

# Assessment of English Oral Communication of Freshman College Students at Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology in Terms of the Different Variables

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**Abstract:** English is one of the most important languages because this is the only language that connects the whole world together. It may not be the most spoken language in the world, but it is the official language in different countries. In the Philippines, students consider it as the most difficult subject that one needs to develop to become successful in their chosen career, moreover in seeking for employment. A research study on the Assessment of English Oral Communication of Freshman College Students at Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology was conducted during the First Semester of Academic Year 2015-2016. It sought answers on the following questions: How may the English oral communication of the respondents be described in terms of fluency, coherence, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation? What interventions maybe proposed on the problems in English oral communication of the students? The respondents of the study consisted of 25 freshman college students enrolled in Bachelor of Science in Education (BSE); Bachelor in Elementary Education (BEE); Bachelor of Science in Agriculture (BSA); Bachelor of Science in Information Technology (BSIT); and Associate in Hotel and Restaurant Management (AHRM). The descriptive method of research was utilized in the study and the performance rubrics to accurately describe the respondents' English oral communication. A face to face interview between the author and the respondents served as sources of data in the speaking test using the following criteria: 4.20 – 5.00, Excellent; 3.40 – 4.19, Very satisfactory; 2.60 – 3.39, Good; 1.80 – 2.59, Poor and 1.00 – 1.79, Needs Improvement. Based from the assessment made, the freshman college students have Very Satisfactory performance in terms of their Pronunciation during the interview, it obtained the highest mean equivalent to 3.63 (VS). It was followed by Fluency - 2.95 ; Coherence, 2.80; Vocabulary, 2.76; and Grammar, 2.68. The obtained data indicate that their English oral communication are Good in terms of Fluency, Coherence, Vocabulary and Grammar. Grammar posed as the major problem that affects the English oral communication of freshman college students as indicated by the lowest mean obtained equivalent to 2.68. They claim that they experienced fear when they are engaged in oral communication thus, they find difficulty in expressing their thoughts and ideas during conversations and other daily classroom activities. Further noted that respondents from the BSIT are assessed to have *Very Satisfactory* (VS) performance in English oral communication as indicated by the average weighted mean (3.44) in terms of the different variables; The respondents from the BEE, AHRM, and BSE are noted to be *Good* with an average weighted mean of 3.32, 2.89 and 2.85 respectively. The BSA was noted to have obtained the lowest average weighted mean equivalent to 2.59 which is verbally described as *Poor*. The author proposed the following interventions on the English oral communication of the students: conduct a regular assessment of students' performance in English oral communication by utilizing a suitable diagnostic instrument; provide remedial measures that will fit with students' needs and that can help boost their confidence; provide more challenging classroom oral activities to enhance students' speaking skills; motivate students to actively take part in discussions to express their thoughts as well as to understand the views and experiences of others.

**Keywords:** Oral communication, assessment, fluency, coherence, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, intervention.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Oral communication is the process of verbally transmitting information and ideas from an individual or group to another. This is also a way of getting into academic and business world. Communication, which is a two-way process, occurs in an orderly and systematic sequence that involves giving and receiving ideas, feelings and attitudes between two or more persons and it results in a response. In the course of speaking, the person may exchange the roles of speaker and listener.

As we communicate with people around us, we will be able to express ourselves, share ideas to others, encourage and inspire by sharing life's experiences. To engage oneself in oral communication is not an easy task because if it will not be done effectively, it will result to misunderstanding or communication gap. As the saying goes "Words can make or unmake you". To avoid communication gap, the thought should be expressed intelligently. Conversation in face to face manner has its distinctive advantages. The ideas are being concrete and easily understand when you talk personally unlike having messages through the use of cellular phones and internet where misinterpretation may arise. Learners find difficulty in expressing their thoughts, without mastery of the language because of limited vocabulary; wrong grammar; their skills in speaking are affected too by their mother tongue, for instance the /e/ sound becomes /i/.

English is a language indispensable in this modern day world, in every sphere of life. It is globally used by people because of its vast application in any field they want to venture. Through the advancement in technology and communication, English communication skills play an important role and one is expected to converse in this language to take part in all the happenings in this advanced and globalized world (Education and Beyond, Krishna Reddy, 2015).

As with most professional skills, oral communication cannot be taught. Instructors can only point out the ways. It is very common among high school and college students to have anxiety prior to speaking in front of many people. Others perceived English as a threatening one. Hence, there is a need to equip themselves with deeper understanding and flexibility on how to develop their speaking skills. Communication is good, but as Lee Laccoca said "You can have brilliant ideas yet if you can't get them across, your ideas won't get you anywhere". Educators should be aware with this problem, for, if everyone stays on silence, students will never improve.

In this regard, the author conducted a study on the Assessment of English Oral Communication of Freshman Students at Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology in terms of the Different Variables. English has always been perceived by both high school and college students to be a difficult subject specifically when assigned to stand and talk in front of the class as a result of difficulty in grammar, pronunciation and limited vocabulary. Moreover, fluency and coherence posed as hindrances in the organization of ideas. They tend to be more curious in their oral communication than in written since any mistake committed can no longer be corrected once it had been uttered or said. Hence, this dilemma had greatly motivated the author to conduct this study.

## 2. CONCLUSION

1. The English oral communication of the freshman college students at Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology is Very Satisfactory in terms of their Pronunciation.
2. They are observed to be Good in terms of Fluency, Coherence, Grammar and Vocabulary.
3. The BSIT are assessed *Very Satisfactory* (VS) performance in English oral communication in terms of the different variables; the BEEd, AHRM, and BSE are noted to be *Good*; and BSA, *Poor*.
4. The following are the proposed interventions:
  - A. Conduct a regular assessment of students' performance in English oral communication by utilizing a suitable diagnostic instrument;
  - B. provides remedial measures that will fit with students' needs and that can help boost their confidence; provide more challenging,
  - C. Provide more challenging classroom oral activities to enhance students' speaking skills; and
  - D. Motivates students to actively take part in discussions to express their thoughts as well as to understand the views and experiences of others.

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