



## EXPLORING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MOTHER TONGUE INTERFERENCE ON SPOKEN DISCOURSE: A QUALITATIVE INQUIRY

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### Abstract

Mother tongue interference (MTI) remains a significant issue affecting the spoken discourse of English language learners. This qualitative phenomenological study explores the significance of mother tongue interference on the spoken discourse of second-year Bachelor of Secondary Education major in English students at Davao de Oro State College. It examines the influence of the mother tongue, the challenges encountered, and the coping mechanisms employed. Ten participants were selected through convenience sampling and engaged in in-depth interviews to investigate the manifestation of MTI on spoken discourse. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's six-phase framework. For students' experiences of mother tongue interference on spoken discourse, the data revealed context-dependent language disruptions, emotional and cognitive struggles, and pronunciation challenges due to accent influence. Regarding challenges encountered when speaking English, students identified limited vocabulary, psychological and emotional factors affecting speaking confidence, and grammar difficulties as major obstacles to oral communication. As for the coping mechanisms students used, they relied on resources and technology to reinforce language, implemented interactive strategies, and engaged in advanced preparation and consistent practice. These findings confirm that students struggle with both linguistic and emotional barriers but make conscious efforts to overcome them. Learner-centered teaching approaches and institutional support are recommended to enhance English fluency and mitigate the negative effects of mother tongue interference on spoken discourse.

*Keywords: Code-Switching, Mother Tongue Interference, English Proficiency, Phenomenology*

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## INTRODUCTION

Mother tongue interference has been widely recognized as a global issue in second-language acquisition among non-English-speaking learners (Alisoy, 2024). This happens mostly in language use, especially in speaking. While existing studies have documented its effects on pronunciation, fluency, and intelligibility, there remains limited focus on how it shapes the spoken discourse of second-year Bachelor of Secondary Education majors in English in the local context. Thus, this study aims to explore the influence of the mother tongue on students' spoken discourse, the challenges encountered, and the coping mechanisms employed, and to inform learner-centered teaching approaches and improve English communication skills among future educators. In line with this study, Denizer (2017) concludes that the most significant effect of mother tongue interference is evident in speaking as a language skill. Second-language learners experience this issue the most. Thus, this interference is prevalent in classroom contexts.

Mother Tongue interference has been a global issue in second-language acquisition among non-English-speaking learners. Chinese learners, in particular, experience this phenomenon, as many others do (Aghadiuno, 2021), in which their native language, Chinese, poses difficulties in English phonology, including sounds, stress, and intonation. In another study of Indian speakers by Singh (2023), most participants had a moderate grasp of spoken English, which shows that specific linguistic features from Indian languages can be transferred into English. It affected the fluency and intelligibility of spoken English among speakers of Indian languages.

A similar study of tertiary students at Nakhon Si Thammarat Rajabhat University (NSTRU) in Thailand also found that learners were reluctant to speak English because they believed their pronunciation was unclear and did not sound like that of native English speakers (Chulee et al., 2023). The results of these studies identify that mother tongue interference has affected the learners' pronunciation.

In the Philippines, Malana (2018) conducted a study focusing on students who belong to three cultural groups- the Ilocano, Ibanag, and Itawes enrolled at Cagayan State University, where the students performed poorly on the oral test, particularly in terms of intonation and pronunciation. According to Krashen's Affective Filter Theory of acquisition and learning as cited in Malana (2018), making input more familiar and user-friendly increases learners' confidence in expressing their ideas and understanding language." Therefore, the mother tongue became a common ground for learners as a means of expressing ideas while they struggled to speak the target language.

Another study from Mindanao State University, Sulu, particularly at the College of Arts and Sciences, by Ajan (2024), concluded that mother tongue interference negatively impacted students' English pronunciation. This means it tends to affect the proper pronunciation of English words, and they often switch to their first language when they encounter difficulties learning the target language.

A local study at Tagum City National High School shows that students are more comfortable using their mother tongue than their target language (Genelza, 2022). This shows that students are challenged to use the English language effectively in communication. A comparable study by Aporbo (2022) concluded that students frequently resort to code-switching because they lack the necessary linguistic competence to present their ideas in English.

These findings firmly establish that the mother tongue interferes with spoken discourse. There are phonetic differences between the native and target languages, resulting in incorrect articulation of sounds. Students also tend to use their mother tongue because they cannot fully express themselves in English. This is evident in their reliance on and preference for their mother tongue, as well as their tendency to code-switch.

With that, this study contributes to advancing ESL education and cultivating practical communication skills among future educators and English language learners. A comprehensive research endeavor focused on these gaps will be instrumental in advancing teaching methodologies that mitigate this interference

## **METHODS**

### **Research Design**

This study employed a qualitative, phenomenological design to explore the research questions. Qualitative research enabled a deeper, evolving understanding of the phenomenon by uncovering subtle distinctions and meanings within participants' experiences (Aspers, 2019). A phenomenological approach was particularly appropriate as it focused on examining the conscious experiences and perceptions of second-year BSED English majors regarding mother tongue interference (Gallagher, 2022). Grounded in Husserl's philosophy and supported by Tenny et al. (2022), this design emphasized understanding the subjective and meaningful nature of human experience by setting aside preconceived assumptions and concentrating on participants' lived realities. Through this approach, the researchers explored students' perceptions, emotions, and interpretations to gain an in-depth, unbiased understanding of how they personally experience and make sense of mother tongue interference.

### **Research Locale and Participants**

This study was conducted among second-year BSED English students at Davao de Oro State College during the 2024–2025 academic year. Participants were selected using convenience sampling. Convenience sampling is a method of selecting participants from the target population based on ease of access (Golzar, 2022). Given the research design, this sampling method was best suited for the study. The researchers preferred a convenience sampling approach to select participants from the second-year BSED major in English because they could provide useful information for the research.

The in-depth interview comprised ten (10) second-year BSED English students. According to Creswell (2013), in phenomenological studies—which emphasize the comprehensive analysis of individuals' lived experiences—5–25 informants are sufficient. By selecting 10 participants, the researchers aimed to achieve an acceptable balance between comprehensive, varied data and the resource and time limitations of phenomenological research.

Conversely, inclusion and exclusion criteria were carefully defined. For inclusion, participants were second-year Bachelor of Secondary Education majors in English with sufficient exposure to English as a second language and experience engaging in bilingual or multilingual spoken communication. Individuals with limited experience in bilingual or multilingual spoken communication or who had not had significant exposure to a second language were excluded from the study.

### **Research Instrument**

The primary research instrument used in this study was a semi-structured interview guide specifically developed by the researchers to explore the lived experiences of second-year BSED English students regarding mother tongue interference in spoken discourse. The interview guide included open-ended questions aligned with the study's research objectives, enabling participants to describe their experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms freely. Probing questions were also included to elicit deeper explanations and clarify responses, thereby ensuring rich, detailed qualitative data. To ensure the instrument's validity and clarity, it underwent expert validation by qualified faculty members, whose feedback was incorporated to refine the wording, relevance, and structure of the questions. This instrument enabled the researchers to gather comprehensive, experience-based insights necessary for thematic analysis.

### **Data Gathering Procedure**

The participants were clearly informed that their involvement in the study was entirely voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw at any time without consequences. The researchers ensured that each participant fully understood the contents of the consent form before obtaining their signature. After obtaining informed consent, semi-structured face-to-face interviews were conducted through In-Depth Interviews (IDI). All participants responded to the same set of guide questions to ensure uniformity and adequacy of data collection. The researchers intentionally fostered a safe and supportive atmosphere to encourage participants to share their experiences openly and honestly.

To strengthen the trustworthiness and credibility of the findings, the researchers employed triangulation strategies, including member checking and peer debriefing. These processes ensured that the interpretations and themes accurately represented the participants' intended meanings and actual responses. In addition, the researchers maintained a comprehensive audit trail that documented the data collection and analysis procedures. This systematic record-keeping enhanced transparency, reliability, and integrity in the research process.

### **Data Analysis**

The data gathered from the In-Depth Interviews (IDI) were analyzed using thematic analysis, following the six-phase framework of Braun and Clarke (2006). After the audio recordings were transcribed verbatim, the researchers immersed themselves in the data by reading and rereading the transcripts to gain familiarity and develop initial insights. During this process, significant statements and meaningful segments related to mother tongue interference were identified and assigned initial codes. These codes served as the foundation for organizing the data into meaningful units, allowing patterns and recurring ideas to emerge systematically across participants' responses.

Subsequently, related codes were grouped into broader themes that captured the essence of the participants' lived experiences. The researchers carefully reviewed and refined these themes to ensure coherence, distinctiveness, and alignment with the research questions. Each theme was clearly defined and supported by representative excerpts from the transcripts to maintain authenticity and credibility. Throughout the analysis, reflexivity and careful documentation were maintained to ensure transparency and rigor. This structured and systematic approach enabled the researchers to uncover deeper insights into how mother tongue interference manifests in students' spoken discourse and how they navigate its challenges.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### ***Students' Experiences of Mother Tongue Interference on Spoken Discourse***

Based on the results, three emergent themes emerged from participants' shared experiences, thoughts, and reflections. There were: (1) Context-Dependent Language Descriptions; (2) Emotional and Cognitive Struggles Triggered by Language Interference; and (3) Pronunciation and Articulation Challenges Due to Accent Influence.

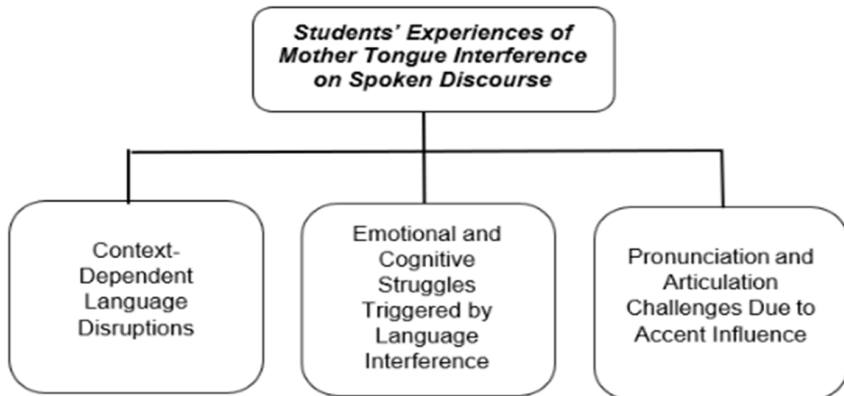


Figure 1. Students' Experiences of Mother Tongue Interference on Spoken Discourse

### ***Context-Dependent Language Descriptions***

Theme 1 highlights that mother tongue interference is influenced by the context in which students speak English. In this study, "context" refers both to the physical setting (e.g., classroom vs. home) and the social hierarchy (e.g., speaking in front of peers versus a teacher). Participants reported greater interference during formal or high-pressure situations, such as class presentations or oral reports, where fear of judgment heightened their reliance on their mother tongue. This aligns with Krashen's

(1994) Affective Filter Theory, which posits that anxiety and low self-confidence can block language acquisition, causing learners to default to familiar linguistic patterns to maintain communication.

Participants 2, 3, and 8 described how pressure and nervousness during class presentations often led to disruptions in language. They shared that speaking in front of others caused them to slip into their native language, especially when they felt embarrassed or lacked confidence in English.

*“... A specific instance of mother tongue interference occurs during reporting or presentations. One reason I experience this is pressure and nervousness. Moreover, you also get embarrassed because there are a lot of people watching you.”—P2*

This response was agreed by Participants 3 and 8, who similarly shared these experiences.

*“... I experienced mother-tongue interference when explaining something during a report. I cannot avoid speaking in Bisaya. Moreover, whenever someone asks a question in class, I prefer not to participate because I am not confident in my English. So, mostly it happens during reporting. It is a lot of pressure because you are expected to be good at English since it is our field. I am more comfortable with writing than speaking in English.”—P3*

*“...I usually experience interference when speaking English, especially during reporting. There are times when I feel embarrassed, especially when the teacher instructs us to use English while explaining, but I accidentally slip into using my mother tongue. The teacher would then remind us to stick to English, and in those moments, I would become very self-conscious.”—P8*

To further support this, Kasap (2019), who explored the manifestations of anxiety in EFL speaking classrooms in Turkey, found that students exhibited visible discomfort and avoided participation due to anxiety. Students often reported fear of making mistakes, which hindered their communication. This is supported by Fauzi and Asi (2023), who found that speaking anxiety leads to avoidance of oral participation and reduced willingness to communicate. Similarly, Fındıklı (2023) emphasized that anxiety negatively affects students' speaking performance by increasing hesitation and fear of negative evaluation.

### *Emotional and Cognitive Struggles Triggered by Language Interference*

These emotional and cognitive struggles not only hinder fluent expression but also discourage active participation, revealing that the effects of language interference extend beyond linguistics and deeply impact students' communication competence and self-esteem.

Based on the interviews, Participants 4, 7, and 3 highlighted that their limited use of English in daily interactions contributes to noticeable mother-tongue interference, especially during academic tasks such as class discussion and reporting.

*“... I do not usually speak English in my daily life, so when I really need to, like in class or during reporting, I feel the interference. I do not know how to construct a structured sentence, or I get confused with verb tenses, sometimes, I also forget that you should not translate directly from Bisaya.”—P4*

*“... I consider it in school, like when I am reporting something in class. Sometimes, there is really interference that happens, and it greatly affects me because some explanations are hard for me to express using English.”—P7*

*“... In every conversation where English is used as the language, that is how severe my mother tongue interference is. It could also be because my English vocabulary is limited.”—P3*

In line with these insights, Rabinovich (2018) found that speakers often select words influenced by their first language, especially when facing lexical retrieval challenges. This supports the idea that limited English vocabulary can lead to involuntary code-switching, as speakers default to familiar terms from their native language. Similarly, Ma and Vanek (2024) explained that lexical retrieval in bilinguals is affected by cross-language competition, which increases interference between L1 and L2 during word production. In addition, Xu et al. (2021) emphasized that bilingual lexical processing operates as an interactive network, where activation of one language can trigger switching due to overlapping lexical representations.

### *Pronunciation and Articulation Challenges Due to Accent Influence*

This theme captures how the participants' spoken English is consistently shaped by the phonological patterns and speech habits of their first language, or mother tongue. Despite their efforts to speak English fluently, their pronunciation and accent often reflect the sounds and rhythm of Bisaya (their native language). This influence is not easily controlled or corrected, as it has been deeply ingrained over years of first-language use during childhood and everyday communication.

Participants P3 and P5 expressed that the dominant tone and phonetic habits of Bisaya influence how they articulate English sounds, often leading to mispronunciations and a harsh delivery. This issue is most evident during public speaking or classroom activities, where the fear of embarrassment due to pronunciation slips—such as the common “six” vs. “sex” error—is heightened.

*“... There are times when, instead of pronouncing “six,” it becomes “sex,” and it is so embarrassing to pronounce it like that. I probably lack practice, and since my mother tongue is Bisaya, where words are pronounced harshly, that way of speaking carries over when I speak in English.”—P3*

*“... Bisaya has a very direct and strong tone, so when I speak English, my voice still sounds harsh. Especially with words that require softer sounds, it is really hard to control. It affects my English speaking because Bisaya has a different flow.”—P5*

These insights are supported by the study by Noviyenty (2021), which revealed that the mother tongue interferes with the pronunciation of English words containing consonants, vowels, and diphthongs. There are five types of interference observed: (1) short vowels being pronounced as long vowels, (2) long vowels shortened, (3) vowel shifts, (4) diphthongs pronounced as single vowels, and (5) vowels articulated as diphthongs. Similarly, Onwochei (2024) reported that L1 phonemic interference leads to mispronunciation of English vowel and diphthong sounds, while Chiluisa et al. (2024) emphasized that such interference contributes to persistent pronunciation errors among EFL learners. These studies confirm that mother tongue interference significantly affects learners' English pronunciation accuracy.

In addition, this reflects a classic interlanguage phenomenon in which learners rely on their first language when producing a second language. Direct translation occurs due to incomplete mastery of English syntax and as a cognitive shortcut under high-pressure situations, such as class reporting. In these moments, students default to familiar patterns to maintain fluency, even if it leads to grammatical errors, showing that mother tongue interference functions as both a developmental stage and a coping strategy in second language acquisition.

### Challenges Encountered When Speaking in English

Based on the participants' responses, the interview data revealed three main themes concerning the challenges students face when speaking in English. The three emergent themes were: (1) Limited Vocabulary; (2) Psychological and Emotional Factors Affecting Speaking Confidence; and (3) Grammar Difficulties.

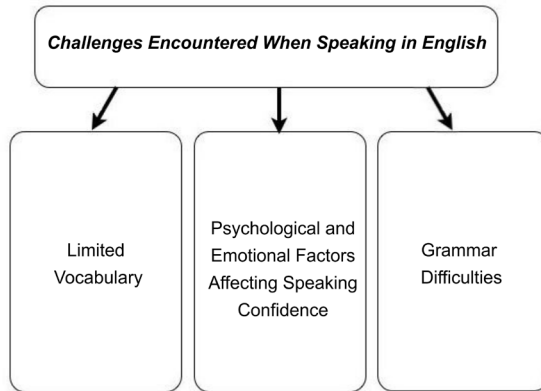


Figure 2. Challenges Encountered When Speaking in English.

#### Limited Vocabulary

Many students expressed difficulty finding the right English words during conversations, often pausing mid-sentence or resorting to their mother tongue to fill linguistic gaps. Some participants shared that, while they could understand English, they lacked the necessary vocabulary to respond fluently or appropriately in academic and casual settings.

Based on the interviews, Participants 2 and 7 described how limited vocabulary made it difficult for them to fully express their thoughts in English, particularly during oral communication and presentations. They emphasized that, even when they understood the content, the struggle to find appropriate English words slowed them down and often led to simplified explanations.

*"... Yes, it is hard to express myself in English because it is difficult to find the right words to describe what I want to say in English, especially in communication or presentations."—P2*

*"... I sometimes struggle to translate my thoughts into English. Also, even though I understand the topics well, it is still hard for me to organize my thoughts clearly in English. That is why I often pause a lot when speaking, or I end up using simple words or shorter explanations. Because of that, I am not always able to fully elaborate on the topics I am reporting."—P7*

To support these insights, Wang-Taylor (2022) found that most students would stop mid-sentence, pause for long periods, or avoid speaking altogether due to limited vocabulary, which increases anxiety and fear of making mistakes. By limiting students' ability to express ideas clearly and causing hesitation, limited vocabulary contributes to speaking anxiety (Namsaeng, 2025). Additionally, students with low vocabulary mastery tend to feel afraid to speak and participate less in oral communication (Syahrani, 2024). As a result, students' fear and insecurity reduce their class participation and limit opportunities to practice and improve their speaking skills.

#### Psychological and Emotional Factors Affecting Speaking Confidence

Participants frequently expressed anxiety, self-consciousness, and fear of negative evaluation when speaking English, attributing these feelings to influences from their native language, such as

accent, pronunciation errors, or literal translations of phrases. These emotional responses often led to hesitation, reduced participation in conversations, and an overall lack of confidence in speaking situations.

Participants 2, 4, and 6 shared how pronunciation errors and incorrect word usage led to frequent misunderstandings in conversations. These lapses in clarity often disrupted the flow of communication and made them feel embarrassed, especially in classroom settings. They emphasized how being misunderstood due to mispronounced or misused words made them more cautious when speaking in English.

*"... I use a word, but it turns out the listener interprets it differently because I pronounced it incorrectly. They misunderstand me, and our conversation does not go smoothly."—P2*

*"... I have experienced using a word incorrectly, one that had a different meaning in English. My classmates just laughed, but I felt embarrassed. There was also a time when the teacher misunderstood what I was explaining because what I said was unclear. That is why I am more careful now."—P4*

*"... I had a point to make, but because of mother tongue interference, the meaning got diverted. Some words get misunderstood because I end up using my first language."—P6*

As stated by Sadighi (2017), speaking anxiety is positively correlated with the refusal to establish communication. Indrianty (2016) argues that students who feel anxious tend to have problems understanding and responding to oral instructions. Similarly, speaking anxiety has been found to reduce students' oral communication performance by limiting their ability to respond effectively during speaking tasks (Saludo, 2026). This situation can lower students' motivation and self-confidence, which, in turn, can directly affect their understanding of a foreign language.

### **Grammar Difficulties**

An emergent theme from the study, Grammar Difficulties, reveals how mother tongue interference significantly affects the grammatical accuracy of spoken discourse in a second language. Participants often displayed consistent errors in verb tense, subject-verb agreement, sentence structure, and article usage—patterns closely linked to their native language.

During the interviews, Participants 4 and 5 emphasized how a lack of vocabulary and the difficulty of shifting from their mother tongue to English hindered their ability to communicate effectively. They shared that, even though they had ideas to express, the language transition made them hesitate, leading to delays and uncertainty in their speech.

*"... I have an idea of what I want to say, but I lack the words to say it. Sometimes, fear and embarrassment come at the same time. I am not confident in speaking in straight English, especially when many people are listening, like my classmates, for example."—P4*

*"... For me, the biggest challenge is the transition from Bisaya to English. It is not easy to switch, especially when you do not have enough vocabulary. It is like I have to think about the sentence first before I can speak."—P5*

These insights are supported by Ajaj (2022), who found that several grammatical errors and difficulties appear among students learning English due to limited knowledge and insufficient exposure to lexis and grammar in their daily lives. Recent studies further reinforce this. Matusalem (2025) found that students experience grammatical errors due to limited understanding of English grammatical

structures, particularly in areas such as tenses, articles, and sentence construction. Similarly, Derla et al. (2026) reported that learners commonly commit recurring grammar errors in writing, including issues in subject-verb agreement, verb tense, and sentence structure. These findings are attributed to insufficient mastery of grammar rules and contribute to students' persistent grammatical difficulties in English.

### **Coping Mechanisms that Students Practice**

From the participants' responses, the interview data uncovered three key themes related to students' coping mechanisms with mother tongue interference in spoken discourse. The three emergent themes were: (1) Utilization of Resources and Technology for Language Reinforcement; (2) Implementing Interactive Strategies; and (3) Advanced Preparation and Consistent Practice.

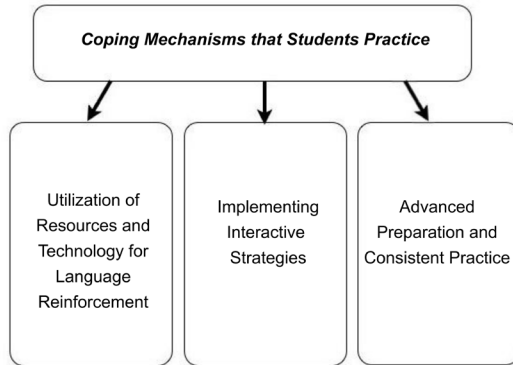


Figure 3. Coping Mechanisms that Students Practice

#### **Utilization of Resources and Technology for Language Reinforcement**

The emergent theme of “Utilization of Resources and Technology for Language Reinforcement” underscores the importance of leveraging modern tools to mitigate mother tongue interference in spoken discourse. Technology, such as language-learning apps, speech recognition tools, and online platforms, provides learners with continuous exposure to authentic language use, helping them correct errors in pronunciation, grammar, and fluency.

Participants 1 and 4 highlighted how social media platforms and peer interaction helped them practice and improve their English communication skills. They shared that platforms like TikTok provided opportunities to engage in interactive speaking activities, such as video duets, where users could respond to prompts in English.

*“... There is this thing on TikTok where you can practice your English skills. On TikTok, there are videos where you do a duet—the person asks a question, and then you answer in English.”—P1*

*“... I watch English vlogs or movies and sometimes mimic what they say to practice. I also have a friend who is good at English, and I hang out with them to get used to it. Sometimes I even write a script of what I am going to say before presenting.”—P4*

Juliana et al. (2024) found that both platforms significantly enhanced students' vocabulary performance, with learners exposed to TikTok showing a higher improvement rate compared to those using YouTube. Similarly, Maria (2024) reported that both TikTok and YouTube significantly improve vocabulary mastery, as students demonstrated notable gains in post-test results after exposure to these platforms. In addition, Usman (2024) emphasized that TikTok's short-form and engaging video content supports vocabulary development through repeated exposure. These findings suggest that digital platforms such as TikTok and YouTube can serve as effective tools for reinforcing vocabulary

acquisition among EFL learners.

### *Implementing Interactive Strategies*

This is the second derived theme from the collected responses, which applies to challenges in formal and informal language environments affecting students' motivation in English-speaking skills. These barriers often arise from fear of judgment and criticism, significantly reducing learners' confidence and willingness to engage actively in speaking. Some students shared feelings of anxiety about being judged harshly for not speaking or writing English correctly, making it difficult for them to communicate effectively.

Participants 1, 4, and 9 highlighted how peer interaction and informal settings provided opportunities to practice and enhance their English communication skills. Participant 1 shared that although they rarely practiced English, interacting with foreigners while playing online games like Roblox allowed them to have spontaneous English conversations. These instances, combined with the need to prepare for academic tasks such as reporting, motivated them to rehearse speaking, which gradually improved their fluency and confidence.

*"... There are times when my cousins are playing Roblox. In those games, you sometimes encounter foreigners. Because of that, I also get to practice speaking in English."—P1*

*"... Not always, but when we have reporting or presentations, I practice at home. Sometimes I do self-talk in front of the mirror to build my confidence. In group work, we sometimes speak in English to get used to it."—P4*

*"... When I discuss things with my female classmates, we speak English. They speak English first, and then I follow their lead. My English speaking improves over time; I become more fluent because I can follow the flow of words. I feel more confident and less self-conscious because I have already practiced the flow."—P9*

In line with these insights, Ajaj (2023) examined the effectiveness of interactive teaching strategies in online English speaking classes, highlighting that structured participation and interactive tools enhance student engagement and speaking performance. Tabing et al. (2025) found that Quizizz-based gamified formative assessment significantly improves student engagement and learning performance by making classroom activities more interactive and motivating. Similarly, Purba (2020) reported that the use of Quizizz as an interactive quiz tool enhances student learning outcomes by increasing participation. Interactive and gamified teaching strategies can effectively improve students' engagement and speaking-related performance in English learning contexts.

### *Advanced Preparation and Consistent Practice*

This theme highlights how learners actively mitigate mother tongue interference in spoken discourse through deliberate effort. Participants in the study emphasized that preparing in advance—such as rehearsing dialogues, memorizing key phrases, and anticipating language challenges—helped reduce the likelihood of L1-based errors during communication. Regular and consistent speaking practice, particularly in authentic or semi-authentic settings, helped them internalize L2 structures and become more aware of interference patterns, particularly in pronunciation and syntax.

Participants 1, 3, and 4 emphasized the use of digital tools and online platforms as instrumental in improving their English communication skills. Participant 1 shared that social media platforms, such as TikTok and YouTube, significantly contributed to their progress, as regular exposure to English content helped them enhance their speaking abilities.

*“... Social media, really—TikTok and YouTube. I noticed that they really help me; my English speaking has truly improved.”—P1*

*“... YouTube and podcasts really help. I also downloaded English-speaking apps like Duolingo. Sometimes, I read short stories in English. It helps me practice reading and improves my vocabulary.”—P4*

*“... I use both soft copy and hard copy materials, like dictionaries, Google, Merriam-Webster, and other tools. I also have books, and they have helped me improve my English.”—P3*

Supporting these findings, Syafutri (2021) reported that frequent participation in speaking activities improves learners' vocabulary use and sentence structure, thereby reducing L1 interference. Similarly, Teng (2022) found that regular speaking practice enhances fluency by improving lexical retrieval and sentence formation. Loewen and Sato (2018) further explained that interactive speaking tasks promote more accurate language use by reducing reliance on L1 structures. Collectively, these studies affirm that consistent speaking practice and interaction are essential in minimizing mother tongue interference and improving spoken English fluency.

## CONCLUSION

This study examined how mother tongue interference shapes the spoken discourse of second-year BSED English students, focusing on their experiences, challenges, and coping strategies. The findings show that interference occurs in context-dependent speaking situations and is associated with difficulties in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, thereby influencing students' ability to communicate effectively. Despite these challenges, students demonstrate active efforts to improve through consistent practice, preparation, and the use of available learning resources.

The study's key contribution is to provide qualitative insights into how linguistic and affective factors interact in students' speaking experiences. These findings underscore the need for learner-centered and supportive instructional approaches that encourage practice, reduce speaking anxiety, and integrate meaningful language exposure.

Overall, this study highlights the importance of addressing mother tongue interference in second-language learning, particularly in developing students' spoken communication skills. Its implications support the design of more responsive language instruction that fosters learners' confidence and communicative competence.

## Acknowledgement

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## Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no financial or other conflicts of interest.

## Ethical Statement

The researchers followed strict ethical guidelines to ensure that their research was conducted fairly and honestly. Furthermore, the researchers obtained the approval from the institution with REC Approval Control Code DDOSC09322025 and REC Protocol Code 081-01-2025.

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