

Speaking Activities in English Second Language Classroom and the Oral Proficiency of the Grade 11 Students

Rechelle S. Moron¹, Cecilia Q. Velasco, EdD²

^{1,2}San Pablo City, Laguna 4000; Laguna State Polytechnic University- SPC Campus

ABSTRACT: The study was conducted in Our Lady of Mount Carmel Seminary in Sariaya, Quezon. The respondents were composed thirty (30) Grade 11 senior high school students. It sought to determine the oral communication proficiency of the students based on articulation, modulation, stage presence, facial expression, and rapport with the audience before and after being exposed to the teaching strategies in speaking story completion and picture description in terms of pretest and post-test. Moreover, the significant difference between pretest and post-test of students was also explored. This study used experimental research design with the use of speaking activities, and a statistical tool employing frequency and percentage and Test of Difference. Random sampling was used to select the sample respondents. The findings of the study revealed that there is a significant difference between the pretest and post-test result of the student respondents. Based on the results, since the interpreted results on all variables under pretest and post-test conform to the significant difference of 0.00 level, the overall result states that there is a significant difference between the pretest and post-test of the grade 11 students when exposed to the speaking activities, story completion and picture description. The researcher recommends educators may apply the same speaking strategies in learning environment. Furthermore, language educators must consider that the speaking strategies must be appropriate, relevant, and useful. Likewise, the speaking strategies must have the ability to attract learners and sustain their interest and be helpful in terms of attainment of essential learning outcomes. They may also explore and endeavor other speaking strategies that may help improve the oral communication proficiency needs of the students.

KEYWORDS: story completion, picture description, articulation, modulation, stage presence, facial expression, rapport with the audience

INTRODUCTION

One of the abilities that students who are studying English must acquire is speaking. Speaking is a crucial component of communication. It has always been a priority in the classroom to help students speak more clearly. Different cutting-edge technology is being brought to classrooms in the quickly evolving 21st century to educate speaking skills. However, despite the many available facilities that can augment the need of improving the speaking skills of the students, there still exists a downside. Empirically, students still find speaking the second language, English, a difficult task.

The study aims to identify if employing speaking activities, specifically picture description and story completion, in an English Second language classroom will improve the oral proficiency of the Grade 11 students.

The communicative approach serves as one of the study's underlying principles. According to Jack C. Richards, the Communicative Approach, also referred to as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), is a teaching strategy that places an emphasis on the value of real communication for learning. It is predicated on the idea that learning a language necessitates needing to convey important information. When communicating in real situations, learners will use their inborn language learning mechanisms, which will aid in language learning. Activities in the classroom that are based on the communicative approach are characterised by their emphasis on encouraging meaningful and genuine conversation at all levels. Lessons might become more learner-centered, focus on skills rather than systems, and employ real resources. (Andreia Zakime, 2018) ^[1]

Language development occurs spontaneously as part of the human experience and is an innate, necessary component of human genetic makeup, according to Noam Chomsky, the major theorist associated with the nativist theory, who created the concept for the language learning tool (LAD). According to nativist theorists, children naturally organize language norms, which makes learning a native tongue easy for them. They believe that children have linguistic abilities that aid them in their quest for language fluency. (2011, Litchfield and Lambert) ^[2].

There are many ways of teaching and improving speaking and using picture description and story completion activities is one which also provides authenticity in the students' responses and bring out the creativity they have in themselves.

Speaking Activities in English Second Language Classroom and the Oral Proficiency of the Grade 11 Students

As Hamsia explains it, using story completion helps the students improve their speaking abilities. The method can encourage them to speak up for themselves. ^[3]

Hidayati, Puspitasari, and Hadifah also experimented with using the story completion technique to describe the students' speaking abilities. The study's findings suggested that teaching speaking skills to students might be accomplished through the story completion method. The children showed an interest in speaking by acting passionately while being taught and studying. The study concluded that teaching speaking skills using the story completion methodology may be successful and would surely boost students' interest in speaking. ^[4]

In terms of picture description, Murni looks at how using the picture description strategy affects students' advancement in English speaking. It was then suggested suggest that applying the descriptive picture method to classroom instruction enhances students' English fluency. Additionally, based on their responses to the questionnaire, the students felt that teaching English speaking through the use of visuals to describe words was an effective and suitable approach. This finding backs with past research that demonstrated how teaching students to describe visuals can improve their ability to speak English fluently. ^[5]

Pictures were used in the speaking teaching and learning process, according to Nagauleng, et.al., study. The actions taken in their study included applying image-based activities, providing feedback on students' performances, training students to use dictionaries, handing out handouts as daily material, and giving gifts to some engaged students. The teaching and learning of speaking included the use of images. The results showed that using visuals to teach and learn about speaking is regarded to be effective in improving students' speaking ability. Additionally, it showed how improvements to the teaching and learning process had an effect on how well students' speaking talents were developing. ^[6]

The oral communication proficiency is to be measured in the students which includes articulation, modulation, stage presence, facial expression, and rapport with the audience.

According to the Principles of Speech Delivery (2020), a competent speaker must have a distinct voice and utilize terms that are simple to comprehend. A skilled speaker also makes the necessary gestures and facial expressions. Additionally, it is preferable for speakers to address their audience directly while keeping eye contact. Additionally, these presenters move on stage with assurance, demonstrating a command of public speaking.

The first principle according to this is **articulation** where in the speech might as well not have been delivered at all if the Speaker's words are hard to understand due to poor articulation. While proper grammar and word choice are important while drafting a speech, it is the speaker's ability to pronounce words clearly and speak clearly that effectively conveys the speaker's message. It is crucial to pronounce words correctly, regardless of how familiar or unfamiliar they are. Effective articulation depends on good breathing habits and the proper shaping of the sounds that make up words. The second principle is **modulation**. People enjoy listening to voices that can modify or manipulate the resonance and timbre of the vocal tone. This is known as having a well-modulated voice. A microphone needs even more modulation since voice resonance will be increased by amplifiers. However, voices shouldn't saturate our eardrums with noise, microphone or not. Listeners will pay attentively if the speaker uses modulation. The Speech's Message will be conveyed and received, and the Speaker's words will be plainly audible. Third principle is **stage presence**. Stage presence is the speaker's capacity to "own" the space, "fill the room," and "present his/her personality to the audience." Stage fright, which is seen by many as the greatest dread in the field of public speaking, is the antithesis of stage presence! But instead of attempting to overcome stage fright, which is impossible to accomplish anyhow, one could use all of the nervousness and trepidation they are feeling to transform into an engaging speaker who can be heard and move around the stage. **Facial expression** is the fourth principle. An effective speech delivery is not solely dependent on the words chosen and how they are pronounced. Nonverbal communication, such as facial expressions, gestures, and movement, strengthens, clarifies, and enhances the message of any speech. Without these nonverbal cues, the Speaker could come out as uninteresting with a flat delivery and an emotionless voice. Faces should alter in accordance with the speech's content. Only specific points should be emphasized with gestures. Movement should allow the Speaker to carry the Speech around, forward, and to the Audience, metaphorically speaking. Additionally, it should instruct the audience to pay attention to the speaker and keep them riveted to every word. Fifth principle is **rapport with the audience**. An audience analysis or rapport is the most crucial tool for connecting with your listeners, as was previously said. With the help of this information, one can prepare a speech that will be interesting to the audience. The same information will also help one present the message to the audience and engage them more deeply. ^[7]

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aims to identify if employing speaking activities, specifically picture description and story completion, in an English Second language classroom will improve the oral proficiency of the Grade 11 students.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study made use of experimental research design. According to Shrutika Sirisilla ^[8], a framework of protocols and methods known as an experimental research design was developed to perform experimental research employing two sets of variables in a

Speaking Activities in English Second Language Classroom and the Oral Proficiency of the Grade 11 Students

scientific manner. Here, the first set of variables serves as a constant and is used to calculate how different the second set is from the first.

Sampling Technique

The researcher used the random sampling technique to identify the respondents. Using this sampling technique, each sample had equal chances of being chosen. Hence, the thirty (30) randomly selected student-respondents or the chosen sample was the unbiased representation of the total population of Grade 11 level which is forty-one (41) students.

Research Instrument

The researcher made use of a speaking enhanced lesson plans where in the story completion and picture description activities were used. The pretest and post test were used in assessing the speaking skills of the respondents of the study.

For the pretest, the researcher used extemporaneous speech in determining the speaking proficiency of the student respondents. The questions were provided by the researcher. A researcher made use of a modified rubric in rating the students' performance.

The main instrument used was part of the lesson as the speaking activity. It was consist of series of story completion prompts in which students were given a three-minute time to complete. The second part was the picture description. Pictures or images that were used were related to the lesson and some were Catholic Church images. These images were to describe by the students for two minutes. Each students were rated through the use of a rubric.

For the post-test, the students delivered a memorized speech which they made themselves. The performance was video-recorded and rated using the modified rubric. The video recorded performances of the respondents were rated by three English Language Teachers.

Research Procedure

The researcher conducted the study on the third quarter of the school year 2022-2023. The lessons were based on the Senior High School Core Curriculum provided by the Department of Education (DepEd). The lessons were discussed which are followed by the teaching technique in speaking, story completion and picture description as speaking activities to make the students engaged individually.

Before the conduct of the study, pretest was given to the respondents to determine their skills in speaking. This was done orally. For the pretest, the students were to do extemporaneous speech. Different topics were given to each students beforehand to prepare their speech. They delivered the speech for only two minutes. A modified rubric was used to rate the students' performance.

For the entire third quarter, the teaching activities, story completion and picture description, were used after each lesson discussions. The topics discussed were based on the Senior High School Core Curriculum Oral Communication in Context. The first and second week lessons, the activity to be used that was used was story completion. For the third and fourth week lessons, the picture description activity was used.

After four weeks of using the speaking activities in every lesson, the post-test was given as the performance task which was a memorized speech delivery to find out if there was a significant increase in the scores of the respondents in speaking tests. In the speech delivery, they must be able to create their own speech and deliver it. Three minute time was given for the performance. In rating the students performance, three English subject teachers rated the video performance through the use of the same modified rubric.

After the pretest and post-test, the researcher then collected the data, and submitted to the statistician for the treatment. It was then be tabulated, analyzed and interpreted.

For ethical considerations, the researcher sought the permission from the principal of the seminary to conduct the study and submitted a letter of consent to utilize the chosen students who served as the respondents.

For the retrieval of the instrument, the instruction, and filming of the speech performances were all done by the researcher herself. The results were handled confidentially and used for the sole purpose of carrying out the study.

Statistical Treatment of Data

After the gathering of the data, it was subjected for statistical treatment. The researcher then tabulated, analyzed and interpreted the results. For better analysis and discussions, the following statistical tools were used.

To get the assessment score and oral communication proficiency of the students, frequency and percentage was used.

To get the significant difference of the pretest and post-test of the experimental group of respondents, Test of difference was used.

Speaking Activities in English Second Language Classroom and the Oral Proficiency of the Grade 11 Students

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Pretest results using the story completion and picture description

Point	Articulation		Modulation		Stage presence		Facial expression		Rapport with the audience	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1			3	10.0	4	13.3	5	16.7	5	16.7
2	3	10.0			14	46.7	16	53.3	15	50.0
3	16	53.3	18	60.0	12	40.0	9	30.0	9	30.0
4	11	36.7	9	30.0					1	3.3
5										
Total	30	100.0	30	100.0	30	100.0	30	100.0	30	100.0

Table 1 displays Pretest result of the respondents before using the teaching activities in speaking, story completion and picture description, whereas in terms of articulation, out of 30 respondents, there are sixteen equivalent to 53.3% students who scored 3.00 which suggests that they performed satisfactorily and have spoken the words properly with proper enunciation and pronunciation.

In terms of modulation, eighteen respondents with the equivalence of 60% scored 3.00 points which means that they are able to adjust or manipulate satisfactorily their vocal tone in an audible manner while three of the respondents who scored 1.00, equivalent to 10%, suggests that they need improvement and have spoken too quietly and too quickly.

In terms of stage presence, fourteen respondents with 46.7% equivalence scored 2.00 which indicates that they performed fairly showing little confidence and poise when delivering the speech while four of the respondents, 13.3%, have demonstrated the lack of confidence and poise as well as showing little knowledge about the topic indicating that they need improvement.

In terms of facial expression, sixteen respondents with corresponding percentage of 53.3% scored 2.00 which means that they have shown few emotions and little facial expressions fairly while five respondents equivalent to 16.7% scored 1.00 indicating that they need improvement for they have shown no emotion and showed boredom when delivering the speech.

In terms of rapport with the audience, a number of 15 respondents, 50%, scored 2.00 suggesting that they did a fair performance who are able to deliver the message to the audience but fail to make connection with them while there are five respondents with 16.7% only scored 1.00 signifying that they fail to deliver the message and establish connection with them; thus they need improvement. On the other hand, one respondent, 3.3%, scored 4.00 which shows that he is able to state the relevance of his speech and is able to connect with the audience at a deeper level.

Table 2. Post-test results using the story completion and picture description

Point	Articulation		Modulation		Stage presence		Facial expression		Rapport with the audience	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1										
2	1	3.3	1	3.3	6	20.0	9	30.0	6	20.0
3	9	30.0	10	33.3	15	50.0	18	60.0	23	76.7
4	15	50.0	10	33.3	7	23.3	3	10.0	1	3.3
5	5	16.7	9	30.0	2	6.7				
Total	30	100.0	30	100.0	30	100.0	30	100.0	30	100.0

Table 2 shows Post-test results of the respondents after using the teaching activities in speaking, story completion and picture description whereas in terms of articulation, fifteen out of thirty respondents, that is 50%, scored 4.00 indicating that they are articulate in pronouncing the words with clear diction, including inflection and fluency in delivery while there five respondents with the equivalence of 16.7% who scored 5.00 which means that they have shown outstanding articulation in pronouncing the words and have excellent inflection and fluency in delivery. Conversely, one respondent, 3.3%, scored 2.00 signifying that some words are not pronounced clearly and properly as well as fluency and inflection are poorly observed.

In terms of modulation, ten respondents equivalent to 33.3% scored 4.00. Similarly, another ten respondents having the same percentage of 33.3% scored 3.00. Thus, those respondents who scored 4.00 indicates that they are able to adjust and manipulate well their vocal tone while those who scored 3.00 are able to manipulate and adjust their volume in an audible manner. In contrary, nine respondents with a percentage of 30.0% scored 5.00 indicating that they are excellent in adjusting or manipulating their vocal tone and are able to deliver the speech in a varying volume while only one respondent with 3.3% scored 2.00 which means that he has spoken quietly and quickly.

Additionally, in terms of stage presence, fifteen respondents, that is 50%, scored 3.00 which suggests that they have shown confidence and minimal poise when speaking while only two respondents, 6.7%, scored 5.00 which signifies that they are able to own the stage excellently displaying confidence and maintaining overall poise. On the contrary, six respondents, that is 20.0%, scored 2.00 which means that they have shown little confidence as well as poise.

Speaking Activities in English Second Language Classroom and the Oral Proficiency of the Grade 11 Students

In terms of facial expression, eighteen respondents with percentage equivalence of 60% scored 3.00 which indicates that they have shown some emotions as they deliver the speech while three respondents, 10%, scored 4.00 indicating that they have shown emotion with adequate facial expression and seem passionate when speaking. Contrariwise, nine respondents with 30% equivalence scored 2.00 signifying that they have shown few emotions and little facial expressions.

In terms of rapport with the audience, twenty-three respondents with the percentage equivalence 76.7% scored 3.00 which means that they demonstrated knowledge in connecting with the audience and stating the message clearly while six respondents, that is 20%, scored 2.00 which means that they are able to deliver the message but unsuccessful to connect with the audience. On the contrary, one respondent, 3.3%, scored 4.00 which suggests that he is able to state the relevance of the topic to the audience and is able to connect with them at a deeper level.

Table 3. The significant difference between the mean oral proficiency of the students before and after use of Story Completion and Picture Description

	Pretest		Post test		Mean Diff	t	Sig. (2- tailed)	Interpretation
	M	SD	M	SD				
Articulation	3.36	0.56	3.75	0.75	0.39	2.091	0.046	Significant
Modulation	3.25	0.65	3.82	0.86	0.57	2.588	0.015	Significant
Stage Presence	2.36	0.62	3.11	0.83	0.75	4.104	0.000	Significant
Facial Expression	2.21	0.63	2.75	0.59	0.54	3.576	0.001	Significant
Rapport with the audience	2.29	0.71	2.82	0.48	0.54	3.074	0.005	Significant
Overall	13.47	0.56	16.25	0.46	2.79	4.653	0.000	Significant

Table 3 shows the test results of the students before and after the use of the teaching activities in speaking namely story completion and picture description in the oral proficiency competencies articulation, modulation, stage presence, facial expression, and rapport to the audience. The result shows that the stage presence garnered the highest mean difference of 0.75 while articulation got the lowest mean difference of 0.39. in terms of p-value, articulation got 0.046, modulation got 0.015, stage presence at 0.000, facial expression with 0.00, and rapport to the audience with 0.005 which are all less than 0.05 and are interpreted as significant. This reveals that significant differences exist between pre-test and post test results of the students. It also implies that the speaking strategies improved the speaking proficiency of the students in terms of articulation, modulation, stage presence, facial expression, and rapport to the audience. This means that the teaching activities in speaking positively addressed the oral communication proficiency needs of the respondents.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusions

Prior to and following exposure to the teaching activities for speaking, story completion and picture description, it was intended to assess the students' oral communication skills based on their articulation, modulation, stage presence, facial expression, and rapport with the audience. Also investigated was the substantial difference between the students' pretest and post-test results. The study's conclusions showed a substantial difference between the student respondents' pretest and post-test scores. The overall result indicates that there is a significant difference between the pretest and post-test of the grade 11 students when exposed to speaking activities, story completion, and picture description, as shown by the interpreted results on all variables under pretest and post-test conforming to the significant difference of 0.00 level.

Recommendations

Based on the findings summary and the conclusion offered, the researcher made the recommendations that follow in order for future researchers working on studies connected to this to make improvements in order to produce learning materials that are beneficial for students.

Language educators may apply the same speaking activities in learning environment. The researcher necessitates further improvisation of the said speaking activities to make lessons more interesting and engaging to the students. Aside from the application, language educators may consider that the speaking activities must be appropriate, relevant, and useful. Likewise, the speaking activities must have the ability to attract learners and sustain their interest and be helpful in terms of attainment of essential learning outcomes.

Language teachers may also consider using the said speaking activities which has a focus on having a creative content as well as a creative output; and, or a focus on technical content and a technical output.

The researcher recommends that the student respondents continue on making use of the skills and knowledge they have acquired about the oral communication proficiency in every speaking opportunity that they may encounter as seminarians.

Speaking Activities in English Second Language Classroom and the Oral Proficiency of the Grade 11 Students

Researchers may use this study as a basis on exploring and endeavoring other speaking activities that may help improve the oral communication proficiency needs of the students

REFERENCES

- 1) Zakime, A. (2018). What is communicative approach?. Retrieved from What is the Communicative Approach? (whatiselt.com)
- 2) Litchfield, K. A. & Lambert, M. C. (2011). *Nativist theory*. Retrieved from Nativist Theory | SpringerLink
Completion. Journal of English Language Teaching. Retrieved from Jo-ELT (Journal of English Language Teaching) Fakultas Pendidikan Bahasa & Seni Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris IKIP
- 3) Hamsia, W. (2018). *Developing Students' Speaking Ability Through Story Completion. Journal of English Language Teaching*. Retrieved from Jo-ELT (Journal of English Language Teaching) Fakultas Pendidikan Bahasa & Seni Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris IKIP
- 4) Hidayati, et.al. (2019). *The Implementation Of Story Completion Technique In Students' Speaking Skill To The Tenth Graders Of Smkn 1 Pacitan In The Academic Year Of 2018/2019*. Retrieved from Hidayati_PBI_AR2019.pdf (stkippacitan.ac.id)*Students' Speaking Skill To The Tenth Graders Of Smkn 1 Pacitan In The Academic Year Of 2018/2019*. Retrieved from Hidayati_PBI_AR2019.pdf (stkippacitan.ac.id)
- 5) Murni, A. (2018). *The Use Of Describing Picture Strategy To Improve Students' English Speaking Skill*. Retrived From Anggia Murni.Pdf (Ar-Raniry.Ac.Id)*Students' English Speaking Skill*. Retrived From Anggia Murni.Pdf (Ar-Raniry.Ac.Id)
- 6) Nagauleng, a. M. Et.al. (2020). *Improving the students speaking skill through picture at the eight grade students of mts negeri 1 bolaang mongondow timur*. View british (jurnal bahasa dan sastra inggris) stats. Vol. 10. No. 1. Retrieved from improving the students speaking skill through picture at the *the eight grade students of mts negeri 1 bolaang mongondow timur*. View british (jurnal bahasa dan sastra inggris) stats. Vol. 10. No. 1. Retrieved from improving the students speaking skill through picture at the nagauleng | british (journal of english language and literature) eight grade students of mts negeri 1 bolaang mongondow timur | nagauleng | british (journal of english language and literature) (journal-umgo-ac-id.translate.google) eight grade students of mts negeri 1 bolaang mongondow timur
- 7) *Principles of Speech Delivery*. (2020). Principles of effective speech. Retrived from Principles of Speech Delivery (elcomblus.com) from Principles of Speech Delivery (elcomblus.com)
- 8) Sirisilla, S. (2023). Experimental Research Design — 6 mistakes you should never make. Enago Academy. Retrieved from Experimental Research Designs: Types, Examples & Advantages (enago.com) Designs: Types, Examples & Advantages (enago.com) never make. Enago Academy. Retrieved from Experimental Research Designs: Types, Examples & Advantages (enago.com) (journal-umgo-ac-id.translate.google) nagauleng | british (journal of english language and literature) (journal-umgo-ac-id.translate.google)