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## HINDRANCES TO LEARNERS' ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN ENGLISH: BASES FOR ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

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### ABSTRACT

The descriptive-qualitative study determined the hindrances to learners' oral communication skills in English as viewed by the Grade 11 Oral Communication teachers and learners of Dumangas National High School, Dumangas, Iloilo for the school year 2022-2023. The study used a phenomenology type of qualitative research. The research method utilized in the study was a descriptive method using in-depth interviews. The research instrument utilized in the study was a researcher-made interview guide. Participants were composed of five (5) Oral Communication teachers and twenty (20) learners in the Senior High School who were taking Oral Communication subject. It was found out that teachers and learners viewed the same aspects as hindrances to their Oral Communication Skills in English. For the learners, the results accordingly identified lack of confidence, and deficiency in pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary as the hindrances to their oral communication skills in English. For the teachers, the result accordingly identified lack of confidence, and deficiency in pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary as the hindrances to learners' Oral Communication Skills in English.

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**Keywords:** *Hindrances, Oral Communication Skills in English, Enhancement Program*

## INTRODUCTION

Communicating in English is an essential skill in the teaching and learning process especially in countries that use English as a medium of instruction.

Oral Communication plays a significant role in professional success. Proficiency in oral communication has become indispensable for graduates to thrive in academic and professional settings. Individuals who have suitable stages of oral communication skills and high levels of interpersonal skills are more likely to attain career goals.

As life-skills constituent in the field of Communication, oral communication contributes to the process of acquiring new skills that would result in continuous learning and a rapid solution-making process (Crosling & Ward, 2018).

Oral communication skills are incorporated into curricula at elementary, secondary, and tertiary levels to ensure learners are equipped for success (Littlewood, 2017).

In an article found in the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Cabigon (2015) discussed that Philippine industries which require proficiency in the command of English communication skills are in decline and unfilled (Tima, 2018).

Also in the GMA News, it was reported that the English proficiency of Filipino learners was falling behind, as per a survey conducted by Hopkins International Partners.

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Oral Communication Skills of Filipinos alongside their overall English language proficiency are declining. This illustrates that despite exposure to the English language, Filipino learners may encounter challenges in enhancing their English proficiency particularly in oral communication skills (Pangket, 2019).

This is a challenge that teachers should take into consideration. Classroom teachers, then, play a crucial role in identifying issues within the classroom environment. They are tasked with enhancing learners' language proficiency as they control how content is presented, the level of learner involvement, and the selection of learning activities and materials. Therefore, their assessment is significant (Syomwene, 2016).

On the other hand, it can be frustrating for an English teacher in school to see learners nowadays who find it difficult to express themselves in a language that they have been studying for more than a decade in school.

Hindrances to oral communication skills stem from various sources which are ranging from personal barriers to environmental factors. Oral Communication occurs in many situations and locations. It takes place at home, in schools, in modes of transportation, in streets, in stores, in concert halls, in malls, and churches. We use our mouth in speaking more than we use it in eating. Maybe, this is because there is an imperative on our part to let other people know what we have in mind or what our heart says. This is because as social beings, we can't keep our thoughts to ourselves (Menoy & Constantino, 2016).

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Overcoming hindrances demands patience, practice, and willingness to adapt strategies in order to ensure clear and impactful oral communication skills.

Professional development programs involve identifying goals and acquiring new skills to support the growth and success of teachers and other professionals in their work. This can be attained by looking at the problems and identifying the possible solutions to such problems (Learning UCSF, 2022).

Considering the results of these observations and studies, the researcher ascertains the hindrances in oral communication skills in order to come up with the enhancement program to help address oral communication issues and concerns.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Research Methodology

This chapter presents the research method, research design, respondents of the study, data gathering procedure, research instrument, and data analysis to be used in this study. The purpose of this study is to determine the influence of teacher-learner interaction on the effects of blended learning as a modality in Dumangas National High School during the School Year 2022-2023.

### Research Method

The research employed descriptive method using in-depth interviews.

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During the in-depth interview, the interviewer and the interviewee were allowed to sit together at a distance and engaged in a thoughtful discussion about specific issues.

The objective was to capture the essential perspectives of the participants on the issue within a social context through their responses to the questions (B2B International, 2023).

### Research Design

The study employed a qualitative research design utilizing phenomenology.

According to Smith (2013), phenomenology is the investigation of structures of consciousness as perceived from the first-person perspective. At the core of any experience is its intentionality, its inherent directedness toward something, as it involves experiencing or being about some objects. An experience is oriented towards an object through its content or meaning, representing the object, in conjunction with the necessary enabling conditions.

Phenomenology serves as a philosophical framework for conducting qualitative research that aims to understand how individuals perceive the world and how their perspectives differ from commonly held views. It emphasizes subjective interpretations of experiences. Phenomenological research typically involves interviewing subjects to explore their impressions and is frequently utilized in fields such as psychology, sociology, and social work.

### Participants of the Study

Research enlisted a targeted group of participants, specifically the selected Senior High School teachers and learners from Dumangas National High School, Dumangas, Iloilo who were

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enrolled during the school year 2022-2023. The teacher participants were composed of five (5) Oral Communication teachers in the Senior High School Department. Meanwhile, the study incorporated a chosen sample of twenty (20) learners who were taking Oral Communication subject. There were four (4) learners from each teacher. The selection strategy aimed to ensure a balanced representation of perspectives from both teachers and learners, thereby, facilitating a thorough examination of their oral communication skills in English.

### Research Instrument

The research instrument utilized in the study was a researcher-made interview guide.

The interview guide has a question focusing on the purpose of the study.

Primarily, note-taking is utilized to document the responses of the participants. Additionally, voice and video recorders were used for data gathering and documentation depending on the permission of the participants.

### Validity of the Research Instrument

The questionnaire created by the researcher went through a process of content evaluation by the panel of experts. In order to establish whether or not the items in the questionnaire were valid, Good and Scates Criteria for Content Validation was used for the data.

Validity pertains to the appropriateness, meaningfulness, correctness, and usefulness of the inferences drawn by a researcher. Regarding content-related evidence of validity, it is crucial that the content and format align with the definitions of variables and the sample of subjects to be

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measured. This alignment is instrumental in validating the items within the questionnaire (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2007).

Any adjustment or ideas offered to improve the questionnaire were merged by the researcher in the final draft. The questionnaire was judged valid whenever the panel of experts answered positively the items in the criterion. Following the completion of the necessary edits, the final text was presented to the panel once more for endorsement.

### Data Gathering Procedures

Permits from the individual participants were obtained to allow the researcher to conduct the study. The researcher personally went to the schools, communities or places convenient for the part of the participants to conduct the interview.

The researcher interviewed the participants but before that, the researcher encouraged the participants to sign a waiver or permission relative to the conduct of the study.

Using in-depth interviews, voice and video recorder were provided to completely capture the participants' answers. Participants sat together with the researcher to get their responses to the questions. The objective was to get the participants' views about the study. The researcher consolidated all of the collected data after a series of interviews.

Minimum health protocols mandated by the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF), Department of Health (DOH) guidelines amidst the pandemic, DepEd Orders on the Health protocols, Local

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Government Units, and the Barangay health protocols were strictly observed and followed during the conduct of the study.

### Data Analysis

The collected information underwent analysis through a thematic approach. Thematic analysis involved identifying patterns or themes within qualitative data. According to Maguire and Delahunt (2017), the method aims to identify important or interesting themes and use them to address the research question or shed light on a particular issue. Thematic analysis entails summarizing, analyzing, and interpreting the gathered data to make sense of it.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The main purpose of this study was to find out the hindrances to learners' oral communication skills in English of Dumangas National High School, Dumangas, Iloilo during the school year 2022-2023.

In the study, an in-depth interview as a qualitative research method was used. The interviewee during the interview was allowed to sit and think about the question about the issue at hand. The aim was to get the main or the necessary views of the participants on a certain issue in the social context through the responses of the participants to the questions.

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The study employed phenomenology as an approach under the qualitative research design. The approach was appropriate because the researcher wants to understand how others view the world in this case, the learners and teachers, and how the views varied from commonly held views by focusing on a person's subjective interpretations of what he experienced. The phenomenology approach was done by personally interviewing the learners and teachers to determine their impressions and was frequently used in the fields of psychology, sociology, and social work.

Participants of the study were the 20 randomly selected Oral Communication learners and 5 purposely selected Oral Communication teachers of Dumangas National High School who were willing to participate in the study.

The research instrument utilized in the study was a researcher-made interview guide as well as the pen and paper. A panel of experts validated the interview schedule. All comments and suggestions related to the validation of the tool were considered and implemented.

The thematic approach was used to analyze the data gathered.

Based on the In-Depth Interview conducted, the results showed that there were different views, opinions, and experiences among learners and teachers regarding the hindrances encountered by the learners to their oral communication skills in English. According to the participants, the hindrances that they face were lack of confidence, deficiency in pronunciation,

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grammar, and vocabulary. The same were identified as the common hindrances for both teachers and learners.

Based on the finding the following insights were drawn:

Learners are hindered in their oral communication skills in English when they are not confident enough to speak because of their difficulty in addressing certain anxiousness and shyness to communicate due to fear of being laughed at, teased, and criticized.

Correct pronunciation and grammar play a vital role in the oral communication skills in English of the learners, and learners' lack of correct pronunciation and grammar hinders them from operating their skills correctly.

When learners are not familiar with the words that they use, they tend to delay the feedback to the communication process.

Teachers observed learners' hindrances almost the same things that learners observed in themselves. Observations confirmed that learners need help in their lack of confidence, deficiency in grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation.

Teachers as facilitators of learners and are good source of information regarding the learner's hindrances and difficulties in oral communication skills in English.

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## CONCLUSION

In the light of the findings and insights arrived in the study, the following recommendations are forwarded:

Learners are recommended to continue identifying the hindrances and weaknesses in their oral communication skills in English and to address the hindrances more actively like practice and exposure.

Teachers are recommended to encourage learners to engage in a more dynamic learning of speaking like short role play and situational conversations to enhance the learners' confidence in conversing with the use of the English language.

Moreover, teachers are also encouraged to include in their lesson plans the activities that will make the learners practice speaking with their classmates and colleagues outside the school.

To validate the results of the present investigation, parallel studies must be conducted in a wider scope not only in Dumangas National High School but also in other schools in the Schools Division of Iloilo.

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Ustaci, H. & Ok, S. (2014). Preferences of ELT Learners in the Correction of Oral Vocabulary and

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