Strengthening the Oral Communicative Competence of Senior High School Students through Inquiry-Based and Content-Focused Approaches

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Abstract

This study investigated the effect of inquiry-based and content-focused approaches on the oral communicative competence among the 64 Senior High School students of a public high school in the Division of El Salvador City, Philippines for the SY 2016-2017. A teacher made English language speaking tests was administered to assess the students' English speaking ability. The test consisted of six items (four mini-guided-situation and two picture-description test items) which reflected the current issues senior high school students were familiar with. Before the intervention, the students from the inquiry-based group were in the "Developing" level for the following competencies: relevance, organization, vocabulary and non-verbal cues and improved to "Approaching Proficiency" after the intervention. With the students exposed to content-focused approach, there were minimal increases in the students' performance for relevance, organization and non-verbal cues after the intervention. Furthermore, students exposed to inquiry-based approach yielded a significant difference in their pretest and posttest in the said competencies except for vocabulary skill. Students who were exposed to content-focused approach showed no significant difference in their pretest and posttest ratings in oral communication skills. Moreover, there were significant differences in the mean improvement of the two groups in their oral communication skills with the students exposed to inquiry-based approach showing higher mean.

Keywords: constructivist strategy, content-focused, active learning, oral communicative competence,

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Introduction

Learners of this century are said to be creative and expressive; however, their speaking competency in the target language can be a barrier to express their thoughts and ideas. In the Senior HighSchool courses or domains, oral communication is offered to improve students' competency in conversational English; thus, minimizing or eliminating communication breakdown when they are faced with situations that requires articulation of thoughts using English as the second language (L2).

The Senior High School students under the class of the researcher claimed that among the language skills, speaking for them seemed to be the most difficult and challenging since it requires the use of the target language in almost all of their presentations, reports and collaborative activities. The researcher also observed that students ran out of words and stuttered when they expressed themselves in English. Because of these, students can barely convey their message clearly; thus, depriving them to elaborate their thoughts and ideas. Since 21st century skills include effective communication, maximizing activities which entail lifelike situations are essential to prepare learners to become globally equipped with the competencies necessary for their college education and future careers.

According to Gellis (2013), the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing are all interconnected. Proficiency in each skill is necessary to become a well-rounded communicator, but the ability to speak skillfully provides the speaker with several distinct advantages. The capacity to put words together in a meaningful way to reflect thoughts, opinions, and feelings provides the speaker with these important advantages: ability to inform, persuade, and direct, ability to stand out from the rest; and ability to benefit derivatively for career enhancement. Speaking skills are important for career success, but certainly not limited to one's professional aspirations. Speaking skills can enhance one's personal life, thereby bringing about the well-rounded growth one seeks.

The academic performance may be influenced positively by the students' active engagement in the classroom (Emerson and Taylor, 2004; Johnson, 2005). Second language (L2) learning requires that learners take ownership of learning activities through interaction, active participation and the use of the target language in a more authentic context (Tabber and deKoeijer, 2010). The traditional "chalk and talk" method which involves the teacher talking to students and writing notes on the chalkboard results in rote learning, learners' low level of retention, and passive learning. The researcher argues that students' exposure to speaking activities which entail life-like situations using the target language would improve their oral communicative competence. However, such assumption has to be validated empirically. Thus, the researcher was motivated to conduct this study.

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Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

This study assumed that knowledge is best constructed when learners are involved in negotiation of meaning. The researcher argues that Inquiry-Based and Content-Focused Approaches influence students' oral communicative competence; thus, knowledge construction is attained through social and learner-centered learning.

This current investigation is anchored on Jean Piaget's constructivism theory. It is a theory based on observation and scientific study -- about how people learn. People construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world, through experiencing things and reflecting on those experiences (Perkins, 2000).

Piaget's theory on Constructivism helped the researcher in establishing the claim that the students' exposure to constructivist strategy such as Inquiry-Based Instruction during speech activities has significant effect on the learners' oral communicative competency. Inquiry-Based teaching is a constructivist approach since it requires learners to construct their own understanding of concepts through activities covering life-like situations which they can integrate in their past knowledge. It also allows learners to interact with classmates and peers to develop not just their academic facets but also their social and personal growth. Hence, the researcher used the 5-E model (engagement, exploration, explanation, elaboration and evaluation) to incorporate Inquiry Instruction Model in the classroom.

Beach and Myers' Inquiry-Based Instruction (2001) claimed that students are more engaged with language when they connect it to their own lives, and they discover that worlds are constructed through language and texts and through multiple literacies. They also learn how to employ intercultural inquiry, and acquire tools for coping within and between social worlds.

Colwell (2003) asserted that in order for the classroom to really affect children, it must contain curriculum that is a reflection of the students' interests. And one can see that the basis of inquiry is letting students explore topics that are related to their own questions. It is from these questions that inquiry can be a tool that connects the child's social world (capacities, interests, and habits) to the curriculum.

In this study, aside from incorporating meaningful questions to activities that require research, the researcher also exposed the students to panel discussion, role play, skits and debate. The latter activities have maximized the 21st century skills of the learners; thus, providing them avenue for social interaction and awareness of issues in the current world. Through these, learners had the opportunity to voice out their own thoughts and views on the issues that they can relate to.

Using the 5-E Model of Inquiry Instruction, the researcher was able to stimulate students' curiosity on the topic (Engagement), let the students manipulate the materials and made discoveries (Exploration), invited students to share their discoveries based on the descriptions provided (Explanation), allowed students to create connections between new concepts, principles, theories and real-world experiences by applying them to a new situation (Elaboration) and assessed students' knowledge and provided feedback on performance (Evaluation). Through these stages, the teacher-researcher was able to secure a meaningful output from students' authentic and logical ideas which motivated them to express their deeper understanding of the concepts presented in class. It also provided opportunities for students to gain confidence and develop enthusiasm in class discussions which made them well-rounded individuals equipped with the 21st century skills namely: collaboration, critical thinking, creativity and communication.

Inquiry-Based Approach provided the researcher with an opportunity to capitalize the naturally inquisitive behavior of students. Through this, the students were more engaged in each of the stages in the 5-E Model and extended their knowledge to different situations. While completing inquiry-based lessons, students developed important skills that will help them become successful, lifelong learners.

On the contrary, Brown (2007) defines traditional English curriculum as a content-focused approach in which teachers make decisions about which literary works will be taken by students, how writing will be assigned, and what vocabulary will be studied. The goal of Content-Based Instruction (CBI) is to fulfill the academic and linguistic needs of English language learning. Peregoy and Boyle (2005) observed that the objective of CBI is to help students understand the content and build language skills at the same time by using English at a comprehensible level. Similarly, Echevarria, Vogt, and Short (2008) explained that content-based ESL classes are taught by language teachers whose primary goal is English language development and whose secondary goal is to prepare students for the class. Gordon (2007) likewise noted that if children learn the academic aspects of a second language in the early grades, they are likely to succeed in school when they move into the upper levels.

For the duration of the intervention, the researcher used the traditional method like drills and lecture to develop mastery among the students in the second group. International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) sounds were presented and students were asked to mimic how the researcher articulates the sounds. Tongue twisters, canned speech and recitation of scripts were also maximized as tool for speech improvement. Ready-made dialogue from the book was memorized by the students and presented in front of the class. The concepts in oral communication were taught using the lecture method and students' oral competency was assessed using pen and paper test and their performance in memorized dialogues.

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The purpose of the classroom teachers, however, do not simply imply arming their learners with tacit knowledge of language structures, but it also entails teaching them ways that enable them to use language in real life situations. That is, the teachers' interest should not just be in the fact that the learners get to know the language but that they get to know how to use it. Therefore, the teacher's concern ought not to be merely with linguistic competence but with what is termed "communicative competence" or the ability to use language in real communicative settings. This, of course, does not mean that language usage is to be forever stored in the dark corner of language teaching.

Communicative competence includes, in addition to the knowledge of language structures, the ability to use this in instances of social interaction appropriately in concrete situations. Language has always functioned and will always continue to function as a means of communication; a means of establishing and maintaining a contact, expressing oneself (attitudes, ideas, feelings) in different social situations. Morrow and Johnson (2001) put it: "The aim of any communication is to get its message across and this is the true criterion by which any communication should be judged".

With the aforementioned theories and concepts presented, the researcher argues that students' exposure to Inquiry-Based and Content-Focused Approaches has a significant effect on students' oral communicative competencies.

Statement of the Problem

This study sought to determine the effect of Inquiry-Based and Content-Focused Approaches in the development of the oral communicative competence of the Senior High School Students. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. How do the participants rate in their Oral Communication test before and after the intervention in terms of: Articulation; Grammar; Relevance; Organization; Vocabulary; and Non Verbal cues?

2. How do the participants in each group compare in their Oral Communicative Competence pretest and post-test ratings?

3. How do the two groups of participants compare in their Oral Communicative rating increment?

Hypotheses

Problem 1 is hypothesis free. On the basis of problems 2 and 3, the following hypotheses were tested at.05 level of significance

H_{01}: The students in both groups did not significantly differ in their oral communicative competence after the intervention.

H_{02}: The students in both groups did not significantly differ in their knowledge increment in oral communicative competence after the intervention

Related Literature and Studies

English as a Second Language (ESL) education has changed greatly over the past few decades. Earlier popular teaching methods-the grammar-translation method, the direct instruction method, and the audio-lingual method-no longer dominate current approaches (DeBourgh, 2008). Onukaogu (2001) pointed out that the primary function of language is communication and interaction. He further said that improving students' communicative competence has emerged as the new focus in language instruction.

Students who are solely exposed to traditional method like direct instruction will have the tendency to be passive learners; thus, they will have difficulty articulating their thoughts when exposed to authentic situations. Communicative competence is best attained when learners are given the chance to be involved in the acquisition of knowledge through activities that depict collaboration, critical thinking and life-like situations (Morrow and Johnson, 2001).

Generally speaking, Inquiry-based instruction is noted for its potential to support known contributors for learning and achievement. As a case in point, inquiry is recommended as a method that promotes motivation to engage in learning. That is, it is considered a method that tends to create a desire to learn capitalizing on the power of a child's interest to motivate learning. Some variations of inquiry-based methods involve children in asking personally relevant questions—questions that are rooted in the interests of the child. Researchers report that children who are motivated and interested in the work of the classroom are more likely to show greater achievement (Billman, 2008).

Furthermore, Second language (L2) learning requires that learners take ownership of learning activities through interaction, active participation and the use of the target language in a more authentic context (Tabber and deKoeijer, 2010). Despite English being the medium of instruction in Nigerian schools, many students are academic underachievers because of their low level of communicative skills in English caused by teachers' reliance on the lecture method

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(Adesemowo, 2005; Oluwole, 2008). The traditional "chalk and talk" method which involves the teacher talking to students and writing notes on the chalkboard results in rote learning, learners' low level of retention, and passive learning. Onukaogu (2001) remarked that the traditional method of teaching provided learners fewer opportunities to participate actively in class; hence learners are less confident to express themselves.

Moreover, communicative competence is seen as a key to promotion to higher professional ranks, to securing a better job, to studying abroad, to both entering and graduating from a university according to the Ministry of Education in China (2000). As a result, there is a massive drive to improve English language teaching in the formal education system, especially at the secondary level (Wei, Brok, and Zhou, 2000).

The increasing concern about the actual use of language in different social settings has led language investigators of language to realize that communicative competence goes deeper than linguistic competence. This is true in the sense that communicative competence does not ignore the socio-cultural aspect of language but combines it with the knowledge of the formation rules of the language. It includes, in addition to the knowledge of language structures, the ability to use these in instances of social interaction appropriately in concrete situations (Agbatogun, 2013).

Moreover, Colwell (2003) reported that students' classroom engagement became significantly positive after integrating the Inquiry-based instruction. Her students expressed that they liked the experience since it gave the students more control. For the teachers, it is an answer to the role of the student-centered classroom and it is a vehicle for the students to discover their potentials and to see how their lives, their talents, and the historical world are all connected with their curriculum.

Related Literature and Studies in the Local Setting

It is not only important to be able to read and write English, but to be able to speak it well as well. Eligan (2008) however, stressed that learning the spoken language is especially difficult for second language learners because effective oral communication requires the ability to use the language appropriately in social interactions. Furthermore, Asesor (2007) also believes that language is the most important tool for a learner to establish interpersonal relationships.

Moreover, Valdez (2011) also cited that the surfacing globalization has placed the learning of the English language as one key priority for progress in the Philippines. It was also stated that due to the rapid development in technology, the vast application of the Internet and ever expanding social relations between and among cultures, competence in the English language has become a highly sought out commodity in different sectors in the society. He further said

that, since Philippines cannot give work to all Filipinos, they prefer going abroad for a living. Therefore, competence in the English language is an advantageous skill among these workers.

Furthermore, Cose (2001) as cited by Lapuz (2009) opined that most of the students of today are handicapped in using the language when they are already in actual communication situation. It is commonly observed that the pupils can respond automatically during drill lessons but when confronted with real situations, they can no longer speak and elucidate their concepts as expected.

Research Mothod Research Design

This present research employed the quasi-experimental method. DiNardo (2008) described quasi-experimental method as an empirical approach used to estimate the causal impact of an intervention on its target population

Research Participants

A total of sixty four (64) Grade 11 students were chosen as participants of the study. Grade 11 Diamond with 32 students were exposed to the Inquiry-Based Approach, and Grade 11 Ruby experienced the Content-Focused Approach. These two sections were from a National High School in the Division of El Salvador City, province of Misamis Oriental, Philippines, for the academic year 2016-2017.

Research Instruments

To measure the senior high school students' oral communicative competence, performance scores in English Language Speaking Tests (developed by the researcher and a 3-man review committee made up of high school English teachers) was used. A teacher made English language speaking tests was administered to assess the students' English speaking ability. The test consisted of six items (four mini-guided-situation and two picture-description test items) which reflected the current issues senior high school students were familiar with.

The six instruments that were used for this study were reviewed by the members of the panel. Pilot-testing was done to determine its reliability.

Scoring Procedure

The researcher adopted Sipacio and Balgos (2016) scoring guide in evaluating speech presentations.

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Range	Description
5	Advanced
4	Proficient
3	Approaching Proficiency
2	Developing
1	Beginning

Data Gathering Procedures

On the first week of the study, the purpose of the research was introduced to the students before administering the English language tests to assess students' initial level of oral communication skills. Thereafter, the groups were exposed to different instructional conditions. Twelve weeks after the interventions, the students from the two groups took the posttest to see if there has been any improvement in their oral communicative competence.

Furthermore, the students' oral performances were evaluated by the researcher together with two inter-raters, who were also English teachers, using the rubrics for speech presentation designed by the researcher and validated by the members of the panel. Students were called one by one inside the classroom to give their responses on the four mini-guided situations and two picture descriptions. The researcher together with the inter-raters tallied the scores of the students' performances and the mean scores for the six competencies (articulation, grammar, relevance, organization, vocabulary and non-verbal cues) were recorded. The researcher also conducted a Focused-Group Discussion (FGD) to solicit feedback, observation and suggestion from the student-participant and reflect on their thoughts and views regarding the class and the approaches exposed to them.

Statistical Treatment of the Data

In treating the data, the following nonparametric tools were used by the researcher.

For data in problem 1 descriptive statistics such as percentage, mean, frequency distribution, and standard deviation were used; for data in Problem no. 2, T-test for paired samples was used to show the significant differences in the participants' oral communicative competence before and after the speech interventions were given; and for data in Problem no. 3, T-test for independent samples was used to determine if there were significant differences in the increment of the two groups of students' oral communicative competence.

Results and Discussions

Problem 1. How do the participants rate in their Oral Communication test before and after the intervention in terms of articulation; grammar; relevance; organization; vocabulary; and non verbal cues?

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Participants' Oral Communication Rating Before and After the Interventions (Articulation)

| Range | Description | INQUIRY-BASED APPROACH | | | | CONTENT-FOCUSED APPROACH | | | |
| | | PRETEST | | POSTTEST | | PRETEST | | POSTTEST | |
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
4.51-5.00	Advanced	0	0.00	2	6.25	0	0.0	0	0.0
3.51-4.50	Proficient	2	6.25	2	6.25	2	6.25	3	9.38
2.50-3.51	Approaching Proficiency	14	43.75	18	56.25	12	37.50	9	28.13
1.51-2.50	Developing	13	40.63	10	31.25	17	53.13	19	59.38
1.00-1.50	Beginning	3	9.38	0	0	1	3.13	1	3.13
Total		32	100	32	100	32	100.0	32	100.0
Overall Mean		2.54		2.90		2.55		2.55	
Description		Approaching Proficiency		Approaching Proficiency		Approaching Proficiency		Approaching Proficiency	
Standard Deviation		0.76		0.84		0.69		0.68	

Table 1 presents the mean, frequency, standard deviation and percentage distribution of students' oral communicative competence on articulation before and after the Inquiry-Based and Content-Focused Approaches teaching strategies. Although both groups were still in the *Approaching Proficiency* level, it is very evident that there had been an improvement among the students exposed to Inquiry-Based Approach in terms of performance during the post test from 2.54 overall mean to 2.90. It is also remarkable to note that the three (3) students who were in the *Beginning* level in the pretest were all moved to a higher level in the posttest. Morever, two (2) students reached the Advanced level during the posttest.

The data also reveal that in the group exposed to Content-Focused Approach, the overall mean remained the same at 2.55. It can also be observed that a student who was at the Beginning level in the pretest remained on the same level during the posttest and nobody reached the Advanced level for the second group.

During the Focused-Group Discussion (FGD), students expressed that they lacked exposure to English speakers since their conversations with their peers and classmates were that of the vernacular. Thus, this phenomenon has contributed mainly to their competence in articulating their thoughts using the target language. Gass and Selinker (2008) emphasized how second language learners create a new language system with only limited exposure to English speaking environment. The limited exposure likewise explains why only few learners appear to achieve oral English competence.

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Table 2: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Participants' Oral Communication Rating Before and After the Interventions (Grammar)

Range	Description	INQUIRY-BASED APPROACH				CONTENT-FOCUSED APPROACH			
		PRETEST		POSTTEST		PRETEST		POSTTEST	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
4.51-5.00	Advanced	0.00	0.00	1	3.13	0	0.00	0	0.00
3.51-4.50	Proficient	2	6.25	5	15.63	2	6.25	2	6.25
2.50-3.51	Approaching Proficiency	14	43.75	12	37.50	12	37.50	12	37.50
1.51-2.50	Developing	14	43.75	13	40.63	17	53.13	17	53.13
1.00-1.50	Beginning	2	6.25	1	3.13	1	3.13	1	3.13
Total		32	100	32	100	32	100	32	100
Overall Mean		2.60		2.90		2.57		2.57	
Description		Approaching Proficiency		Approaching Proficiency		Approaching Proficiency		Approaching Proficiency	
Standard Deviation		0.72		0.85		0.68		0.70	

Table 2 presents the mean, frequency, standard deviation and percentage distribution of students' oral communicative rating on grammar before and after the Inquiry-Based and Content-Focused Approaches teaching strategies. It can be gleaned from the data that 43.75 percent of the students in the Inquiry-Based group were in the Developing level during the pretest but decreased to 40.63 percent in the post test. One of the two students who was on the *Beginning* level in the pretest improved during the posttest. Furthermore, from zero (0) in the pretest, a student reached the *Advanced* level during the posttest. It can also be observed that the total mean score had increased from 2.60 to 2.90 since there had been an improvement in the performance of the students based on the increase evident on the data.

On the other hand, in the Content Focused Group, it can be observed that there was no significant improvement from the students' performance since the overall mean score remained the same at 2.57. Nobody from the class reached the Advanced level during the pretest and posttest. A student also remained on the Beginning level for both tests.

Since grammar has a system of structure and rules, students claimed, that they already forgot some of its basics like subject-verb agreement, tenses and the adverbs. Some of them even asserted that they had taken for granted their past lessons on grammar and that resulted to lack of mastery on its rules and structures. Correctness in grammar eliminates negative impact on the audience and increases the credibility and effectiveness of the message (Sipacio and Balgos, 2016).

Table 3: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Participants' Oral Communication Rating Before and After the Interventions (Relevance)

Range	Description	INQUIRY-BASED APPROACH				CONTENT-FOCUSED APPROACH			
		PRETEST		POSTTEST		PRETEST		POSTTEST	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
4.51-5.00	Advanced	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3.51-4.50	Proficient	2	6.25	4	12.50	2	6.25	0	0
2.50-3.51	Approaching Proficiency	7	21.88	9	28.13	8	25.00	13	40.63
1.51-2.50	Developing	20	62.50	19	59.38	21	65.63	18	56.25
1.00-1.50	Beginning	3	9.38	0	0.00	1	3.13	1	3.13
Total		32	100	32	100	32	100	32	100
Overall Mean		2.33		2.61		2.38		2.43	
Description		Developing		Approaching Proficiency		Developing		Developing	
Standard Deviation		0.67		0.72		0.61		0.60	

Table 3 presents the mean, frequency, standard deviation and percentage distribution of students' oral communicative rating on relevance before and after the Inquiry-Based and Content-Focused Approaches teaching strategies. It can be gleaned from the data that nobody from both groups reached the Advanced level during the pretest and even in the posttest. In the Inquiry-Based Group, the students' performance improved from Developing (M=2.33) to Approaching Proficiency (M=2.61). It is also remarkable that from 9.38% of the students in the Beginning level during the pretest, all of them moved to the Developing level during the posttest.

Meanwhile, in the Content-Focused Group, the students' competency remained on the Developing level with an overall mean of 2.38 and 2.43 in pretest and posttest respectively. The researcher observed that during the tests, students had the tendency to include concepts and ideas which were not relevant to the topic. The listeners were misled with the context of the speech because of the ambiguity of the ideas. According to Sipacio & Balgos (2016), insignificant or redundant information should be eliminated from the communication that will be sent to the recipient. Effective communication happens when the message is concrete and supported by facts, figures, and real-life examples and situations. In this case, the receiver is more connected to the message conveyed.

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Table 4: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Participants' Oral Communication Rating Before and After the Interventions (Organization)

| Range | Description | INQUIRY-BASED APPROACH | | | | CONTENT-FOCUSED APPROACH | | | |
| | | PRETEST | | POSTTEST | | PRETEST | | POSTTEST | |
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
4.51-5.00	Advanced	0	0	1	3.13	0	0	0	0
3.51-4.50	Proficient	2	6.25	3	9.38	1	3.13	3	9.38
2.50-3.51	Approaching Proficiency	9	28.13	11	34.38	11	34.38	7	21.88
1.51-2.50	Developing	20	62.50	17	53.13	18	56.25	19	59.38
1.00-1.50	Beginning	1	3.13	0	0.00	2	6.25	3	9.38
Total		32	100	32	100	32	100	32	100
Overall Mean		2.41		2.72		2.39		2.43	
Description		Developing		Approaching Proficiency		Developing		Developing	
Standard Deviation		0.61		0.69		0.63		0.69	

Table 4 presents the mean, frequency, standard deviation and percentage distribution of students' oral communicative rating on organization before and after the interventions. It can be gleaned from the data that 62.52 percent from the 32 respondents in the Inquiry-Based group were in the Developing level during the pretest and decreased into 53.13 percent in the posttest. It is also remarkable that no one was left in the Beginning level during the posttest. Meanwhile, it can be observed that the students' oral communicative competency improved from Developing (M=2.41) to Approaching Proficiency (M=2.72).

Moreover, the table shows that there was a minimal increase of the total mean score of the students from Content-Focused Group from 2.39 from the pretest and 2.43 from the post test which made them remained at the Developing level. The researcher observed that students rarely used transitional devices in their speeches and thoughts were not logically arranged. When asked during the FGD, students maintained that they were anxious to give their responses to some topics like the possible rebirth of death penalty in the Philippines because of the lack of background on the issue.

Table 5: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Participants' Oral Communication Rating Before and After the Interventions (Vocabulary)

Range	Description	INQUIRY-BASED APPROACH				CONTENT-FOCUSED APPROACH			
		PRETEST		POSTTEST		PRETEST		POSTTEST	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
4.51-5.00	Advanced	0	0	1	3.13	0	0	0	0
3.51-4.50	Proficient	3	9.38	2	6.25	2	6.25	1	3.125
2.50-3.51	Approaching Proficiency	10	31.25	10	31.25	10	31.25	10	31.25
1.51-2.50	Developing	17	53.13	18	56.25	18	56.25	18	56.25
1.00-1.50	Beginning	2	6.25	1	3.13	2	6.25	3	9.375
Total		32	100	32	100	32	100	32	100
Overall Mean		2.47		2.60		2.42		2.38	
Description		Developing		Approaching Proficiency		Developing		Developing	
Standard Deviation		0.71		0.74		0.63		0.59	

Table 5 presents the mean, frequency, standard deviation and percentage distribution of students' oral communicative rating on vocabulary before and after the Inquiry-Based and Content-Focused Approaches teaching strategies. Based on the data, Inquiry-Based group were in the Developing (M=2.47) level during the pretest and improved to Approaching Proficiency (M=2.60) during the posttest.

On the contrary, in the Content-Focused group, it was very surprising to detect a decrease from the group's post test scores. The researcher who was also the participants' English teacher claimed that some of the students from this group started to cut classes and commit absences. This has resulted to students' inability to participate in class activities; thus, depriving them to learn more and practice their vocabulary.

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Table 6: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Participants' Oral Communication Rating Before and After the Interventions (Non Verbal)

Range	Description	INQUIRY-BASED APPROACH				CONTENT-FOCUSED APPROACH			
		PRETEST		POSTTEST		PRETEST		POSTTEST	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
4.51-5.00	Outstanding	0	0	1	3.13	0	0	0	0
3.51-4.50	Advance	1	3.13	1	3.13	1	3.13	1	3.13
2.50-3.51	Approaching Proficiency	12	37.50	20	62.50	12	37.50	13	40.63
1.51-2.50	Developing	15	46.88	10	31.25	19	59.38	18	56.25
1.00-1.50	Beginning	4	12.50	0	0.00	0	0	0	0
Total		32	100	32	100	32	100	32	100
Overall Mean		2.36		2.83		2.43		2.51	
Description		Developing		Approaching Proficiency		Developing		Approaching Proficiency	
Standard Deviation		0.71		0.59		0.54		0.48	

Table 6 presents the mean, frequency, standard deviation and percentage distribution of students' oral communicative rating on non verbal cues before and after the interventions. Based on the data, Inquiry-Based group were in the Developing (M=2.36) level during the pretest and moved to Approaching Proficiency (M=2.83) during the posttest. Furthermore, in the Content-Focused Group, there was also an increase of the total mean score from 2.43 in the pretest to 2.51 during the posttest which made the group moved from Developing to Approaching Proficiency.

Mastery of nonverbal communication is important because it enhances and emphasizes the message of your speech, thus making it more meaningful, truthful, and relevant. Through these, the speaker can communicate feelings, attitudes, and perceptions without you saying a word that can sustain the attention of listeners and keep them engaged in the speech (Sipacio and Balgos, 2016).

Table 7: Summary Table of the Participants' Oral Communication Skills Rating Before and After the Interventions

Oral Communication Test	INQUIRY-BASED APPROACH				CONTENT-FOCUSED APPROACH			
	PRETEST		POSTTEST		PRETEST		POSTTEST	
	M	Desc	M	Desc.	M	Desc	M	Desc
Articulation	2.54	AP	2.90	AP	2.55	AP	2.55	AP
Grammar	2.60	AP	2.90	AP	2.57	AP	2.57	AP
Relevance	2.33	Dev	2.61	AP	2.38	Dev	2.43	Dev
Organization	2.41	Dev	2.72	AP	2.39	Dev	2.43	Dev
Vocabulary	2.47	Dev	2.60	AP	2.42	Dev	2.38	Dev
Non-verbal	2.36	Dev	2.83	AP	2.43	Dev	2.51	AP

Legend: AP – Approaching Proficiency   **Dev**- Developing

Table 7 presents the summary of the oral communication skills of the Senior High School students in both the Inquiry-Based and Content-Focused Groups. It can be seen from the data that in the Inquiry-Based Group, the competency which had the highest mean score during the pretest was on grammar, while it was on both articulation and grammar which obtained the highest mean scores during the post test. Moreover, students' competencies on relevance, organization, vocabulary and non-verbal cues remarkably improved from Developing to Approaching Proficiency after the intervention was given.

During the Focused-Group Discussion (FGD), students expressed that they lack exposure to English speakers since their conversations with their peers and classmates were that of the vernacular. This phenomenon may have contributed to their competence in articulating their thoughts using the target language. Gass and Selinker (2008) emphasized how second language learners create a new language system with only limited exposure to English speaking environment. The limited exposure likewise explains why only few learners appear to achieve oral English competence.

Problem 2. How do the participants in each group compare in their Oral Communicative Competence Pretest and Post-test ratings?

H_{01}:: The students in both groups did not significantly differ in their oral communicative competence after the intervention.

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Table 8: T-test with Paired Samples' Result of the Test of Difference in the Participants' Oral Communicative CompetencePretest and Post-test ratings

	INQUIRY-BASED APPROACH				CONTENT-FOCUSED APPROACH			
	PRE TEST	POST TEST	t	p	PRE TEST	POST TEST	T	p
Articulation	2.56	2.94	4.31**	.000	2.56	2.50	1.44	.161
Grammar	2.59	2.81	2.52*	.017	2.56	2.53	.571	.572
Relevance	2.31	2.59	3.48*	.002	2.38	2.50	-1.68	.103
Organization	2.41	2.69	3.04*	.005	2.44	2.34	1.14	.263
Vocabulary	2.44	2.53	1.79	.083	2.38	2.41	-.373	.712
Non-verbal	2.31	2.78	5.23**	.000	2.44	2.50	-.812	.423

*significant at 0.05 level   ** significant at 0.01 level

Table 8 presents the results of the test of difference in the participants' oral communicative competence pretest and posttest ratings. The data reveal that the communicative competence of the students exposed to Inquiry-Based Approach significantly differ in five out of six competencies that were measured with the post test showing higher means. Only the vocabulary skill of the students had no significant increase based on the figures. On the contrary, the oral communicative competence of the students who were exposed to Content-Focused Approach showed no significant difference in their pretest and posttest ratings.

From the findings of the study, the null hypothesis on non-significant difference in the oral communicative competence of the students can be rejected in the Inquiry-Based Approach.

The findings of the study affirm the claims of Emerson and Taylor (2004); and Johnson (2005) that the performance may be influenced positively by the students' active engagement in the classroom. Tabber & deKoeijer (2010) also emphasized that second language (L2) learning requires that learners take ownership of learning activities through interaction, active participation and the use of the target language in a more authentic context The traditional "chalk and talk" method which involves the teacher talking to students and writing notes on the chalkboard results in rote learning, learners' low level of retention, and passive learning.

Problem 3.   How do the group of participants compare in their Oral Communicative rating increment?

H_{02}: The students in both groups did not significantly differ in their knowledge increment in oral communicative competence after the intervention.

Table 9: T-test with Independent Sample Result of the Test of Difference in Participants' Test Score Increments in the Two Groups

Oral Communicative	INQUIRY-BASED APPROACH		CONTENT-FOCUSED APPROACH		T	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
Articulation	.31	.471	.00	.000	3.75**	.001
Grammar	.25	.508	.00	.000	2.78**	.009
Relevance	.25	.440	.06	.246	2.10*	.041
Organization	.22	.420	-.03	.177	3.10**	.003
Vocabulary	.03	.177	.00	.254	.571	.570
Non-verbal	.41	.560	.03	.177	3.613**	.001

** Significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)   * Significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed

Table 9 presents the result of the test of difference in the participants' test score increments in Inquiry-Based and Content-Focused groups. The data show that the increments in the students' performance significantly differed with students who were exposed to Inquiry-Based Approach demonstrating higher means from all the oral communicative competencies measured.

From the findings of the study, the null hypothesis on non- significant difference in the knowledge increment in oral communicative competence of the two groups can be rejected. The data show that there is a significant difference in the increment on the oral communicative skills of the students in the two groups with the students demonstrating higher increments in all the dimensions of the skills.

The findings of the study supports Rekrut (2002) claim that Inquiry-Based teaching approach strengthens both students' linguistic and communicative competence where activities were presented into a meaningful context in a natural sequence. The implementation of inquiry teaching benefits second language instruction in all aspects. It not only serves the purpose of increasing the opportunity of participation and maintaining students' attention, but it is an instrument to initiate and sustain the instructional interaction.

Furthermore, the findings also validate Wells' (2000) assertion that a student's metacognitive skills can be developed through inquiry. They do not just have to memorize material and then reiterate it on a test; instead, they have to develop skills for researching, organizing, thinking abstractly, questioning and reflecting. These skills are applicable to all areas of their life and will help them in their personal, school, work and social lives. A student who is learning these skills now will have intrinsic motivation and will continue their learning throughout their lives.

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Findings

The following results were disclosed after analyzing the data gathered.

1. The students from the Inquiry-Based Group demonstrated an improvement in their skills in relevance, organization, vocabulary and non-verbal cues to the Approaching Proficiency level after the intervention was given. With the students exposed to Content-Focused Approach, there were minimal increases from the students' performance in relevance, organization and non-verbal cues after the intervention.

2. The oral communicative competence of the students exposed to Inquiry-Based Approach significantly differs in their pretest and posttest except in vocabulary.

3. Students who were exposed to Content-Focused Approach showed no significant differences in their pretest and posttest ratings in oral communication skills.

4. There were significant differences in the mean increment of the two groups in their oral communication skills with the students exposed to Inquiry-Based Approach showing higher mean increments.

5. There was no significant difference in the score increment of the two groups in terms of vocabulary.

Conclusions

The student-participants in this study generally lack the competency in oral communication in terms of articulation, grammar, relevance, organization, vocabulary and non verbal cues. Such phenomenon confirms the researcher's claim that Senior High School students' competency in speaking can be a barrier to express their thoughts and ideas using the target language since speaking for them is the most challenging and difficult among the language skills. Evidently, in the study, the use of Inquiry-Based Approach helped improve the students' oral communication.

Inquiry-based learning allows students to be active creators of knowledge; to see each other as authorities; and to validate their learning. It provides such opportunities for all students so that they can draw on and confirm the dimensions of their histories and experiences that are deeply rooted in the surrounding community to create the conditions where students come together to speak, to engage in dialogue, to share their stories, and to struggle together within social relations that strengthen rather than weaken possibilities for active citizenship" (Emerson, 2004). It can be inferred that students who are exposed in Inquiry-Based Approach

more frequently can acquire higher oral communicative competence compared to Content-Focused Approach.

Recommendations

In the light of the findings and conclusions in the study, the researcher presents the following recommendations:

1. For English teachers that they expose students to Inquiry-Based Approach so that the students can take ownership of their learning process and become independent learners;

2. For English teachers to create learning exemplar and modules that integrate inquiry-based activities so that students will be equipped with speaking skills necessary in their higher education and future careers;

3. For school administrators to include Inquiry-Based Approach training as part of faculty development training and create classroom monitoring committee that will ensure a closer follow up of the effective implementation of the approach in this research;

4. For future researchers to explore other Inquiry-Based strategies in their research to increase the time duration in the implementation of interventions to better determine the effectiveness of Inquiry-Based and Content-Focused Approaches.

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