UTILIZATION OF CLASSROOM TALK IN ENHANCING THE ORAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE OF GRADE 9 STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to find out if there is a significant difference in the oral communication competence of Grade 9 students before and after classroom talk strategy was utilized thru online discussions. Pre-assessment and post-assessment were given to know if the implementation of classroom talk did enhance the oral communication competence of the group that was involved in the study. The activity was evaluated using the scoring rubrics as instrument that included the organization, content, language use, and speech delivery as sub-categories to measure. The design of this study is experimental one group pre-test post-test. The respondents were composed of 30 Grade 9 students studying at San Pablo City Science Integrated High School for the School Year 2020-2021. The group was originally heterogeneously sectioned even before the study was implemented so there was no need to do a random sampling. The teacher-researcher selected one Grade 9 section with 30 students, as advised by the thesis adviser. Since the students were already in a heterogeneous group, intact sampling was used by the researcher. This sampling technique was the appropriate one for this study for it will most likely guarantee a valid result when very strong assumptions were formed after the implementation of the study since the respondents have already been grouped heterogeneously from the beginning of the school year. This means that their skills regarding the oral communication competence varies. Using Brainstorming, Think-Pair-Share, and Storytelling as activities under classroom talk strategy, respondents were given more opportunities to speak out their minds and share their opinions to the rest of the class, thus exercising their oral communication competencies. This has been proven effective for the post-assessment activity yielded increased scores of the students compared to their pre-assessment data gathered. The data gathered after the retrieval of the profiling questionnaires were subjected to descriptive statistics to describe the respondents' profile using frequency, mean, and standard deviation. The study confirmed that Grade 9 respondents' oral communication competency was enhanced after classroom talk strategy has been implemented during their online discussions. It was hypothesized that there was a significant difference in the mean scores of the respondents before and after using classroom talk strategy in their oral communication competence.

Keywords: classroom talk, oral communication competence, online discussion, brainstorming, think-pair-share, storytelling

INTRODUCTION

With the rise of the aftermaths of the pandemic, schools and other institutions now find it difficult to adjust to what is referred as the "new normal" environment. Everyone, no matter what age or status, is greatly affected by the spread of COVID-19 virus.

Nonetheless, the education of Filipino youth is still important and must be continued with

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this, the Department of Education (DepEd) sought high and low for other ways just for students to have the quality education they needed and not waste time. Distance Learning has then been the trend to every school and that administrations here and there come up with methods to still be able to teach students no matter where they are.

Education Secretary Leonor Briones, in one of her meetings with DepEd, ensured that the Department has been preparing various alternative learning delivery modalities in order to continue learning despite the COVID-19 situation in the country (Merlina Hernando-Malipot, 2020).

The immediate change in the education system from face-to-face to online or distance learning has been a major struggle for both the teachers and the learners that is why it is a necessity to experiment with different teaching strategies. Pursuant to DO 012, s. 2020 of DepEd or the Adoption of Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) for the Academic Year 2020-2021 amid the pandemic, LDMs (Learning Delivery Modalities) have been implemented by DepEd personnel to be implemented during the school year. This includes distance learning through online learning. Students have undergone home-based learning until the government had announced otherwise.

Teachers are expected to adapt to this sudden change. Hence, they have thought of strategies that would work while teaching online distance learning to students who are used to learning while physically being there inside the classrooms.

Since students are accustomed to face-to-face classes, one of the most considerate ways teachers can do is to let them feel that they are still inside a classroom even when facing a computer screen. In other words, using the classroom talk strategy, the students will feel at ease and comfortable in expressing themselves even in front of a monitor, and thus, practicing their communication skills more.

According to Morton (2012), classroom talk is an important instructional instrument to further develop student participation for it gives opportunities for the teacher to influence student perspectives in ways that still support significant learning. During classroom discussions, a link between students' prior knowledge and the new learnings could be created with the help of the teacher's redirection of the responses of students. Furthermore, general misunderstandings from the background knowledge of students may be discovered and corrected during classroom interactions (Morton, 2012; Scott, Mortimer, and Ametller, 2011).

On the other hand, the term *classroom discourse* refers to the language that teachers and students use to communicate with each other in the classroom. The medium, talking or initiating a conversation, is where most teaching takes place which means that studying classroom discourse is also the study of the face-to-face classroom teaching process (Graesser, Nuthall, and Person, 2020).

When learners feel that they may still be able to talk and somehow act the way they used to inside classrooms, they will be more motivated to participate in online discussions. This will also help the teacher in giving students more time to adjust to the kind of education the current situation requires.

The difficulties of getting students to cooperate during class discussions have intensified during distance learning according to a lot of teachers. Communication barriers created from digital platforms make students confused as to when they are allowed to talk or read nonverbal cues like a person's body language and facial expressions during a discourse (Minero, 2020).

According to Zhao, Shen, Hwang, and Shih (date), discussion is a good method of raising teaching quality. Face-to-face discussion and on-line lectures have their own blessings and downsides; however, they each face the challenge that a way to enhance students' participation. In order to evaluate the benefits and harmful effects of online discussion and face-to-face instructions strategies, learners are assigned focused time to create a habit of critical thinking and reflecting and expressing these online. These can consequently start further in-class oral discussions, and off-class online discussions (Chen and Looi, 2007).

With this, teachers have been trying to bring the classroom atmosphere while having synchronous classes with students through online

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video conferences. In other words, teaching online classes using Classroom Talk strategy.

Behavioral psychology, also commonly coined as Behaviorism, is a theory of learning which affirms that through interactions with the environment using "*conditioning,*" all behaviors are learned. In conclusion, behavior is simply a response to environmental stimuli (McLeod, 2017). With this theory in mind, the first and foremost thing needed for students to be able to behave according to the teacher's advantage is to make sure that the environment they are in conducive to mastering their oral communication skills.

Experiencing an interaction face to face like before has always been the focus of the schools' educational system. Having it changed in the shortest of time made new problems to arise. From the beginning of the class, the joining of a conference call, the hearing of words being uttered by the teacher, having stable internet connection, being in a conducive-to-learning environment, and being mentally and physically prepared to attend online classes are just some of the many difficulties that are being encountered by both the student and the teacher.

Since students are used to hearing explanations from the teacher in class, classroom talk has been used as a strategy to overcome miscommunication while having online discussions. Results gathered from this research will serve as an indicator if there is a difference in using the said teaching method thru online discussion to San Pablo City Science Integrated High School Grade 9 students of the current school year when it comes to their communication skills.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to:

1. Find out the mean pre-assessment scores of respondents in their oral communication competence before using classroom talk strategy.
2. Find out the mean post-assessment scores of the respondents in their oral communication competence after using classroom talk strategy

3. Find out the significant difference in the mean scores of the respondents before and after using classroom talk strategy in their oral communication competence

METHODOLOGY

The research conducted was experimental research. Since this study intended to know the effectiveness of classroom talk as a strategy on the oral communication competence of Grade 9 ESL students while conducting online classes, a one group Pre-assessment, Post- assessment method of using scoring rubrics has been done. The following chapters were uncovered, in detail, the steps and gathered information about the topic.

Chronologically, the researcher assigned an activity about speech delivery without using the classroom strategy yet. She gave this task as Pre-assessment to find out the students' oral communication competence. Scoring rubrics were used to determine their expertise. After the activity, the researcher proceeded with the use of classroom strategy in conducting online classes. Students were encouraged to speak casually and comfortably through their laptop screens to practice their oral communication competence. Brainstorming, Think-Pair-Share, and Storytelling activities were also implemented for students to understand deeply the topic and to practice their oral communication competence better.

On the other hand, for the Post-assessment, another speech activity that required them to compose sentences on the spot was implemented. The same scoring rubrics were used in determining the effects of classroom strategy on their oral communication competence. The scoring rubrics focused on the student's organization, content, language use, and speech delivery.

The instrument used by the teacher-researcher was in pursuance with DO, 031 s. 2020, which states that performance tasks in evaluating learners' knowledge in diverse ways, must be accompanied with coherent instructions and appropriate scoring tools (i.e., scoring rubrics).

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Thus, the instrument was composed of a researcher-made scoring rubric to determine the oral communication competence of students before and after being exposed to classroom talk strategy. The scoring rubrics contained the sub-categories to be measured under the oral communication competence of each respondent: organization, content, language use and speech delivery. In organization, respondents' flow of thoughts and distribution of ideas were measured. The focus of measuring content was the information given and relevance of what they were saying to the topic. For language use, rules of grammar and pronunciation were aimed to be measured while in speech delivery, the confidence of each respondent was evaluated

The present study was conducted at San Pablo City Science Integrated High School. The teacher-researcher selected one Grade 9 section with 30 students grouped heterogeneously, as advised by the thesis adviser. Since the students were already in a heterogeneous group, intact sampling was used by the researcher. This sampling technique was the appropriate one for this study for it will most likely guarantee a valid result when very strong assumptions were formed after the implementation of the study since the respondents have already been grouped heterogeneously from the beginning of the school year. This means that their skills regarding the oral communication competence varies. The design of this research was a one group pre-test post-test so the section with 30 heterogeneous students was exposed to activities before and after the use of classroom talk strategy. This was conducted for the School Year 2020-2021.

The researcher prepared first the lesson intended for the third quarter as stipulated in the Lesson Exemplar. After the checking of the adviser, subject specialist, and validation of the three English teachers from San Pablo City Science Integrated High School, the researcher gave students pre- assessment before using the classroom talk strategy.

When the pre-assessment has been taken, it was retrieved and checked for analysis. It was then followed by the teaching biases and prejudices and interpreting the message from the material viewed using classroom talk strategy.

Upon completing the teaching of the lessons, the teacher-researcher gave post-test to find out if the use of classroom talk improved their oral communication competence.

Upon the implementation of the pre- and post-assessments of the teacher-researcher, two other teachers from the same major also gave scores for the speech of the Grade 9 students. This is to ensure fair and accurate evaluation of the study.

For ethical consideration, the researcher sought the permission of the school head/ officer-in-charge to conduct the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The information and data gathered here were analyzed and interpreted for conclusions and recommendations to be drawn from the study.

1. Respondent's Oral Communication Competence Before and After using Classroom Talk Strategy

Table 1

Mean Scores of the Respondents in their Oral Communication Competence Before using Classroom Talk strategy

Oral Communication Competence	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
Organization	5.43	.774	Proficient
Content	5.63	.809	Advanced
Language Use	5.37	.718	Proficient

The results above indicate the mean scores given by the three teachers (the teacher-researcher and two other teachers in the same major) for the pre-assessment activity of the study. It is shown from the table above that the mean scores of students on their pre-assessment activity belong in the proficient level except for the sub-category content, which belongs in the advanced level. It means that even before the implementation of classroom strategy, respondents were still able to deliver an impromptu speech with the help of their background knowledge.

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Even so, it was still evident that the respondents needed the improvement and development of their oral communication competence. With the organization only having 5.43 as the mean score out of 7, 5.63 for content, 5.37 in language use, and 5.57 for the speech delivery, this means that before the use of classroom talk strategy, respondents were still able to perform averagely while focusing on the organization and content of their thoughts and ideas presented in the speech, the way they follow the rules of English grammar, and how they articulated the words in front of the class.

It was provided in the table that the results of the pre-assessment of Grade 9 respondents for measuring their oral communication competence before the implementation of classroom talk strategy were in need of further development even if they have already yielded average mean scores. Respondents still lacked the confidence in speaking that was why the researcher had noticed the stuttering and stumbling to find words to say out loud and they had a disorganized way of delivering their thoughts because too much irrelevant information were included in their speeches.

2. Post-assessment Scores of the Respondents in their Oral Communication Competence After using Classroom Talk strategy

The numbers illustrated above indicates the mean scores from the rubrics given as respondents presented their impromptu speech after classroom talk strategy has been implemented in the discussion, along with what the average for the minimum and maximum score was, and their verbal interpretations.

There is a clear indication that the scores of Grade 9-respondents increased compared to their pre-assessment scores. The data gathered for the mean scores after the implementation of classroom talk have clearly improved as organization from 5.43 to 5.90, language use (having a mean pre-test score of 5.37 to 6.00), and speech delivery from 5.57 to 5.90.

Table 2

Mean Scores of the Respondents in their Oral Communication Competence after using Classroom Talk strategy

Oral Communication Competence	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
Organization	5.90	.607	Advanced
Content	5.90	.607	Advanced
Language Use	6.00	.525	Advanced
Speech Delivery	5.90	.607	Advanced
Oral Communication Competence	23.70	2.003	Advanced

The scores have likewise progressed from proficient to advanced, and that content, which had 5.63 as the mean pre-test score, had improved to 5.90 and it is still considered as being in the advanced level.

It can be implied that with the help of classroom talk in the online classroom, students were able to express their thoughts more freely. They organized their thoughts neatly, so the information presented in their speech were relevant and enough to point out their opinions. The way they spoke using the English language also showed improvements since they were given more time to practice casually speaking in class. Their confidence also gradually increased.

The mean score for the post assessment for the total oral communication competence of respondents was 23.7 which indicated that the average score increased from 22.0 in the pre-assessment for the total oral communication competence mean score.

It can be interpreted from the data in Table 2 that with the help of activities under classroom talk strategy like brainstorming ideas and knowing why a certain situation showed bias and/or prejudice, having a pair to share insights with when tasked to interpret a message from an image, and creating one's own plot from a visual image on the spot can be done. Respondents were able to practice their oral communication casually without a lot of pressure. With these

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activities, they were able to gain confidence and practiced organizing their thoughts and what to say even without scripts. By casually speaking the English language during class discussion, respondents got used to translating their ideas into the said language without much stuttering and irrelevant information shared. Classroom talk activities boosted their confidence to speak up even in a crowd and even without a prepared script to read.

3. Significant Difference between the Mean Pre-test and Post-test Scores of the Respondents Before and After using Classroom Talk strategy in their Oral Communication Competence

Table 3

The Significant Difference Between the Pre- and Post-assessment Results Before and After the Use of Classroom Talk Strategy

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Organization	-.467	.730	.133	-.739	-.194	-3.500	29	.002
Pair 2	Content	-.267	.691	.126	-.525	-.008	-2.112	29	.043
Pair 3	Language Use	-.633	.765	.140	-.919	-.348	-4.535	29	.000
Pair 4	Speech Delivery	-.333	.711	.130	-.599	-.068	-2.567	29	.016
Pair 5	Oral Communication Competence	-1.700	2.292	.418	-2.556	-.844	-4.063	29	.000

The results shown in the table above showed the test of differences in the scores of pre- and post-assessments of 30 respondents in terms of their oral communication competence in terms of organization, content, language use, and speech delivery before and after the implementation of classroom talk strategy.

Analyzing the results, the p-value (Sig.) for the Pre- and Post-assessments of the organization category in the scoring rubrics had .002 which was less than .05 so it was statistically significant. For the p-value (Sig.) of the pre- and post-assessment of content, it gave the result of .043 which was also less than .05 which means that it was also statistically significant. For the pre-and post-assessment p-value of language use, it gave the result .000 and it was still less than .05; thus, it was statistically significant. Meanwhile, .016 was the p-value (Sig.) of the pre- and post-assessment for the speech delivery category. This was still less than .05, which can be taken the result was statistically significant. In the overall analysis of the pre- and post-assessment scores of respondents when their oral communication competence was measured before and after the implementation of classroom talk strategy, the p-value (Sig.) resulted to .000 which was less than .05; thus, it was statistically significant.

It was found out that before classroom talk strategy, the respondents found it difficult to express their ideas in an organized way. Because of this, they were not able to include the important details that they should include in their speeches, which also led to a lot of stuttering and non-confident way of speaking that also led to some English grammar mistakes. This information was supported by other researchers because according to Seau, Azman, and Noor's (2018) study, "poor oral presentation skills amongst ESL speakers are frequently linked to weakness in general English proficiency. However, the literature has also identified the lack of a systematic and effective

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pedagogical method to develop students' multimodal oral presentation skills to meet 21st century communication realities. (Seau, Azman, and Noor, 2018).

After the teacher-researcher has implemented the classroom talk strategy, this also means that students practiced expressing themselves in an online class environment wherein they would feel comfortable to speak up and say what is on their minds. The respondents were then able to deliver their speeches and enumerate the information needed for their presentation to be delivered in an organized way. With the contents of their speech provided precisely and accurately, their confidence in speaking was also evidently observed which led to them constructing English sentences in an orderly manner while following the rules of English grammar. This evidence has similarities to a study conducted by Qhobela and Moru (2020), who indicated that the results of their study "Understanding the Use of Classroom Talk by Newly Trained Physics Teachers in Lesotho" demonstrates that teachers who implemented classroom talk gave respondents scientific concepts, which allowed student discussion and established common understanding. Less focus on the teacher but did encourage talk for applying scientific meaning, i.e., the final stage in Mortimer and Scott's framework. In summary, there was a significant difference in the mean scores of respondents before and after the use of classroom talk strategy in enhancing their oral communication competence.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and findings discussed previously on the use of classroom talk in the utilization of Grade 9 students' oral communication competence, these conclusions are drawn:

There is a significant difference in the pre- and post- assessment scores of Grade 9 respondents before and after classroom talk strategy is implemented to enhance their oral communication competence in terms of organization.

There is a significant difference in the pre- and post- assessment scores of Grade 9

respondents before and after classroom talk strategy is implemented to enhance their oral communication competence in terms of content.

There is a significant difference in the pre- and post- assessment scores of Grade 9 respondents before and after classroom talk strategy is implemented to enhance their oral communication competence in terms of language use.

There is a significant difference in the pre- and post- assessment scores of Grade 9 respondents before and after classroom talk strategy is implemented to enhance their oral communication competence in terms of speech delivery.

There is a significant difference in the pre- and post- assessment scores of Grade 9 respondents before and after classroom talk strategy is implemented to enhance their oral communication competence. Thus, the hypothesis stated previously which says that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of the respondents before and after using classroom talk strategy in their oral communication competence is rejected.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results gathered and analyzed from the study, the following recommendations are hereby presented:

1. Classroom talk strategy may be implemented in utilizing the oral communication of students in schools even during online classes.
2. The said strategy may tackle the students' way of organizing their thoughts and the topics that they want to share to the class so that unwanted clutter of ideas will be prevented.
3. Classroom talk strategy may also make students be more knowledgeable of different topics and issues in order for them to share more information and specific details that they want to include in their speeches.
4. Students may also be able to have more practices in speaking casually in class, which means that the teacher should let them explain and share ideas in the discussions. With this, they would be able to be used to speaking the

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English language and that their confidence in speaking in front of the class will be improved.

5. Teachers may implement classroom talk strategy to their intervention classes to measure the development of the oral communication competence of students.

6. Other researchers may conduct another study with a wider scope and measures deeper competencies.

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