Interaction-based activities in the teaching of speaking

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT

This research assessed the acceptability and effectiveness of Interaction-based activities in teaching speaking to propose appropriate enhancements. It utilized two instruments - Interaction-based Activities and the Acceptability Survey Questionnaire. The Descriptive normative survey, which involved the analysis of the Interaction-based Activities in its acceptability through the Acceptability Survey Questionnaire and effectiveness in developing students'communicative performance through the 49 student-respondents, was utilized in this research. The findings using the Interaction-based activities through the statistical treatment of Pearson r showed that the student's performance in communicative and discourse competence is approaching proficiency, and strategic competence is proficient. On the other hand, the four aspects of the Interaction-based activities'acceptability level, as perceived by the student respondents, received an acceptable response. Moreover, a moderate positive correlation exists between learners'performance and their perceived acceptability level. The following conclusions are capsulized based on the findings: Interaction-based activities using Jose Garcia Villa's select poems are accepted and can be improved for utilization to develop learners'performance in discourse and strategic competence anchored on Lev Vygotsky's Interactionist Theory and Canale and Swain's Communicative Competence Theory. Based on these findings and conclusions, it is recommended that enhanced interaction-based activities be utilized to refine Grade VII learners'communicative competence.

1. Introduction

Communicative competence is essential for language learning, enabling speakers to convey messages appropriately in various contexts. Rajkhowa and Borah (2015, p. 01) highlight that communicative competence is as crucial as technical skills for professionals to succeed in the competitive global market. Developing this competence is a key goal in language classrooms and is included in the Philippine Department of Education curriculum from essential to advanced levels (DepEd, 2016). Starting in Grade VII, high school students engage in debates, interviews, role plays, forums, and discussions to practice effective communication learned in elementary years.

However, despite these efforts, many undergraduate and post-graduate students still lack communicative competence, which is evident in their speaking and writing errors and inability to

communicate fluently in English. Tas and Khan (2020) state that this gap may result from teachers neglecting this aspect in classrooms. They emphasize that improving communicative competence should start in language classrooms, focusing on practical activities. Cronin and Glenn (1991) further highlight that non-speech majors often lack the structured practice and evaluation necessary to develop their communication skills.

To address this gap, this research advocates for constant practice in developing communicative competence through interaction-based activities, especially in mountainous barangay schools in Danao City, where students do not have the luxury of regular exposure to English as a second language due to the limitation of technologies and due to their focus on helping their families make ends meet, and its distance to varied sources for reading. Learners need exposure to English to gain confidence and practical communication skills. This study examines the effectiveness of interaction-based activities in enhancing the communicative skills of Grade 7 learners at one of the high schools in Danao City, aiming to propose improved educational activities.

2. Theoretical background of the study

This research posits that social interaction and realistic tasks in teaching English through Interaction-Based Activities enhance learners' communicative performance. This assumption is grounded in Lev Vygotsky's Interactionist Theory (Vygotsky, 1978), which emphasizes social interaction in language development, and Canale and Swain's Communicative Competence Theory (Canale & Swain, 1980).

Vygotsky's Interactionist Theory underscores the importance of social interaction for language development, suggesting that learning involves a cyclic process of direct experience, reflection, abstract conceptualization, and action, according to Nunan (1993, p. 14). Hasan (2014, pp. 252-253) added that this theory asserts that learners should actively construct new meanings based on prior knowledge and experiences, emphasizing real engagement rather than passive learning. On the other hand, Canale and Swain's (2002) Communicative Competence Theory highlights the necessity of real-world tasks to develop second-language communication skills. This theory includes grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic, and strategic competencies, advocating for tasks that require learners to demonstrate their knowledge in authentic situations. Brown (2000, p. 227) also emphasized the essence of authentic texts and experiences for learners to connect new knowledge to prior experiences, enabling effective language use in context.

Substantially, Chen's (2016) study on EFL learners' strategy use during task-based interaction in a virtual course utilized four types of tasks via voice chat to elicit learners' interactional modification strategies during negotiations. The findings revealed that meaningful tasks significantly enhanced interaction, motivation, and language processing. The study identified that learners frequently employed clarification requests and comprehension checks, demonstrating that authentic tasks can foster effective communication and engagement in language learning. Moreover, Truong (2021) explored the perceptions of teachers and students regarding task-related motivational strategies in EFL classrooms in Vietnam. Using a questionnaire and journal reflections, the study found consensus on the motivational value of various methods, including clear instructions and interactive tasks. Both teachers and students identified the importance of engaging in activities that promote interaction, positively impacting students' learning experiences and motivation.

Additionally, Foster and Ohta (2005) studied high-intermediate students' interactions and

found that, rather than solely negotiating meaning, students actively engaged in co-construction and prompting during tasks. This study emphasized that peer assistance and encouragement were crucial for effective communication, showcasing how interaction-based activities can facilitate collaborative learning and language development. Furthermore, Omar et al. (2020) also conducted a related study on interactive language learning activities for improving learners'communicative ability. The results showed that interactive activities motivated learners to speak English, provided a positive learning environment, and allowed learners to practice and enhance their language understanding.

Consequently, this study creates Interaction-Based Activities in teaching speaking guided by the DepEd K to 12 competencies (DepEd, 2016), which are expressing ideas, opinions, and emotions during interviews, group/panel discussions, forums/fora, or debates and using the appropriate prosodic features of speech during interviews, group/panel discussions, forums/fora or debates. These competencies aim to enhance discourse and strategic competence. Tareva and Polushkina (2018, p. 467) assert that activities like debates and interviews help learners practice communication, using prosodic speech features and coping strategies to repair communication breakdowns.

The study by Lașcu (2022), which explored the role of literary texts in developing discourse competence among English language learners, emphasized a discursive approach that integrates the interpretation of texts with communicative activities, such as analyzing character relationships and social contexts within narratives through debates. This approach fosters discourse competence and enhances students'communicative skills by linking language structures with social phenomena, demonstrating the effectiveness of debate-based activities in a literary context. Sun (2014), on the other hand, examined the shift from traditional communicative competence to interactional competence in language teaching. The study advocated for a constructivist approach where learners engage in collaborative projects, such as interviews, to practice conversational strategies. Students co-construct knowledge and improve their fluency and confidence by simulating real-world interactions. This highlights how interview-based activities can develop strategic competence in spoken English. In addition, Gani (2023) analyzed EFL students'strategic and discourse competence through conversational transcripts. The study found that while students frequently used stalling strategies indicating hesitation, their conversations maintained cohesion and coherence. This suggests that discussion-based activities can enhance discourse competence even with communication challenges. The study recommends that EFL learners engage more in English conversations to improve their speaking skills and reduce communication barriers.

Relatively, a literature review by Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) discussed various communication strategies essential for developing strategic competence. The review emphasized that interaction-based activities, which engage learners in authentic communication scenarios, are crucial for overcoming language gaps and enhancing overall communicative competence. This aligns with the notion that strategic competence is vital for effective communication, especially in language learning environments. These studies collectively illustrate the importance of interaction-based activities, such as debates, interviews, and discussions, in fostering discourse and strategic competence, emphasizing their role in enhancing learners' language learning and communication skills.

With the created Interaction-based activities fostering social interaction and realistic tasks, this research assessed the acceptability of these activities among Grade 7 learners based on

content, comprehensibility, functionality, and ease of use using the Acceptability Questionnaire adapted from Pierrette Desroisers Psycoaching; Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education. These simple, well-organized, engaging activities allow learners to practice and assess their communicative skills. Overall, the study supports the view that social interaction and realistic tasks in language learning are essential for developing communicative competence, aligning with Vygotsky's and Canale and Swain's theories.

Figure 1

A Schematic Presentation of the Theoretical Background of the Study
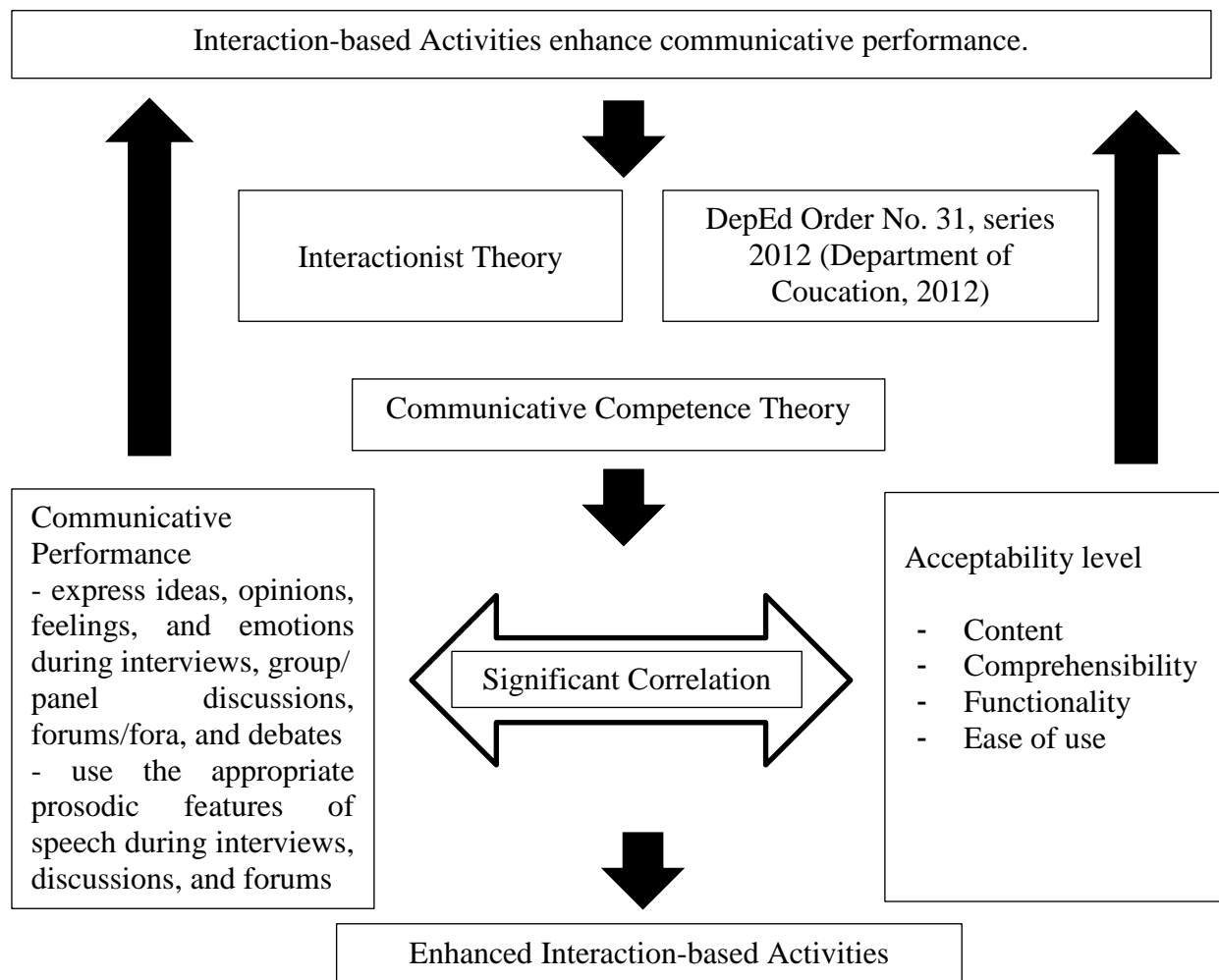
Source. Researcher-made

3. Review of related literature

Recent literature underscores the importance of interaction-based activities, such as debates, interviews, and discussions, in developing discourse and strategic competence among language learners. For instance, Musabal and Abdalgane (2023) explored the obstacles that EFL learners encounter in participating orally in classroom discussions from the perspective of tertiary-level instructors in Saudi Arabia. Through semi-structured interviews with 15 instructors, the researchers identified several key challenges, including linguistic factors such as limited vocabulary and grammatical errors, psychological factors like anxiety and lack of confidence, socio-cultural influences that shape learners' perceptions of classroom participation, and instructional factors related to teaching methods and feedback. The findings emphasize the need for a multifaceted approach involving learners and instructors to address these obstacles and

promote a more engaging and inclusive classroom environment that fosters learners' oral communication skills. The researchers recommend further investigating the effectiveness of specific teaching methods and activities in overcoming the identified barriers to oral participation.

In another study, Selin (2014) investigated the development of strategic competence in oral interaction among students learning English as a foreign language through two classroom learning studies. The research revealed that students' ability to adapt their language to suit different interlocutors and situations was crucial for effective communication. The findings indicated that students needed to identify the characteristics of their conversation partners to engage in meaningful dialogue, highlighting the importance of considering the direction of communication. Moreover, the study demonstrated that strategic competence can be explicitly taught rather than acquired solely through natural conversation. This suggests that integrating explicit instruction of strategic competence into language curricula can enhance students'communicative abilities and foster more effective oral interactions.

A study by Heng (2014) also emphasized the importance of effectively implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in EFL contexts to enhance language proficiency. The study found that teachers often face challenges such as insufficient training and resistance to change, which hinder the successful adoption of CLT methodologies. Educators can create an engaging environment that encourages meaningful communication by effectively incorporating collaborative learning activities and authentic materials. This approach improves learners'linguistic skills and boosts their confidence and motivation to use the language in real-life situations. Overall, the findings underscore the necessity of addressing implementation challenges and adopting interactive strategies to foster successful language learning experiences in EFL classrooms.

All these studies collectively shape the argument for assessing performance on speaking skills determined by specific DepEd K to 12 competencies (DepEd, 2016), which points to the fact that, instead of merely being concerned with knowing, attention must be paid to interaction-based activities that build up a discourse, strategic competence, and oral communication. Thus, the outcomes of Musabal and Abdalgane's study (2023) pinpoint the importance of taking tests considering the linguistic, psychological, socio-cultural, and instructional barriers to oral participation to create an even more inclusive learning environment. Similarly, Selin (2014), in his work on strategic competence, has argued that explicit instruction and assessment of adaptive language strategies enhance the learner's ability to communicate. According to Heng, the CLT study emphasizes that including authentic materials and collaborative activities in assessments will help improve learners'proficiency and effective real-world communication according to the targeted competencies of the DepEd K to 12 curriculum.

4. Statement of the problem

This research assessed the status of the interaction-based activities in teaching English to Grade 7 students at one of the high schools in Danao City to propose appropriate enhancements.

Specifically, this research answered the following questions:

1. Using the Interaction-based Activities, what is the performance of the learners in terms of the following DepEd Curriculum Guide Competencies:

1.1. expressing ideas, opinions, and emotions during debates; and

1.2. using the prosodic features of speech during interviews?

2. As perceived by the learners, what is the acceptability level of the Interaction-based activities as to:

2.1. content;

2.2. comprehensibility;

2.3. functionality; and

2.4. ease of use?

3. Is there a significant correlation between the learner's performance on the activities and the learner's perception?

4. Based on the findings, what enhanced interaction-based activities can be proposed?

5. Research methodology

This study employed a descriptive normative survey design to assess the acceptability of researcher-created interaction-based activities and their effectiveness in enhancing the communicative competence of Grade 7 learners at one of the Junior High Schools in Danao City, measured against curriculum standards. The study involved conducting a two-week class with the respondents using the created Interaction-based activities and letting the students answer the acceptability questionnaire. This was done by the English teacher of the study's locale. The interaction-based activities were structured according to the 4As (Activity, Analysis, Abstraction, and Application) format of a lesson plan guided by the two specific DepEd competencies in equivalent for 02 lesson plans with the duration of one week each. All parts of the lesson involved activities and exercises that engage students in speaking. An assessment was also implemented after every lesson. Specifically, these assessments were interviews and debates, as explicitly stated in the competencies. The collected raw scores of students from the interview and discussion were analyzed using statistical methods, including weighted means, standard deviations, Pearson correlation, and regression analysis, to draw meaningful conclusions about the effectiveness of the activities against the standardized scoring procedure of Deped adopted from D.O # 31, s. 2012 (Department of Coucation, 2012). The correlation between learners' performance and their perceptions was also calculated.

The research was conducted in a rural environment where students had limited exposure to the language because of the limited availability of technology and other means by which students could be engaged with the language. This setting highlighted the need for practical teaching activities to improve English communication skills since the classroom for these students is the only means of engaging in learning and using English as their second language. The study involved only one Grade 7 section of the identified school with 49 students through convenience sampling. They were chosen among other grade levels of the school because they have the highest number of students with difficulties in oral communication, as identified by the principal and assistant principal during the enrollment process interview. The research instruments included the researcher-made interaction-based activities to evaluate discourse and strategic competence through debate and interview assessments, alongside an acceptability survey adapted from Pierrette Desroisers Psycoaching and Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education. The Interaction-based activity is a researcher-made packet that compiles communicative tasks following the 4As lesson plan format guided by Deped competencies focusing on speaking skills. This is administered in a two-week class to determine the discourse and strategic competence of the respondents

through interview and debate as the assessments of the competencies. This packet includes tasks that will generate raw scores from students'performance.

On the other hand, the Acceptability Questionnaire was adapted from the acceptability questionnaire of Pierrette Desroisers Psycoaching and the Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education. It contains five-item statements each on content, comprehensibility, functionality, and ease of use, where students rated from 1 - 5, 5 as very acceptable, and 1 as least acceptable. The former underwent three expert validations, while the latter was pilot-tested with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.71. The data collection process involved obtaining approval from the school principal, conducting the two-week class using Interaction-based activities, implementing the acceptability questionnaire, and then tabulating and analyzing the collected data. Ethical considerations included obtaining ethical clearance, informed consent from participants, and parental consent. These participants were also oriented before the start of the study on their rights to decline to participate and withdraw at any time as study participants. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to report the findings. The analysis aimed to determine the correlation between learners'performance and the perceived acceptability of the activities, using tools such as MS Excel and PH Stat Excel add-in for statistical computations. The results provided a basis for enhancing interaction-based activities to improve communicative performance through effective teaching practices. The scoring of speaking skills was guided by the competencies outlined in the Department of Education's curriculum, using rubrics to evaluate performance on discourse and strategic aspects.

6. Result and discussion

This chapter comprises the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the data gathered based on the discourse and strategic competence performance and the acceptability level of the content, comprehensibility, functionality, and ease of use of learners in interaction-based activities. Moreover, it presents an investigation of the significant correlation between the two.

6.1. Learner's performance

Based on the competencies of the DepEd Curriculum Guide (DepEd, 2016), which are expressing ideas, opinions, and emotions during debates and using prosodic features of speech during interviews, the Interaction-based activities were crafted to elicit performance.

6.1.1. Expressing ideas, opinions, and emotions during debates

Table 1 shows the learner's performance in expressing ideas, opinions, and emotions during classroom debate. It is composed of three columns, which start with an interval of scores on the learners'performance in the discussion, followed by its frequency and verbal description. As reflected in the table, the interval of the scores is four, which is based on the computation of standard deviation. As reflected, the learners got a mean of 12.13, which is approaching proficiency performance, whereas most respondents have scores of 9 - 12 out of 20. The debate rubric is the basis for learners, which comprises organization and clarity, use of arguments, use of examples and facts, use of rebuttal, and presentation and style. Each criterion corresponds to four levels of performance, such as Developing (1), Approaching Proficiency (2), Proficient (3), and Advanced (4), where learners have the chance to get a perfect score of four and the lowest score of one in every criterion.

Table 1

Expressing Ideas, Opinions, and Emotions during Debates

Performance of the Learners in the Debate	Learners n = 49	Verbal Description
	Frequency	
17 - 20	08	Advanced
13 - 16	10	Proficient
09 - 12	25	Approaching Proficiency
05 - 08	06	Developing
Standard Deviation	3.64	
Mean	12.13	
Interpretation	Approaching Proficiency	

Source. Researcher-made

As a systematic instructional approach, classroom debate enhances active learner engagement, higher-order thinking skills, course content mastery, and speaking abilities, as quoted by Zare and Othman (2013, p. 1506). In this research, debates were used as a performance task, dividing the class into four groups to discuss "God or Science" based on the poem "God Said I Made a Man" by Jose Garcia Villa (Year). The learners' performance, evaluated using a rubric, generally fell into the "approaching proficiency" category, with most students presenting viewpoints supported by reasons, though primarily involving only two respondents with connected and related responses. As transcribed in the dialogue below, it can be observed that only Group 1 member A and Group 2 member A presented logical arguments that have a clear connection and relationship with each other that will help make the discussion sustained and deepened.

Group 1 member A: *Our group believes that ahm Science has better creations than God because you know we are now surrounded by technologies like TV, ref, electric fans, etc., which are all helpful in making our ahm lives easier.*

Group 2 member A: *According to Wilkinson, Science is a gift from God (Wilkinson, 2020). Base pa lang ani nga sentence, God has better creations than science because without God, no technology will be created, or no man who can invent technologies will be born.*

Group 1 member B: *But do you have ebidensya that God is the one who created man? Because science has evidence of the experiments conducted everywhere?*

Group 2 member B: *Ahm, your theory of science told us that man comes from monkeys and the like. Is there any evidence you can present where monkeys come from?*

Group 1 member C: *Yes.*

Group 2 member C: *I don't know if you have, but all we know, ahm, etc., is that man is created by God, which, uhh, is one of the most remarkable creations of God.*

Moreover, most of the responses of other group members, like Group 1 member B, Group 2 member B, Group 1 member C, and Group 2 member C, were not even presented with sufficient reasons and were not supported with supporting details, factual information, and examples. Consequently, teachers should aim to nurture students' skills in arguing well with

well-structured debates, argument mapping exercises, and exploring deeper discussions through the Socratic questioning model (Burns, 2019). Effective speaking also requires the act of listening and appropriate responses; thus, there should be more emphasis on teaching active listening and responses to allow all voices to be heard (Dawes, 2021). Using strategies to promote student participation, such as asking clarifying questions or summarizing, would enable better participation in discussions (Sosas, 2021). Accessibility and fluency when speaking will be easy to achieve with the help of technology, and they can make various repetitions in speaking (Pakula, 2019). Lastly, knowing that every student has different levels of confidence and skillfulness, it is imperative to have differentiated instruction so that any one of them can become a better speaker (Sim & Pop, 2016). Teachers can create a learning environment that encourages individual expression and cooperative discourse by addressing these domains.

On the other hand, Group 3 and Group 4's debate with the transcribed dialogue below presented a transparent connection between each other's arguments that kept the discussion going; however, they still failed to show factual information and sufficient examples.

Group 3 member A: *God's creation, aw, the creation of God is better than science because it does not cause any destruction and harm to the world. Instead, it provides the world with resources for making a living, food, and shelter. One of the creations of God which can do such is plants. Plants 'kins or roots can make baskets that can be a source of income. Plants can produce fruits as well, which can give food to living. They can build houses, also.*

Group 4 member A: *But how? Ahm, God's creation cannot inflict harm to the world because you know we, humans, as known to be made by God, are the reason for different disasters that destroy parts of the world.*

Group 3 member B: *Disasters are by ahh people who do not have discipline in themselves but like the plant created by God, they can make people learn that by ahm the realization that they should take care of the plants for them to grow and multiply and be helpful.*

Group 4 member B: *But if you do not know, ahm, there are already many inventions today of science that can do what plants can do and even make more extraordinary things which can make people's lives easier.*

The learners' performance in the debate activity indicated a need for improvement in discourse competence, particularly in organizing utterances to convey meaning and providing supporting details with sufficient facts and examples. However, the enthusiasm and self-esteem demonstrated by the learners suggest a strong potential for developing these skills through more practice and exercise. Allen et al. (1999, p. 28) study supports this, showing that intensive communication training yields positive results, with nearly forty studies indicating significant benefits from practicing verbal skills. Steinfatt (1986, pp. 359, 469) also highlights that communication across the curriculum can address the "cannot communicate" problem, with faculty and learners reacting positively to intensive communication activities and reporting marked improvements in oral communication skills. Additionally, self-reports suggest that such intensive activities enhance learners perceived mastery of course materials.

6.1.2. Using the Appropriate Prosodic Features of Speech during Interviews

Table 2 on learners' performance in using appropriate prosodic features of speech during interviews shows a mean score of 13.28, indicating proficient performance, with most learners scoring between 13 - 16 out of 20. The Mock Interview rubric, used to assess this performance, includes five criteria: appearance, greeting, communication, body language and posture, and eye

contact, each rated on a scale from Developing (1) to Advanced (4). The highest possible score per criterion is four, and the lowest is one. The poem "Nobody Knows Who I Am" by Jose Garcia Villa (1942) was used as the basis for interview questions to evaluate learners individually according to the rubric. A criterion-referenced measure indicated the learner's attainment concerning the specified abilities.

Table 2

Using the Appropriate Prosodic Features of Speech during Interviews

Performance of the Learners in Strategic Competence(Interview)	Learners n = 49	Verbal Description
	Frequency	
17 - 20	07	Advanced
13 - 16	22	Proficient
09 - 12	18	Approaching Proficiency
05 - 08	02	Developing
Standard Deviation	3.08	
Weighted Mean	13.28	
Interpretation	Proficient	

Source. Researcher-made

Criterion-Referenced (CR) tests allow users to interpret scores as indicators of the extent to which an individual has acquired a specific ability, according to Bachman and Savignon (1986, p. 382). The activity aimed to assess learners' strategic competence and encourage using strategies to handle breakdowns during interviews. These verbal and nonverbal strategies help second language learners avoid communication issues and compensate for gaps in linguistic knowledge. Transcriptions of learners' learner's performances showed that most could use communication strategies to facilitate comprehension or production, giving them more time to think of alternative expressions. According to Rabab'ah (2015), these strategies effectively maintained conversation and negotiated meaning.

As seen in the following conversation, the interviewee used a confirmation request in the interview question, "What made you different from other people?" to ensure that he understood the question. It can be observed that the participant is not sure which aspect of his life he will tackle in discussing his differences with others, and that is why he decided to ask for clarification strategy. The interviewer confirmed that the interviewee may seek to discuss any aspect of his life to discuss his differences. Using this strategy also led to learning the most relevant aspect of his life, which he can discuss with confidence and pride.

Interviewer: *What made you different from other people?*

Interviewee: Ahm. *Which aspect of my life will I be focusing ma'am?*

Interviewer: *You may point out any aspect of your life you wish to discuss with me.*

Interviewee: *I may not have the most beautiful face and skin and healthy body like some of my classmates'ma'am, and I do not have experienced those they already experienced, but I know that I have a happy and united family who are helping each other all the time with all the happiness and sadness we went through.*

Interviewer: *Do you mean to say that you may not come from a well-off family, but you are still happy with your family and what you have?*

Interviewee: *Yes, ma'am.*

With the example above, the learner used circumlocution to discuss his differences. He said, *"I may not have the most beautiful face and skin and healthy body like some of my classmates'ma'am, and I do not have experienced those they already experienced."* Instead of saying he came from a well-off family with enough resources to sustain their daily needs. Another learning was developed through this strategy, leading to the successful interaction between the two.

Another significant observation of the learners'performance in this activity is that communication strategies helped the learners in any way possible to make the conversation going, which made these strategies conducive to language learning (Tareva & Polushkina, 2018, p. 470). In fact, during the interview, when the interviewer asked another interviewee this question, *"How did you deal with the problems you encountered?"* it can be observed from the dialogue below that the interviewee had difficulties in delivering his answer. Still, he utilized language switches and non-verbal strategies with his response.

Interviewer: *How did you deal with the problems you encountered?*

Interviewee: You know ma'am, ahm. *I have lots of problems nga nasugatan but uh, (furrow eyebrows) I am still here standing ug pilit na maging malakas ma'am. (smiling) I just always make sure ma'am nga hindi ako magpapatinag sa kahit na anong problema sa buhay. Dapat akong magiging strong lage. I mean I make sure to be strong always ma'am. (smiling).*

Interviewer: *That's great of you, Chris! You must ensure you are always strong despite your life problems.*

During the interview, the interviewee employed a self-repair strategy, demonstrating the learner's willingness to take risks to convey meaning effectively, even if not explicitly taught in the interaction-based activities. Language learners often encounter interruptions due to gaps in their linguistic knowledge, prompting the use of communication strategies to bridge these gaps and maintain conversation flow with interlocutors. In the interview activity, learners utilized strategies such as circumlocution, language switching, seeking clarification, and non-verbal cues to address communication breakdowns. While not all learners used these strategies, the majority did, as evidenced by their proficient performance, with four strategies being employed in 75% of breakdowns. This aligns with the study of Kayi (2006), which highlights that teaching communication strategies is beneficial in developing learners'strategic competence. Furthermore, it supports Omar's (2020) study that learners who acquire language skills naturally in immersive environments are more motivated to use these strategies effectively, enhancing their communication ability. Explicit instruction on communication strategies has been shown to positively impact learners'strategic performance, making them more aware of the benefits and willing to employ strategy in communication.

In summary, the learners' performance in the debate activity indicates that while there is a need for improvement in discourse competence, particularly in organizing thoughts and providing supporting details, their enthusiasm suggests the potential for growth through practice. This highlights the importance of intensive communication training, which has yielded positive results in enhancing verbal skills and addressing communication challenges. Using various communication strategies during interviews, such as self-repair and seeking clarification, underscores the benefits of teaching these strategies to develop learners' strategic competence.

Fostering an environment that encourages practice and explicit instruction in communication strategies can significantly enhance students'ability to communicate effectively and improve their academic performance.

6.2. Acceptability level of the interaction-based activities

This part displays the acceptability level of interaction-based activities as the respondents perceive them in terms of content, comprehensibility, functionality, and ease of use.

6.2.1. Content on interaction-based activities

Table 3 on the acceptability of interaction-based activities regarding content shows an acceptable interpretation with an average mean of 3.81, where all five items received an acceptable response. These items are *"I can understand the explanations of the topics in the activities"* as number 1 and *"I have read enough information on the discussions in the interaction-based activities"* as number 2. Moreover, *"I can understand the construction of sentences and its connection with each other in the activities"* as number 3, *"I can follow the flow of the activities easily and the connection of each activity from one another"* as number 4, and *"I can relate on the activities since it is on real-world situations"* as number 5.

Table 3

Learners'Acceptability Level on the Interaction-based Activities as to Content

Level of Acceptability on Interaction-based Activities in terms of content	X	SD	VD
1. I can understand the explanations of the topics in the activities.	3.96	4.89	A
2. I have read enough information on the discussions in the interaction-based activities.	4	5.66	A
3. I can understand the construction of sentences and their connection to the activities.	3.61	5.91	A
4. I can follow the flow of the activities smoothly and connect each activity with the others.	3.78	5.61	A
5. I can relate to the activities since they are in real-world situations.	3.69	6.81	A
Average Weighted Mean		3.81	
Interpretation		Acceptable	

Note. Legend: VA (Very Acceptable), A (Acceptable), SA (Slightly Acceptable), LSA (Less Acceptable), NA (Not Acceptable)
Source. Researcher-made

The analysis of the interaction-based activities indicates an overall acceptability regarding content, though improvements are needed to enhance learners' understanding and performance. Specifically, explanations within the activities require greater clarity and additional relevant information, while the organization of tasks should be structured to build linkage and guide learners toward achieving their goals. Instructions must be comprehensible and well-constructed, utilizing vocabulary suitable for the audience and the context of the activity. Incorporating real-world activities and emphasizing intrinsic goals can further enhance learner engagement and promote language development, aligning with the principles of situated learning. Ultimately, the refinement of interaction-based activities, guided by these considerations, can significantly contribute to learners' language development and communicative competence, which is further supported by Hasan (2014, p. 256).

6.2.2. comprehensibility of the interaction-based activities

Table 4 shows that the comprehensibility of the Interaction-based activities is acceptable, substantiated by an average mean of 3.88 and an adequate response of learners for the five items. Number 1 is *"I can understand the words used in the activities."* Number 2 is *"I have followed the instructions of each activity."* Number 3 is *'I understand the connections of each activity."* Number 4 is *"The words used in the interaction-based activities are appropriate to my level,"* and number 5 is *"The interaction-based activities are easy to understand".*

Table 4

Learners'Acceptability Level on the Interaction-Based Activities as to Comprehensibility

Level of Acceptability on Interaction-Based Activities in terms of comprehensibility	X	SD	VD
1. I can understand the words used in the activities.	3.98	5.57	A
2. I have followed the instructions for each activity.	3.96	5.65	A
3. I understand the connections between each activity.	3.71	6.00	A
4. The words used in the interaction-based activities are appropriate to my level.	3.76	7.19	A
5. Interaction-based activities are easy to understand.	3.98	5.57	A
Average Weighted Mean		3.88	
Interpretation		Acceptable	

Note. Legend: VA (Very Acceptable), A (Acceptable), SA (Slightly Acceptable), LSA (Less Acceptable), NA (Not Acceptable)
Source. Researcher-made

The assessment of the interaction-based activities reveals an acceptable level of comprehensibility, suggesting that while understandable, improvements are needed to ensure effortless understanding. This necessitates considerations such as learners' familiarity with the choice of words, the clarity of instructions, the coherence of activity sequences, and the simplification of tasks. Instructions play a pivotal role in guiding learners' performance, with research indicating that well-structured instructions can enhance motivation and performance (Sansone et al.,1989, p. 827). Therefore, revisions to instructions within the Enhanced Interaction-based Activities are essential to ensure learners grasp the activity's goals and remain motivated to achieve them. Furthermore, the choice of words must align with learners' familiarity to enhance comprehension and performance, drawing on research highlighting the impact of background knowledge on text comprehension supported by the study of Tabatabaei and Shakerin (2013, p. 155). Additionally, Nunan (1993, p. 23) asserted that tasks within the activities should be designed to match learners' proficiency levels and interests, facilitating engagement and autonomy in the learning process. By incorporating these considerations, the Enhanced Interaction-based Activities aim to provide accessible and engaging learning experiences that promote adequate comprehension and performance.

6.2.3. functionality of the interaction-based activities

The functionality of the Interaction-based Activities reveals an acceptable interpretation with a mean of 3.90. All the items from numbers 1 to 5 received an adequate response. Descriptions in each item are *"I am interested in participating in every activity because I find it important in my life"* and *"I can perform the activities because it is within my capability."*

Moreover, "I can talk with my classmates during group activities, which help improve my communicative competence," and "I can practice speaking English in front of people through its activities." Furthermore, "I can improve my communicative competence throughout the activities because I now have the confidence to talk in English in front of people".

Table 5

Learners'Acceptability Level on the Interaction-based Activities as to Functionality

Level of Acceptability on Interaction-Based Activities in terms of functionality	X	SD	VD
1. I can talk with my classmates during group activities, which helps in improving my communicative competence.	3.88	6.42	A
2. I am interested in participating in every activity because it is essential.	3.94	5.37	A
3. I can perform the activities because they are within my capability.	3.98	6.56	A
4. I can practice speaking English in front of people through its activities.	3.88	5.76	A
5. I can improve my communicative competence throughout the activities because I now have the confidence to talk in English in front of people.	3.82	6.11	A
Average Weighted Mean		3.90	
Interpretation		Acceptable	

Note. Legend: VA (Very Acceptable), A (Acceptable), SA (Slightly Acceptable), LSA (Less Acceptable), NA (Not Acceptable)
Source. Researcher-made

The data presented that the interaction-based activities are acceptable and need modification to contribute to learners' speaking skill development. As each item suggested, the activities must be fun and applicable to learners' lives, suit learners' capability, interact through group work, practice speaking, and build learners'confidence in talking in front of an audience.

Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation play a crucial role in stimulating learners to engage in language learning, influencing various components of language acquisition. Positive attitudes toward language learning enhance learners'sensitivity to linguistic aspects such as pronunciation and accent, while negative attitudes can impede progress, as affirmed by Merisuo-Storm (2007, p. 38). Recognizing that communicative competence alone may not suffice for speaking skill improvement, the Enhanced Interaction-based Activities aim to incorporate engaging and interactive tasks that trigger learners' motivation, facilitating effective communication sustained by Hasan (2014, p. 252). Torky's (2006, p. 40) studies emphasize that communicative, interactive tasks enhance learners'motivation, attitudes, and risk-taking propensity, improving speaking fluency and accuracy. Furthermore, activities within the Enhanced Interaction-based Activities must align with learners' abilities, offering tasks suitable for Grade 7 learners, such as basic conversational exercises within familiar contexts backed by Hwang et al. (2010, pp. 175-176). They added that encouraging conversational interactions among peers fosters a supportive environment for learners to freely express ideas, feelings, and opinions, contributing to confidence-building and skill development. By providing ample opportunities for learners to engage in speaking activities, the Enhanced Interaction-based Activities aim to enhance learners' confidence and proficiency in oral communication, recognizing that practice is key to skill development.

6.2.4. Ease of use on interaction-based activities

Table 6, on ease of use of the interaction-based activities, reveals that all five items are acceptable, with an average weighted mean of 3.9429. These items are *"I find the interaction-based activities easy to use because I have my copy of it"* as number 1, and *"I can carry the activities with me anytime I want"* as number 2. While *"I can write notes on the Interaction-Based Activities"* is number 3, *"I find the instruction and discussions easy to understand"* is number 4, and *"I can assess myself in each activity through its given rubric"* is number 5.

Table 6

Learners'Acceptability Level on the Interaction-based Activities as to Ease of Use

Level of Acceptability on Interaction-Based Activities in terms of Ease of Use	Learners n = 49					X	SD	VD
	VA (5)	A (4)	SA (3)	LSA (2)	NA (1)			
1. I find the interaction-based activities easy to use because I have a copy of it.	19	18	10	2	0	4.1020	6.0407	A
2. I can carry the activities with me anytime I want.	12	16	15	6	0	3.6939	6.8124	A
3. I can write notes on the Interaction-Based Activities.	11	25	11	2	0	3.9184	5.4473	A
4. I find the instructions and discussions easy to understand.	11	26	9	2	1	3.8980	5.3166	A
5. I can assess myself in each activity through the rubric given.	19	15	12	5	0	4.1020	7.2210	A
Average Weighted Mean					3.9429			
Interpretation					Acceptable			

Note. Legend: VA (Very Acceptable), A (Acceptable), SA (Slightly Acceptable), LSA (Less Acceptable), NA (Not Acceptable)
Source. Researcher-made

In conclusion, the results presented show that the activities do not provide absolute convenience to the learners. Based on the suggestions of the items, modification of the activities'words is necessary for learners to grasp the ideas independently conveyed to perform the tasks provided efficiently. With this, they realize its usefulness (Hwang et al., 2011, p.176). Besides, the activities will also allow learners to make annotations for accessible monitoring of their performance. Through this, learners may develop an appreciation of their copy of the activities.

Annotations enable learners to reflect on the learning material individually, which allows them to recall the content of learning activities whenever possible for remediation and then collaboratively by sharing their annotations with their peers and the teacher for further discussion on their ideas and thoughts, which facilitates the development of speaking skills reinforced by Hwang et al. (2011, p. 176). Moreover, annotations can be attached to any position in the learning material, thus building a connection between the content of the annotation and that of the learning material and giving the learners a clear picture of the whole learning scenario with an appropriate explanation.

Generally, the overall result indicates that the interaction-based activities are acceptable and need further improvement to deliver their cause and develop the student's communicative competence.

6.3. Significant correlation between respondents performance and acceptability level

The significant correlation between learners' performance and perceived acceptability level exhibited in Table 7 was determined by the statistical operation of Pearson r. The minimum alpha for confirmation of the research hypothesis is 0.05.

The result of the test illustrated in the column shows that the correlation between the performance and acceptability of the respondents with a correlation coefficient of r = 0.5437 is significantly correlated to the significant p-value of (p < 0.05), which can be interpreted as positively moderately correlated (Evans, 1996).

Table 7

Significant Correlation between Respondents' Performance and Perceived Acceptability Level

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	SIGNIFICANT CORRELATION	P VALUE	INTERPRETATION
49	0.5437	0.05	Positive Moderate Correlation

Source. Researchers-made

This signifies that the correlation rejected the null hypothesis, stating that no significant correlation exists between learners'performance and the acceptability level of interaction-based activities. Positive moderate correlation, as a result, means that the performance of learners in the DepEd Curriculum Guide Competencies, DepEd (2016) (Expressing ideas, opinions, feelings, and emotions during debates and Using the appropriate prosodic features of speech during interviews) combination with an average weighted mean of 2.551 (Proficient) is associated with their perceived acceptability level (Acceptable).

The significant positive moderate correlation (r = 0.5437, p = 0.05) observed in Table 7 between respondents' performance and perceived acceptability level implies several implications. Firstly, the rejection of the null hypothesis suggests that there is indeed a meaningful relationship between learners' performance and their perception of the acceptability level of Interaction-based Activities. This finding underscores the importance of considering learners' performance outcomes when assessing the acceptability of instructional activities. Secondly, the positive correlation indicates that as learners demonstrate higher proficiency in the designated competencies outlined in the DepEd Curriculum Guide, DepEd (2016) (such as expressing ideas, opinions, feelings, and emotions during debates and using appropriate prosodic features of speech during interviews), their perceived acceptability of the Interaction-based Activities also tends to increase. This suggests that effective performance in these competencies may contribute positively to learners' satisfaction and engagement with the instructional activities. Therefore, educators should strive to design activities that facilitate skill development and align with learners'perceptions of acceptability, ultimately enhancing their learning experiences and outcomes.

7. Conclusions and recommendations

The conclusion drawn from the study suggests that Interaction-based activities have positively impacted learners' performance in discourse and strategic competence with the result of approaching proficiency and proficiency, respectively. This conclusion is supported by the finding that learners perceived these activities as acceptable, indicating their willingness to engage with and benefit from them. However, it is also recognized that these activities have room for improvement to further enhance their effectiveness as instructional tools for English

language learning. The analysis of interaction-based activities reveals an overall acceptability in content, but modifications must be made to improve learners' understanding and performance. Specifically, simple explanations with simple words understandable by students and additional relevant information to further the discussion are necessary on the abstraction parts of the lessons, along with a better flow of activities where learners will find the connection from one activity to the other and the discussion as a whole. The instructions must be comprehensible, using appropriate vocabulary for the audience and context while incorporating real-world activities to boost engagement and promote language development. Overall, while the activities are deemed acceptable, modifications are needed to ensure they are enjoyable, suitable for learners' capabilities, encourage group interaction, and build confidence in speaking, ultimately allowing learners to grasp concepts independently and perform tasks effectively. These enhancements are needed to better develop learners' communicative competence through social interaction and consistent target language use in realistic tasks. This conclusion is grounded in educational theories, particularly Lev Vygotsky's Interactionist Theory, which emphasizes the importance of social interaction in learning, and Canale and Swain's Communicative Competence Theory, which emphasizes the ability to use language effectively in real-life communication situations. Therefore, the study suggests that by refining Interaction-based activities to better align with these theoretical principles, educators can optimize their effectiveness in promoting communicative competence among English language learners. An experimental study can be conducted further to test the efficacy of interaction-based activities for a randomly selected group of students according to the set inclusion and exclusion criteria compared to the control group.

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