

Exploring Approaches to Strengthen Oral Communication Skills in Secondary Education

Gabrielle Sunogan¹, Charito Ong²

^{1,2}University of Science and Technology of Southern Philippines

Abstract

This study investigated strategies aimed at enhancing oral communication skills among secondary students through a mixed-methods approach. The research design integrated quantitative assessments and qualitative data collection methods to gain comprehensive insights into the effectiveness of various approaches. Quantitative data were gathered through standardized assessments administered to measure students' oral proficiency levels before and after implementing specific strategies. These assessments included structured speaking tasks aligned with proficiency standards. Additionally, qualitative data were collected through interviews with secondary language teachers and learners to provide perspectives on the perceived impact of the strategies on students' oral communication skills. Findings revealed significant improvements in students' oral proficiency levels following the implementation of tailored approaches, highlighting the importance of student-centered methodologies in fostering effective oral communication skills development. These findings contribute to the ongoing discourse on language education and have implications for instructional practices aimed at promoting communicative competence among secondary students.

Keywords: Approaches, Oral Communication Skills, Investigation

Introduction

In recent years, the cultivation of oral communication skills emerged as a critical focus area for language learning and overall academic success (Yusuf et al., 2022; Lee & Yoon, 2020). Effective oral communication not only facilitated language acquisition but also played a pivotal role in social interaction, professional advancement, and cognitive development among students (Sarwar & Sohail, 2021; Wang & Gao, 2020). However, despite its recognized importance, educational institutions often encountered challenges in effectively addressing the development of students' oral communication abilities, particularly in secondary education settings (Chen & Tsai, 2019; Brown & Larson-Hall, 2020). This gap underscored the pressing need for research that explored innovative strategies to enhance oral communication skills among secondary students.

The significance of oral communication skills development was particularly pronounced in the context of remote or underserved areas, where students may have faced limited exposure to authentic language use and opportunities for practice (Liu et al., 2021; Wu, 2019). In such settings, addressing the gap in oral communication skills became imperative for promoting equitable educational opportunities and preparing students for success in diverse social and professional contexts. Therefore, there was a growing interest in investigating tailored instructional approaches that leveraged student-centered methodologies to foster communicative competence and enhance oral communication skills among secondary students.

This study aimed to contribute to this area of inquiry by exploring effective strategies to strengthen oral communication skills among secondary students through a mixed-methods research approach. By integrating quantitative assessments and qualitative data collection methods, this research sought to gain comprehensive insights into the effectiveness of specific instructional strategies in promoting oral proficiency levels among students. The findings of this study were expected to inform educational practice and policy, offering valuable insights into the design and implementation of student-centered approaches to enhance oral communication skills in secondary education settings.

Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods approach to investigate strategies aimed at enhancing oral communication skills among secondary students. The research design integrated quantitative assessments and qualitative data collection methods to gain comprehensive insights into the effectiveness of various approaches. Quantitative data were gathered through standardized assessments administered to measure students' oral proficiency levels before and after implementing specific strategies. These assessments included structured speaking tasks aligned with proficiency standards (Yusuf et al., 2022; Wang & Gao, 2020). Additionally, qualitative data were collected through interviews with secondary language teachers and learners to provide perspectives on the perceived impact of the strategies on students' oral communication skills (Sarwar & Sohail, 2021; Brown & Larson-Hall, 2020).

To ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, a purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants who represented diverse perspectives and experiences related to oral communication skills development in secondary education settings. Secondary language teachers and learners from select schools were chosen as key informants for the study. The assessments, interviews, observations, and open-ended surveys conducted with these participants were designed to gather rich, context-specific data that would inform the development and refinement of oral communication skills enhancement strategies (Liu et al., 2021; Wu, 2019).

Data analysis involved both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative data from the assessments were analyzed using statistical techniques, such as descriptive statistics and inferential tests, to measure changes in students' oral proficiency levels before and after implementing the strategies. Qualitative data from the interviews were subjected to thematic analysis, wherein recurring themes and patterns related to the effectiveness of the strategies and factors influencing oral communication skills development were identified and interpreted (Yusuf et al., 2022; Lee & Yoon, 2020). The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the research objectives and contributed to the development of evidence-based recommendations for enhancing oral communication skills among secondary students.

Findings

The findings of this study revealed significant improvements in students' oral communication skills following the implementation of the various strategies. Quantitative analysis of pre- and post-assessment data indicated a statistically significant increase in students' oral proficiency levels across all measured dimensions, including fluency, accuracy, vocabulary usage, and pronunciation. Specifically, students demonstrated enhanced ability to engage in spontaneous conversations, express ideas coherently, and respond effectively to questions and prompts in the target language. These findings underscored the

effectiveness of the strategies in fostering communicative competence and enhancing students' overall oral communication skills (Sarwar & Sohail, 2021; Wang & Gao, 2020).

Qualitative analysis of interview data provided further insights into the factors contributing to the observed improvements in students' oral communication skills. Secondary language teachers highlighted the importance of learner-centered instructional approaches and authentic communication tasks incorporated into the strategies. They noted that activities such as role-plays, group discussions, and real-life simulations facilitated meaningful interaction and language practice, thereby promoting confidence and proficiency in oral communication among students. Additionally, learners expressed positive perceptions of the strategies, citing increased motivation, engagement, and enjoyment in language learning activities. They also highlighted the supportive learning environment created by their teachers, which encouraged risk-taking and experimentation in oral expression (Yusuf et al., 2022; Lee & Yoon, 2020).

Overall, the findings of this study underscored the importance of tailored instructional approaches in promoting oral communication skills development among secondary students. By addressing the identified gap in exposure to the target language and enhancing students' self-confidence in speaking, the strategies demonstrated significant potential to bridge the gap in oral communication skills and empower students to communicate effectively in various contexts. These findings have implications for educational practice, highlighting the importance of implementing student-centered methodologies to foster language proficiency and promote holistic language learning outcomes (Chen & Tsai, 2019; Brown & Larson-Hall, 2020).

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study provided compelling evidence supporting the effectiveness of tailored instructional strategies in enhancing oral communication skills among secondary students. The findings highlighted significant improvements in students' oral proficiency levels following the implementation of these strategies, as evidenced by both quantitative assessments and qualitative insights. The success of the strategies underscored the importance of learner-centered approaches and authentic communication tasks in promoting communicative competence and fostering confidence in oral expression. Furthermore, the positive perceptions of both teachers and students regarding the strategies reinforced their potential to address the persistent gap in oral communication skills development, particularly in remote or underserved educational settings.

These conclusions emphasized the importance of implementing student-centered methodologies that prioritized meaningful interaction and language practice in language learning environments. By creating supportive learning environments that encouraged risk-taking and experimentation, educators were able to empower students to develop the necessary skills and confidence to communicate effectively in various social and professional contexts. Moving forward, it was essential to continue exploring innovative approaches and adapting instructional strategies to meet the diverse needs of students, thereby ensuring equitable access to quality language education and promoting holistic language learning outcomes. Ultimately, the findings of this study contributed valuable insights to the ongoing discourse on language education and informed evidence-based practices aimed at enhancing oral communication skills among secondary students.

Recommendation

Based on the conclusions drawn from this study, several recommendations can be made to further enhance

oral communication skills among secondary students:

Implement Student-Centered Methodologies. Education stakeholders should prioritize the implementation of student-centered instructional methodologies that promote meaningful interaction and language practice. Activities such as role-plays, group discussions, and real-life simulations have proven effective in fostering confidence and proficiency in oral communication. Educators should continue to design and implement such activities to create supportive learning environments conducive to language learning.

Provide Professional Development for Educators. Teachers play a crucial role in facilitating language learning and fostering oral communication skills development. Therefore, it is essential to provide ongoing professional development opportunities for educators to enhance their pedagogical skills in communicative language teaching. Workshops, seminars, and training sessions focused on implementing student-centered approaches can empower teachers to create dynamic and engaging language learning experiences for their students.

Integrate Technology-Enhanced Learning. Leveraging technology can further enhance oral communication skills development by providing students with additional opportunities for language practice and interaction. Educational software, online platforms, and multimedia resources can supplement traditional instructional methods and facilitate remote learning environments, particularly in areas where access to authentic language use may be limited.

Promote Collaborative Learning. Encouraging collaboration among students can foster peer-to-peer interaction and support language acquisition. Group projects, collaborative discussions, and peer feedback activities can provide valuable opportunities for students to practice their oral communication skills in authentic contexts while also developing teamwork and interpersonal skills.

Address Equity and Access. Education policymakers should prioritize efforts to address inequities in access to quality language education, particularly in remote or underserved areas. This may involve investing in infrastructure, resources, and support systems to ensure that all students have equitable access to effective language learning opportunities, regardless of their geographical location or socioeconomic background.

By implementing these recommendations, education stakeholders can work towards fostering a supportive and inclusive learning environment that empowers students to develop the oral communication skills necessary for success in academic, professional, and social contexts.

References

1. Brown, H. D., & Larson-Hall, J. (2020). *Second language acquisition: Theoretical and experimental issues in contemporary research*. Routledge.
2. Chen, C., & Tsai, M. (2019). The impact of oral language skills on the development of English proficiency for non-native English-speaking students in elementary schools. *Language Teaching Research*, 23(4), 483-505.
3. Lee, S., & Yoon, B. (2020). Investigating the relationship between second language anxiety and English listening proficiency: A mixed-methods study. *TESOL Quarterly*, 54(2), 291-318.
4. Liu, Y., Hong, Y. C., & Vong, S. Y. (2021). Chinese as a heritage language: A mixed-methods study of language attitudes and motivation among Chinese Australian children. *Heritage Language Journal*, 18(2), 132-153.
5. Sarwar, F., & Sohail, A. (2021). Impact of communicative language teaching on the English language

proficiency of ESL learners at university level: A mixed-methods study. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 10(2), 162-174.

6. Wang, L., & Gao, X. (2020). Task-based language teaching and speaking performance: A meta-analysis. *Language Teaching Research*, 24(1), 49-74.
7. Wu, L. C. (2019). Effects of learner-generated materials on language learning motivation and engagement: A mixed-methods study. *System*, 82, 26-40.
8. Yusuf, M., Haniff, A., Ismail, I., & Hamzah, M. I. (2022). Implementation of task-based language teaching in the Malaysian ESL classroom: A mixed-methods study. *English Language Teaching*, 15(1), 1-17.