). In the same situation, Saeid emphasized that peer-to-peer speaking exercises can train preservice teachers to lessen anxiety and enhance confidence for smoother classroom interactions and class discussions (2024). Communicative training programs were also said to be helpful before the practice teaching journey of English preservice teachers in the Philippines to prepare them to be competent teachers (Saglam, 2025). Al-khresheh also studied the effects of

training and seminars for English teachers in teaching EFL students and found that these practices are best for teachers, especially when communicative activities are incorporated (2024).

Moreover, in 2019, Nevarez *et al.* highlighted the positive influence of digital tools like videos used in virtual classes, which highly enable preservice teachers to rehearse their speaking abilities in a controlled setting in preparation for the field experience (2019). Wildeman *et al.* have supported the notion that integration of technology-driven speaking activities in teacher-training programs is one of the best practices in preparing the English preservice teachers (2022). Apat *et al.* also claimed that this method gives an immediate chance to assess oneself and develop constructive feedback, which significantly improves oral communication skills (2023).

3.1.1 Content

Content represents the information and experiences meant to be understood by the audience. It is conveyed through various media forms, including speeches, literature, and the arts. Individuals are assessed by their speaking style, tone, word selection, the substance of their message, their pace of speech, and more (Rulona & Bacasmot, 2023). In fact, McConnell III *et al.* (2022) claimed that when subject-specific content is integrated into speaking exercises, it allows preservice teachers to express complex concepts with clarity and confidence, which is vital for successful communication in the classroom. It means to say, content-based activities help preservice teachers in honing the cognitive and language skills essential for teaching their subjects more efficiently, promoting a stronger link between speaking abilities and subject knowledge.

Sosas noted that the process of teaching also affects speaking abilities. In current classrooms, more speaking activities are integrated into lessons, such as debate activities, role-playing, situation-analysis, problem-solving discussions, and others, for English preservice teachers, rather than pure lectures (2021). While these speaking activities give emphasis on content that reinforces learning, they also provide room for improvement among preservice teachers to participate in inclusive, dynamic, context-driven conversations in the classroom (Shah, 2019). Burns clarified that preservice teachers who engage in content-driven activities, such as lesson plan presentations or peer teaching, exhibited enhanced fluency and confidence in oral communication (2019). These propose that incorporating content-based activities is essential in promoting the speaking skills of English preservice teachers.

In addition, the focus instructional materials that are especially diverse have significance to developing the speaking skills of preservice teachers in multicultural classrooms. Preservice teachers enhance their abilities in managing multicultural classrooms when they are exposed to the environment, including the cultural education themes (Adipat *et al.*, 2021). It is a good indication that engagement also encourages preservice teachers to recreate their communication and language delivery styles to meet the needs of multicultural learners. Through this, the preservice teachers' general speaking abilities improve as they become more skillful at expressing their thoughts

about a variety of subject-contents for better teaching (Amerstorfer & Freiin von Münster-Kistner, 2021). Therefore, differentiated activities and the difficulty of content play an important role in upholding the speaking proficiency of preservice teachers. Thus, these prepare them to delve into real-life problem-solving in the classrooms.

3.1.2 Grammatical Accuracy

Grammatical accuracy is a significant factor that promotes preservice teachers' speaking skills (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). Language use and comprehension within the person's cognition is referred to as grammar. It represents the product of language knowledge as human brain activity (Hoque, 2017). In the Input Hypothesis of Krashen in the study of Nguyen and Doan (2025), integrating grammatical accuracy in teaching the language can enhance the competence of students in speaking. As to the context of preservice teachers, Dzormeku (2024) revealed that preservice teachers face problems with grammatical accuracy most of the time because they lack practice and exposure. This affects the fluency and the capacity of an individual to express ideas clearly, which is an important factor for successful teaching. Preservice teachers often lack confidence in speaking activities because grammatical accuracy is their primary concern when speaking on stage or in the classroom (Burns, 2019; Galeas *et al.*, 2014).

Furthermore, previous studies claim that the grammatical proficiency of preservice teachers is important in their progressing careers and the effectiveness of their teaching. In fact, Dy and Sumayao denote that preservice teachers who embody strong grammatical accuracy in their speaking abilities are likely to serve more as models of proper language users to their constituents (2024). Andilab and Amante also agree that preservice teachers with a high level of grammar correctness tend to exhibit more confidence than those who struggle during classes or instruction (2024). Accordingly, these are serious problems that need to be improved by educational advancements, exposure to language, engagement, understanding, and training programs (Hossain, 2024).

Language teaching frameworks in recent years have emphasized how crucial it is for aspiring teachers to possess both fluency and grammatical accuracy. According to Safitri *et al.* (2020), speaking exercises that include targeted grammar instruction have been shown to improve both fluency and grammatical accuracy. Meaningful conversations can be facilitated by preservice teachers with their students by employing a balance between factors affecting communication. In 2022, Schurz *et al.* suggested that preservice teachers maintain communicative situations in the classroom by emphasizing speaking accuracy, fluency, and preparation to avoid speaking difficulties.

3.1.3 Fluency

It is a crucial aspect of being an English teacher to demonstrate fluency in speaking. This skill requires speakers to speak naturally and effortlessly. For example, a person who speaks quickly and can handle linguistic elements can be called a fluent speaker. Abugohar *et al.* (2020) referred that preservice teachers who speak fluently are better able

to keep students' attention in a dynamic and interactive classroom. In fact, Patterson found that preservice teachers who participate in speaking practices to improve fluency, such as speaking assignments and communicative activities, have higher improvements (2013).

In addition, speaking fluency plays an important role in anxiety reduction of preservice teachers who usually experience anxiety during interactions in the classroom. Maulimora (2019) added that preservice teachers who are fluent in speaking are more likely to have a favorable expression of their ability to teach and feel less anxious when having class discussions. When an individual enables himself confidently when speaking, his teaching abilities are also enhanced. This allows him to practice speaking naturally and respond to any communicative situations among others. Dzormeku *et al.* pointed out that activities centered on fluency practices have a significant effect on preservice teachers' preparedness in the real field (2024).

3.1.4 Vocabulary

Vocabulary refers to the terminology or words that a person utilizes when communicating. When a person is limited in vocabulary, they may not express their intentions, ideas, and emotions. However, learning a lot of vocabulary is not as easy as it seems. Constant practice and exposure to the language are the keys to successful language learning. Vocabulary development is important in improving preservice teachers' speaking skills because it has an effect on the conversing abilities in the classroom. In fact, according to Diamond and Gutlohn (2022), when a person has a strong vocabulary foundation, their speech just flows naturally without obvious stops or pauses. The use of various words enables a speaker to confidently express opinions orally because a strong vocabulary foundation helps students to use language broadly and explain complex ideas (Calub & Calub, 2017). One of the indicators that a speaker has improved language learning is the use of terminology in their speeches.

Abugohar *et al.* (2020) found that when preservice teachers concentrated on expanding their vocabulary, they were more likely to take part in group work, actively participate, and provide meaningful and eloquent ideas. Corrigan emphasized that vocabulary knowledge is interconnected to the interactions and comprehension done by the students (2011). Thus, training the preservice teachers to learn more vocabulary enables them to become exposed to the language and master it eventually.

3.1.5 Pronunciation

Pronunciation is one of the most challenging aspects of communication for ESL learners. However, it plays a very important role in enhancing speaking skills and promoting understanding. If a non-native speaker learns English, they might have a problem with the natural pronunciation of the words, especially when they are new to them (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011). There are lots of reasons to consider. One, the L1 has a great effect on learning a new language. A longitudinal study conducted by Burri and Baker in 2021 has indicated that speaking is an important skill for EPSTs because it significantly affects their

ability to communicate effectively and be understood by each other. When preservice teachers pronounce the words they use correctly, teaching becomes effective since it encourages engagement among students. In 2014, Akkuzu found that preservice teachers with strong pronunciation skills were better at modeling correct speech.

Atli and Su Bergil (2012) found that preservice teachers who engage themselves in improving their pronunciation skills are more likely to feel confident during speaking activities in the classroom. When teachers are sure of their pronunciation, they can concentrate more on expressing their content instead of making pronunciation mistakes. This promotes better teacher-learner relationships because Hunt-Gomez and Navarro-Pablo claimed that by integrating training of pronunciation, the teacher prepares programs, and the preservice teachers learn the essential skills required for teaching communication (2020).

Communication skills are essential to preservice teachers because they significantly affect the way the information is transmitted to students, colleagues, and other stakeholders in different educational contexts. When language teachers are proficient in speaking, they are more likely to express lessons clearly, communicate effectively, and engage in worthwhile conversations among learners (Punongbayan *et al.*, 2025).

In addition, when communication skills are honed through grammatical correctness, fluency development, enhanced vocabulary use, and pronunciation practices, preservice teachers are more likely to establish confidence and reduce anxiety during classroom interactions (Arsi *et al.*, 2025). Some studies show that preservice teachers with strong speaking skills are more flexible in teaching skills and giving commands in the classroom because they can implement and enhance student comprehension of things (Yu & Kaur, 2024).

On the other hand, very few studies investigate the specific instructional materials used in some interventions mentioned in previous studies. There are still existing gaps in the effectiveness of specific instructional materials, for example, learning modules that provide meaningful experiences for the students. The focus of this study will be on identifying the instructional material needs of the EPSTs tailored to its objectives, by focusing to addressing their speaking proficiency challenges.

4. Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored to the theory of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) proposed by Dell Hymes in 1967. According to Hymes, CLT explains that learners are encouraged to develop their communicative competence by using the language in meaningful and real-life situations. This theory best explains the phenomenon in this study because it emphasizes the importance of fluency over accuracy in ESL/EFL speaking classes (Qasserras, 2023). For example, in the context of this study, when EPSTs in the classroom are provided with a speaking task, they usually take into consideration that they have to master what they are going to speak about. Memorization and repetitive

speaking practices are the usual ways in which EPSTs improve their communication. CLT also explains that EPSTs practice their speaking tasks with other EPSTs, encouraging other individuals to also master their speech (Wathawatthana *et al.*, 2025).

In the context of this study, the activities that will be injected in the learning modules or instructional materials will consist of speaking tasks. For example, to test the fluency of the EPSTs, the module contains literature such as reading passages, poems, or prose. In exercises or assessments, EPSTs will be challenged to discuss the contents or meaning of the passage in the activity. CLT explains that through practicing speaking tasks, EPSTs are also enhancing their communication skills.

To support the main theory, the transactional model of communication can also explain the phenomenon in this study. In 1970, Dean C. Barnlund developed the transactional model to analyze basic interpersonal communication. This theory is essential to this study because, among various communication models, this one incorporates a complex feedback system. For example, EPSTs usually have speaking activities in the classroom or in school activities. The Transactional Model of Communication explains the phenomenon of communicative exchanges between and among individuals. Barnlund contends that one issue with more linear communication models is that they mimic mediated messages. In a more specific context, the message is crafted, transmitted, and then received. For instance, we utter a message, deliver it, and then the recipient receives it and composes feedback (Bragg *et al.*, 2021).

In the context of this study, Transactional Communication (TC) also explains the way the EPSTs transact with each other. Various activities can describe the role of TC in the implementation phase of this study. For example, in a role play, conversations are usually performed through casual transactions. In the learning module, activities like role-playing will be included because, according to Katemba and Grace, this is a good avenue to improve proficient communication (2023).

Conversely, Barnlund maintains that during interpersonal exchanges of EPSTs, individuals are simultaneously transmitting and receiving messages. We are capable of giving verbal feedback, but our nonverbal cues (such as tone of voice, eye contact, facial expressions, and gestures) are equally crucial in how others perceive the messages we convey. We also rely on the nonverbal signals from others to decode their messages. Consequently, in any interpersonal communication, a multitude of messages is exchanged at the same time between both parties (Wrench *et al.*, 2021).

Another theory that explains the phenomenon being studied is Interpersonal Communication Competence, first introduced by Spitzberg and Cupach in 1984 (Broeckelman-post *et al.*, 2023), which asserts that this impacts students' sense of belongingness in order to understand how it contributes to overall well-being. In particular, this theory emphasizes the concept of competence that looks at how two or more individuals foster competency rather than concentrating on individual abilities. In the context of this study, particularly in the learning module, a dyad's communication can be deemed competent as an activity (Kokkonen & Almonkari, 2021).

5. Methodology

This chapter contains the research methods, including the procedures to employ in this study. These encompass the research design, research locale, respondents/participants, research instruments, data gathering procedure, statistical treatment of data, and ethical considerations.

5.1 Research Design

This study employed a descriptive research design utilizing a needs analysis approach to systematically identify the gaps between current conditions and desired outcomes among the target respondents. Descriptive research was deemed appropriate as it described existing conditions and relationships without manipulating variables (Creswell, 2014).

Needs analysis was used to determine discrepancies between “what is” and “what should be,” thereby guiding program development and decision-making (Remr, 2022). In this study, the needs analysis focused on identifying priority areas that required intervention based on the perceptions and experiences of the participants.

A qualitative approach was adopted, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive understanding of the identified needs. This approach allowed for triangulation, thereby enhancing the validity and depth of the findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

5.2 Research Locale

This study was conducted in local colleges located in the provinces of Davao Region, Philippines. Particularly, this study was conducted in Governor Generoso College of Arts, Sciences and Technology (GGCAST) in Davao Oriental, Kapalong College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (KCAST) in Davao del Norte and Kolehiyo ng Pantukan (KNP) in Davao de Oro.

5.3 Population of the Study

The respondents/participants of this study were the English preservice teachers (EPSTs). They were preservice teachers from the selected local colleges in Davao Region. Regardless of age, gender, religion, ethnicity, or other factors, they could participate in this study. On the other hand, *practicumers*, who were not in the field of teacher education, were not included in this study. Likewise, those preservice teachers who did not specialize in English were also not included in this study.

Since the purpose of this study is to help English teachers elevate their proficiency, it is appropriate that respondents of this study will also be coming from the BSED–English program of the participating schools (Belangoy *et al.*, 2024). There were 10 participants included in the study. Basnet suggests between 6 and 12 participants to participate in the focus group discussion/interview (2018).

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents

Participating School	No. of Participants
GGCAST	5
KCAST	3
KNP	2
Total	10

5.4 Research Instrument

A focus group discussion/interview was employed utilizing a structured interview guide. According to Basnet, a focus group discussion (FDG) is a process of collecting data through interviews of a small group of people representing the population (2018). In this study, the participants for the FGD are selected based on their scores in the pretest.

5.5 Sampling Technique

A purposive sampling technique was used in this study. This means that the individual or case chosen can represent the issue and can answer the research problems in the study (Nikolopoulou, 2022).

5.6 Procedures of the Study

Data collection is a crucial aspect of research, requiring a careful and methodical approach. The researchers followed a step-by-step procedure to collect the data they needed, which included the following steps:

- **Asking for Permission to Conduct the Study.** Firstly, obtaining informed consent is foundational. The researcher prepared a permission letter addressed to the college/university presidents and signed by the adviser, the college dean, and the program head.
- **General orientation and seeking consent from research respondents.** The researcher will provide the respondents with a study summary and explain the ethical considerations in data collection. The researcher will provide consent forms to the respondents, allowing them to make an informed decision about their involvement. The respondents who agreed to be part of the study will be involved. The researcher will provide one copy of the survey questionnaire for the respondents.
- **Administration and Retrieval of Questionnaires/Administering the in-depth interview and focused group discussion.** Before distributing the questionnaires in both quantitative and qualitative phases, the researcher will communicate with the respondents/participants. In administering the questionnaire, the researcher will use the time allotted for the vacancy to avoid distractions from classes. The respondents will be given enough time to answer the questions. After data gathering, the researcher will collect the data for tallying the scores and will amplify the statistical treatment to be used in the study.
- **Review and Validation of Respondent Answers.** The researcher will meticulously check the responses and answers to ensure all items were thoroughly

addressed. This step will be essential since it will make it easier to find any disparities that would compromise the study's validity. Following the completion of the verification procedure, the researcher will precisely sum up the scores and get the data ready for statistical analysis.

- **Data Tallying and Organization in Microsoft Excel/Coding/Transcribing Data.** Making sure that every response was appropriately recorded in the relevant columns, the researcher will input the data into the spreadsheet. Utilizing Excel's functions, it will calculate totals and averages, which will facilitate an efficient analysis of the results.
- **Collaboration with the Statistician and Validator for Data Analysis.** The completed dataset and recordings will be assembled by the researcher, ready to be given to the statistician and validator for analysis.
- **Finding Literature to Support the Results.** The researcher will embark on a comprehensive literature review to identify relevant studies that could support and validate their results. This will involve searching academic databases for peer-reviewed articles, books, and reports that address similar topics or utilize comparable methodologies. As the researcher gathers this literature, a critical assessment of each source for relevance and credibility will be done to ensure that these are in line with the study.

5.7 Data Analysis

This study used *thematic analysis* to analyze the emerging themes. Thematic analysis is part of various analytical methods used to recognize meaningful patterns within the dataset. This step followed the verification of transcribed and translated responses from the participants (Jnanathapaswi, 2021).

Thematic analysis was used in this study following Braun and Clarke's method (Braun & Clarke, 2006). There is a six-phase guide used in conducting this kind of analysis, namely: (1) Become familiar with the data, (2) Generate initial codes, (3) Search for themes, (4) Review themes, (5) Define and name themes, and (6) Construct the report. First, the researcher becomes familiar with the data by reading and rereading the transcript. Second, initial codes were generated to reduce large amounts of data into small chunks of meaning, addressing specific research questions. Third, searching for themes was done to guide their significance. The themes were predominantly descriptive, capturing patterns in the data relevant to the research question. Fourth, the review of themes involved gathering all the data relevant to each theme and supporting it. Fifth, defining and naming themes was done to the final refinement of themes and identifying the essence of each one. Lastly, constructing the report was done to mark the endpoint of the research, which resulted in a report, dissertation, or journal article. Therefore, the researcher used thematic analysis to analyze qualitative data and categorized it into themes aligned with the specific research questions (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017).

6. Results, Discussions, and Recommendations

6.1 Results and Discussion

This chapter presents the results and discussion, including the procedures employed in the study. These encompass the discussions on the concept of the study involving the five phases: *analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation*.

In the needs analysis phase, EPST students were identified and invited to participate in a Focus Group Discussion. Ten (10) EPSTs willingly participated in the FGD that was conducted online using the structured interview guide. The FGD was specially employed to determine the specific needs of the English Preservice Teachers to improve their communication proficiency.

6.1.1 The Current Speaking Skills of English Preservice Teachers

In this study, participants were asked about the current level of their English-speaking skills, specifically their confidence, strengths, and challenges. Generally, EPSTs mention that their current Communication Skills are unstable due to feeling nervous, anxious, and hesitant in public speaking, but they are particular in pronunciation, fluency and expounding ideas.

"I sometimes feel confident Ma'am in Speaking English in Classroom, Ma'am, if, if naka-prepare jud ko Ma'am. Like is aka semana ko naka-prepared, confident kaayo ko ana Ma'am, kay memorized najud, memorized najud nako siya Ma'am, but ehh sometimes Ma'am, sometimes if gi-cram na siya Ma'am, I sometimes feel nervous." (P5)

"My confidence is still growing, Ma'am. There are times I get nervous or overthink about my grammar." (P2)

"Fairly confident ko. especially when communicating in English during class discussions or even casual conversations kay sometimes mag-joke joke man ghud mi Ma'am, so ga-estorya estorya mi ug English po. But sometimes, I still hesitate speaking in formal setting uhm also Ma'am kanang pag makig-converse ko with kanang, with professional nga individuals like Principal, Ma'am kay kanang murag mawala ko sakong huna-huna, Ma'am." (P3)

In the study of Navarro in 2024, it was found that the EPSTs experience communication anxiety during their field study and practicum. Common to the EPSTs is low self-confidence because they are anxious about their pronunciation or language skills. However, when asked about their strengths, EPSTs commonly perceive good pronunciation and fluency in discussion.

"Dili jud ingon nga perfect like sa pag-pronounce or grammar pero pag sa discussion lang, mao jud na akoang strength Ma'am." (P8)

"Pronunciation po, in pronunciation, I think, because I'm very particular with pronunciation and I also practice my vocabulary when speaking" (P6)

*"I think same as kay Sir ***** po, I am also particular with the pronunciation" (P9)*

"Kanang sa strengths, sa strengths po Ma'am kay I believe in terms of Fluency" (P10)

6.1.2 The Learning Experiences of English Preservice Teachers in the Field

In the same Focus Group Discussion, the EPSTs were also asked about their learning experiences in the field. Specifically, what classroom activities or training have they experienced that helped them improve their communication skills? EPSTs shared that they receive training through demonstration teaching, reporting, and public speaking. This is aligned with the study of Naira (2024), emphasizing that EPSTs are receiving demonstration training and public speaking and that these have helped them improve their communication skills.

"Gina-train jud ta when it comes to improving our communication skills, like when we do reportings, our teachers or instructors really like, speak in English because we are basically taking Major in English, we are gonna teach English to our learner later kung ma-teacher ta, I think that's actually like one of the best experience gyud kanang ginapa-speak up in English gyud ta sa atong mga instructors po." (P6)

"Common najud kaayo ni sa atoa is ang pag-report so in reporting, this is where uhmm I have trained actually, my instructors, trainers, teachers as well from uhmm Senior High School to my First Year in College Ma'am ahh they have helped me a lot it's because sometimes they tend to correct me, when I use any uhmm ahhh when I use uhmm words or my grammar is the, is incorrect po Ma'am so direa, dira jud nako ma-ahh, ma-train akong sarili to improve my communication skills po." (P7)

"The class presentations, are demo, our demo teachings, or our reporting because as we all know speaking in front of others noh, it helps us organize our thoughts and improve our fluency, and because of that, and because of that presentations, kuan pa jud, ma-enhance pa jud atong communication skills." (P5)

"Sa amoang Demo, katong ako ra gud isa Ma'am. Ako ra isa nag-demo. I believe na-practice akong communication skills." (P10)

"Uhhmm actually reporting kay nag-tell akong mga instructor nga need namo mag-gamit ug English Language kay mao man among gikuha jud nga Major, English Major, need namo mag-gamit ug English Language, grabe nakong kakulba that time kay when mag-report ko." (P8)

6.1.3 The Communication Challenges of English Preservice Teachers

On the other hand, EPSTs were also asked what barriers or difficulties they had encountered in improving their communication skills. EPSTs shared common answers such as fear of making mistakes, time limits, stage fright, and teaching delivery. This information was confirmed in the study of Andog *et al.* about EPSTs' stage frights and speaking skill anxiety. In their study, they noted that stage fright is common and evident among EPSTs due to fear of making mistakes (2025).

"Akoa kay ang difficulties nga akoang na-encounter Ma'am kay I think fear of making mistakes because as an English Student, murag akong mindset man ghud, I don't any rights to ahh to speak and to say ahh or ahh ahh I mean kanang mali ghud nga grammar Ma'am in front of my students kay siyempre role model ta so therefore we need to speak correctly noh English so mao tu Ma'am..." (P9)

"Ang difficulty nako ang kanang fear of kanang making mistakes po Ma'am. Sometimes, this makes me nervous to speak po especially in front of others kay dili ko gusto Ma'am nga ang ma-remember nila sa akoa Ma'am kay kanang mispronounced words po Ma'am or kanang mali nako nga matudlo Ma'am." (P3)

"I also fear of making mistakes." (P4)

"General nalang gyud siya Ma'am, same with other, like fear of making mistakes, in using the language inside the classroom delivering the lessons to your students that kanang mamali nimo siyag pronounce ma...ma... makuan ma-grammatical error gyud ka diha sa atubangan sa imong class, classmates or sa imong students and also, i-highlight gud nako Ma'am... ang limited feedback sad Ma'am..." (P1)

"Difficulties to when it comes to improving communication skills is limitation of Time, Ma'am." (P6)

"I want to uhm emphasize is here in public speaking because some of the pre-service teachers are not that very confident when it comes to, not that confident when it comes to delivering their content or sa ilahang lesson and some of them are very hesitant pa so I think that maybe the cause of that.." (P2)

"I am confident about my pronunciation and my grammar po Ma'am pero in terms of public speaking po Ma'am is matay-og jud ko Ma'am..." (P7)

"I know that I need to improve my teaching delivery kay bisan unsaon man ghud nako ka-master, even though master nako akoang content Ma'am, kung mag mag una-ana jud ang nervous Ma'am, mauna jud akong kakulba Ma'am." (P5)

"Uhm for me Ma'am, kung ang pinaka-major jud Ma'am kay Teaching Delivery." (P10)

6.1.4 The Needs of English Preservice Teachers to Improve Their Communication Proficiency

Most importantly, in this procedure, the English Preservice Teachers were asked what needs and expectations they had to improve their communication. The common needs of the EPSTs are instructional materials that incorporate communication activities for enhancing pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and confidence. Dou also conducted a needs assessment in 2024 and found out that language learning also needs integration of technology into class activities.

“Kato gong sing-along Ma’am na karaoke version siya Ma’am bah tapos pero in English mura siyag, mura siyag ipakanta sa mga students, ipa-sunod sunod nimo sa ilaha then I think that’s actually a great activity.” (P6)

“Isa ka instructional material naay activity wherein ang isa ka student needed gyud siya mag-speak ug English thoughtout sa, hangtud sa maiwit gyud, hangtud sa mahuman gyud sa klase because not only ma-enhance ang grammar sa bata but maka-learn pud siguro siyag mga vocabulary after man gud sa klase, maghatag ug feedback ang teacher” (P9)

“For me Ma’am, ang activities nga akong ma-suggest is role playing, ay role playing with, ah using English Language lang until the end of Class.” (P8)

“I think it would be like reporting, role playing and speech presentation po Ma’am kay makatabang gyud siya mag-help ug communication skills, example podcasts...” (P2)

In addition, along the learning process, EPSTs prefer to receive feedback critically and constructively. According to Wilcoxon and Lemke, the goal of teacher preparation is simple: create teachers who are well-equipped with the knowledge and skills to positively impact their total education. They insist that constructive feedback is a must in preparing future teachers (2021), which is aligned with the answers of the participants in this study.

“I prefer to receive feedback in a positive and constructive kay during sa among demonstration Ma’am diba, naa man jud na siyay post-conference so ang gibuhat ni Ma’am Wendy sa amoa, amoang CT kay naghatag siyag mga feedback Ma’am nga murag Sandwich Method gani Ma’am” (P3)

“I prefer to receive my feedback po Ma’am uhhmm uhhmmm in a more critical way po Ma’am it’s because it is how or where I know asa jud ko nagkulang sa communication performance po Ma’am, as a, as a, as an English Major po Ma’am, I really don’t like ahh if maghatag sila ug nang sugarcoated nga feedback.” (P7)

"I think I would like to receive my, the feedback through constructive criticisms, ana gud Ma'am." (P8)

6.1.5 The Future Application in Improving the EPSTs Communication

Lastly, the EPSTs were asked how the future application of the intervention program would help in improving the communication proficiency of English Preservice Teachers. A single theme emerged, which says EPSTs will develop their positive teacher-student interaction and improve collaboration, engagement, and motivation. The study of Wei Yi in 2021 has aligned its findings with the current study, wherein intervention programs with student-teacher interactions conducted in the classes are significant factors affecting the students' improvement in language learning.

"Ma-improve ang teaching career kay maka-ano siya sa between students naay interactions, collaborations and then kanang mas ma-ano pa ang ilahang pakig-communicate sa ilahang kapwa kay naga-roleplay sila so mag-act sila and then using English Language so mas ma-improve siya through communicating and acting different situations" (P8)

"Habang patagal ng patagal po, mas mahasa po ang atong communication skills specifically in English" (P9)

"Learners will gain is mas mu-improve sila through engagement or interactive activities and if ang mga activities kay Interactive enough" (P10)

"Those communication activities Ma'am, mao jud ni sila ang naga-increase sa students and teachers engagement kay naga, because of those activities man gud, mas ma-foster nato bali, mas mag-deeper ang comprehension level" (P6)

"Uhhmm those communication activities will keep students engaged and motivated Ma'am and also this ensures that kanang ang mga student kay magpa, magparticipate actively ani nga learning process and ehh uhhmm makaingon ko Ma'am nga kani siya nga communication activities will help teachers Ma'am to develop and refine their communication skills, articulating, articulate ideas clearly and effectively" (P4)

"Makatabang gyud na siya nga para sa akoo, para sa amoa, teachers, future teachers kay matatak man ghud sa atong utok, ma-pinpoint ba, ma-visualize, kanang importante ang communication and also ma-express nato ang ideas, atong thoughts clearly." (P2)

7. Conclusion

This study identified the specific needs of English Preservice Teachers (EPSTs) in improving their communication proficiency, emphasizing the importance of targeted and

responsive instructional support. The findings revealed that EPSTs expressed a strong need for well-designed instructional materials that incorporate meaningful communication activities aimed at enhancing pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and overall confidence. These needs highlight the demand for structured and purposeful learning resources that go beyond theoretical knowledge and actively engage learners in practical communication tasks. The results align with the study of Dou (2024), which underscored the importance of integrating technology into language learning to create more dynamic and effective classroom experiences.

Furthermore, the study found that EPSTs value the role of feedback in their learning process, particularly feedback that is both critical and constructive. Participants emphasized that receiving clear, specific, and supportive feedback helps them recognize their strengths and areas for improvement, thereby facilitating the continuous development of their communication skills. This finding is consistent with Wilcoxon and Lemke (2021), who argued that effective teacher preparation requires equipping future educators with the necessary knowledge and skills through guided feedback and reflective practice. The emphasis on constructive feedback suggests that learning environments must foster openness, support, and opportunities for growth.

Overall, the study highlights that improving the communication proficiency of EPSTs requires a comprehensive approach that integrates instructional materials, technology, and effective feedback mechanisms. While EPSTs demonstrate a willingness to improve, their success largely depends on the availability of resources and support systems that address both their linguistic and developmental needs. Therefore, it is essential to design intervention programs that are responsive to these identified needs, ensuring that EPSTs are better prepared to communicate effectively and perform confidently in their future teaching roles.

7.1 Limitations of the Study

This study was subject to several limitations that may have influenced the results and their interpretation. Firstly, the study relied primarily on self-reported data gathered through surveys and focus group discussions, which may have been affected by response bias, such as social desirability or participants' tendency to provide favorable answers. As a result, the findings may not fully reflect the actual communication competencies or needs of the respondents.

Secondly, the study was limited to a specific group of participants within local colleges only, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other contexts or populations. Finally, the scope of the study focused mainly on identifying communication skill needs and proposing an intervention program, without conducting a full implementation and evaluation of the proposed instructional material. Therefore, the effectiveness of the intervention was not empirically tested within the duration of the study. Future research may address this limitation by designing the structured instructional material, implementing the program, and assessing its impact on participants' communication skills over time.

7.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the focus group discussion (FGD), it is recommended that a *structured instructional material* and *intervention program* be developed to enhance the communication skills of the participants. The program should be designed as a contextualized and needs-based learning resource, anchored on the specific communication gaps identified during the needs analysis. It may include modules on essential areas such as oral communication, written expression, active listening, and professional or academic discourse. The instructional material should be learner-centered, incorporating real-life scenarios, guided practice, and reflective activities to ensure meaningful engagement and skill development.

Furthermore, the proposed intervention program should adopt a blended and interactive delivery approach to maximize learning outcomes. This may involve a combination of workshops, peer collaboration, role-playing activities, and the integration of digital tools to support flexible and accessible learning. Regular formative assessments should also be embedded within the program to monitor progress and provide timely feedback. Facilitators or educators implementing the program should be oriented and trained to ensure consistent and effective delivery of the instructional material.

Finally, it is recommended that the intervention program undergo pilot testing and continuous evaluation to ensure its relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability. Feedback from participants should be systematically collected and used to refine the content and strategies of the program. Additionally, the results of the implementation may serve as a basis for scaling the program across similar contexts within the institution or division. Through this, the proposed instructional material will not only address the immediate communication needs of the participants but also contribute to long-term capacity building and improved performance.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest in the conduct and publication of this study.

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Janine Rulona is an educator, researcher, and college instructor currently serving at Davao Oriental State University, Banaybanay Extension Campus. She is actively engaged in instruction, research, and extension services in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT). Prior to her current position, she also served as Instructor I at Davao del Norte State College, where she contributed to higher education instruction and academic research. Ms. Rulona earned her Bachelor of Secondary Education major in English from Governor Generoso College of Arts, Sciences and Technology (GGCAST). She completed her Master of Arts in Education major in Teaching English at the University of Mindanao in 2022. She is also working on completing her degree, Doctor of Philosophy in English Language Teaching at the University of Southeastern Philippines. Her academic interests focus on English language teaching, communication proficiency, instructional material development, pedagogy, and student engagement in education. She has conducted various studies on instructional innovation, communication skills enhancement, and literacy skills of students. Among her scholarly works and research engagements are studies on: communication proficiency among English pre-service teachers; student engagement and social literacy of students; action research; development of instructional materials using the ADDIE Model; utilization and evaluation of digital instructional materials; and research engagement and scientific investigation in higher education. As an educator and researcher, Janine Rulona continues to advocate for learner-centered instruction, innovative pedagogy, and research-driven educational practices that enhance students' communication competence and academic development.

Dr. Lilibeth A. Cenojas is an accomplished Filipino educator, applied linguist, researcher, and extension specialist currently serving as Associate Professor II at the Graduate School of the College of Education of the University of Southeastern Philippines. With extensive experience in higher education, research, language instruction, and community extension services, she has dedicated her professional career to advancing English language education and teacher development in the Philippines and beyond. Dr. Cenojas earned her Doctor of Philosophy in Education major in Applied Linguistics from the University of the Immaculate Conception, where she graduated Cum Laude. She also pursued doctoral coursework in Education Administration at Ateneo de Davao University. Her academic preparation further includes a Master of Training and Development from Griffith University and a Master of Education in Language Teaching major in English from the University of Southeastern Philippines. She completed her Bachelor of Arts in Communication Arts at Ateneo de Davao University. Throughout her academic career, Dr. Cenojas has held various instructional and leadership positions at the University of Southeastern Philippines, including Instructor, Assistant Professor, Extension Coordinator, and Deputy Director of several university programs and centers. Her expertise spans applied linguistics, English language teaching, communication, teacher education, curriculum development, classroom management, and educational extension services. Dr. Cenojas has also served as an international trainer and facilitator, conducting programs such as English as a Medium of Instruction and English for Teaching Purposes

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