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**PRONUNCIATION ANXIETY AND PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY
FORMATION: EXPERIENCES OF INDONESIAN PRE-SERVICE EFL
TEACHERS**

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Abstract: Pronunciation anxiety (PA) is one of the psychological factors that affects how pre-service EFL teachers develop their confidence and professional identity as future teachers. Despite growing research on PA in language learning contexts, studies that specifically examine how PA is reflected in the professional identity formation of Indonesian pre-service EFL teachers remain limited. This study aimed to explore the types of pronunciation anxiety experienced by pre-service EFL teachers and to describe how PA affected their professional identity. This study used a mixed-method design, combining a four-point Likert-scale questionnaire administered to 30 participants and semi-structured interviews conducted with 15 participants from an English Education Study Program at one university in Bogor, Indonesia. The quantitative findings show that fear of negative evaluation (M=2.77) and pedagogical pronunciation anxiety (M=2.73) were the most dominant types of PA, both falling within the high category, while communication apprehension (M=2.50) also fell in the high category. Accent anxiety (M=2.47) and segmental/suprasegmental anxiety (M=2.40) fell within the low category. The qualitative findings show that pronunciation anxiety affects pre-service teachers' self-confidence, teaching readiness, and professional identity. Although good pronunciation is often associated with a prospective teacher's professionalism, most view professional identity as something that is shaped through learning and experience. Therefore, pronunciation anxiety can influence the process of professional identity formation among prospective teachers of English as a foreign language.

Keywords: Pronunciation Anxiety, Professional Identity, Pre-service EFL Teachers

INTRODUCTION

Pronunciation is one of the most fundamental aspects of English speaking skills, as it determines the extent to which a message can be understood by the interlocutor and how a person's language ability is perceived by others (Derwing & Munro, 2015). In the context of language learning, pronunciation does not stand alone as a purely technical skill, but is also closely tied to one's ability to communicate clearly and effectively. This applies to anyone learning English, yet it becomes increasingly important for those who will eventually take on the role of educators, particularly pre-service EFL teachers.

According to (Diller, 2020), Many pre-service teachers view pronunciation as an important skill. They are aware that good pronunciation is essential as a teacher. Pre-service English teachers refer to students in the English teacher education program, who are learning and being prepared to become professional teachers. As pre-service teachers, they are required to be able to communicate actively and clearly in the classroom. They are also prepared to be the main models in the classroom who will facilitate, motivate, and guide their own students to dare to speak in English. However, this is often hindered by feelings of low self-confidence and anxiety that frequently arise when they want to communicate. Recent studies show that pronunciation errors are one of the sources of speaking anxiety that impacts the decline in communication participation in class (Yousif, 2025)(Marshalina, 2025). This condition is certainly related to Pronunciation Anxiety (PA), which is a common anxiety that can reduce a person's confidence in communicating.

Pronunciation Anxiety (PA) is a type of anxiety that occurs when learners feel afraid and lack confidence when pronouncing words or even sentences in English correctly (Baran-Łucarz, 2014). Anxiety occurs because learners are worried about mispronouncing words, concerned about negative judgments, and even apprehensive about perceptions when speaking in English. PA may occur in various situations, from everyday conversations to academic presentations. This condition is often more intense compared to general language anxiety because pronunciation errors are more easily noticeable and directly affect the comprehensibility of communication. On the other hand, (Horwitz et al., 1986) Identify communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation as the main components of foreign language classroom anxiety, both of these can arise in situations involving pronunciation.

PA itself appears in five related types, each reflecting a different side of the pronunciation anxiety experience. Accent anxiety refers to the anxiety that comes from worrying about having a non-native accent and believing that sounding like a native speaker is the ideal standard (Coppinger & Sheridan, 2022). Fear of negative evaluation refers to the worry of being judged poorly by others because of pronunciation mistakes (Alrashidi, 2022)(Li et al., 2023). Communication

apprehension occurs when a person feels afraid or uncomfortable communicating because of pronunciation concerns, which can lead them to avoid speaking situations or feel less confident in conversation (Horwitz et al., 1986)(Richards & Pun, 2022). In teaching contexts, pre-service teachers may also experience pedagogical pronunciation anxiety, which refers to worries about their ability to teach pronunciation, correct student errors, or act as a language model in the classroom (Islam et al., 2024). Finally, segmental/suprasegmental anxiety is a separate type that refers to the specific anxiety a person feels when they need to pronounce English accurately at the segmental level, such as individual sounds and words, as well as at the suprasegmental level, which includes word stress, rhythm, and intonation (Szyszka, 2016)(Mamang et al., 2023).

In a wider context, professional identity is considered one of the most important parts of pre-service teacher development, as it shapes how they see themselves in their future role as educators. Professional identity includes the beliefs, values, self-perceptions, and personal commitment to the teaching profession, all of which develop gradually throughout one's education and can affect their confidence, readiness, and dedication as a future teacher (Hong, 2010). For pre-service EFL teachers, concerns about pronunciation can affect more than just their speaking performance, because as future educators, they are expected to communicate well and serve as language models in the classroom, meaning that the anxiety they experience may be reflected in how they see their own readiness and ability as future teachers.

For pre-service English teachers, pronunciation anxiety may affect more than speaking performance. As future educators, they are expected to serve as language models and communicate effectively in the classroom. Therefore, concerns about pronunciation may influence how they view their readiness and abilities as future teachers. Feelings of pronunciation-related anxiety, such as fear of making mistakes, low confidence, and concerns about language competence, may lead them to doubt their ability to meet professional expectations. As a result, pronunciation anxiety may shape how pre-service teachers perceive themselves as future professionals.

Previous studies have shown that PA has a significant impact on many aspects of language learning. (Alimorad & Adib, 2022) found that PA noticeably affects learners' communicative behavior and reduces their confidence in using English, suggesting that pronunciation concerns do not only affect speaking performance but also shape learners' confidence, participation, and self-perception in various learning situations. Similar findings have also been reported in the Indonesian context, where learners generally experience moderate to high levels of pronunciation anxiety, and this has a negative effect on their participation and confidence in classroom interaction (Wati et al., 2025)(Amin et al., 2023).

Although many studies have looked at PA and its relationship to speaking performance, research that specifically examines how PA is reflected in the

professional identity formation of pre-service EFL teachers in Indonesia is still very limited. Most previous studies have focused mainly on speaking performance and communicative behaviour, while the connection between pronunciation anxiety and how pre-service teachers see themselves as future professional educators has received much less attention. Yet as future educators who are expected to use English effectively and serve as language models in the classroom, understanding how PA is reflected in their professional identity is an important area that still needs to be explored further.

Based on the background and research gap described above, this study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What types of Pronunciation Anxiety do Indonesian pre-service teachers experience?
2. How does pronunciation anxiety affect the professional identity formation of Indonesian pre-service EFL teachers?

In line with these questions, this study aims to explore the five types of PA experienced by Indonesian pre-service EFL teachers, while also describing the relationship between these PA experiences and their perceptions of professional identity as future educators. What makes this study different from previous research is its specific focus on the relationship between PA and professional identity development, an area that has not been widely discussed before, as most earlier studies have focused more on how PA affects communication and speaking performance.

METHOD

This study used a mixed-method design that combined quantitative and qualitative data collection at the same time. This approach was chosen because using only one method would not be enough to fully understand how pronunciation anxiety affects pre-service EFL teachers and how it connects to the way they see themselves as future teachers. Quantitative data were collected through a questionnaire to measure participants' pronunciation anxiety levels, while qualitative data were gathered through interviews to explore how anxiety shapes their professional identity. Following (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017), the qualitative findings were used to support and explain the quantitative results.

Participants in this study were students from the English Education Study Program at one university in Bogor. To be included in the study, participants had to be currently enrolled as pre-service EFL teacher candidates and have direct experience in micro-teaching activities in the classroom. Purposive sampling was used to select participants who could reflect meaningfully on their pronunciation anxiety experiences (Etikan et al., 2016). A total of 30 participants completed the questionnaire, and 15 of them agreed to take part in the interviews. To protect their

privacy, each participant was given a number code from Participant 1 to Participant 30, and no personal information was collected or shared.

Two instruments were used in this study to collect data on pronunciation anxiety and its relationship to professional identity perception. The first instrument was a questionnaire adapted from (Baran-Łucarz, 2014), The instrument was designed for EFL learners, and adaptations were made to better fit the pre-service teacher context of this study. The adapted questionnaire addresses five types of Pronunciation Anxiety: accent anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, communication apprehension, pedagogical pronunciation anxiety, and segmental/suprasegmental anxiety. Each item was rated on a four-point scale: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Agree (3), and Strongly Agree (4), a format chosen for its ability to capture differences in attitude and perception clearly (Matas, 2018).

The second instrument was a semi-structured interview guide consisting of 10 questions adapted from Baran-Lucarz (2014). Semi-structured interviews are a widely used method of qualitative data collection that allows researchers to explore participants' experiences and perspectives in depth while maintaining a consistent focus throughout the interview session (Creswell & Poth, 2016). The questions were organized around the same five types of pronunciation anxiety addressed in the questionnaire, with two questions allocated to each type to allow for in-depth exploration. This instrument was designed to capture how pronunciation anxiety influences participants' sense of themselves as future EFL teachers

The quantitative data obtained from the questionnaire were analysed using descriptive statistics in the form of mean scores (Ary et al., 2019). The mean was obtained by calculating each response according to its assigned value, summing the results, and dividing by the total number of responses (N). Based on this calculation, the mean scores were classified into four categories: Very Low, Low, High, and Very High, as presented in Table 1. The use of mean scores for analysing Likert-scale data is widely accepted in educational research (Boone, 2012) (Sullivan & Artino, 2014).

Table 1. Interpretation of Mean Scores

Mean Range	Interpretation
3.25–4.00	Very High / Strongly Positive
2.50–3.24	High / Positive
1.75–2.49	Low
1.00–1.74	Very Low

Interview data were analysed using thematic analysis as described by (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Rather than applying a fixed coding framework from the start, this approach allows themes to emerge gradually from the data itself, beginning with close reading of the transcripts, moving through coding and theme development, and ending with a written account of the patterns identified. This

inductive quality made it especially suitable for capturing how participants describe their pronunciation anxiety experiences and what those experiences mean for how they see themselves as future teachers.

Because qualitative analysis always involves interpretation, steps were taken to make sure the process was not shaped by one researcher's view alone. Two raters coded the transcripts independently, then met to compare their results and work through any differences. Creswell & Poth (2018) argue that this kind of collaborative coding strengthens the dependability of qualitative findings by bringing more than one perspective into the analysis.

In addition, peer debriefing was conducted as part of the trustworthiness procedure, in which an external reviewer reviewed the coding process and discussed the emerging themes with the research team to enhance the reliability of the qualitative findings. A supervisor reviewed with the researchers to ensure that interpretations remained grounded in the data rather than being influenced by personal assumptions. This procedure is recommended as a strategy to strengthen reliability in thematic analysis by providing critical feedback and perspectives regarding data interpretation (Nowell et al., 2017). Inter-rater agreement was calculated using Cohen's Kappa (Cohen Jacob, 1960), yielding a score of 0.82, a value widely regarded as indicating strong agreement and confirming that the coding was carried out consistently.

All participants joined the study voluntarily and were told they could stop at any time without any consequences. No personal information was collected, and all data were kept securely. These steps were taken to follow standard ethical guidelines in educational research and to make sure the findings of this study are trustworthy.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The results of this study are presented in two main parts. The first part reports the quantitative and qualitative findings on five types of Pronunciation Anxiety (PA) experienced by Indonesian pre-service EFL teachers. The second part presents findings related to how those anxiety experiences connect to participants' professional identity formation. Each type of PA is discussed using both the questionnaire results and the interview responses from four participants.

1. Types of Pronunciation Anxiety among Pre-Service EFL Teachers

The quantitative findings show that participants experience different levels of pronunciation anxiety across the five types measured in this study. As shown in Table 1, three types fall within the high category, while two types fall within the low category, suggesting that PA among these pre-service teachers is present but not equally strong across all aspects of pronunciation.

Table 2. Frequency and Mean Scores of Pronunciation Anxiety Types

Types	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	N	Mean
Accent Anxiety	3	11	15	1	30	2.47
Fear of Negative Evaluation	2	9	13	6	30	2.77
Communication Apprehension	1	15	12	2	30	2.50
Pedagogical Pronunciation Anxiety	2	8	16	4	30	2.73
Segmental/Suprasegmental Anxiety	3	13	13	1	30	2.40
Overall mean						2.57

Among the five types, the most dominant type is fear of negative evaluation, with a score of (M=2.77). Followed by type pedagogical pronunciation anxiety with a score (M=2.73) and communication apprehension with a score of (M=2.50), these three types are included in the high category. Meanwhile, type accent anxiety with a score of (M=2.47) and segmental/suprasegmental anxiety with a score of (M=2.40) are included in the low category, suggesting that while participants are aware of their accent limitations and phonological challenges, these concerns do not cause as much anxiety as the social and professional types of PA. Overall shows that the pronunciation anxiety experienced by pre-service teachers is mainly driven by concerns about social judgment and professional readiness, rather than technical phonological difficulties alone. The qualitative results from the semi-structured interviews provide a deeper look into each of these types.

a. Accent Anxiety

Types	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	N	Mean
Accent Anxiety	3	11	15	1	30	2.47

Accent anxiety received a mean score of 2.47, which falls in the low category. It shows that almost all participants (53.3%) agreed that they feel less confident about their accent. Pre-service teachers may have gradually learned to accept accent differences as a normal part of being a non-native English speaker, even while knowing that there is still room for improvement.

The interview data reveal that this acceptance is not always straightforward. Participants described moments where the gap between their accent and native speaker norms still created self-doubt, particularly in spontaneous speaking situations.

"I sometimes still feel less confident about my accent, because when I hear a native speaker talk, it sounds so different from the way I speak." (Participant 2)

Another participant pointed to a specific context where the feeling becomes more noticeable, *"When I read aloud, I feel like my pronunciation is okay. But when I speak without reading, it's just whatever comes out."* (Participant 4)

The findings suggest that accent anxiety, while present, operates at a relatively low level of intensity among these participants, and that their awareness of accent differences tends to coexist with a degree of acceptance rather than acute distress.

b. Fear of Negative Evaluation

Types	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	N	Mean
Fear of Negative Evaluation	2	9	13	6	30	2.77

Fear of negative received a mean score of 2.77, the most dominant type in this study, and it is in the high category. This result shows that worrying about being judged negatively by others when mispronouncing words is a major source of anxiety for these pre-service teachers. Fear of negative evaluation is social in nature because it comes up around other people and is shaped by how pre-service teachers expect their peers, lecturers, and conversation partners to react. The relatively high score on this type, with 63.3% of participants agreeing or strongly agreeing, shows how strongly the social side of pronunciation anxiety is felt in academic settings.

The interview data give clear examples of this experience. One participant described how being corrected by peers in class had a lasting effect on willingness to speak,

"In class, when someone mispronounces a word, they get corrected, which is fine, but sometimes it's done in a harsh way. That kind of experience really gets into your head and makes you feel like you did something terribly wrong, so you end up hesitating to speak up after that." (Participant 1)

Another participant described how making a pronunciation mistake in front of others immediately makes them worry about how they are seen as a language learner: *"When I mispronounce something in front of others, I immediately think they will assume I cannot speak English well, or that my English is bad. So sometimes I end up feeling embarrassed on my own."* (Participant 2)

One participant added that the fear of being judged gets stronger when the other person is seen as more proficient, *"Some of the people I talk to are really good at English. I sometimes feel like my pronunciation is okay, but then the other person tells me I said something wrong. That really makes me doubt myself."* (Participant 4)

It shows that fear of negative evaluation is the most prominent type of PA among these pre-service teachers, strongly shaped by social comparison and the experience of being publicly corrected in academic settings.

c. Communication Apprehension

Types	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	N	Mean
Communication Apprehension	1	15	12	2	30	2.5

Communication apprehension received a mean score of 2.50, placing it at the lower edge of the high category and making it the third type overall. The fairly even split between those who disagreed (53.3%) and those who agreed (46.7%) reflects a divided experience among participants, where a considerable number feel hesitant to speak English due to pronunciation concerns, while a similarly large group does not report consistent avoidance behavior. This suggests that communication apprehension shows up selectively rather than as a general pattern, and is more likely to appear in specific situations where participants feel socially exposed or outperformed by more proficient peers.

One participant described how avoiding communication in class became a go-to response when feeling uncertain: *"When the lecturer asks a question, sometimes I just respond with a laugh or a smile, or just shake my head."* (Participant 1)

Another participant noted that avoidance was especially triggered when talking with highly proficient people, *"I talk to my friend quite often, and she is really good at English. So, I sometimes feel insecure when speaking with her, and I tend to avoid it."* (Participant 2)

One participant described a broader tendency to default to Indonesian as a safer choice, *"I actually want to speak English, but I am afraid that what I say will be wrong, whether it is the grammar or the way I pronounce things. Then I worry about being judged, so I just go with Indonesian. It feels safer."* (Participant 4)

These results show that communication apprehension is a real but situational type of PA among these participants, and that avoidance behavior is more strongly triggered by social comparison and perceived proficiency gaps than by pronunciation concerns on their own.

d. Pedagogical Pronunciation Anxiety

Types	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	N	Mean
Pedagogical Pronunciation Anxiety	2	8	16	4	30	2.73

Pedagogical pronunciation anxiety received a mean score of 2.73, placing it in the high category and making it the second most dominant type in this study. This result is especially significant given the professional context of the participants, as it directly reflects the anxiety they feel when thinking about their future role as English teachers. With 66.7% of participants agreeing or strongly agreeing that their pronunciation ability is not yet good enough to teach students, the result suggests

that PA among pre-service teachers goes well beyond personal discomfort and reaches into how they see their professional readiness and identity as future educators.

The interview data show a range of responses to this concern, from moderate uncertainty to a stronger sense of feeling unprepared. One participant described her confidence as depending a lot on further self-improvement,

"I am not really confident because my own quality is not that great right now. I am not even sure if I will be able to do it, but I know we have to keep trying." (Participant 1)

Another participant expressed a stronger sense of inadequacy, framing the risk of teaching incorrect pronunciation as a professional and ethical concern,

"To be an English teacher, your grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation should already have as few mistakes as possible. If we still have errors and we teach that to students, we are going to damage their learning." (Participant 3)

In contrast, one participant offered a more optimistic perspective, suggesting that professional growth does not require perfection from the outset,

"Being a teacher does not mean you have to be perfect. It is more about being willing to learn and grow. As long as we understand the material, can explain it, and teach it to students, I think we can still be a good teacher." (Participant 2)

These results show that pedagogical pronunciation anxiety is a very meaningful type of PA among these pre-service teachers, and that concerns about teaching pronunciation are closely tied to how they see their own professional identity and readiness to enter the classroom as educators.

e. Segmental/Suprasegmental Anxiety

Types	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	N	Mean
Segmental/Suprasegmental Anxiety	3	13	13	1	30	2.4

Segmental/suprasegmental anxiety received the lowest mean score among all five types 2.40, falling in the low category. The almost perfectly even split between those who disagreed (53.3%) and those who agreed (46.7%) reflects a very divided experience among participants, suggesting that anxiety about the technical side of pronunciation, including individual sounds, word stress, rhythm, and intonation, is neither something everyone feels nor something that is completely absent. This result may suggest that participants vary a lot in which phonological features they find most difficult, and that anxiety at this level is shaped more by each person's individual learning history and exposure than by a common pattern of difficulty.

The interview data make it especially clear is that while the overall score for this type is low, the specific features that cause anxiety are quite different from one participant to another. Word stress came up most often as a source of concern, followed closely by intonation. One participant explained why word stress is especially hard for them,

"I am more worried about stress, because there are many words that look the same but have different stress patterns, like 'address' and 'address'. We have to memorize them. That is what scares me the most, the stress." (Participant 1)

Another participant echoed this, pointing out how hard it is to remember stress patterns when speaking without reading,

"Word stress. Because stress patterns are different for every word, and I often forget or get confused. When I am confused, I need to read it, but when speaking spontaneously, you cannot rely on reading." (Participant 4)

One participant identified intonation as their primary area of concern due to its potential impact on listener comprehension,

"I would say intonation. I am worried that my intonation is not clear enough when people listen to me, and that they might misunderstand what I am saying." (Participant 3)

Meanwhile, one participant reported feeling anxious about both at the same time, *"Probably intonation and word stress. Sometimes it gets confusing because if you get the stress or intonation wrong, the meaning can change, or it just sounds odd." (Participant 2)*

These results suggest that segmental/suprasegmental anxiety, while the least dominant type statistically, reflects a genuinely varied range of phonological concerns among pre-service teachers, with word stress and intonation standing out as the two features most likely to cause anxiety in this group.

2. Pronunciation Anxiety and Professional Identity Formation among Pre-Service EFL Teachers

This study examined the relationship between pronunciation anxiety and pre-service teachers' perceptions of themselves as future professional identity formation, in addition to measuring the five categories of PA. In order to explore this relationship, three questions were posed during the interviews: whether PA makes them feel unprofessional, whether it impacts their confidence as prospective teachers, and whether they think someone with PA can still work as a professional English teacher. All of the participants' answers paint a nuanced picture that extends beyond worry and touches on how they perceive their own identities as aspiring teachers.

a. Pronunciation Anxiety as a Challenge to Pre-Service Teachers' Professional Identity Confidence

All participants acknowledged that their confidence as pre-service teachers is significantly impacted by pronunciation anxiety. However, each person experiences this impact in a somewhat different way. Some people directly doubt their abilities to stand in front of a class as a result of their fear. For others, it puts pressure on them to maintain getting better before they feel prepared to instruct.

Participant 1 described how the fear of making mistakes in the classroom directly lowers her confidence, *"It really affects me. The more afraid I am, the more it brings down my confidence. Right now, I am also afraid of teaching, afraid of saying the wrong thing. If I do not keep practising, I will really not be confident at all."*

Participant 3 explained how pronunciation anxiety would interfere with teaching itself, since speaking is unavoidable in the classroom, *"Because I have pronunciation anxiety, and if I force myself to teach English, the pronunciation will automatically come out when I am teaching. That will make me not confident, and it will disturb the teaching process."*

Participant 2 connected confidence directly to the responsibility of being correct as a teacher, *"To be a teacher, you have to be right. If we teach something wrong, that is not allowed. And confidence is something a teacher must have. Because of my pronunciation anxiety, I feel like I cannot be a teacher."*

Participant 4 also felt the effect, framed it more in terms of external expectations rather than personal doubt, *"It affects me quite a bit. I sometimes feel less confident when I have to speak in front of students. I think people expect a lot from teachers, especially when it comes to pronunciation."*

These answers imply that PA influences participants' perceptions of their preparedness and capacity to assume the position of a teacher in addition to their feelings about speaking English in general. This relates to what is known as professional identity (Hong, 2010), which refers to the attitudes and self-perceptions that influence pre-service teachers' conceptions of their future roles as educators. When PA erodes their self-esteem, it also puts strain on the professional identity they are currently developing.

b. Pre-Service Teachers' Perception of Professionalism amid Pronunciation Anxiety

For a variety of reasons, the majority of participants responded in the affirmative when asked if their pronunciation anxiety makes them feel unprofessional as potential teachers. Interestingly, their answers show how closely pronunciation relates to their conception of what it means to be a competent and reliable instructor.

Participant 1 explained that showing anxiety in front of students would directly damage her image as a teacher, *"If we look afraid in front of students, they will also doubt us. If the teacher is not sure about what they are teaching, the students will not be sure either. That looks very unprofessional."*

Participant 3 gave the strongest response, framing mispronunciation as an ethical issue: *"To be a teacher, you should already have as few mistakes as possible in grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. If we still have errors and teach them to students, we are going to damage their learning. That is unprofessional."*

Participant 2 connected the feeling of being unprofessional to the practical reality of teaching without a script: *"A teacher cannot keep looking at a text. But I need to look at a text to speak. That makes me feel less professional."*

Participant 4 offered a slightly more forgiving view, suggesting that professionalism does not require perfection, *"I have thought about it. But I also think being a professional teacher does not mean having perfect pronunciation. What matters is being able to teach and help students learn."*

These responses show that most participants associate professionalism with linguistic accuracy, particularly in pronunciation. This finding is in line with Islam et al. (2024), who argued that for pre-service teachers, the pressure to perform well linguistically is closely tied to their sense of professional identity and credibility in the classroom.

c. Pre-Service Teachers' Perspectives on Professional Identity Formation in the Face of Pronunciation Anxiety

The majority of participants came to the conclusion that, as long as they are prepared to continue learning and developing, having pronunciation anxiety does not permanently bar someone from becoming a professional teacher, despite the uncertainties and concerns raised in the preceding two questions.

Participant 1 believed that continued practice is the key, *"I think you can definitely still be a professional teacher, as long as you keep practising. Do not be afraid. Keep listening to how native speakers pronounce things. The more you practise, the more your confidence will grow, and the more professional you will become."*

Participant 2 shared a similar view, emphasising growth over perfection, *"I think you can still be a professional teacher. Many people are still learning and developing. Pronunciation anxiety makes you less confident, but it does not mean you cannot be a good teacher. As long as you are willing to practise and accept feedback, you can still be professional."*

Participant 4 added that being well-prepared can help manage the anxiety: *"I think you can, as long as you are really well-prepared. A teacher does not just speak randomly, you prepare what they are going to say. If I prepare well enough, I think I can manage the anxiety and still teach effectively."*

Participant 3, however, took a different position: *"I do not think you can be a truly professional teacher if you still have fear around pronunciation. Being professional means you have already mastered those skills: grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. If you are still afraid and still making mistakes, that is not professional."*

The difference between participant 3 view and the other three participants' is significant. While Participants 1, 2, and 4 see professional identity as something that develops over time through effort and willingness to grow, Participant 3 sees it as a standard that must already be met before entering the profession. This reflects what (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009) described as the ongoing and sometimes conflicted nature of professional identity formation, where pre-service teachers are still working out what kind of teacher they want and need to be, and what that identity requires of them.

The findings of this study show that pronunciation anxiety has a strong and wide-ranging impact on how pre-service EFL teachers in Indonesia see themselves as future teachers. All participants felt that pronunciation anxiety pressured them, lowered their confidence, and made it harder for them to feel ready to become teachers. Most of them believed that having good pronunciation is an important part of being seen as a credible and professional teacher. However, despite these worries, most participants still believed that professional identity is something that grows over time through practice, learning, and experience, rather than something a person must already have perfectly before they start teaching.

Discussion

The results of this study show that pronunciation anxiety among Indonesian pre-service EFL teachers is not a single, uniform experience. It takes different shapes depending on the situation, the people involved, and how each participant understands their own role as a future teacher. The discussion below connects these findings to relevant theories and previous research to explain the patterns that appear across the five types of PA and the professional identity questions.

When looking across all five types, a clear pattern emerges. type of fear of negative evaluation (2.77), pedagogical pronunciation anxiety (2.73), and communication apprehension (2.50). These types all fall within the high category. Meanwhile, the type of accent anxiety (2.47) and segmental/suprasegmental anxiety (2.40) these types all fall within the low category. This suggests that participants are aware of their accent limitations and phonological challenges. These types are relatively lower than anxiety related to others' evaluations and doubts about their readiness to fulfill their role as teachers. In other words, the factor that most influences prospective teachers' anxiety is not their technical pronunciation skills, but rather the social and professional pressures associated

with those skills. This finding provides the primary answer to the first research question posed in this study.

The most dominant type found in this study is fear of negative evaluation (2.77), which is in line with (Horwitz et al., 1986), who identified this as one of the central parts of foreign language anxiety. The high score on this type suggests that the anxiety these participants feel is mostly social. It is not just about pronunciation itself, but about what a mistake might say about them in the eyes of others. Participants described being corrected by peers in ways that felt more like judgment than help, and these experiences had a lasting effect on their willingness to speak. This is in line with (Alrashidi, 2022), who found that fear of negative evaluation tends to grow stronger in academic settings where errors are more visible and more likely to draw attention.

The second most dominant type, pedagogical pronunciation anxiety (2.73), which reflects how participants worry about whether their current ability is good enough for their future role as teachers. This type is particularly meaningful because it shows that PA not only affects participants as language learners, but also how they think about their future readiness as educators. This result is consistent with (Islam et al. 2024), who argued that pedagogical pronunciation anxiety is especially serious for pre-service teachers because it directly touches on their sense of professional responsibility. It also connects to (Hong, 2010) view of professional identity as the beliefs and self-perceptions that shape how pre-service teachers understand their future role.

The third most dominant type, communication apprehension (2.50), while sitting at the lower edge of the high category, tells a more nuanced story. The quantitative data show a fairly even split in responses, but the qualitative data make clear that avoidance does happen, just not all the time. Participants tended to avoid communication in situations where they felt socially at risk, such as when speaking with more proficient peers or answering questions in class. This situational pattern is consistent with (MacIntyre et al., 1998), who argued that willingness to communicate is not a fixed trait but changes depending on how confident the speaker feels in a given moment.

The last two parts are accent anxiety (2.47) and segmental/suprasegmental anxiety (2.40), both of which fall in the low category, though the qualitative data show that these concerns are still present and personally felt. For accent anxiety, participants seemed to have developed a kind of acceptance, they know their accent is not like a native's, but they have learned to live with that awareness rather than letting it stop them. For segmental/suprasegmental anxiety, the individual variation was striking, different participants pointed to completely different features as their main source of worry, with word stress and intonation being the most commonly mentioned. This is in line with (Szyszka, 2016), who noted that anxiety about

phonological features varies greatly across learners depending on their background and learning experience.

This study also examined how pronunciation anxiety relates to participants' self-perception as prospective professionals, to answer the second research question. The findings show that PA reaches far beyond the language classroom. Participants described feeling pressured by their pronunciation anxiety in ways that directly lowered their confidence and made it harder for them to feel ready to step into the role of a teacher. Most of them also tied the idea of being a professional teacher to having good pronunciation, which means that when their pronunciation felt inadequate, their sense of professional identity felt shaken as well. Most participants maintained the belief that professional identity is not something that must be fully formed before entering the classroom, it is something that develops gradually through practice, experience, and a sincere desire to continue growing. This is the main answer to the second research question in this study.

This connection between PA and professional identity is consistent with (Hong, 2010), who described professional identity as the set of beliefs and self-perceptions that shape how pre-service teachers understand their future role, and with (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009), who emphasised that professional identity ongoing experience. The contrast between participants who saw professionalism as an ongoing journey and one participant who saw it as a standard that must already be met reflects exactly the kind of tension. Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) described how pre-service teachers are still working out what it means to be the teacher they want to become.

This study shows that PA and professional identity issues are language learning issues, and addressing them requires more than pronunciation drills. It requires building the kind of confidence and self-belief that allows pre-service teachers to see themselves as capable, growing, and professional educators.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to explore the types of pronunciation anxiety (PA) experienced by Indonesian pre-service EFL teachers and to describe how these experiences are reflected in the way they perceive their professional identity formation as future educators. Using a mixed-method approach that combined quantitative data from a Likert-scale questionnaire and qualitative data from semi-structured interviews, this study found that PA is a complex and layered experience that goes beyond pronunciation ability alone, and touches on how these pre-service teachers see themselves as future English language educators.

The first research question indicates that the anxiety regarding pronunciation experienced by these pre-service teachers is of a social nature. The most dominant type of anxiety is the fear of negative evaluation, which is directly related to social life. Here, pre-service teachers' fear of others' opinions causes them

to feel excessive anxiety. This indicates that what most troubles prospective EFL teachers regarding their pronunciation is not the sounds or stress patterns themselves, but rather the pressure of being judged by others and the pressure to meet the standards they believe a teacher must possess.

The second research question, the findings indicate that pronunciation anxiety has a significant impact on how prospective teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) form their professional identities. Pre-service reported that pronunciation anxiety (PA) undermined their self-confidence and made it difficult for them to feel prepared to take on the role of a teacher. Most of them associated being a professional teacher with having good pronunciation, which means that when their pronunciation felt inadequate, their sense of professional identity also diminished. And most participants maintained the belief that professional identity is not something that must be perfected before entering the classroom, but rather something that grows gradually through consistent practice, experience, and a sincere willingness to continuously improve.

These findings suggest that pronunciation anxiety in the context of pre-service teacher education is an issue related to linguistic and professional identity. Therefore, teacher education programs are encouraged to focus on creating a supportive environment where pre-service teachers can build professional self-confidence, rather than merely providing pronunciation training.

Future research is recommended to involve a larger and more diverse group of participants from other universities in Indonesia. Future research may also consider incorporating classroom observations or micro-teaching recordings to identify how pronunciation anxiety actually manifests in real teaching situations. Additionally, exploring what types of teaching support can help prospective teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL) manage pronunciation anxiety while building their professional identities would be a meaningful direction for future research.

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