



COPING STRATEGIES AND MOTIVATION TO LEARN ENGLISH WITH PUBLIC SPEAKING ANXIETY AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

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Abstract:

This study examined coping strategies and motivation to learn English in the context of public speaking anxiety among college students. Using a descriptive-correlational design, data were collected from 172 students through standardized questionnaires measuring coping strategies, English learning motivation, and public speaking anxiety. Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and regression analyses were employed to analyze the data. Results revealed that students experienced a generally high level of public speaking anxiety, yet demonstrated moderately high use of coping strategies, particularly preparation and positive thinking. Motivation to learn English was also high, indicating that students recognize the academic and professional value of English proficiency. Correlation analyses showed significant positive relationships among coping strategies, motivation, and anxiety, suggesting that students who feel more anxious are more likely to adopt coping behaviors, while motivated learners tend to employ more adaptive strategies. Regression results indicated that positive thinking and preparation significantly predicted motivation to learn English, whereas positive thinking, peer seeking, and resignation significantly predicted public speaking anxiety. These findings imply that coping strategies function both as responses to anxiety and as mechanisms that sustain motivation in language learning. Overall, the study concludes that public speaking anxiety, coping mechanisms, and English learning motivation are interconnected aspects of students' communication experiences. The findings highlight the importance of instructional interventions that strengthen strategic preparation, promote constructive self-beliefs, and foster supportive learning environments to enhance students' confidence and communicative competence. Such interventions may also improve participation, reduce avoidance behaviors, and support the long-term development of academic and professional communication.

Keywords: coping strategies, motivation to learn English, public speaking anxiety, college students

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1. Rationale

Public speaking plays a crucial role in academic and professional development, as it allows individuals to articulate ideas, share knowledge, and engage audiences effectively. In contemporary society, the ability to speak confidently in public is increasingly recognized as an essential skill that supports leadership, collaboration, and lifelong learning. However, this is a continuing challenge for students, especially at the tertiary level, as public speaking anxiety becomes a pervasive affective barrier that significantly impairs college students' ability to communicate effectively in English, particularly in academic settings where performance expectations are high.

At the global level, studies have shown that students often experience anxiety when speaking in front of others due to fear of making mistakes and being negatively judged (Rajitha & Alamelu, 2020). Moreover, Thaksanan (2024) found that university students in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts struggle with public speaking because they feel linguistically unprepared and lack confidence in their oral communication skills. As a result, public speaking becomes a source of stress rather than an opportunity for communication, thereby encouraging the need for coping mechanisms.

At the national level, in the Philippine educational system, many Filipino students still experience anxiety when required to speak publicly using the language (Giray et al., 2022). English language anxiety has been documented among Filipino college students as a common problem that inhibits active participation in classroom communication activities (Giray et al., 2022).

In the Davao region, it further highlights how public speaking anxiety is manifested among Filipino students in specific communities. A study of students in Panabo City revealed that school culture and student engagement are significantly related to public speaking class anxiety, with learners showing increased nervousness during public speaking tasks when they perceive a lack of support or engagement (Moya & Tagadiad, 2023).

2. Statement of the Problem

The study investigates the level of coping strategies and motivation to learn English in relation to public speaking anxiety among college students. Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of college students in terms of:
 - 1.1. Year Level;
 - 1.2. Gender.
2. What is the level of coping strategies implemented among college students in terms of:
 - 2.1 Preparation;
 - 2.2 Relaxation;
 - 2.3 Positive Thinking;
 - 2.4 Peer Seeking; and
 - 2.5 Resignation?

3. What is the level of motivation to learn English among college students?
4. What is the level of public speaking anxiety among college students?
5. Is there a statistically significant relationship between coping strategies implemented, motivation to learn English, and public speaking anxiety among college students?

2.1 Hypotheses

The hypotheses of this study were tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

- (**H₀**) There is no statistically significant relationship between coping strategies, motivation to learn English, and public speaking anxiety among college students.

3. Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Cognitive Appraisal Theory, proposed by Lazarus (1991), which posits how individuals perceive and respond to stressful situations. Public speaking anxiety among college students can be understood as a stressor that is influenced by their cognitive evaluation of the task. According to the theory, students employ coping strategies to manage anxiety, using either problem-focused or emotion-focused approaches. Motivation to learn English also plays a key role, as highly motivated students are more likely to appraise public speaking as a manageable challenge rather than a threat, which affects both their coping behavior and anxiety level. Therefore, Cognitive Appraisal Theory provides a comprehensive framework for examining the relationships among coping strategies, motivation to learn English, and public speaking anxiety among college students.

4. Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it provides school administrators with insights into how public speaking anxiety affects students' learning and how coping strategies and motivation can support better academic outcomes. For teachers, the findings offer guidance on designing interventions and classroom activities that enhance students' confidence and reduce anxiety during English language presentations. Students will benefit by understanding effective coping strategies and ways to increase their motivation, which can improve their public speaking performance and overall language skills. The study also provides valuable insights for future researchers exploring related topics in language learning, communication apprehension, or educational psychology. Ultimately, the research aims to foster a more supportive learning environment that promotes both the personal and academic growth of college students.

5. Literature Review

5.1 Coping Strategies

Coping strategies are essential in dealing with public speaking anxiety to help individuals regulate fear, build confidence, and perform effectively despite nervousness. Recent studies highlight that college students employ a range of cognitive, behavioral, and social coping

strategies to manage public speaking anxiety. Globally, research shows that relaxation techniques, preparation, and positive thinking are among the most frequently used strategies to reduce anxiety and improve speaking performance, demonstrating that psychological regulation plays a crucial role in speech confidence (Martiningsih et al., 2024).

A study by Safira et al. (2023) also investigated speaking anxiety among undergraduate students and identified both its causes and coping mechanisms. Findings showed that students experience anxiety through physical symptoms such as trembling, panic, and difficulty concentrating, often triggered by classroom pressure and fear of mistakes. To manage these difficulties, students reported using several coping strategies, including thorough preparation, relaxation techniques, positive thinking, seeking peer support, and developing self-confidence. The study concluded that combining psychological and behavioral strategies is essential in reducing public speaking anxiety among college students, as these approaches help learners manage both the emotional and performance aspects of speaking tasks. In the Philippine context, studies likewise indicate that students rely on preparation, classroom support, and strategic practice opportunities to manage second-language speaking anxiety, emphasizing that coping strategies are strengthened when institutions provide supportive communicative environments (Agcaoili & Guillermo, 2024). These findings collectively suggest that coping with public speaking anxiety is not solely an individual effort but also shaped by instructional practices and learning environments, highlighting the importance of structured support systems in higher education to improve communication confidence.

5.2 Motivation to Learn English

Motivation plays a crucial role in second-language acquisition, particularly among college students learning English as a foreign language. Studies consistently show that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation influence students' engagement, persistence, and achievement in English learning. A study by Alqurashi (2019) found that university students generally possess high motivation to learn English, but their success depends on supportive learning environments, positive teacher–student relationships, and encouragement that strengthens self-esteem and attitudes toward the language.

Similarly, Abdalla (2023) reported that college students often demonstrate strong instrumental motivation, meaning they learn English primarily for career opportunities, academic advancement, and global communication. In addition, Hussain et al. (2019) revealed that many English learners exhibit intrinsic motivation, driven by personal interest and the desire for self-development, which significantly enhances persistence in language study. Taken together, these studies suggest that English learning motivation among college students is multidimensional, combining personal interest, external goals, and classroom influences that collectively shape students' commitment to language acquisition.

5.3 Public Speaking Anxiety

Public speaking anxiety significantly affects students' participation and performance, especially in second-language contexts, as fear of judgment, mistakes, and embarrassment often leads to stress and avoidance behaviors (Marinho et al., 2017; Fathikasari et al., 2022; Yunus et al., 2024).

Similar patterns are observed among EFL learners, where anxiety is linked to miscommunication fears, low confidence, and insufficient preparation, negatively influencing engagement (Priya, 2024; Yunus et al., 2024). Evidence from the EDSA English Study Club shows that while anxiety hinders participation in speaking, structured coping strategies can improve involvement (Muhibbah & Amalia, 2025).

Moreover, limited vocabulary, pronunciation difficulties, and uncertainty about audience reactions are the main barriers to public speaking that contribute to public speaking anxiety, further influenced by external factors such as cultural differences and a lack of teacher support that exacerbates students' lack of confidence (Lukman & Widiastuty, 2024).

In the Philippines, college students also describe difficulty with English public speaking due to fear of mistakes, audience pressure, and low self-esteem, which undermine their willingness to communicate orally despite often having adequate language proficiency (Ederio, 2023). It further confirms that fear of mistakes and low self-esteem limit students' willingness to speak, though coping mechanisms and supportive feedback help reduce anxiety (Pabro-Maquidato, 2021; Giray et al., 2022). Overall, these findings suggest that English-speaking anxiety is both a linguistic and psychological issue that requires targeted instructional and motivational support.

6. Materials and Methods

6.1 Research Design

To address the objectives of this study, the researchers adopted a descriptive-correlational research design, which, according to Shona (2019), describes variables and examines the degree of correlation between them without the researcher manipulating any of the variables. This design allowed the researchers to determine the level of coping strategies, motivation to learn in English, and public speaking anxiety among college students. It is particularly suitable for this study because it not only involves the systematic description and recording of data but also enables the analysis and interpretation of relationships among the variables. By using this design, the study could provide both quantitative descriptions of students' experiences and a statistical assessment of how coping strategies and motivation relate to public speaking anxiety. Therefore, the descriptive-correlational approach effectively supports the objectives of examining the levels and interrelationships of the key variables.

6.2 Research Participants

The participants of this study were college students enrolled during the Academic Year 2025–2026. They were selected using purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling technique that allows researchers to deliberately choose participants who possess specific characteristics relevant to the study. According to Crossman (2020), purposive sampling enables researchers to select respondents who meet predetermined criteria aligned with the research objectives. This sampling technique was deemed appropriate because the study specifically focused on college students learning English who may experience public-speaking anxiety. By selecting participants who fit these qualifications, the researchers were able to gather relevant and

meaningful data. Moreover, purposive sampling enabled the study to obtain varied responses that reflected differences in coping strategies, motivation to learn English, and levels of public-speaking anxiety among college students.

6.3 Research Instruments

The researchers utilized three sets of standardized survey questionnaires corresponding to the three variables of the study. The first questionnaire was adopted from Kondo and Ying (2004) and measured coping strategies using the indicators Preparation, Relaxation, Positive Thinking, Peer Seeking, and Resignation. The second questionnaire was adopted from Mohammed Looti (2025), titled the Motivation Questionnaire for EFL learners. The third questionnaire was adopted from the study by Yaikhong and Usaha (2012), entitled "A Measure of EFL Public Speaking Class Anxiety: Scale Development and Preliminary Validation and Reliability," which assessed students' public speaking anxiety. All three instruments employed a five-point Likert scale to measure the respondents' perceptions and experiences. The scale ranged from 1 (always), representing the lowest descriptive equivalent and interpretation, to 5 (never), representing the highest descriptive equivalent and interpretation. The descriptive equivalents and the scale's interpretation are illustrated in the table below.

Range of Means	Level	Verbal Description	Descriptive Meaning
4.21 - 5.00	5	Always	The level of coping strategies, motivation to learn English, and public speaking anxiety among college students is very high.
3.41 - 4.20	4	Often	The level of coping strategies, motivation to learn English, and public speaking anxiety among college students is high.
2.61- 3.40	3	Sometimes	The level of coping strategies, motivation to learn English, and public speaking anxiety among college students is average.
1.81 - 2.60	2	Rarely	The level of coping strategies, motivation to learn English, and public speaking anxiety among college students is low.
1.00-1.80	1	Never	The level of coping strategies, motivation to learn English, and public speaking anxiety among college students is very low.

6.4 Data Gathering Procedure

Prior to conducting the study and data collection, the researchers ensured adherence to the following procedures. First, the researchers prepared and submitted a formal letter of communication to the school director requesting permission to conduct the study within the institution and to administer the survey questionnaires to the selected college student respondents. Upon approval, the researchers validated the research instruments with the assistance of one subject-matter expert before administering the questionnaires. Clear instructions were provided to respondents to ensure accurate and honest responses, and all completed questionnaires were collected upon completion. After data collection, the researchers collated, coded, tallied, and organized the responses in preparation for statistical analysis. A consultation with a statistician followed to ensure appropriate treatment and computation of the gathered data. Finally, the data were analyzed to generate findings, conclusions, and recommendations relevant to the study's objectives.

6.5 Statistical Treatment of Data

The following statistical tools were utilized to analyze and interpret the data gathered from the respondents.

6.5.1 Mean

This was used to determine the levels of coping strategies, motivation to learn English, and public speaking anxiety among college students.

6.5.2 Pearson's R Correlation Coefficient

It was employed to determine the statistically significant relationship among coping strategies, motivation to learn English, and public speaking anxiety among college students.

7. Results and Discussion

7.1 Demographic Profile of the Students

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the 172 student respondents by year level and gender. The data reveal that First-Year students comprise 83 respondents (48.26%), while Second-Year students comprise 78 respondents (45.35%). In contrast, Third Year and Fourth Year students represent only 4 (2.33%) and 7 (4.07%) respondents, respectively. This indicates that the sample is predominantly composed of lower-year-level students. Consequently, the dataset provides a stronger representation of students at the early stages of their college education.

Table 1: Demographic profile of the students

Demographic Profile		Frequency	Relative Frequency
Year Level	First Year	83	48.26%
	Second Year	78	45.35%
	Third Year	4	2.33%
	Fourth Year	7	4.07%
Gender	Female	96	55.81%
	Male	76	44.19%

The table further implies that First- and Second-Year students collectively constitute 93.61% of the total population. Such concentration suggests that the study largely captures the perspectives of students who are still adjusting to the academic and communication demands of higher education. Since early-year students are typically in the transition phase from secondary to tertiary learning environments, their communication experiences may differ from those of upper-year students. The limited representation of Third and Fourth Year respondents may reduce the variability of perspectives from more academically experienced learners. Therefore, the study's findings primarily reflect the realities and challenges faced by newer college students.

7.2 Students' Coping Mechanisms on Public Speaking Anxiety

Table 2 presents the coping mechanisms students use to manage public speaking anxiety, based on responses from 172 participants. The overall mean score of 3.60 (SD = 0.518) indicates that students generally utilize coping strategies at a moderately high level. Among the identified strategies, Preparation (\bar{x} = 3.87, SD = 0.523) and Positive Thinking (\bar{x} = 3.87, SD = 0.592) obtained the highest mean scores. This suggests that students primarily depend on thorough preparation and constructive self-talk to manage their anxiety. These findings underscore learners' proactive efforts to build confidence and competence when faced with public speaking situations.

Table 2: Students' Coping Mechanisms on Public Speaking Anxiety

Indicators	\bar{x}	SD
Preparation	3.87	0.523
Relaxation	3.63	0.692
Positive Thinking	3.87	0.592
Peer Seeking	3.67	0.687
Resignation	2.97	0.818
Overall	3.60	0.518

- **Preparation**

The findings indicate that students generally exhibit a high level of preparation, with a mean score of 3.87. This suggests that most students take time to organize their ideas and materials before engaging in communication tasks. The standard deviation of 0.523 indicates that responses were fairly consistent, suggesting a shared approach to preparation among participants. Proper preparation appears to enhance students' confidence and communication effectiveness. Overall, it reflects a proactive attitude toward learning and toward being task-ready.

- **Relaxation**

Students reported a moderate level of relaxation, with a mean score of 3.63, indicating that while many can remain calm, some still experience nervousness. The standard deviation of 0.692 indicates slightly greater variability in how students manage stress before or during communication. This suggests that relaxation techniques or coping mechanisms differ among students. Those who are more relaxed likely perform better in presentations and interactions. The findings highlight the need for strategies to further enhance students' comfort and composure.

- **Positive Thinking**

The mean score for positive thinking is 3.87, showing that students generally maintain an optimistic mindset toward communication challenges. With a standard deviation of 0.592, responses are relatively consistent, suggesting that most students share a constructive outlook. Positive thinking appears to help students reduce anxiety and approach tasks with confidence. This mindset likely reinforces other effective communication strategies, such as preparation and

peer support. Encouraging positive thinking can therefore be a key factor in improving overall communication performance.

- **Peer Seeking**

The results indicate that students moderately seek support from peers, with a mean score of 3.67. The standard deviation of 0.687 shows some variation, reflecting differences in students' willingness to rely on peer feedback or assistance. Those who actively seek peer support may benefit from collaborative learning and improved confidence. Peer interaction seems to play a supportive role in managing communication apprehension. Promoting peer engagement could further enhance students' preparation and performance outcomes.

- **Resignation**

Resignation scored the lowest among the indicators, with a mean of 2.97, suggesting that students are less likely to give up when faced with communication challenges. The higher standard deviation of 0.818 indicates greater variability, suggesting some students may feel more discouraged than others. This reflects that while most students demonstrate perseverance, a minority may struggle with feelings of helplessness. Addressing resignation through motivation and skill-building can improve overall confidence. Reducing tendencies toward resignation can strengthen students' resilience in communication tasks.

The overall mean of 3.60 indicates that students generally exhibit moderate to high levels of coping strategies in communication. A standard deviation of 0.518 shows that most students share similar tendencies across different indicators. Preparation and positive thinking stand out as strong strategies, whereas resignation appears to be the weakest area. This overall profile suggests that students are reasonably equipped to handle communication challenges but could benefit from further support in stress management and peer engagement. Strengthening weaker areas could lead to more consistent, confident communication.

Findings demonstrated that students generally experience a high level of public speaking anxiety, confirming that speaking before an audience remains a significant communicative challenge. Despite this, students reported a moderately high use of coping mechanisms, particularly preparation and positive thinking, suggesting that learners actively attempt to manage anxiety through cognitive and behavioral strategies. Social support from peers and relaxation techniques were also practiced, as resignation is the least preferred approach, indicating that most students do not passively accept their anxiety.

These findings support the study by Martiningsih et al. (2024), which revealed that while learners frequently feel nervous when speaking before an audience, they tend to employ adaptive strategies such as preparation, relaxation techniques, positive thinking, and seeking peer support to reduce anxiety and improve performance. Similarly, research by Safira et al. (2023) confirmed that students commonly cope with speaking anxiety through preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, and seeking support from peers, demonstrating that learners actively employ both cognitive and social strategies to manage communication apprehension. These findings strongly support the present study's results that students do not simply endure

anxiety but instead adopt practical behavioral and psychological techniques to cope with public speaking demands.

7.3 Students' Level of Motivation to Learn English

Table 3 presents the students' levels of motivation to learn English, based on responses from 172 participants. The computed mean score of 3.77 (SD = 0.686) indicates that students generally exhibit a high level of motivation toward learning the language. This suggests that English is perceived as an important academic and practical skill, and that students are inclined to make an effort to acquire proficiency. The relatively moderate standard deviation reflects some variability in responses, suggesting that although most students are highly motivated, motivation intensity differs across individuals.

Table 3: Students' Level of Motivation to Learn English

	\bar{x}	<i>SD</i>
Motivation to learn English	3.77	0.686

Students' motivation to learn English is strongly influenced by its perceived academic usefulness, future career value, and personal aspirations. As Tosuncuoglu (2019) found among university English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, students' motivation to learn English is strongly linked to goal orientation, self-efficacy, and the perceived academic value of the language. The study revealed that learners invest effort in English learning when they believe it contributes to their academic success and personal development. Furthermore, a study by Fatima, Hashmi, & Sheroz (2022) found that students showed strong motivation toward English because it is considered an essential educational tool and a key to academic achievement and global participation. This supports the result of this study, which shows that students demonstrate high motivation toward learning English, as they recognize it as a meaningful skill that serves both a practical academic requirement and a pathway to broader opportunities.

7.4 Students' Level of Public Speaking Anxiety

Table 4 presents the students' level of public speaking anxiety, based on the responses of 172 participants. The computed mean score of 3.57 (SD = 0.631) indicates that students generally experience a high level of anxiety when engaging in public speaking. This suggests that anxiety is a common challenge among the group, reflecting the psychological pressure often associated with speaking before an audience. The standard deviation value shows a moderate degree of variability, implying that while many students share similar levels of anxiety, there are noticeable differences in individual experiences.

Table 4: Students' Level of Public Speaking Anxiety

	\bar{x}	<i>SD</i>
Public Speaking Anxiety	3.57	0.631

Presenting in front of an audience creates psychological pressure associated with fear of negative judgment, mistakes, and embarrassment (Marinho et al., 2017). Each student experiences

different public speaking anxiety, as elaborated from the study of Pike and Raymundo (2024), students generally experienced moderate public speaking anxiety, indicating that classroom speaking tasks expose learners to emotional tension, such as pounding of heart, trembling, panic, discomfort, and low levels of self-confidence, leading them to have self-evaluation pressure during performance.

The overall findings imply that public speaking anxiety is a significant factor affecting students' performance and engagement in classroom activities. High levels of anxiety may hinder students' ability to express ideas clearly, participate confidently, and fully demonstrate their communication skills. This highlights the importance of implementing interventions, such as stress-reduction techniques, positive reinforcement, and structured practice opportunities, to help students manage their anxiety. Additionally, understanding students' experience variability allows educators to provide more personalized support to those who struggle the most. Ultimately, addressing public speaking anxiety can enhance both students' academic outcomes and their long-term communication competence.

7.5 Correlation Matrix Between Public Speaking Anxiety and Coping Mechanisms

Table 5 presents the correlation between students' public speaking anxiety and their coping mechanisms. The results indicate statistically significant positive correlations across all indicators ($p < .01$). The overall correlation coefficient of .567 suggests a moderate positive relationship, implying that students experiencing higher levels of anxiety are more likely to employ coping strategies. Among the specific mechanisms, Positive Thinking ($r = .521, p < .01$) and Peer Seeking ($r = .510, p < .01$) showed the strongest associations, indicating reliance on constructive self-talk and social support. Relaxation ($r = .470, p < .01$), Resignation ($r = .384, p < .01$), and Preparation ($r = .360, p < .01$) also demonstrated significant, albeit varying, relationships with anxiety.

Table 5: Correlation Matrix Between Public Speaking Anxiety and Coping Mechanisms

Coping Mechanisms on Public Speaking Anxiety	Public Speaking Anxiety
Preparation	.360**
	(.000)
Relaxation	.470**
	(.00)
Positive Thinking	.521**
	(.000)
Peer Seeking	.510**
	(.000)
Resignation	.384**
	(.000)
Overall	.567**
	(.000)
* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$	(.000)

These findings align with previous research highlighting the link between anxiety and active coping behaviors. Genc (2016) reported that students with higher public speaking anxiety often

utilize cognitive and social strategies to manage stress, suggesting that anxiety can motivate proactive coping rather than avoidance. Similarly, Lukman and Widiastuty (2024) emphasized that strategies such as thorough preparation, practicing with peers, seeking feedback, and employing relaxation techniques enhance confidence and reduce performance-related tension. The positive correlations in this study imply that students are responsive to their own psychological needs by selecting coping mechanisms that help mitigate anxiety. These results underscore the importance of teaching and reinforcing effective coping strategies to improve both emotional regulation and communication performance.

Overall, the moderate positive relationship indicates that coping mechanisms serve as essential tools for managing public speaking anxiety among students. While some strategies, like Positive Thinking and Peer Seeking, are particularly effective, others, such as Resignation, may reflect less adaptive responses. The findings suggest that anxiety is not solely detrimental; rather, it can stimulate the use of constructive strategies that enhance performance readiness. Understanding these patterns allows educators to tailor interventions that strengthen adaptive coping and reduce reliance on less effective responses. Ultimately, fostering effective coping mechanisms can improve students' confidence, resilience, and overall communicative competence.

7.6 Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Public Speaking Anxiety

Table 6 presents the regression analysis of coping mechanisms as predictors of public speaking anxiety among 172 students. The model yielded an R^2 value of .345 and an adjusted R^2 of .325, indicating that approximately 32.5% of the variance in public speaking anxiety can be explained by the coping strategies included in the analysis. The overall regression model was statistically significant ($F = 6.77, p < .01$), confirming that these predictors collectively influence anxiety levels. Among the mechanisms, Positive Thinking ($B = .334, p = .003$) was the strongest and most significant predictor, while Peer Seeking ($B = .204, p = .017$) and Resignation ($B = .117, p = .045$) also significantly predicted anxiety. In contrast, Preparation ($B = -.076, p = .487$) and Relaxation ($B = .068, p = .405$) did not significantly predict anxiety, suggesting that their influence is comparatively minimal in this sample.

Table 6: Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Public Speaking Anxiety

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>B</i>
(Constant)	1.227	.311	
Preparation	-.076	.110	.4870
Relaxation	.068	.082	.4047
Positive Thinking	.334	.113	.003**
Peer Seeking	.204	.085	.017*
Resignation	.117	.058	.045*
R^2	.345		
Adjusted R^2	.325		
<i>F</i>	6.77**		

* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$.

These results indicate that certain coping mechanisms are closely associated with students' public speaking anxiety, supporting prior research on cognitive and social responses to stress. Martiningsih et al. (2024) note that strategies such as positive thinking, peer support, and even resignation are often employed reactively, reflecting how students manage anxiety once it arises rather than preventing it. Similarly, Muhibbah and Amalia (2025) argue that effective coping strategies ideally reduce fear and enhance confidence, while Afidawati et al. (2024) emphasize that preparation, relaxation, and peer-seeking reflect proactive efforts that coexist alongside ongoing anxiety. The positive association of some coping strategies with higher anxiety underscores that students may rely on these methods as psychological support rather than as immediate anxiety-reducing tools.

Overall, the regression analysis suggests that coping mechanisms collectively play a significant role in students' experiences of public speaking anxiety. Strategies such as Positive Thinking, Peer Seeking, and Resignation are most strongly linked to higher anxiety, indicating they are often used in response to stress rather than as preventive measures. Meanwhile, Preparation and Relaxation, although commonly practiced, do not show a statistically meaningful effect on anxiety levels in this study. This pattern illustrates that coping behaviors may coexist with anxiety because they are reactive tools, reflecting students' attempts to manage rather than eliminate discomfort. Understanding these dynamics can inform educators and counselors in promoting more effective, preventive coping strategies to build confidence and reduce public speaking anxiety over time.

7.7 Correlation Matrix Between Motivation to Learn English and Coping Mechanisms

Table 7 presents the correlation between students' motivation to learn English and their coping mechanisms for public speaking anxiety. The results show statistically significant positive correlations across all indicators at $p < .01$, with an overall correlation coefficient of .599, indicating a moderate to strong positive relationship. This suggests that students with higher motivation to learn English are more likely to employ coping strategies when managing public speaking anxiety.

Table 7: Correlation Matrix Between Motivation to Learn English and Coping Mechanisms

Coping Mechanisms on Public Speaking Anxiety	Motivation to learn English
Preparation	.589** (.000)
Relaxation	.422** (.000)
Positive Thinking	.629** (.000)
Peer Seeking	.501** (.000)
Resignation	.287** (.0001)
Overall	.599** (.000)

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Among the coping mechanisms, Positive Thinking ($r = .629, p < .01$) demonstrated the strongest correlation, implying that motivated students tend to adopt constructive self-talk and optimistic perspectives to overcome anxiety. Preparation ($r = .589, p < .01$) also showed a substantial correlation, highlighting that motivated learners are inclined to prepare thoroughly as part of their coping process. Peer Seeking ($r = .501, p < .01$) and Relaxation ($r = .422, p < .01$) were moderately correlated, reflecting the role of social support and calming techniques in reinforcing motivation. In contrast, Resignation ($r = .287, p < .01$) exhibited the weakest correlation, suggesting that passive acceptance of anxiety is less associated with motivation to learn English. The findings show that students with higher motivation to learn English are more likely to use coping strategies, such as positive thinking, thorough preparation, peer support, and relaxation, to manage public speaking anxiety, with resignation being least associated with motivation. Preparation, relaxation, and positive thinking are especially important, as they help learners actively reframe anxiety and build confidence (Lestari et al., 2024; Hadi & Yuliasari, 2024). Overall, motivation drives students to take proactive steps to handle anxiety rather than avoid it, supported by evidence that intrinsic motivation enhances persistence in language learning (Hussain et al., 2019).

7.8 Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Motivation to Learn English

Table 8 presents a regression analysis of coping mechanisms as predictors of students' motivation to learn English, based on responses from 172 participants. The model produced an R^2 value of .445 and an adjusted R^2 of .428, indicating that approximately 42.8% of the variance in motivation to learn English can be explained by the coping mechanisms included in the analysis. The overall regression model was statistically significant ($F = 1.06, p < .01$), confirming that the predictors collectively explain students' motivation levels.

Table 8: Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Motivation to Learn English

Variable	B	SE B	B
(Constant)	.330	.311	
Preparation	.373	.110	.001**
Relaxation	-.043	.082	.596
Positive Thinking	.435	.113	.0002**
Peer Seeking	.080	.085	.347
Resignation	.057	.058	.323
R^2	.445		
Adjusted R^2	.428		
F	1.06**		

* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$.

Among the coping mechanisms, Preparation ($B = .373, p = .001$) and Positive Thinking ($B = .435, p = .0002$) emerged as significant predictors of motivation. This suggests that students who prepare thoroughly and adopt constructive self-talk are more likely to demonstrate higher motivation in learning English. In contrast, Relaxation ($B = -.043, p = .596$), Peer Seeking ($B = .080, p = .347$), and Resignation ($B = .057, p = .323$) did not significantly predict motivation, implying

that these strategies, while practiced, do not exert a strong statistical influence on students' drive to learn the language.

The regression analysis shows that coping mechanisms collectively explain about 42.8% of the variance in students' motivation to learn English, and the overall model is statistically significant. Among the strategies, Preparation and Positive Thinking are significant predictors, indicating that students who prepare thoroughly and engage in constructive self-talk are more motivated. In contrast, Relaxation, Peer Seeking, and Resignation do not significantly predict motivation, suggesting that these strategies have little impact on students' drive to learn English. This implies that coping strategies that involve personal effort and mindset are more effective at enhancing motivation than passive or social approaches. Consistent with this, Gaoat et al. (2022) found that learners who actively prepare and apply positive cognitive strategies manage speaking anxiety more effectively and demonstrate greater confidence and persistence in English communication tasks.

8. Recommendations

Based on the findings, several recommendations can be proposed to support students in managing public speaking anxiety and enhancing motivation to learn English. Instructors should integrate structured, scaffolded speaking activities that gradually increase in difficulty, allowing learners to build confidence while practicing proactive coping strategies, such as preparation and positive self-talk. Training in cognitive coping strategies, including constructive self-talk, goal-setting, and visualization, should be emphasized to strengthen resilience and emotional regulation during communicative tasks.

Opportunities for peer support and collaborative learning, such as group presentations or peer feedback sessions, can further reinforce coping efforts and create a positive learning environment. Additionally, motivation-focused interventions that highlight the personal relevance and benefits of English proficiency can sustain learner engagement, while brief relaxation or mindfulness exercises may complement cognitive strategies to manage stress. Finally, instructors should monitor students who rely on resignation or exhibit high anxiety, providing individualized guidance to encourage more adaptive coping behaviors and prevent disengagement.

9. Conclusion

This study examined students' public speaking anxiety, coping mechanisms, motivation to learn English, and the relationships among these variables. Results showed that most participants were first- and second-year students, indicating that the findings largely reflect the experiences of learners who are still adjusting to academic communication demands. Findings demonstrated that students generally experience a high level of public speaking anxiety, confirming that speaking before an audience remains a significant communicative challenge. Despite this, students reported a moderately high use of coping mechanisms, particularly preparation and

positive thinking, suggesting that learners actively attempt to manage their anxiety through both cognitive and behavioral strategies.

Social support and relaxation techniques were also practiced, though to a lesser extent, while resignation was the least preferred approach, indicating that most students do not passively accept their anxiety. Students also demonstrated high motivation to learn English, which appears to encourage engagement with communicative tasks despite anxiety. Correlation analyses revealed that both anxiety and motivation were positively associated with coping strategies, highlighting their adaptive role, while regression analyses indicated that positive thinking and preparation significantly predict motivation, and that positive thinking, peer seeking, and resignation predict higher anxiety levels.

Overall, the findings suggest that public speaking anxiety, coping mechanisms, and motivation to learn English are interrelated constructs within the language learning process. While anxiety remains prevalent, students demonstrate resilience by adopting adaptive coping strategies and maintaining strong motivation. These results underscore the importance of instructional interventions that strengthen students' confidence, promote strategic preparation, and cultivate positive self-beliefs in order to reduce anxiety and enhance communicative competence. Future programs and classroom practices may benefit from integrating structured speaking activities, supportive peer environments, and training in cognitive coping strategies to help learners manage anxiety while sustaining motivation in language learning.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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Appendix: Survey Questionnaire

Dear Respondent,
Greetings!

We are conducting a study entitled **“Coping Strategies and Motivation to Learn English with Public Speaking Anxiety among College Students.”** In this study, we aim to better understand how students manage public speaking anxiety and what motivates them to learn English. We kindly ask for your time and effort in answering the questions in this questionnaire, as your responses are important and will greatly contribute to the success of our research.

The questionnaire is composed of four parts. The first part collects your demographic information; the second explores your coping strategies; the third focuses on your motivation to learn English; and the fourth examines your experiences with public speaking anxiety. Please be assured that all information you provide will be treated with the strictest confidentiality and used solely for research purposes.

Your participation is highly valued, and your honest responses will make a meaningful contribution to this study. We sincerely appreciate your time, effort, and cooperation in helping us complete this research.

Respectfully yours,
The Researchers

Part I: Demographic Profile

Name (optional): _____
 Year Level: First Year Second Year Third year Fourth Year
 Sex: Male Female

Part II. Coping Strategies

Instruction: Please read each of the statements carefully and indicate the frequency with which you use each strategy in coping with public speaking anxiety. Kindly use the scale below as your guide in answering.

(5) Always (4) Often (3) Sometimes (2) Rarely (1) Never

Part II. Coping Strategies					
Preparation	5	4	3	2	1
1. I try to get used to using English.					
2. I study hard.					
3. I prepare myself better.					
4. I peruse the material before I am called on by the teacher.					
5. I ask for help from friends.					
6. I check my dictionary.					
7. I ask the teacher some questions.					
8. I practice English in my mind.					
9. I think carefully about where I am having trouble.					
10. I concentrate on the class.					
11. I listen carefully to what my classmates say in class.					
12. I try to perform my best.					
13. I try to read carefully.					
14. I ask the teacher to speak more slowly.					
15. I try to guess the meaning of a difficult passage.					
16. I try to make a habit of studying English every day.					
17. I try to obtain good summaries of lecture notes.					
Relaxation					
18. I take a deep breath.					
19. I try to relax.					
20. I try to calm down.					
21. I close my eyes.					
22. I pretend to be calm.					
23. I shake my body.					
24. I touch my hair.					
25. I play with my hands.					
26. I look at my watch.					
27. I write "people" on my palm and swallow it.					
Positive Thinking					
28. I try to be confident.					
29. I tell myself that English is not so important.					
30. I try to think positively.					

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31. I tell myself that I'm OK.					
32. I try not to think of people around me.					
33. I believe in myself.					
34. I try to enjoy the tension.					
35. I think of my favorite song.					
36. I cheer myself up.					
37. I imagine myself giving a great performance.					
38. I tell myself that I can do it.					
39. I tell myself that I am better than the others.					
40. I try to take it easy.					
41. I try not to take it seriously.					
42. I use anxiety to motivate myself.					
43. I just try to be myself.					
44. I tell myself that I'm not anxious.					
45. I say a prayer.					
46. I try not to think of the consequences.					
47. I tell myself that my answer is correct.					
48. I tell myself that it's OK to make mistakes.					
49. I tell myself that mistakes are good because I can learn from them.					
50. I tell myself that even if I am poor at English, I am good at other subjects.					
51. I try to enjoy English.					
52. I think of something pleasant.					
53. I think of a joke.					
54. I think of something else.					
55. I tell myself to study harder for the next class.					
Peer Seeking					
56. I tell myself that difficult problems for me are also difficult for others.					
57. I tell myself that the others must also be anxious.					
58. I look for others who are having difficulty understanding the class.					
59. I look for others who are having difficulty controlling their anxiety.					
60. I ask students around me if they understand the class.					
61. I talk with friends around me.					
62. I look around.					
63. I deliberately perform poorly.					
Resignation					
64. I give up.					
65. I don't make useless resistance.					
66. I accept the situation.					
67. I just try to put up with the situation.					
68. I sleep in class.					
69. I stop paying attention.					

Part III. Motivation to Learn English

Instruction: Please read each of the statements below carefully. The following items assess your motivation and attitude toward learning the English language. Indicate your response based on how often each statement reflects your thoughts, feelings, or behaviors. Use the scale provided below to guide your answers.

(5) Always (4) Often (3) Sometimes (2) Rarely (1) Never

Part III. Motivation to Learn English	5	4	3	2	1
1. I like English more than other subjects.					
2. I would like to have more personal practice in my English course.					
3. If I saw a tourist on the street, I would like to speak English.					
4. I would like to have more English spoken.					
5. In my English study, I get through hard work.					
6. Doing my homework, I carry on till I really know it.					
7. I work more with my English studies than with other subjects.					
8. If there is a panel discussion on the radio in English, I just do my best to understand it.					
9. Learning English is more important to me just because I want to get a good job.					
10. Other people think more highly of me if I know a foreign language.					
11. Learning a foreign language makes me a more knowledgeable person.					
12. I would like to learn English because I would like to teach it.					
13. Learning English is important to me because I can then get in contact with English-speaking people.					
14. I would like to learn English because I would like to be like a native speaker.					
15. I learn English because I would like to join the English people.					
16. I learn English because I would like to get familiar with English culture.					
17. I would like to learn English perfectly.					
18. I am curious about English.					
19. I would choose to learn English even if it weren't compulsory.					
20. I feel learning a foreign language truly helps me to develop my real self.					
21. I think academic learning is pleasant.					
22. I think that the number of academic years should be increased.					
23. If I could choose, I would take more courses in English.					
24. I think English courses in university should be increased.					
25. I love English/American music.					
26. It is important to know life in the English-speaking world.					
27. I found the English way of life exciting.					
28. I think one should know English history and culture.					
29. I love the sound of English.					
30. I think English is an exciting language.					
31. I think it's useful to know the inner structure of English.					
32. I would really like to understand how the English language works.					
33. I love the way English is taught to us.					
34. I feel I can express myself in the English lessons.					
35. I find our English teaching methods useful.					
36. I find our English teaching methods boring.					

Part IV. Public Speaking Anxiety

Instruction: The statements below reflect your experiences and feelings related to public speaking anxiety. Please read each statement carefully and select only one response for each item. Use the following Likert scale to indicate how frequently each statement applies to you.

(5) Always (4) Often (3) Sometimes (2) Rarely (1) Never

Part IV. Public Speaking Anxiety					
	5	4	3	2	1
1. I never feel quite sure of myself while I am speaking English.					
2. I start to panic when I have to speak English without preparation in advance.					
3. In a speaking class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.					
4. I feel confident while I am speaking English.					
5. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking English.					
6. I am afraid that other students will laugh at me while I am speaking English.					
7. I get so nervous when the language teacher asks me to speak English which I have prepared in advance.					
8. I have no fear of speaking English.					
9. I can feel my heart pounding when I am going to be called on.					
10. I feel relaxed while speaking English.					
11. It embarrasses me to volunteer to go out first to speak English.					
12. I face the prospect of speaking English with confidence.					
13. Certain parts of my body feel very tense and rigid while speaking English.					
14. I feel anxious while waiting to speak English.					
15. I dislike using my voice and body expressively while speaking English.					
16. I have trouble coordinating my movements while speaking English.					
17. Even if I am very well-prepared, I feel anxious about speaking English.					