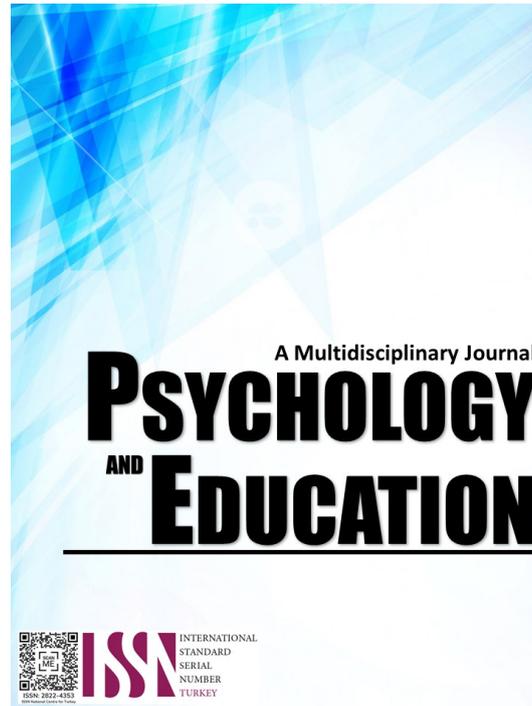


**ATTITUDE OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
TOWARDS THE USE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE: ITS
RELATIONSHIP TO THEIR
ORAL&NBSP;COMMUNICATION SKILLS**



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Attitude of Senior High School Students Towards the Use of English Language: Its Relationship to Their Oral Communication Skills

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Abstract

The study made use of a descriptive-correlational research to determine the attitude of senior high school students towards the use of the English language and its relationship to their oral communication skills. The data were gathered from 176 senior high school students using the 25-item English language questionnaire to measure the attitude of students towards the use of the English language and the level of oral communication skills using the interview guide. Responses were audio-recorded by the researcher and rated using rubrics by the raters. Based on the findings, almost all agreed that learning English is an important goal in their life; understand the meaning of some English songs when listening to its lyrics; and like to watch English movies. Moreover, studying English helps them communicate the English language effectively; and studying the English subject makes them feel more confident. Also, they joined English club and some English competitions. They prefer to speak English in their English classes. They take English course to improve their English language. Generally, the respondents have positive attitude toward the use of the English language. In addition, the oral communication skill is proficient. Students with high level of oral communication skills are 19 years old in ABM Track. The oral communication skills of students differ significantly according to age and track. And finally, students' attitude towards the use of the English language is significantly related to their oral communication skills.

Keywords: Attitude, English Language, Senior High School, Oral Communication Skills, Academic Track

Introduction

Everyone's essential activity is speaking and listening, but the prime activity is oral communication which is first acquired and practiced at home. It plays a vital role in interactions, social-familial relationships, and collaborations to build a sense of belongingness in school and the community. Learners' oral communication skills are deemed necessary for academic Proficiency and vital skills to enhance their potential learning and future career (Cruz, 2019). Oral communication skills are crucial life skills (Aliyu, 2017), although speaking is the most challenging skill for the students (Mandasari, Ernati, and Roza (2013).

The English language is part of everyday life which is necessary to learn. Students must participate in learning (Kesgin & Arslan, 2015). According to Tanni (2015), since English is used as a second language in the country, learners' attitudes towards the language are essential in learning the language. A learner's attitude is an important factor impacting language learning. It is essential to language learning (Canceran & Temporal, 2020).

'Singapore formal English' or 'Standard English' is learned in schools, and informal English, or 'Singapore Colloquial English,' is learned and used in vernacular it is the native language of the Singaporeans and is

negatively perceived as bad English. To eradicate bad English, the Speak Good English Movement Campaign was launched (Rubdy, 2001 in; Chang, 2011).

In Vietnam, students with a positive outlook toward speaking English have a significantly higher level of oral Proficiency than those with a negative perspective. Students with negative attitudes toward speaking English have an average or low oral Proficiency (Bui, 2003).

Attitude toward the use of language, speaking styles, and self-expression is vital for students' success and future career prospects. These hold students in good stead professionally (Lucanos, 2019). Ong (2020) said that English is the second language taught in the Philippines from primary to tertiary. Moreover, the "Speak Only English Policy" was implemented in the elementary and secondary levels. Students who hardly speak the language had a negative aspect of learning the language. Students' communicative competence was affected. Thus, skills in oral communication are low.

Locally, learners come from diverse cultures with different dialects such as Cebuano, Ilonggo, Ilocano, Maguindanaon, and Menuvu. The researcher observed that many students need help to speak English. He observed that students have poor performance in



English, as evidenced by their difficulties in expressing themselves in front of the class. The researcher noticed that learning the English language is very challenging to many learners, and these challenges in learning the English language can be due to many factors. This scenario prompted the researcher to investigate the current study on the attitude of senior high school students towards the use of the English language and its relationship to their oral communication skills.

Research Questions

This study determined the attitude of senior high school students towards using the English language and its relationship to their oral communication skills. Specifically, this study sought to find answers to the following questions:

1. What are the demographic characteristics of the senior high school students in terms of age, sex, academic Track, and tribe?
2. What is the general attitude of senior high school students towards using the English language in the new normal?
3. What is the level of oral communication skills of senior high school students?
4. Is there a significant difference between the oral communication skills of senior high school students when grouped according to their demographic characteristics
5. Is there a significant relationship between the attitude of senior high school students toward using the English language and their skills.

Literature Review

The English Language

Learning the English language is considered an essential aspect at every stage of the educational process (Bhaskar & Soundiraraj, 2013). English has become a dominant language worldwide and is regarded chiefly as a skill, tool, subject, and discipline. It is the foundation substance of thought and experience upon which the rest of the academic knowledge is built. It takes the central role of bridging knowledge and skills to learner competency (Gemora & Arellano, 2016). The success or failure of formal education largely depends on the level of competence of learners in the English Language in schools and colleges (Ihejirika, 2014).

Education is a learning procedure that helps new

generations obtain the necessary information and possibilities to develop their personality to be a part of community life (Kesgin & Arslan, 2015). It is vital to learn a foreign language to be a part of community life in the globalizing world. After World War II, English became *the lingua franca* across the globe. It has become a necessity for nations to learn the world language of English in addition to their language (Nordquist, 2020). English is undoubtedly the international scientific language and the world language today (Eskicumali & Turedi, 2010).

More so, the expansion of the English language has rapidly increased the need to gain better English communication throughout the world because the aptitude to use English is very much needed for further studies, journeys in other countries as well as for social and professional global contacts of different kinds (Hashemi, 2011). Ton and Pham (2010) identify that English is generally used as an international language for communication among people from different language backgrounds worldwide.

In the same vein, the English language is a global language that can be used for communication with native speakers and non-native speakers worldwide, especially in the education section. All university students need it for their studies to search for information and obtain knowledge. Therefore, many universities worldwide need to include the English language as one of their educational tool requirements (Khader & Mohammad, 2010). Murray and Christison (2010) stressed that English is often used as the medium of instruction in higher education.

Silvani (2014) said that using the first language in an English classroom means that a first language is a language that is learned naturally by the children from their environment before they know the other languages. Some experts believe that using the first language negatively affects students' English mastery.

Furthermore, there are many possible reasons for studying a foreign or second language. Some people want to learn English because it offers a chance for advancement in their professional lives. They will get a better job with two languages than if they only know their mother tongue. English has a particular position since it has become the international language of communication. The students would need to learn English to survive. Students who study at a university may need English to write reports or essays. Business executives need English for international trade. Waiters may need English to serve the customers. It is clear from this list that there are many possible reasons



for studying a language (Ahmed, 2015).

According to McCarthy (2009), learning English can be broken down into two areas: input and output. Input comprises reading and listening, while production consists of writing and speaking. There must be a lot of good-quality input to have good quality output. The more one reads, the better one writes. Therefore, the more one reads, writes, and listens, the better one speaks.

Many reasons that cause students in Laos poor performance in their learning of English as a foreign language include the weakness of curriculum design, lack of English teachers, and lack of students' learning motivation. According to John and Ehow (2011), the problems of learning the English language are derived from many different factors in different environments, such as school resources, class size, quality of teachers, and the school attendance of learners.

Cao (2011) noted that students' poor performance in learning the English language is affected by the changing of learners' habits, cultures, and the structure of languages because there were no strict rules for the pronunciation of their mother language. Besides, Khattak, Jamshed, Ahmad, and Baig (2011) said that students were afraid of making mistakes in classes during examinations, as well as the poor socio-economic background caused by poor performance in learning the English language. While, Bouangeune, Latsanyphone, and Hirakawa (2010) said that the determinant and issues in student achievement in English at the Lao secondary education level is a problem with basic vocabulary skills, which influences reading comprehension and the content of textbooks difficulty.

A study has been conducted by Tanveer (2011) investigating the factors that cause language anxiety for ESL/EFL learners in learning speaking skills and the influence it casts on communication in the target language found difficulties in language learning, differences in learners' and target language cultures, the difference in the social status of the speakers are the factors that affect to the students' weakness of language learning. In addition, Loae (2011) studied the problems encountered by Arab EFL learners and showed that learners preferred to use Arabic rather than English for communication both outside and inside the classroom, the lack of the target language exposure as spoken by its native speakers, the shortage and weakness of the contribution in their language teaching context, and lack of their motivation.

In addition, learners' performance in English is poor

because English is regarded as a complex subject to learn; learning depends on the English teachers as authorities; lack of support to use English in the home environment and the community; insufficient or lacking exposure to the language as there is a limited opportunity to use English outside the classrooms; limitation of vocabulary proficiency as well as English reading materials are not always available; unwilling and lack the motivation to learn English as they do not see the immediate need to use the language; and lack of motivation for learning or a negative attitude towards the target language Musa, Lei, and Azman (2012).

Chang (2010) indicated that students' weakness in English language learning is derived from learners' laziness, lack of school efficiency, and insufficient parental promotions. Racca and Lasaten (2016) noted that proficiency in the English language is the basis for success in academic pursuits. Reading, writing, and working with numbers are tasks based on language skills and are described as the interplay between conversational and more advanced communication skills. For Palmero (2019), learning and mastering the English language offers a person countless opportunities to be employed because English is considered a springboard to achieving a better life.

However, in the Philippines, most Filipinos are learning to speak the English language. Parents teach their children to speak English and read and write at a very young age. Speaking the English language can give a career opportunity here and abroad. At present, the English language is imperative in how you write, read, and pronounce it very well (Cruz, 2019).

Attitude of Students Toward Use of the English Language

Attitudes are defined as an acquired internal state that influences the choice of personal action (Gagné & Driscoll, 1988; Kesgin & Arslan, 2015). Van (2004, as cited in Munir & Rehman, 2015) defined attitude as assessing an attitudinal entity, ranging from exceptionally damaging to exceptionally positive. Abidin, Pour-Mohammadi, and Alzwari (2012) said that the student's attitude toward learning English had been considered one of the principal factors in stimulating students' language learning. On the other hand, Baker (1988), cited in Gemora and Arellano (2016), believed that students' attitudes toward the language they learn in English play a crucial role in language growth. Moreover, young learners' intellectual development is still in concrete operational stages, so they cannot learn abstract rules. There are



also some points to be considered; one of them is attitude. Teachers must know their students' attitudes due to successful teaching and learning.

Moreover, students' behavior toward language learning can impact their language acquisition. Lightbown and Spada (2016) said that if the students have positive attitudes toward the language speakers, they will desire more contact. It means that the students will be more attracted to learning the language if they are interested in the target language. This positive attitude related to the target language will motivate the students to learn the target language enthusiastically. According to Khasinah (2014), attitude is a set of beliefs about factors such as the language culture, their culture, classroom learning, teachers, and learning task. The statement explains that the attitude is not only about the language culture but also about classroom learning. The teachers who teach the language and kinds of language learning tasks are given to the students. The attitude in learning the language can be positive or negative.

Consequently, learners need to have a positive attitude to acquire high proficiency in the target language. Learners with a positive attitude towards speaking English will be more involved in speaking activities. They may try to use more strategies to help them deal with their difficulties in conversation. Learners with a negative attitude are less willing to participate in speaking activities. Attitudes are internal states that influence what the learners are likely to do (Bui & Intaraprasert, 2013).

Padwick (2010) asserted that language learning has psychological and social aspects besides the intellectual perspective and depends primarily on the learners' motivation and attitude to learn the target language. Feng and Chen (2009) stated that the learning process is emotional. It is affected by different emotional factors. The teacher and his students engaged in various emotional activities, and varied emotions yielded. According to Choy and Troudi (2016), attitudes can help learners express whether they like or dislike objects or surrounding situations. It is agreed that FL learners' inner feelings and emotions influence their perspectives and attitudes toward the target language.

A student's attitude toward learning the language is one of the leading predictors of success in learning English. The role of the teacher is an important factor in developing a positive attitude toward learning English. So, teachers should provide their students a more active, free learning environment (Gömleksiz,

2010).

Gemora and Arellano (2016) concluded that owing to students' contextual understanding yielded positive attitude towards English as a subject, which is more likely attributed to their background, stored knowledge, and frequent use of English as required in their primary education curricula and may sometimes their language used at home. English becomes an interesting subject because it provides them with varied comprehension, problem-solving, and critical thinking activities to enhance their Proficiency in the language.

For this reason, students with positive learning attitudes are happy with learning, and thus, they would actively engage in learning. In comparison, those with negative learning attitudes may feel anxious about learning. They would get bored quickly and find it difficult to enjoy their learning. This suggests that a negative attitude leads to a lack of learning success (Padwick, 2010). Moreover, a positive attitude can increase the chance of language learning striving to win, while negative attitudes can hinder the learning of that language. Zeinivanda, Azizifara, and Gowharya (2015) said that a positive and negative attitude to speaking English is one of the factors that may be associated with learners' speaking activities.

Ghazvinia and Khajehpoura (2011) concluded in their study that the attitude of female students toward learning a foreign language is more favorable than males. However, a significant difference between girls and boys in negative attitudes was not observed. Also, female students have a more positive attitude to learning English as a foreign language than male students.

Besides, learners' attitude toward using the English language is related to different factors such as gender and type of school. As well as first-year students in the university had higher attitude scores towards English than higher year levels' scores. There is a gender difference in attitude toward the English language (Coşkun & Taşgın, 2018 & Ong, 2020). Inal and Evin (cited in Ong, 2020) stated that the learners' attitudes affect their academic performance since attitudes affect how much they become interested in learning the language.

Yang (2012) conducted a short study with 20 University Malaya Master students to gauge their attitudes and motivation in a second language. The study's main objective was to determine what makes some people acquire and learn English better than others. The findings revealed that learners who were

highly and positively involved in their English Proficiency had positive attitudes and were highly motivated towards learning English.

Batang and Temporal (2018) found that a positive attitude towards English may lead to awareness of the importance of English and learning it as a compulsory subject. The attitude concept is considered an essential component in language learning. So, a positive attitude should be the umbrella of language learning. Gardner (1985) stated that the learners' attitudes toward learning another language play a crucial role in enhancing and motivating them to learn that language.

Oral Communication

Wix Encyclopedia (<https://www.wix.com/encyclopedia/definition/oral-communication>) posited that oral communication is exchanging information and ideas through spoken word. It can be in person in a face-to-face interaction or through an electronic device such as a phone, video platform, or radio. It is vital for learning and understanding the environment on a daily basis, both personally and professionally. It is a fundamental aspect of learning a language and helps solve problems. It also allows people to exchange information quickly, and it conveys emotion in conversations.

The primary purpose of communication is to transmit thoughts and beliefs to another person. The central communication components are verbal communication or oral communication and non-verbal communication. Oral communication is the process of expressing ideas through the medium of speech, which plays a crucial role in the life of students (Lucanos, 2017).

Oral communication is communicating with spoken words. It is a verbal form of communication where you communicate your thoughts, present ideas, and share information (Harappa Education, n.d.). Oral communication has five (5) elements that complete the entire oral communication cycle: the sender is the person who initiates communication with the receiver; the medium, which is the format in which the message is being sent; the channel, it is the platform on which the message is delivered. For example, in a podcast, a telephone, or a meeting, the receiver is the one that listens and decodes the message sent by the sender and then generates feedback for the sender in response to the message; feedback, which is the final stage is the reaction of the receiver, such as oral or written communication. No response from the receiver is also a type of feedback.

In addition, oral communication is a dynamic process involving two or more people. It is the process of expressing ideas through the medium of speech that plays a crucial role in the lives of learners (Lucanos, 2017). Students' oral communication skills must be developed to teach them appropriate presentation knowledge (Cruz, 2019). Bui and Intaraprasert (2013) said that to be able to communicate efficiently in English requires language learners to possess communicative competence.

In school, within the subject of English, the students must be given many opportunities to use their English and practice how to communicate verbally and express themselves in English (Törnqvist, 2018). According to Lucanos (2017), the importance of oral communication in student life will define professional communication later in life. Good communication enables students to assimilate more from the learning process by asking relevant questions and discussing doubts. Effective verbal communication nurtures the process of socialization by facilitating new friendships, and these, in turn, aid the learning process. Productive communication is a boost to career development. An ability to convey thoughts clearly and precisely would help a student make a favorable impression at an interview and get the job he deserves.

Törnqvist (2018) posited factors relevant to oral communication: Teaching motivation. Language teachers should strive for pupils to become communicatively competent. Teachers should encourage the pupils to express themselves orally; Motivation. Learning is an active process within the pupil, and when acquiring new knowledge, motivation has a decisive influence on the result. Teachers are to get the pupils to participate in conversations where they express themselves freely. To get the pupils to communicate and express themselves freely in the target language, it is necessary to use exciting topics. Notably, the discourse must have a meaningful purpose and self-esteem. Emotions, or the affective domain, have a significant impact on foreign language learners; they need to be receptive both to those with whom they are communicating and to the language itself, responsive to persons and the context of communication, and willing and able to place a specific value on the communicative act of interpersonal exchange. Learners who study a foreign language usually think it is important to speak it.

Lucanos (2017) postulated the dynamics of oral communication. This includes the substance of the presentation should be relevant to the audience and the goals of the presentation; Self-awareness is the starting



point of good oral communication; Confidence is considered a vital aspect of good communication; Simplicity in messaging is indispensable for good communication; Awareness of the audience is an essential tool in the hands of an effective oral communicator; and the tone of voice of the presenter carries much weight in delivery of the message; Body language is an essential component of effective oral communication; and 8) Oral communication is not merely the ability to speak, but also the capacity to listen. Palmero (2019) added that it would be easy to express opinions, make arguments, offer explanations, transmit information, and make impressions upon others if one has a high level of oral communication skills.

Oral Communication Skills

The etymology of the term 'communication' comes from the Latin word 'communicare' (meaning to share) and the French word 'communis' (common) means one's experience sharing with others (Weekley, Idrus, Salleh, Wan Hassan, & Ali, 2013). Thus, oral English communication skills are such a skill for creating better opportunities in future careers than the others who do not have such. Learners' oral presentation technique helps to improve oral communication skills or ability. It is the skill or capability to use sound and grammar systems to communicate meaning (Idrus, Salleh, Wan Hassan, & Ali, 2013). Sabbah, Hallabich, and Hussein (2020) emphasized that students interact massively daily. They exchange news, thoughts, feelings, information, and points of view. The student's ability to effectively carry out these operations is called communication skills. Today, this ability is the most critical factor in student life to consider and maintain good relationships with one another. Every student, therefore, needs these skills everywhere to avoid misunderstandings and problems.

In other words, students with good communication skills can explain their ideas and thoughts and build relationships without trouble or discrimination based on religion, race, and gender. Moreover, experts in communication skills consider poor communication as the basis of several problems, so communication is the solution to many obstacles (Pearson & Nelson, 2000).

Lucanos (2017) emphasized that oral communication skills are vital for students' academic success and future career prospects. It inculcates professionalism in speaking styles, self-expression, and attitudes toward others, and these traits would hold students in good stead in their professional lives. Ihmeideh, Ahmad, and Dababneh (2010) and Cleland, Foster, and Moffat

(2005) said that for students to learn how to communicate, a positive communicative environment be provided for students to have better communication skills.

Oral communication is a unique and learned rhetorical skill that requires understanding what to say and how to say it. Speech in more formal environments takes work. What should be learned is how to critically think about how to present oneself as a speaker on all occasions and how to function in various speaking environments (Palu, 2016; Akinola, 2016 Palmero, 2019).

Indeed, oral communication skills comprise listening and speaking skills (Ogunsiji, 2014). They are the most important language skills because they are the commonest channels through which most people encounter language and learn to use and interpret feelings or messages (Johnstone and Milne, 1995 in Aliyu, 2017). They always go together since one is usually dependent on the other for effective communication. It is asserted that listening takes about 40 to 50 percent of speaking and 25 to 30 percent of the time one spends communicating. On the other hand, reading takes only 11 to 16 percent; and writing about 9 percent (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011). Thus, effective communication consists of the ability to produce well-articulated speech, as well as the ability to listen. From a linguistic point of view, the overall skills of oral communication can be represented in its component skills, namely, listening and speaking skills. These two skills can stand independently in their respective significance as macro skills of English. However, they are viewed in this study as indicators of oral communication skills (Aliyu, 2017).

Evans (2015) stated that oral communication skills are meaningful to literacy development and essential for thinking and learning. It is the glue that puts all the components of a language together. Through talk, students communicate information and explore and come to understand ideas and concepts, identify and solve problems, organize their experiences and knowledge, and express and clarify their thoughts, feelings, and opinions.

In a survey by the National Association of Colleges and Employers in 2016, written and oral communication skills ranked as the most important personal quality employers seek in an employee. In today's global society, people often use English as an international language of communication. The ability to use English in the workplace has some benefits, including helping one's company succeed, building



trust with colleagues and clients, building and improving international relationships, enhancing skill-set and commanding a higher salary, and enhancing international relations through cultural understanding.

Nevertheless, oral communication requires understanding what to say and how to say it. It comprises many elements that work out, leading to either success or failure of the interaction. One must learn to communicate effectively with eye contact, body language, style, understanding the audience, adapting to the audience, active and reflexive listening, politeness, precision, and conciseness (Palmero, 2019). It is essential for the successful future career of students. In a competitive world, communication skills are a crucial part of a foreign language in which we can share our ideas and thoughts with other people, and this skill demonstrates the level of English that students had when they implemented the foreign language when oral communication is effective, both the student and the teacher benefit. Communication makes learning more accessible, helps students achieve goals, increases opportunities for expanded learning, strengthens the connection between student and teacher, and creates confidence between them (Morales, López, & Valdez, 2017).

Cruz (2019) pointed out that in today's competitive world, oral communication skills must be developed among students to gear them with appropriate knowledge of presentations. Being communicatively competent likewise boosts marketability and viability for work in various careers in the future. Oral communication is a core aspect of employability.

Nonetheless, there are some speaking problems that teachers come across in getting students to talk in the classroom. Inhibition, lack of topical knowledge, low or uneven participation, and mother-tongue use. The problem that the students often encounter is inhibition. Students are often inhibited when they try to say things in a foreign language in the classroom. They worry about making mistakes, fearing criticism, or losing face. They are shy of the attention that their speech attracts. Next, learners often complain that they cannot think of anything to say and not be motivated to express themselves. Many students find it difficult to respond when the teachers ask them to say something in English because they might need more ideas about what to say, which vocabulary to use, or how to use the grammar correctly (McGrath, 2013).

In Indonesia, speaking is the most challenging skill for students. Students were very afraid if the teacher asked them to speak in front of the class to do an English

presentation. They were shy when they used English to communicate with their friends because they were afraid of making a mistake and being uncomfortable speaking English is not used in a daily situation, it is thus more difficult for students to grow their habit of communicating orally using English (Mandasari, 2013).

In Palestine, the students' main oral communication problems are incorrect pronunciation, limited vocabulary, lack of exposure to the target language, and self-confidence. The students needed to develop the habit of extensive listening and reading in the target language. They could not organize their ideas and meanings coherently and cohesively (Alyan, 2013).

In the Philippines, as pointed out by Palmero (2019), oral communication skill has become an essential tool for someone to succeed in their academic endeavor since engagement in classes uses the English language as its medium of instruction. Oral communication skill is the most crucial skill since the students who know the language are usually referred to as speakers of that language. Moreover, De Vera and De Vera (2018) noted that the Philippines is an excellent English-speaking country where English is treated as a second language. From primary education to college, the English language is being taught, and almost everywhere in the country, the English language can be heard.

Claro (2012) published an article in the Philippine Star that one trait of Filipinos is that speaking a foreign language and speaking English fluently is the country's strategic edge that has attracted foreign investors to set up companies and outsource labor.

According to Benasing (2013) that categorically the Philippines is an excellent English-speaking country. After all, English is treated as a second language in the country. Filipinos widely use English in their daily communication and transactions. From primary education to college, the English language is being taught, and almost everywhere in the country, the English language can be heard. Regardless of race and educational attainment, practically all people know the language.

To help students overcome problems in learning to speak, teachers must figure out factors that affect their speaking performance. Students speaking performance can be affected by the factors that come from performance conditions, time pressure, planning, the standard of performance, and amount of support, affective factors such as motivation, confidence, and



anxiety, listening ability, and feedback during speaking activities (Mitchell, Miles, & Marsden, 2013).

Rafeka, Ramlia, Iksana, Haritha, and Abas Stepanoviene (2014) revealed that male and female students significantly differ in their oral communication skills. McLean & Anderson (2009) also indicated that females have greater fear and a high possibility of developing anxiety than men.

The study of Palmero (2019) on the oral communication proficiency and learning engagement of Grade 11 students in English indicated that students in the academic Track have higher ratings on oral communication proficiency than students in the TVL track. Therefore, there is a significant difference in the oral communication proficiency of Grade 11 students when analyzed according to their senior high school track. The result confirmed the observation of the researcher that Grade 11 students who were enrolled in the academic Track had a higher level of oral communication proficiency than students who were in the technical-vocation and livelihood track. Students enrolled in different tracks displayed a difference in oral communication skills.

Finally, the Department of Education (DepEd) Order (DO) Number 73, series of 2012, enumerated the performance of the students based on the levels of Proficiency: 1) Beginning. The student at this level struggles with his/her understanding. The prerequisite and fundamental knowledge and skills have yet to be acquired or developed adequately to aid the understanding of basic interpersonal communication skills. Teemant and Pinnegar (2019) stated that the teacher expects children to spend much time listening and trying to adjust to the new social environment. Learners are encouraged in their early productions by teachers who respond primarily to the meanings the learners are trying to express and not so much to correcting student errors. The beginner needs to gain more knowledge of the language. However, if the situation is familiar, the learner can manage everyday situations with commonly-used expressions and vocabulary. Benjamine (2022) added that the learners speak slowly and with pauses while they search for the right word, so it can take a little patience from native speakers to have an honest conversation; 2) Developing. The student at this level possesses the minimum knowledge and skills and core understandings but needs help throughout the performance of an authentic task; 3) Approaching Proficiency. The student at this level has developed the fundamental knowledge and skills and core

understandings, and with little guidance from the teacher and some assistance from peers, can transfer this understanding through authentic performance tasks; 4) Proficient. The student at this level has developed the fundamental knowledge and skills and core understandings and can transfer them independently through authentic performance tasks; and 5) Advance. The student at this level exceeds the core requirements in terms of knowledge, skills, and understanding and can transfer them automatically and flexibly through authentic performance tasks (DepEd DO 73, s.2012).

The literature reviews gave narratives on the attitude toward using the English language. Study results emphasized that a student's attitude toward learning the language is one of the leading predictors of success in learning English. Furthermore, the review indicated that students' contextual understanding yielded a positive attitude toward English. Students with positive learning attitudes are happy toward learning, and thus, they actively engage in learning. At the same time, those with negative learning attitudes felt anxious about learning. Moreover, negative attitudes lead to dealt lack of learning success, and positive and negative attitudes impact the students. A positive attitude can increase the chance of language learning striving to succeed, while negative attitudes can hinder the learning of that language.

Moreover, the literature displayed that communication skills are vital for academic success and career prospects. It also exposed that effective communication consists of producing well-articulated speech and the ability to listen. Communication makes learning more accessible, helps students achieve goals, increases opportunities for expanded learning, strengthens the connection between student and teacher, and creates confidence.

This study is unique compared to other studies, for this dealt with the distinctive characteristics of the students as they engaged themselves in learning the English language, particularly on their attitude toward the use of the English language and how it relates to their oral communication skills. As reflected in the literature review, oral communication is the most crucial skill. It is an essential tool for students to succeed in their academic endeavors. This study is just in time after the COVID-19 pandemic when students were locked in their homes and deprived of communicating with others, particularly in the school setting.



Methodology

This study used the descriptive and correlational method of research. Descriptive method was used to describe the characteristics of the senior high school students in terms of age, sex, academic track, and tribe. This further described the attitude towards the use of the English language.

The study is also correlational for it determined the relationships between two or more variables. Correlational studies are non-experimental, which means the researcher does not manipulate or control any of the variables (Cherry, 2022). In this study the researcher measured two variables, of which, he understood and assessed the statistical relationship with no influence from any extraneous variable. It examined significant relationships between attitude towards using the English language and oral communication skills among senior high school students, and their demographic characteristics as well as a significant relationship between oral communication skills and attitude towards using the English language.

Participants

This study was conducted among the Senior High School students of a secondary high school in Midsayap, Cotabato. The school is situated at the heart of the municipality of Midsayap in a low-lying plain topography with a total area of 42,494 square meters. The respondents of this study were 176 grade 12 senior high school students enrolled in the second semester of the school year 2021 – 2022.

Instruments of the Study

The study adopted the 25-item language attitude of the students towards the English language questionnaire of Andini (2018). This questionnaire was used in her study on the language attitude of senior high school students towards the English language and its relationship with their academic achievement in the University of Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara Medan.

Andini's English language questionnaire was used in this study to measure the attitude of the senior high school students toward the use of the English language. There are three parts of the questionnaire. The first part is the demographic characteristics of the respondents, in terms of age, sex, academic track, and tribe. Part 2 consists of 25 items on the attitude of students toward using the English language. Responses to the questionnaire were scored using a five-point

Likert scale: 1 for Strongly Disagree, 2 for Disagree; 3 for Moderately Agree; 4, Agree; and 5 for Strongly Agree.

Part 3 is an interview guide that was constructed to determine the level of oral communication skills of the respondents. Respondents' answer to the questions were audio recorded and rated by the raters using rubrics in a Likert Scale of 1 for beginning, 2 for Developing, 3 for Proficient, and 4 for Highly Proficient. The scale-descriptive equivalent of the ratings was: 1.00 to 1.79 poor, 1.80 to 2.59 beginner, 2.60 to 3.39 developing, 3.40 to 4.59, proficient, and 4.20 to 5.00 highly proficient.

Procedure

A letter was sent to the Dean of Graduate School of Notre Dame of Midsayap College (NDMC) asking permission to conduct the study. After the approval of the Dean, a letter was sent to the Schools Division Superintendent. Upon approval, a letter was sent to the Cluster Principal asking permission to invite the SHS students as study respondents. The researcher also asked permission from the SHS teachers to allow the researcher to use their time to administer the questionnaire and for the audio-recording interview of the respondents.

Ethical Considerations

Written informed consent was given to the respondents who were above 18 years old, and a letter of assent was given and explained to the parents of the respondents who were below 18 years old. They were assured that the information they would disclose would remain confidential and that they were allowed to leave the study at any stage if they do not like to continue. Importance was placed on the confidentiality of answers to reduce social desirability and emphasize respondents to answer honestly.

Result

This chapter presents the result of the statistical treatment of the data and its interpretation based on the research pursued. The discussion covers the profile of the respondents, the general attitude and level of oral communication skills of the senior high school students, and the significant difference between the oral communication skills of senior high school students and their demographic characteristics and the significant relationship between the attitude of senior high school students towards the use of the English



language and their oral communication skills.

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents

Variable	f	%
Age of the Respondents		
16 years old	12	6.82
17	44	25.00
18	83	47.16
19	30	17.05
20	7	3.98
Total	176	100.00
Sex		
Male	104	59.09
Female	72	40.91
Total	176	100.00

Figure 1. .

Track of Respondents		
HUMSS	69	39.20
TVL	63	35.80
ABM	27	15.34
STEM	17	9.66
Total	176	100.00
Tribe of Respondents		
Cebuano	69	39.20
Ilongo	63	35.80
Ilocano	19	10.80
Maguindanao	18	10.23
Maranao	4	2.27
Tagalog	3	1.70
Total	176	100.00

Figure 2. .

Table 2. General Attitude of Senior High School Respondents Towards Using the English Language

	Attitudes	Mean	SD
1.	Learning English is an important goal in my life	4.08	0.92
2.	I understand the meaning of some English songs when listening to the lyrics of the songs	4.07	0.79
3.	I like watching English movies more	4.07	0.84
4.	Studying English helps me communicate the English language effectively	4.00	0.87
5.	Studying English subject makes me feel more confident	4.00	0.83

Figure 3. .



6.	I am interested in studying English.	4.00	0.80
7.	I like listening to English songs frequently	3.98	0.90
8.	I feel proud studying the English language	3.97	0.89
9.	I can apply the knowledge from English subjects in my real life	3.92	0.92

Figure 4. .

10.	Studying foreign languages like English is enjoyable	3.87	0.83
11.	I study English to pass the exam.	3.86	0.83
12.	When I hear a student speaking English well, I like to practice speaking with him/her.	3.81	0.94
13.	I study the English language seriously to get good scores in my English subjects.	3.77	0.96
14.	I push myself to be active in learning the English language	3.73	0.97
15.	I have more knowledge and more understanding when studying English.	3.70	0.79
16.	I prefer to read English novels	3.48	0.97
17.	I answer teachers' questions in the English language in my English classes.	3.42	0.95
18.	I update status in social media (Facebook/Twitter/Instagram and others) in the English language	3.42	1.05
19.	I always take down notes in the English version.	3.41	0.92
20.	I use correct grammar when speaking the English language.	3.34	0.96

Figure 5. .

21.	I am taking an English course to improve my English language	3.25	1.06
22.	I use English language in my English class	3.21	0.93
23.	I prefer to speak English in my English classes	3.19	0.89
24.	I like to join some English competitions.	2.91	1.19
25.	I join English Club	2.78	1.13
Overall Mean		3.65	0.92

Figure 6. .

Table 3. Oral Communication Skills of the Respondents

Skills Category	Frequency	Percentage	Description
1 – 11	12	6.80	Beginning
12 – 24	30	17.00	Developing
25 – 39	76	43.20	Proficient
40 – 50	58	33.00	Highly Proficient
TOTAL	176	100.00	

Figure 7. .

Table 4. Difference Between the Oral Communication Skills of Senior High School Respondents and their Age



Variable	Oral Communication Skills							Interpretation	Decision
	N	\bar{x}	X^2	df	η^2	P			
Age									
16	12	63.79	11.15	4	6.37	0.025	S	H ₀₁ Rejected	
17	44	72.85							
18	83	93.95							
19	30	104.93							
20	7	94.21							
Total	176								

Figure 8. .

Sex

Table 4.1. *Difference Between the Oral Communication Skills of Senior High Students and Sex*

Variable	Oral Communication Skills of Senior High School Students						Interpretation	Decision
	N	Mean	T-Value	DF	P-Value			
Sex								
Male	72	3.6	0.44	174	0.66	NS	H ₀₁ Not Rejected	
Female	104	3.6						
Total	176							

Figure 9. .

Academic Track

Table 4.2. *Difference Between the Oral Communication Skills of Senior High Respondents and Academic Track*

Track	Oral Communication Skills							Interpretation	Decision
	n	\bar{x}	X^2	df	η^2	P			
ABM	27	133.72	29.14	3	16.70	0.00	S	H ₀₁ Rejected	
STEM	17	103.24							
HUMSS	69	78.50							
TVL	63	76.10							
Total	176								

Figure 10. .

Tribe

Table 4.3. *Difference Between the Oral Communication Skills of Senior High Respondents and their Tribe*

Variable	Oral Communication Skills							
	Tribe	N	\bar{x}	X^2	df	η^2	P	Interpretation
Cebuano	69	99.29	8.70	5	4.97	0.12	NS	H ₀₁ Not Rejected
Ilonggo	63	86.53						
Ilocano	19	81.26						
Maguindanao	18	76.97						
Maranao	4	50.38						
Tagalog	3	47.50						
Total	176							

Figure 11. .

Table 5. *Relationship Between the Attitude of Senior High School Respondents Towards the Use of the English Language and their Oral Communication Skills Using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient*

Variable	Attitude of Senior High School Students				
	n	r-value	p-value	Interpretation	Decision
Skills in Oral Communication	176	0.163	0.031	S	H ₀₂ Rejected

Figure 12. .

Discussion

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concluded that senior high school respondents have positive attitude towards the use of the English language, which gives rise to students' self-confidence. The students are proficient in their communication skill, of which, it varies significantly according to age and track of the respondents where they are enrolled, but not the sex of the students. Furthermore, the attitude of the senior high school respondents towards the use of the English language and their oral communication skills yielded a significant relationship with each other.

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