Appreciative Inquiry Approach and its Effects on English Oral Communication Skills of Teacher Education Students

Patricia Mariz Hilao-Valencia & Ruth A. Ortega-Dela Cruz, University of the Philippines
Los Baños, Laguna, Philippines

Abstract
Good oral communication skills are necessary to help people understand and process information in a clear manner. Aspiring language teachers must be able to exemplify good verbal ability to become competent in their fields. Therefore, it is important to develop a future teacher’s ability to communicate in English. This study investigated the effects of the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) approach on the oral communication skills of teacher education students in a local college in Laguna, Philippines. Appreciative Inquiry is defined as the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system’s capacity to heighten positive potential; it focuses on doing more of what is already working, rather than focusing on fixing problems (Whitney & Cooperrider, 2011). A group of 11 student participants were given treatment in the form of an intervention workshop that followed the 4D cycle model of Appreciative Inquiry. Results revealed a significant impact in the students’ motivation to improve their oral communication skills. The intervention sessions had a positive effect on their self-confidence and eagerness to proceed with specializing in English language education. Their notion of their own personality that reflected negative self-talk was observed to have been significantly transformed into high self-esteem and determination. Feedback from the post-intervention interview suggested that the AI approach is a viable method that can be used in the classroom setting to build a safe learning space for students who engage in second language acquisition because the sessions give out a sense of fulfillment, positive reinforcement, and self-paced success. It is recommended that teachers employ AI techniques in their teaching-learning plans to sustain their students’ motivation in pursuing Teacher Education and to support their varying needs and preferences based on the strengths they already possess.

Introduction
Filipino students are well exposed to studying the English language during their first ten years of education. Good oral communication skills are necessary to help people understand and process information in a clear manner. Aspiring language teachers must be able to exemplify good verbal ability to become competent in their fields. Therefore, it is important to develop a future teacher’s ability to communicate in English. This study investigated the effects of the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) approach on the oral communication skills of teacher education students in a local college in Laguna, Philippines. Appreciative Inquiry is defined as the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system’s capacity to heighten positive potential; it focuses on doing more of what is already working, rather than focusing on fixing problems (Whitney & Cooperrider, 2011). A group of 11 student participants were given treatment in the form of an intervention workshop that followed the 4D cycle model of Appreciative Inquiry. Results revealed a significant impact in the students’ motivation to improve their oral communication skills. The intervention sessions had a positive effect on their self-confidence and eagerness to proceed with specializing in English language education. Their notion of their own personality that reflected negative self-talk was observed to have been significantly transformed into high self-esteem and determination. Feedback from the post-intervention interview suggested that the AI approach is a viable method that can be used in the classroom setting to build a safe learning space for students who engage in second language acquisition because the sessions give out a sense of fulfillment, positive reinforcement, and self-paced success. It is recommended that teachers employ AI techniques in their teaching-learning plans to sustain their students’ motivation in pursuing Teacher Education and to support their varying needs and preferences based on the strengths they already possess.
This research sought to explore the connection between the current oral communication skills of teacher education students at a local college in Laguna and the instructional approach and strategies applied to...
improve their speech preparation and delivery practices. The effects of the use of the AI approach in a series of skills enhancement workshops and assessment of the possibility of integrating it in the teaching-learning plans for the English courses has been described. It was carried out in response to the institution’s goal of developing the necessary life skills for the students by providing a more holistic learning environment.

This study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the qualities of the oral communication skills level of teacher education students in Laguna, Philippines?
2. What are the effects of the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) workshop sessions on the oral communication skills of the teacher education students?

This study aimed to evaluate the effects of AI approach to the oral communication skills of teacher education students at a local college in Laguna, Philippines. Specifically, it: (i) described the level of oral communication skills of the students; (ii) implemented the AI workshop sessions using an online interaction scheme; and (iii) analysed the effects of the AI workshop series on the oral communication skills of the students.

Materials and Methods

Research design

This study utilized a case study design with a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. The qualitative method involved a semi-structured interview and a thematic analysis, in which meanings were identified in patterns. More specifically, reflexive thematic analysis was adapted as it aims to analyze experiential and critical data, those that are contextualized and relative, and to interpret them based on identified patterns of shared meaning (Braun & Clarke, 2021). A one-shot case study is a pre-experimental design where a single group is observed after a treatment that is presumed to cause change has been made (Research Connections, 2021). In this study, the sample population was the group of teacher education students who had the means to connect to the internet and were available to join the intervention sessions. The design was used to assess a single group of 11 students after a series of AI workshop sessions was conducted. The researcher chose this method with the limitations of the COVID-19 pandemic in mind.

To enrich the discussion of findings, the study also incorporated a qualitative method such as a semi-structured in-depth interview that used a list of questions following the AI approach. The interviews help get a deeper understanding of student participants about their perception on their and their school’s strengths and, later, about the effects of AI as an intervention strategy.

Participants of the study

Considering that the research was conducted through a video conferencing software, the informed consent was obtained through a verbal agreement via the virtual platform Zoom Meetings. Purposive sampling is a non-probability method used to produce a sample that is logically assumed to represent a certain population (Lavrakas, 2008). This method was used in this study based on the following criteria: the students’ year level and major, their ability to access the internet, and their availability given the modular distance learning set up adopted by the local college. For instance, in one section of 30 third-year students majoring in English Language Education, only students #3 and #5 said they had a stable internet connection and agreed to devote the weekends to the workshop sessions. Due to these limitations, only a total of 11 students participated.

Instrumentation


To describe the English oral communication skills level of the student participants of this study and to reiterate the necessity for an intervention, a needs assessment was conducted prior to the AI intervention. The skills presented were scored based on the eight competencies under two key areas of the evaluation form: speech preparation and speech delivery (See Appendix A).

The Competent Speaker Holistic Speech Evaluation Form formulated by the National Communication Association is a statistically valid and reliable tool for evaluating oral communication competencies for higher education levels. This in-class evaluation tool measures public speaking skills, both the verbal and non-verbal, and not only the knowledge and motivation of the speaker. There are eight competencies measured in this rubric—four for speech preparation and four for speech delivery. These competencies are as follows:
Speech Preparation Competencies | Speech Delivery Competencies
--- | ---
Chooses and narrows a topic appropriately for the audience and occasion | Uses language appropriate to the audience and occasion
Communicates the thesis/specific purpose in a manner appropriate for the audience and occasion | Uses vocal variety in rate, pitch, and intensity to heighten and maintain interest appropriate to the audience and occasion
Provides supporting material appropriate for the audience and occasion | Uses pronunciation, grammar, and articulation appropriate to the audience and occasion
Uses an organizational pattern to the topic, audience, occasion, and purpose | Uses physical behaviors that support the verbal message

Table 1. The Competent Speaker Holistic Speech Evaluation Form Competencies

For each of the criteria given in the competencies, three levels of performance are provided: excellent, satisfactory, and unsatisfactory (See Appendix 1).

Guidelines for proper use and the descriptors for each level of assessment of The Competent Speaker rubric are provided in the manual used. However, because the manual allows the evaluator to use a scale system that is deemed appropriate for the context of the performance, the researcher chose not to assign numerical values, but simply checked off the level of performance applicable per competency instead. The use of the assessment results was guaranteed to be solely for the purpose of diagnosing the student participants’ strengths and weaknesses in oral communication prior to the intervention. The results of the evaluation led to the description of the oral communication skills of the student participants based on the level of performance (unsatisfactory, satisfactory, or excellent) where the greatest number of checks were given.

From the number of checks given, the students were divided into three groups: low-performing, average-performing, and high-performing. The students who got most of their checks under unsatisfactory were recorded under low-performing; those who got most under satisfactory were recorded under average-performing; and those who got most under excellent were recorded under high-performing. This grouping system was formulated based on the levels of performance categories under the instructional functions performance standards (Hansche, 1998) and the Student Performance Level Descriptors for Oral Communication used for non-native English speakers (Grognet, 1997). According to Hansche (1994), to identify various levels of student attainment, categories such as below standard, at standard, and above standard are being used. The elements of performance standards are based on the collection of the performance tasks done by the students which include those that measure proficiency. These standards are later used to improve teaching strategies used in the classroom. Meanwhile, the Student Performance Level (SPL) descriptors were designed for teachers so that they can communicate their adult learners’ English skills effectively. There are ten SPLs in total. But because only three levels are indicated in the scoring rubric to evaluate the teaching demo, the researcher used the lowest, the middle and the highest levels as a basis.

The SPL’s used as a basis are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Performance Level</th>
<th>Descriptor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>For those who have limited vocabulary and no control of grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>For those who function independently but still needs help, and still rely on some learned phrases but also use new ones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>For those who can be equated to a native English speaker</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Student performance level

It should be noted that these were only used as guide in the categorization of the students and were not the exact scoring criteria used to evaluate their demo.

**Semi-structured interview**

A semi-structured interview was conducted with the participants during the post-intervention or evaluation phase, to further probe their thoughts on their AI intervention experience. The highlights among the participants’ answers were used to describe the effects of the AI approach as stated in the research objectives. The semi-structured questionnaire was given to the students via real-time chat through Facebook messenger. (See Appendix 6)
**Needs assessment analysis summary**

The assessment was targeted on the ability to employ the basics of public speaking in English of teacher education students majoring in English Language Education. The students were asked to deliver a teaching demo spiel that they formulated based on a topic in Education Technology. The following criteria indicated in the speech preparation section of the Competent Speaker Holistic Evaluation Form was measured: the ability to communicate the purpose of the speech, the use of appropriate supporting materials, and the effective organizational pattern of ideas. Meanwhile, for the speech delivery section of the form, the following were measured: vocal production in rate, pitch, and intensity; pronunciation, grammar, articulation; and non-verbal behaviours.

During the demonstration, an observation guide was designed and utilized to account for the student participants’ verbal and non-verbal cues (See Appendix 5) The cues mentioned in the guide consist of content, delivery, language, posture, movements, eye contact, and facial expressions. For each of the cues, a list of specific behaviours to be observed is indicated in the form of questions. The cues identified were based on the expected outcomes of the teaching demo and on the eight competencies of the same scoring rubric used in the assessment proper.

**Data analysis**

The student participants’ answers were collected from the semi-structured interview. The data was grouped into two phases— the responses made during the intervention phase (the AI workshop sessions), and the responses made during the post-intervention phase. The grouping was intended to clearly identify the real-time effects of the AI session based on the observation and discussion notes, and the student participants’ over-all notion of the whole experience after the sessions.

Data analysis was done in reference to the research questions that tackled the measurement of the students’ oral communication skills and their perception thereof, and the application of AI approach in response to the need to improve such skills.

Qualitative descriptive analysis methods such as the semi-structured interview and the reflexive thematic analysis were utilized to explain the students’ responses in relation to the research questions and objectives. Mainly, thematic analysis was used to analyse qualitative data by identifying patterns in the meanings of the data. More specifically, reflexive thematic analysis was adapted as it aims to analyze experiential and critical data, those that are contextualized and relative, and to interpret them based on identified patterns of shared meaning (Braun & Clarke 2021). Considering the high volume of response and reactions from the student participants, the researcher used the deductive way of reflexive thematic analysis to develop themes that are directed by existing ideas and concepts. In this study, these ideas and concepts include: the student’s feeling towards using a new approach, the lessons gained from the AI approach, the plausibility of AI as a tool to improve oral communication skills, and the rooms for improvement of the workshop series. These ideas were chosen as these were the highlighted responses that came about during the post-intervention interview.

**Results and Discussion**

**Students’ oral communication skills: Results of the pre-intervention needs assessment**

Based on the observation, the following was identified: 1) The students had poor eye contact; 2) There were no variations in facial expressions; 3) The hand gestures were either very limited or repetitive; 4) Their pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary need improvement for better content delivery; 5) The students looked under-rehearsed and were evidently nervous; 6) They showed very few signs of self-confidence and self-esteem as shown in their low scores in the speech evaluation rubric and the researcher’s observation. In this study, self-confidence and self-esteem are characterized as having the ability to demonstrate verbal cues without hesitation and without much nervousness being apparent, as indicated in the Delivery criterion in the observation guide (Appendix 5); 7) Stage fright was very apparent; and 8) A unique communication and presentation style of each student was not observed.

Upon using the observation guide and The Competent Speaker Holistic Evaluation Form in the pre-intervention assessment, the researcher concluded that ten of the eleven students exhibited low performance in the oral English communication skills evaluation. Based on the rubric, the ten students scored unsatisfactory in five of the eight competencies and satisfactory in three out of eight competencies. Meanwhile, only one student exhibited average performance by scoring satisfactory in all eight competencies. This is displayed in the Table below.
Assessment Classification | Number of student participants
---|---
High-Performing (majority or more than 50% of checks were put under Excellent) | 0
Average-Performing (majority or more than 50% of checks were put under Satisfactory) | 1
Low-Performing (majority or more than 50% of checks were put under Unsatisfactory) | 10

Table 3. Summary of Needs Assessment Test results

Following these results, a strong need to further improve the students’ English oral communication skills was identified, especially in the areas of pronunciation, articulation, grammar, and vocal variety. This need was supported by the fact that pre-service teachers are expected to employ good communication skills to effectively transmit information and provide motivation to their future students, especially in terms of the concepts in an application of the English language. An English teacher must be able to communicate in a clear and understandable manner (Khan et al., 2017). Moreover, the resources in responding to the needs must include measures to improve their self-confidence and motivation as well.

The students’ self-assessment on their oral communication skills

In Separa et al.’s study (2015) on Filipino college students’ self-assessment in English oral communication, they noted that students show zero positivity towards learning and using the second language. This was attributed to several factors including the students’ low exposure to an English-speaking environment and their general reluctance to use the language in fear of committing grammar and pronunciation errors. Consequently, they were uncomfortable when the need to speak in English arose.

In this study, the students’ perception of their own performance during the pre-intervention needs assessment was also considered. This was reflected during brief interviews where they were asked how they felt about their presentation skills.

Based on the self-assessment of the students, the themes identified were a) The students were not confident about their English pronunciation and grammar, b) They were afraid to make mistakes in translating Filipino to English, c) They worried about not getting their thoughts and message across, d) They wanted to master speaking in English fluently but did not know where to start, e) The motivation to communicate well was present, but the students felt they were not good enough to begin with, f) They students thought it is time for new classroom approaches to improve methods in teaching and learning oral communication.

These themes show that the students had inhibitions while presenting themselves in front of a group regardless of their ability to communicate. They were hindered by their pre-conceived notion that they are not good at English and by being intimidated by the difficulty of the language. According to Separa et al. (2015), students’ lack of confidence in speaking can be attributed to Leon Festinger’s Cognitive Dissonance Theory which states that a person tends to be dissonant when there is forced compliant behaviour. This means that when individuals are forced to do a task they do not want to do, their attitude towards the activity and all other similar activities may change because of the mental discomfort they have experienced (Festinger, 1962). If the students are compelled to do speaking exercises in a language that they are not comfortable speaking and are afraid of using, they are deprived of the most humanizing activity of engaging in a conversation (Separa et al., 2015). Likewise, they are not confident about their technical knowledge in English grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary and they worry about their audience identifying their weaknesses while they are exposed in front of the class. These responses can be attributed to the oral communication problems concerning the linguistic approach and the interactional approach in learning a foreign language (Kavanoz & Yuksel, 2017). The motivation of the students towards speaking in English decreases when their desire and attitude to practice the language is low (Ihsan, 2016). Likewise, the following are also considered as contributory to the high level of anxiety that the students experience in class: fear of committing mistakes, fear of the teachers, negative self-perception of language competence, and the teachers’ negative demeanour in class. This means that the teacher might be a key factor in building motivation support for the students (Dincer & Yensilyurt, 2017).

Because good oral communication skills depend on the ability to use language properly in social contexts, it becomes problematic when students hesitate or pause while expressing their thoughts on account of their fears. Effective techniques must then be developed to improve such skills (Hussein et al., 2019). If the students are not given any variation in their English communication activities, they are not given the opportunity to use the language in expressing their ideas. So, there is a need to create a more favourable...
environment for them in class (Dincer & Yensilyurt, 2017). In this study, the favourable environment identified is a classroom that welcomes an exchange of positive feedback and reinforcement among all students.

However, measuring an individual’s language competence based on a communicative task such as a teaching demo or an oral performance task alone can be insufficient. This is because a pre-service language teacher’s motivation and understanding of their teacher identity is formed through a dynamic process that must be integrated throughout the Teacher Education program they are taking, and programs vary from one educational institution to another (Kavanoz & Yuksel, 2017). This is where the implementation for new teaching strategies come in.

**AI workshop session**

With the learning objectives and outcomes in place, a workshop session guide was designed to put the AI into practice in an educational setting. (See Appendix 4) The first session was devoted to the needs assessment or the teaching demonstration and a brief orientation to AI and its purpose. The second session was devoted to the Discovery and Dream stages of the AI workshop. In the Discovery stage, the students were asked to share an experience, preferably an oral presentation or performance, where they felt most alive, most excited, and most competent. A strength-building exercise was also done, where they were asked to share the aspects of oral communication that they are good at and the positive values they think they have that made them good at such aspects. In the Dream stage, the students were asked to envision what they would be doing within the year to improve their oral communication skills more and what positive results they believed would come out of the experience by the end of 2021.

The third session was devoted for the Design stage where the students were asked to fill out an AI Action Plan. This is where they detailed specific goals that they want to attain oral communication-wise and their strongest skills that could be used to ensure the achievement of these goals.

Lastly, the fourth and fifth sessions were devoted for the Destiny stage which was done over two weeks after the third session. This was when the students’ progress was monitored based on the AI action plan they devised. They were asked to re-perform the teaching demonstration they had presented during the first session. The researcher recorded the improvements shown by the students. Following this, all eleven students underwent the post-intervention interview where they were asked to answer a structured set of questions.

During the strength building exercise in Session 1, the student participants were asked to describe an event in their student life when they felt most involved and excited to present something orally in class. The students’ responses to the exercise consisted of the following themes: 1) The students felt stronger when they were given a group task; 2) Their unforgettable moment in a performance had something to do with leading a group; 3) When they felt more alive on being given responsibilities that they were passionate in fulfilling; 4) When they felt more involved when they worked on a creative output; 5) When they felt more confident on having prepared for and mastered every detail of their presentation.

During the exercise, some of the student participants mentioned their weaknesses and the problems they have encountered in their story. One participant ended up saying he was disappointed about how the whole event turned out even when he was so excited in the beginning. However, following the nature of AI, the researchers chose not to follow up on this negative self-talk and instead focused on the participant’s sense of self-fulfilment despite what happened. A resolve approach was used, so that all student participants felt that the session was a safe place for sharing only the best of what is. The students were led to the idea of appreciating the best of themselves and the environment they were in on the events they mentioned—that instead of focusing on the mishaps along the way, it would be better to capitalize on the talents they already possess, the things they already know, the skills they have already acquired, and how they will be able to share all these in a participatory learning set up.

Meanwhile, the following ideas were reiterated upon hearing the responses: 1) Students must learn how to set their weaknesses aside by focusing on what they are good at; 2) They must treat their problems as opportunities to be stronger than they already are; 3) They should see themselves differently in a positive way. This feedback exchange was the jumping-off point for introducing another strength-building exercise that allowed the students to dig deeper into their character and abilities. The researcher asked them to list what they thought was their best quality and the things that they strongly believed they were good at both in terms of speech and oral communication and in their personal life.
The students’ responses to this exercise consisted of the following themes in terms of the academics (oral communication): 1) Some of the students believed they were good at written communication including planning and organizing report outlines, visual aids, and other instructional materials; 2) Some expressed their strength in posture, eye contact and other non-verbal communication skills during speech delivery; 3) Some said they were good at pronunciation and diction; 4) Others mentioned they are good at creating impactful introductions and impromptu speeches. Meanwhile, for the non-academics, the themes of the responses were as follows: 1) The students’ strengths were inclined to their ability to keep and maintain healthy relationships; 2) The students were good at facing daily adversities.

Each of the eleven students was given a chance to speak up and share their best asset, and all these responses were supported and agreed upon by the researcher and their co-student participants. However, it was observed that there was lack of confidence, even when they were talking about their specialties, which was supposedly a moment of glory for them. They felt more awkward than self-assured even when they were certain of their answers. This was noted as a natural-occurring behaviour for students who are used to being scrutinized for their speech performance (Aquino et al., 2016). As treatment, the researcher discussed the importance of acknowledging one’s self-worth in dealing with communication skills. Pointers were given to teach the students how to capitalize on the strengths they have already identified in the Discover stage and how they can use them to turn their fears and inhibitions into strengths.

In the Dream stage of the intervention, the students were asked to reflect on the strengths they had identified and to use it to co-construct what should be. Part of the Dream stage of AI is looking into the community where an individual belongs to and the community’s worth to his or her well-being. In this study, we refer to this environment or community as the school. Following this, the students were asked to name their and their school’s core life-giving values, which involve the factors that keep them motivated to continue majoring in English. Also, the researcher asked what the students valued deeply about themselves, their friends, and their families and what made their school a great place to work in. The themes identified from the analysis were: 1) The students considered their school a safe space for honing their communication skills because it provided an avenue for interactive and performance-based lessons; 2) The people in their community—their teachers and classmates—made their stay in school worthwhile; 3) Their school gave them a sense of purpose that their dream of becoming an English teacher would be realized because the school was able to provide a space for it.

In this stage, a shift in the student participants’ tone was observed—from being meek and lacking confidence to being more open and enthusiastic. It was notable that when the session started, the students were ready to open up since they had already grown accustomed to sharing. Excitement was apparent in their facial reactions and gestures. Because their strengths were built and maintained in the last two stages, their sense of self-worth had started to bloom when they talked about their core life-giving values. They were happy talking about their student life and how they rose to the challenges along the way. What was even more prominent in the discussion was their notion of challenge. When they mentioned their struggles, they no longer regarded those as hindrances but as success stories that inspired them to become better. As compared to the negative self-talk where two of the respondents uttered, “Kaya lang po, hindi ko kaya (I really cannot do it),” and “Wala po talaga akong lakas ng loob (I’m not brave enough),” they have now moved to, “Yung kakayahan ko po hindi ko lang na-realize (I just didn’t realize I had these skills),” and “Hindi pala ‘yun parusa. Kaya pala namin ‘yun i-overcome (I realized it was not a punishment and that I can overcome it).”

A change was also seen in the comments they gave each other throughout the session. They were lighter, more uplifting, and more validating. Comments such as, “Oo nga! That’s your strength. Nainspire mo kami maging kasya mo (I agree! That’s your strength. You inspire us to become more like you),” and “Idol ka nga namin. Hindi mo lang napapansin (We do admire you. You just don’t notice),” were exchanged.

After identifying their core life-giving values, the students underwent an imagination exercise called, “A Journey to the Future”. Their creative minds were tapped by allowing them to envision themselves and their school in the next three to five years, supposing that their dreams for themselves and their school have already been realized. From this exercise, responses that only circled on positive reinforcement were elicited and encouraged. The themes identified from the analysis were: 1) The students were inspired to be better with the intricacies of the English language; 2) In three more years, they were hopeful that their oral communication skills would have already improved; 3) They saw themselves going back to their school and winning their teachers’ approval.
Based on the observation, this exercise and the entire Dream stage ignited a fire in the students. They repeatedly mentioned the words "motivated," “inspired,” and “abilities” when asked how they felt when they were exchanging stories. The facilitator watched for any remaining negative self-talk that could have stirred them away from the appreciation method, but none was found notable. The end of the Dream stage initiated the students’ goal setting. They were given an assignment—to list a set of goals they wanted to achieve to improve their oral communication skills by the end of the year.

In the Design stage, the students were asked to draft an action plan that could guide them in realizing the goals they had set. This involved listing the SMART goals, identifying the actions to be performed, writing the materials and resources needed, and recognizing the capacity and skills needed to achieve such goals. Afterwards, the students were asked to share parts of their action plan to the workshop group, where everyone was encouraged to give constructive feedback and positive reinforcement to one another. (See Appendix 7)

The themes identified from the analysis were: 1) The students saw themselves improving in the areas of grammar and vocabulary by the end of the year; 2) The students’ goals included increasing their English fluency level and enriching their English vocabulary; 3) They wanted to proceed by taking refresher courses in English grammar; 4) Their strategy included reading more books in English and making this a habit; 5) They planned to keep track of their progress using the action plans they created.

In the duration of the Design session, the researcher observed that the students were eager to see through the end of their goals instead of holding back. This was notably different from the image they portrayed at the beginning of the AI intervention where they talked about their fears a lot more than they talked about their strengths.

The final stage in the 4D Appreciative Inquiry model is the most crucial part of the study as it determines whether the students show any significant changes with the consistent use of the AI approach. This is where the students’ progress was closely monitored. It was one thing to set the goals, but it was entirely different to keep their motivation intact and help them not get lost along the way, with all limitations considered. It took weeks to monitor the students’ progress. Their daily habits were tracked down via virtual consultations with the facilitator, and it was found that most of them stayed true to the list of actions to be taken indicated on their action plan—reading at least one to three chapters of an English book a day, listing newly discovered English words, practicing their demonstrations at least twice a week, doing self-practice in front of a mirror, watching videos on improving self-confidence and public speaking, and reviewing grammar lessons at least twice a week.

Effects of the AI Workshop on the oral communication skills of the students

Before completely evaluating the effects of the AI intervention, the students were asked to repeat the teaching demonstration they presented at the beginning of the study. The observation guide used during the pre-intervention assessment was re-used for the post-intervention assessment to check for progress and improvements in the students’ oral communication skills.

To check whether there was a significant difference between the pre-intervention teaching demonstration and the post-intervention teaching demonstration, the Competent Speaker Holistic Evaluation Form in the pre-intervention assessment was re-used to re-assess the students. It was then concluded that nine of the eleven respondents exhibited low performance in the oral English communication skills evaluation. Based on the rubric, the nine students scored unsatisfactory in five of the eight competencies and satisfactory in three out of eight competencies. Meanwhile, two students exhibited average performance – one scored satisfactory in seven out of eight competencies, and the other scored satisfactory in six out of eight competencies. This is displayed in Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Classification</th>
<th>Number of student participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High-Performing (majority or more than 50% of checks were put under Excellent)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average-Performing (majority or more than 50% of checks were put under Satisfactory)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Performing (majority or more than 50% of checks were put under Unsatisfactory)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Summary of post intervention test results

Compared to the pre-intervention results, the data above shows that there was a difference in the performance of one out of eleven students. The specific improvement noted on this student was the
improvement in self-confidence which had evidently changed from the first session. Nevertheless, the student participants showed improvements during the second demonstration. Generally, the following were observed: 1) The students showed significant improvements in eye contact, facial expression, and hand gestures, which were all noted with the basis of the observation guide (See Appendix 5); 2) There was still much more to improve in their pronunciation and grammar; 3) They all showed improvement in the speech preparation because they looked well-rehearsed. This was measured when the observations from the initial n and the final demonstration were compared and analysed and when the findings from the initial one were no longer repeated in the final one; 4) The most significant improvement was evidently in the aspect of self-confidence—that despite mispronunciation, grammar errors, and incorrect word usage, the students showed fewer signs of presentation fright.

More specifically, the following were noted as the effects of AI on the eight speaking competencies that were measured using the evaluation rubric:

**Competencies One and Two – On narrowing down the topic and communicating the thesis/specific purpose**

Based on the observation notes and the scores, 80% of the students were evidently more comfortable during their demo introduction in the post-intervention than in their first teaching demo. They introduced their topics more clearly, discussed the purpose of their demo more effectively and explained the supporting details with more ease. During the interview, the student participants attributed this improvement to the AI intervention, specifically referring to the idea that AI has opened a venue for them to speak their minds; because they were encouraged to share multiple times to their peers, they grew more and more comfortable of public speaking. They referred to this as one of the positive effects of AI.

**Competencies Three and Four – Supporting materials and organizational pattern**

It was evident that the students were more prepared in the second demo in terms of the materials they used. More than the visual appeal of their presentations, the supplemental topics that 50% of them provided were notable. These students provided videos and additional readings that could be used by the audience to enrich their knowledge and awareness of the topics discussed. It was observed that these students were able to organize and break down their ideas more clearly. Although 50% is not majority, this was still noted as one of the positive effects of AI as this led the students to say that they were more eager to prepare for the second demo after being able to speak up multiple times during the intervention sessions.

**Competencies Five to Seven - On appropriate language and vocal variety**

During the observation in the first demonstration, the poor choice of words or word usage was one of the recurring comments noted in the verbal cues. During the second demonstration, there was no significant difference noted. Moreover, the appropriateness of the language in terms of how it sparked the audience’s enthusiasm had significant changes not on the speaker’s delivery, but on the audience’s overall mood. The students were evidently more attentive during the second demonstration, and this could be related to the intervention in terms of how they perceived the experience of validating their peers’ strengths and shared ideas.

The students’ delivery did not have any notable difference in vocal variety and grammar. Particularly, their grammar and inflections still need work. The pronunciation had noticeable differences which reflected on how much they had prepared for the demo the second time. They were more careful and slower when they pronounced the tricky sounds. The students also mentioned during the interview that they had devoted more time to rehearsing their demo the second time around.

**Competency Eight – Physical behaviour**

The notable differences in the non-verbal cues of the students in the second demo included improvements in eye contact, posture, and the use of their hands. Eighty percent of the students looked more confident because they stood straight, without being too stiff, with their eyes focused on the camera more than on their notes. With the limited space of their video frames, their movements appeared to be more controlled both in the first and second demo, but during the second demo, they looked more relaxed, and they were able to move their hands more freely as they gave explanations.

These improvements in the communication skills of students could be attributed to the Appreciative Inquiry intervention conducted in terms of how the students perceived the change in approach. Bentkowski and Yamaga (cited by Lessard-Clouston, 2020) in a similar study where it was concluded that students who were asked Appreciative Inquiry questions rated their own English oral communication skills 25% higher than the
students who were asked problem-focused questions. Their observation also included the students’ shift to a more positive mode of learning where they are excited and looking forward to the next sessions. Afterwards, a semi-structured interview was conducted with the student participants during the post-intervention phase to further probe their thoughts on their AI intervention experience. The highlights among the student participants’ answers were used to describe the effects of the AI approach as stated in the research objectives.

The following coding categories were established based on the perception questions detailed in the semi-structured questionnaire used in the interview. These questions were identified as essential in addressing the research objectives:

**The Effects of the AI Intervention**

During the intervention phase, a great deal of improvement among all eleven students in terms of confidence and determination in enhancing their oral communication skills were observed. The second demonstration became the jumping-off point in the description of the effects of the Appreciative Inquiry workshop on the group. After the second demo, the students were asked to answer a series of questions during a semi-structured interview. The questions focused on how they felt about each exercise, how they felt talking about their strengths, how they perceived the idea of AI and how they perceived it after completing all intervention sessions. They were also asked how the intervention impacted them and whether they think AI is a plausible, attainable approach in honing a student’s English oral communication skills or not. Table 5 describes the coding categories

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Interview Question</th>
<th>Coding Category</th>
<th>Theme</th>
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| How did you feel when you were asked to talk about your strengths and not your problems? | The student’s feeling towards using a new approach | 1) The students gained a sense of fulfilment after the intervention sessions  
2) They found the Appreciative Inquiry approach “interesting” and “enjoyable”  
3) The students found out that banking on one’s positive core works in a classroom setting.  
4) The students discovered that there was another method a teacher can adopt to interact with students, enabling the latter to feel better about doing better.  
5) They learned that they each have their own “hidden strengths” that they can explore to be better at what they do. |
| What lesson(s) did you get from AI?                                                | The lessons gained from the AI approach       | 1) The students found out that banking on one’s positive core works in a classroom setting.  
2) The students discovered that there was another method a teacher can adopt to interact with students, enabling the latter to feel better about doing better.  
3) They learned that they each have their own “hidden strengths” that they can explore to be better at what they do.  
4) They realized that “appreciating what they already have” helps them stay motivated and grounded.  
5) They learned that it is important to have a venue for sharing each other’s strengths without worrying about receiving negative judgments from their peers. |
| Do you think AI is an effective approach to be used in education? Would you use it when you become a teacher yourself? Why or why not? | The plausibility of AI as a tool to improve oral communication skills | 1) The students recommend using AI approach in classroom instruction, specifically in the Teacher Education program.  
2) The students think AI is a plausible approach to be used in a classroom setting to help the students stay inspired in mastering English communication  
3) The students are positive that AI would help students like them use their strengths and make it work for them.  
4) The students said that this approach is “worth trying” because it veers away from the traditional approach and can empower more students to become better at what they want to be better at. |
| What did you find negative/wrong about AI workshop?                               | Room for improvement for the AI workshop      | 1) The students said it would be more effective to have the workshop series in a traditional face-to-face scheme.  
2) They wanted additional sessions that were not scheduled far apart.  
3) They recommended having longer sessions so they can share about their strengths and feelings more as this “gets them on track.”  
4) They recommended having more strength-building activities. |

Table 5. Coding categories and emerging themes
Using reflexive thematic analysis, the following themes have come up in the following code categories:

**The students’ feelings towards using a new approach**

The students gained a sense of fulfillment after the intervention sessions and found the Appreciative Inquiry approach “interesting” and “enjoyable”. The student participants said they felt renewed and eager to improve their oral communication skills—something they did not feel in a long time especially when the COVID-19 pandemic happened. Bentkowski and Yamaga (2006) noted this as a positive experience where the students can celebrate good experiences which may motivate them to increase their confidence. The AI approach was interesting to them because it was very different from the usual problem-solving approach in which they had previously used to find out what was wrong and lacking. This new approach helped them rediscover themselves because it helped them see the talents that were hidden all along, and talents they did not realize they had. When the students were made to realize how wonderful they were as a person, expansive learning was opened together with positive change (Murphey et al., 2014).

In this sense, during the post-intervention interview, students asserted that:

> It was very fulfilling po⁴. Getting to share your hobbies and strengths to your peers feels like letting them know you better. Being appreciated is very motivating din po⁵ (Student #2, interview, 06.03.2021)

> At first, nakakahiya. Pero knowing na someone will appreciate you nang walang judgment ay nakakapanatag po ng loob mag share. [At first it was embarrassing, but knowing someone will appreciate you without any judgement helps you feel more at ease to share.] (Student #3, interview, 06.03.2021)

**The lessons gained from the AI approach**

The students discovered that relying on their positive core works in a classroom setting. They also discovered that there was another method a teacher could adopt to interact with students, enabling them to feel better about doing better. When the students were encouraged to share part of who they were to their classmates, care and respect among them was nurtured as they shared common goals that they all accepted and honoured (Murphey et al., 2014). They learned that they each have their own hidden strengths that they can explore to be better at what they do. Giles and Kung (2010) refers to this as the best of the past that is put forward, noting how essential it is for people to revisit some humbling and revealing past experiences that remind them who they really are and what they are capable of.

The students realized that appreciating what they already have helps them stay motivated and grounded. They also learned that it is important to have a venue for sharing each other’s strengths without worrying about receiving negative judgments from their peers. For students who are disengaged and discouraged, AI serves as an opportunity for them to tap their sense of community with their peers (Davis, 2020). According to the students, the workshop sessions made them realize the importance of getting to know themselves and their classmates more. They found out that they were so focused on their weaknesses and problems it had already become a burden for them and hindered them from working more diligently. Giles and Kung (2010) identified that problem-centred realities often lead to a greater sense of hopelessness contrary to the inspiring discoveries and messages of positive change in a constructionist reality. This is the very heart of Appreciative Inquiry, which states that people have the power over our social realities by believing what we see to create it.

Participants stated that:

> Learning new things from others’ strength made me realize things that I can do also. (Student# 3, interview, 06.03.2021)

> Maappreciate nila lalo yung meron sila at magfocus sila para mapalago yun. Para sakim po kase minsan po pag mali lang lagi yung napapansin parang di ka mag eenjoy na gumawa kase nasa utak mo na yung thinking na “baka may mali sa gawa ko, ano kayang malik dito” mga ganon po ma’am mas ma coconscious po sila. Basta ma perfect na lang kahit wala na po yung understanding ganon po. [They will be able to appreciate it if they practice it. For me, the habit of just identifying the problems and weaknesses disallows us to enjoy because we’re too worried of committing a mistake. We just become overly conscious of our actions, and we tend to strive for perfection without understanding the actual process.]

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⁴ In Filipino, *po* means “yes” and is used to show respect to someone older.

⁵ In Filipino, *din* means “also” and *po* means “yes.”
The plausibility of AI as a tool to improve oral communication skills.

The students recommended using the AI approach in classroom instruction, specifically in the Teacher Education program. It has been found that the pre-service teacher’s ability to identify their own cultural competencies and describe their own development as an educator allows them to unmask strengths and assets, eventually helping them realize how they can engage better in the teaching and learning process (He, 2013).

The students thought AI was a plausible approach to be used in a classroom setting to help students stay inspired in mastering English communication. Bentkowski and Yamaga (2006) found this to be true, stating that AI can be a helpful tool for students to realize and refocus on their language successes. Moreover, shifting questions about problems to questions about the strengths helps the learners change themselves so they can positively change their worlds (Murphey et al., 2014).

The students were convinced that AI could help students like themselves to use their strengths and make them work for them. The students said that this approach was worth trying because it veers away from the traditional approach and can empower more students to become better at the things they want to be better at. AI is an approach that lets teachers structure the students’ experiences by allowing them to ask and answer meaningful questions out who they are. This creates a trusting space where sincere relationships are built, and compassion is nurtured among the students and the teacher. The teachers are also given the chance to become role models by sharing their values and beliefs that are assigned to their own practice. This opens a vital discussion on the crucial concept of teachers teaching the future teachers (Giles & Kung, 2010).

In this regard, the participants mentioned that:

Makakatulong talaga yung AI sa pag improve ng oral communication skills ng mga estudyante kase po, natatakde po nung AI yung mg strengths ng mga estudyante na nakalimutan nila na meron po pala sila, mas na aappreciate po nila yun. Saka nagbibigay din po ng techniques or tips pano mas gagamitin or huhubugin yung kakayahan na meron tayo. [AI would really help in the improvement of students’ oral communication skills because it tackles the strengths that they almost forgot they had, and they are given the chance to appreciate it. AI also gives out strategies on how to further nurture our talents.] (Student #1, interview, 06.03.2021)

Malaki ang magiging contribution nito sa field of education especially sa communication dahil bibigyan nito ang mga estudyante upang magkaroon ng self-confidence when it comes to communicating to others [AI would hugely contribute to the field of education because it paves a way for students to gain self-confidence when it comes to communication with others.] (Student #6, interview, 06.03.2021)

Teachers should help student to enhance their skills. When I’ll be [sic] the teacher I should reinforce positive statements rather than negative statements to students, it is for me to motivate them [sic] who feels [sic] discouraged. Also, for them to voice out their thoughts and not to be shy in front of their classmates. (Student #5, interview, 06.03.2021)

Rooms for improvement for the AI workshop

The students said it would be more effective to have the workshop series in a traditional face-to-face scheme. They wanted additional sessions that were not scheduled far apart, and they recommended having longer sessions so they could share about their strengths and feelings more as this gets them on track.

The students also recommended having more strength-building activities. In a study entitled “Learning to like learning” where Appreciative Inquiry was used to promote increased personal involvement in learning, it was noticed that giving out positive reinforcement allows for changes in the behaviour and cognition of students. This can result in the creation of a new and more positive learning principle to be incorporated in the school curriculum (Naude et al., 2014).

The participants mentioned that:

AI Approach po ay mas effective po kung ginawa sya ng face to face at mas nakakeng joy. [The AI Approach would be more effective and enjoyable if done face-to-face.] (Student #4, interview, 06.03.2021)

Dahil nga po yung AI is appreciative, more on appreciation ganan baka mo mag settle na lang yung mga students sa kung anong meron sila, like di na sila magatry ng iba, di na po sila aalis sa comfort zone nila po [Because AI is concerned with appreciation, the students may choose to just settle with what they believe they are capable of and no longer step out of their comfort zones.] (Student #3, interview, 06.03.2021)
Conclusions
In search for an approach to better hone the future English educators, the use of AI was hoped to contribute to the improvement of the students’ oral communication skills. Some of the results of this study seem to indicate that:

Students are more content when their strengths and abilities are recognized over their weaknesses. The students appreciate criticisms if these appeal to the notion that they are already good. When the students are recognized and rewarded with positive reinforcement, they are more motivated to set their goals and work on them concretely. By way of providing the students with the opportunity to share their experiences without receiving judgments and negative comments from their peers, teachers can help in boosting the students’ self-confidence in oral presentations.

When the teacher does not focus on the problems of the oral presentation, the student becomes eager to present. The students in the study believed that their chances for success in oral communication would be higher with the use of the AI. Furthermore, it seems that the integration of AI approach can positively impact a student’s oral communication skills.

However, as difficult as it may be, considering the need for additional workshop sessions that may interfere with the students’ regular academic workload, it is deemed worth trying AI as it apparently makes space for a more personal and interactive approach for students who are easily demotivated by struggles in the likes of fear of judgment, stage fright, and self-doubt.

It was recognized that although AI practices are helpful, it is an overstatement to say it can help sharpen the technical skills for oral use of English language as this takes hours of methodical training, review, and practical application. Nevertheless, AI could greatly help a student mastering English to stay motivated and determined to take small steps and make these steps part of their daily habits. It can be said that AI is a plausible approach that could aid in the fulfillment of the students’ goals because it serves as a starting place for later development. At the very least, it could help them begin something to later arrive at something better.

It can also be suggested that if AI were to be applied in the classroom setting across all courses and programs, and if it were implemented in the teaching-learning plans more consistently, the possibility of changing the landscape of traditional and formal classroom instruction would possibly increase. Moreover, it could also create a venue for developing new classroom approaches that have yet to be discovered.

References


II. THE COMPETENT SPEAKER SPEECH EVALUATION FORM FACT SHEET

Appendix 1

The Competent Speaker Evaluation Form

Background
The Competent Speaker was developed in 1990 by a subcommittee of the NCA Committee on Assessment and Testing (now the NCA Division on Communication Assessment) charged to develop and test a communication competency-based speech evaluation form (Buchhold, 1990). Development and testing involved representatives of 12 academic institutions, and the subcommittee was chaired by Sherwyn Morreete of the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, Michael Moore of Purdue University Calumet, and Phillip Taylor of the University of Central Florida. Information regarding the instrument’s development and testing in the 1990’s as well as current testing for this second edition is found in Appendices B and C in this manual.

Purpose
The instrument is to be used to assess public speaking competency at the higher education level, for purposes of in-class speech evaluation, entrance/exit placement and assessment, as an instructional strategy or advising tool, and/or to generate assessment data for institutional or departmental accountability.

The instrument assesses public speaking behaviors, as opposed to knowledge/cognition and motivation/aptitude. Further, it assesses molecular/specific behaviors as opposed to material/abstract traits. That said, the speech evaluator may make references about knowledge/cognition and motivation/aptitude from observing the public speaking behaviors of a speaker.

Rationale
Despite the proliferation of public speaking courses and evaluation forms, no standardized and psychometrically tested speech evaluation form was available prior to 1990. Nor has there been such a form available grounded in the discipline’s conceptualization of public speaking competency. Thus, the Competent Speaker was developed to address that need for a standardized and tested instrument.

Technical Characteristics
The Competent Speaker consists of eight public speaking competencies, four of which relate to preparation and four to delivery. For each of the eight competencies, specific criteria for assessment are provided at three levels of performance: excellent, satisfactory, and unsatisfactory. The instrument is presented on pages 11 (anomalous form) and 12 (holistic form) in this manual; the criteria begin on page 13.

Conceptualization
The instrument was derived from NCA’s Speaking and Listening Competencies for High School Graduates (1982); NCA’s Communication is Life: Essential College Sophomore Speaking and Listening Competencies (Quintal, 1990); and the public speaking competencies contained in the Communication Competency Assessment Instrument (Rubin, 1982a).

Training Manual
This manual provides guidelines for instructors to train one or more speech rates/evaluators. Training instructions for use of the instrument begin on page 21. The manual’s appendix also provides background information for administrators who may need to provide a rationale for using the instrument.

Scoring Procedure
Utilize the instrument as a ratio scale by using any numerical weighing system, between and within the eight competencies, that suits the purpose of the evaluator and the particular speech event. For example, assignment of 1 to unsatisfactory, 2 to satisfactory, and 3 to excellent, for each of the eight competencies, would result in a possible score range of 8 (unsatisfactory) to 24 (excellent) for a given speech.

Reliability/Validity/Bias
The Competent Speaker was developed with great concern for its psychometric reliability and validity and for biases of any kind and is determined to be a reliable, valid, and useful instrument with speeches. Appendix C contains the normal testing process as well as testing inclusion in this second edition.

Every effort was made to ensure that this instrument is consistent with research and literature in the communication discipline concerning the nature of communication competence and current policy concerning its assessment. A few of the more significant characteristics of The Competent Speaker instrument relevant to this objective include the following:

1. Assesses public speaking behaviors. In recognition of the impracticality of assessing all domains of competence, the instrument focuses exclusively on the assessment of public speaking behaviors. Thus, it is not designed nor does it purport to measure either knowledge/cognition of public speaking or affect/motivation for public speaking. Regardless, as with the assessment of any behavior, the instrument may permit one to make limited inferences about the knowledge, motivation, and critical thinking skills of the speaker, inferences limited at most to the particular speaking event. However, such inferences should be made with caution since any reliability or validity associated with the instrument’s assessment of behavior does not apply to its assessment of knowledge or motivation.

2. Assesses both verbal and nonverbal behavior: The instrument identifies competencies for verbal and nonverbal behavior and provides criteria for assessing competency in the use of each. However, assessment is limited to the public speaking context and should not be generalized to other contexts, e.g., dyadic, group, etc.

3. Does not assess motor/abstract traits. The instrument does not directly assess motor/abstract traits such as figurative language, animation, audience contact, etc. Rather, the assessment of these traits is implied through the rating of molecular/specific behaviors such as communicating thesis, vocal variety, eye contact, etc.

4. Provides a holistic assessment of public preparation skills. The instrument will provide a holistic assessment of the speaker’s remote preparation skills. However, additional procedures or instruments will be required to assess specific remote preparation skills (e.g., specific research or outlining skills). Of course, the results of preparation skills, as assessed in the first four competencies, can be observed to some extent as the speech is presented.

5. Does not assess listening skills. The instrument is designed for the assessment of “speaking” skills only. Listening skills should be assessed by instruments and procedures designed for that purpose.

6. Provides for either an atomistic or holistic assessment. The eight discrete competency statements with their corresponding criteria primarily provide for an atomistic/analytic assessment. However, neither the competency statements nor their corresponding criteria prevent assessment based upon a holistic impression. For this purpose, a holistic version of the instrument is included in this second edition.

7. Assesses degree of competence: The criteria for each competency describe degrees of competence at the unsatisfactory, satisfactory, and excellent levels. An assessment can be made of either or both the degree to which the speaker possesses each competency and the degree to which the speaker possesses public speaking competence in general.

8. Provides descriptions of “competent” responses or behaviors. Each of the eight competency statements is accompanied by a descriptive statement of the criteria for judging each of the three degrees of competence.

9. Is free of cultural bias. Each competency is assessed with respect to the target audience and situation. In other words, judgments are based upon the degree to which the behavior is appropriate to the “audience and occasion.” As long as the evaluator bases judgments on these criteria, cultural bias should not become a factor.

NOTE: The purchaser of this manual is permitted to copy the speech evaluation form and the criteria for the competencies presented on the following pages in order to carry out any speech performance evaluation. With the purchase of the manual from NCA, any instructor in a department or institution may reprint as many copies of the speech evaluation form as are needed by that instructor, department, or institution, without further permission of NCA.
### IV. The NCA Competent Speaker Speech Evaluation Form

**Course:** 
**Semester:** 
**Date:** 
**Project:** 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRESENTATIONAL COMPETENCIES</th>
<th>RATINGS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Competency One: CHOOSES AND NARROWS A TOPIC APPROPRIATELY FOR THE AUDIENCE &amp; OCCASION</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Competency Two: COMMUNICATES THE THESIS/SPECIFIC PURPOSE IN A MANNER APPROPRIATE FOR THE AUDIENCE &amp; OCCASION</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competency Three: PROVIDES SUPPORTING MATERIAL (INCLUDING ELECTRONIC AND NON-ELECTRONIC PRESENTATIONAL AIDS) APPROPRIATE FOR THE AUDIENCE &amp; OCCASION</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Competency Four: USES AN ORGANIZATIONAL PATTERN APPROPRIATE TO THE TOPIC, AUDIENCE, OCCASION, &amp; PURPOSE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Competency Five: USES LANGUAGE APPROPRIATE TO THE AUDIENCE &amp; OCCASION</td>
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<tr>
<td>Competency Six: USES VOCAL VARIETY IN RATE, PITCH &amp; INTENSITY (VOLUME) TO HEIGHTEN &amp; MAINTAIN INTEREST APPROPRIATE TO THE AUDIENCE &amp; OCCASION</td>
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<tr>
<td>Competency Seven: USES PRONUNCIATION, GRAMMAR, &amp; ARTICULATION APPROPRIATE TO THE AUDIENCE &amp; OCCASION</td>
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<tr>
<td>Competency Eight: USES PHYSICAL BEHAVIORS THAT SUPPORT THE VERBAL MESSAGE</td>
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**General Comments:** 
**Summative Scores of Eight Competencies:**

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Appendix 2

Criteria for Assessment of the Eight Competencies: The Competent Speaker Evaluation Form

V. EIGHT PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETENCIES AND CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

Competency One

CHOSE AND NARROW A TOPIC APPROPRIATELY FOR THE AUDIENCE & OCCASION.

EXEMPLARY
The speaker presents a topic and a thesis that are exceptionally appropriate for the purpose, time constraints, and audience.

SATISFACTORY
The speaker presents a topic and a thesis that are appropriate for the purpose, time constraints, and audience.

UNSATISFACTORY
The speaker presents a topic and a thesis that are not appropriate for the purpose, time constraints, and audience.

The Competent Speaker Speech Evaluation Form

Competency Two

COMMUNICATE THE THEORETICAL PURPOSE IN A MANNER APPROPRIATE FOR THE AUDIENCE & OCCASION.

EXEMPLARY
The speaker communicates a thesis-specific purpose that is exceptionally clear and identifiable.

SATISFACTORY
The speaker communicates a thesis-specific purpose that is adequately clear and identifiable.

UNSATISFACTORY
The speaker does not communicate a clear and identifiable thesis-specific purpose.

The Competent Speaker Speech Evaluation Form

Competency Three

PRESENT MATERIAL SUPPORTING MATERIAL, INCLUDING ELECTRONIC AND NON-ELECTRONIC PRESENTATIONAL AIDS APPROPRIATE TO THE AUDIENCE & OCCASION.

EXEMPLARY
The speaker uses supporting material that is exceptional in quality and variety.

SATISFACTORY
The speaker uses supporting material that is appropriate in quality and variety.

UNSATISFACTORY
The speaker uses supporting material that is inappropriate in quality and variety.

The Competent Speaker Speech Evaluation Form

Competency Four

USES AN ORGANIZATIONAL PATTERN APPROPRIATE TO THE TOPIC, AUDIENCE, OCCASION, & PURPOSE.

EXEMPLARY
The speaker uses an exceptional introduction and conclusion and provides an exceptionally clear and logical progression within and between ideas.

SATISFACTORY
The speaker uses an appropriate introduction and conclusion and provides a reasonably clear and logical progression within and between ideas.

UNSATISFACTORY
The speaker fails to use an introduction or conclusion and fails to provide a reasonably clear and logical progression within and among ideas.

The Competent Speaker Speech Evaluation Form

Competency Five

USES LANGUAGE APPROPRIATE TO THE AUDIENCE & OCCASION.

EXEMPLARY
The speaker uses language that is exceptionally clear, vivid, and appropriate.

SATISFACTORY
The speaker uses language that is reasonably clear, vivid, and appropriate.

UNSATISFACTORY
The speaker uses unclear or inappropriate language.

The Competent Speaker Speech Evaluation Form

Competency Six

USES VOCAL VARIETY IN RATE, PITCH, AND INTENSITY (VOLUME) TO HEIGHTEN AND MAINTAIN INTEREST APPROPRIATE TO THE AUDIENCE & OCCASION.

EXEMPLARY
The speaker makes exceptional use of vocal variety in a conversational mode.

SATISFACTORY
The speaker makes acceptable use of vocal variety in a conversational mode.

UNSATISFACTORY
The speaker fails to use vocal variety and falls in a conversational mode.

The Competent Speaker Speech Evaluation Form

Competency Seven

USES PRONUNCIATION, GRAMMAR, AND ARTICULATION APPROPRIATE TO THE AUDIENCE & OCCASION.

EXEMPLARY
The speaker has exceptional articulation, pronunciation, and grammar.

SATISFACTORY
The speaker has acceptable articulation, with few pronunciation or grammatical errors.

UNSATISFACTORY
The speaker fails to use acceptable articulation, pronunciation, and grammar.

The Competent Speaker Speech Evaluation Form

Competency Eight

USES PHYSICAL BEHAVIORS THAT SUPPORT THE VERBAL MESSAGE.

EXEMPLARY
The speaker demonstrates exceptional posture, gestures, bodily movement, facial expressions, eye contact, and use of dress.

SATISFACTORY
The speaker demonstrates acceptable posture, gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, and use of dress.

UNSATISFACTORY
The speaker fails to use acceptable posture, gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, and use of dress.

The Competent Speaker Speech Evaluation Form

Appendix 3

Reliability, Validity and Bias Testing Report: The Competent Speaker Evaluation Form

APPENDIX C

RELIABILITY, VALIDITY, AND BIAS TESTING

Traditional Analysis

The following section describes the testing processes from the original study using traditional statistical analyses to determine the reliability and validity of the Competent Speaker Evaluation Form. Further investigation for this second edition then is reported in the Rasch Analysis section that follows.

Development of a Testing Videotape

In order to test the reliability and validity of the Competent Speaker Evaluation Form and criteria, a videotape was developed with student speeches in a small classroom environment at Middlesex University. The student speeches were informative presentations lasting approximately five minutes in duration. A group of six Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) selected approximately 40 videotaped classroom speeches from the previous semester’s presentations. Utilizing the form and criteria, the GTAs rated these speeches as either unsatisfactory, satisfactory, or excellent. From this initial pool of 40, the public speaking course director and one of the GTAs selected 12 student speeches, four at each level of competency. These 12 speeches were then divided into two sets of 6 speeches per level of competency. Each set of 6 speeches was scored by a different evaluator.

Scoring of Speeches

Speeches were scored based on the Competent Speaker Evaluation Form and criteria developed by Morreale et al. (2007). The form is divided into two sections: the Competent Speaker and the Non-Competent Speaker. The Competent Speaker section includes criteria such as voice quality, clarity, and coherence. The Non-Competent Speaker section includes criteria such as examples and illustrations, participation, and delivery.

Reliability

The 12 raters were speech communication professionals teaching at colleges and universities in the U.S. Nine of the raters held a Ph.D. or equivalent, while three of the raters held master's degrees. The raters' experience in teaching ranged from 4 years to 25 years as estimated by the date of receipt of the raters' terminal degrees. Raters were eight females and four males, eleven of whom were Anglo and one Hispanic.

Raters received a packet containing instructions for scoring the Competent Speaker Evaluation Form and criteria. The raters were provided with the 12 student speeches to review and rate. Each rater was given a set of 12 speeches to score. The speeches were randomized and scored by each rater using the Competent Speaker Evaluation Form and criteria.

Validity

In addition to reliability testing of the Competent Speaker form, the instrument and its criteria currently meet societal or face validity. That validity can be argued based on the extensive literature review conducted during the process of development of the instrument by the 11 member subcommittee of the NCA Committee on Assessment and Testing (see Appendices A and B of this manual).

Also regarding the validity of the instrument, several studies involving convergent validity have been conducted. First, a correlation of scores on the public speaking portion of the Perceptual Report of Communication Apprehension (Mehrzadi, 1970) and scores derived using the Competent Speaker form in an introductory speech class indicated inverse directional convergent validity. That is, as speech scores using the Competent Speaker form increased, scores on the public speaking items of the PRCA decreased. Second, a correlation of scores on the seven public speaking items of the Communication Competency Assessment Instrument (Rubin, 1982), derived from entrance and exit interviews with students in an introductory speech class, were correlated with the Competent Speaker scores from the same class. Positive directional convergent validity for the two instruments was indicated; scores on speeches, rated using the Competent Speaker form, were positively correlated with the public speaking items of the CCII for the same class.

Cultural Diversity

In addition to the Competent Speaker Evaluation Form and criteria underlying reliability and validity sampling, several other tests used the form in regard to ethnic and gender bias. One study compared the 12 speech communication professionals’ ratings of 12 speeches to the ratings of the same speeches by a sample of 28 minority students using the speech evaluation form. An inter-rater reliability test of the minority students as a group generated a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of .76. When combined with the 12 speech communication professionals, the coefficient remained .76. In another 2-proposition diversity study, actual speech evaluations in the classroom (N=250) were examined both by ethnicity and by gender. An analysis of variance, no significant difference was found in the ratings of speech of white (mo=86.46), Black (mo=82.92), Hispanic (mo=85.25), and Asian (85.33) students (F=16). Exceptionally, there was no significant difference in speech scores of ethnic females (mo=86.47) or male (mo=85.70) students using the speech evaluation form (F=.41).

Normative Data

Although normative data are provided for training purposes with the videotaped anchor speeches, the Competent Speaker Evaluation Form and criteria are intended for use by instructors who want to include speech evaluation in their course. The ratings for the speech evaluation form are listed in Table 1 and reflect the average score received by the anchor speeches.

Conclusions of Traditional Analysis

Initial and subsequent testing of the Competent Speaker Evaluation Form indicates that the instrument is psychometrically sound in terms of reliability and validity.

As described in the following section, larger and more diverse pools of raters and greater diversity of student populations are evaluated for this edition of the Competent Speaker Evaluation Form. These studies are found in the forthcoming original results.

Rasch Analysis

A second analysis was performed to evaluate the reliability and validity of the instrument. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 2. The Rasch model provides a measure of the difficulty of the items and the ability of the raters. The results of the analysis were consistent with the original results.

Appendix 4

Appreciative Inquiry Session Guide

I. PRE-SESSION

Part 1. Topic Statement Exercise

Discuss the following questions. Feel free to share your insights with the group.
1. What topic/concept in Speech and Oral Communication do you wish to focus on in our upcoming sessions?
   • What positive element are you looking to develop in this course?
   • How do you think we can achieve this together?

Part 2. Strength-building Exercise

Follow these instructions:
1. Describe an event in your life where you were asked to speak up and you felt good about it.
2. Then each group member will tell the person two or three strengths you must have/have used to achieve it.
3. Choose one strength (from among those mentioned by others) which you liked best.
4. Then, when all members are ready, they will have to go around and tell each one “I am _____!” (mentioning the strength that the person liked most). Make sure that you say this convincingly, with a positive tone, owning the strength.

II. SESSION PROPER

Fulfil the following tasks per session. The time frame indicated on each one is not strict. You may extend as you wish, giving each member of the group a chance to speak.

A. Discover

Student Task

I. Reflect on and answer the following questions. Feel free to share your insights within the group.
   1. Recall a time when you felt most alive, most involved, or most excited about your involvement in presenting or performing in front of an audience in English. Share this experience to the group. Who was/were involved? Describe the event in detail.
   2. What skills and strengths did you use to achieve them? What made it an exciting experience? What made it valuable and memorable to you?
   3. What are the things you value deeply about your pronunciation and grammar skills?
   4. If you had three wishes for your pronunciation and grammar skills, what would they be?

II. Present your answers to the group.

(Note to the teacher: Ask broad questions to “tap into the students’ hidden motivation and values.” Moderate the flow of conversation among the members of the class, making sure everyone gets a turn in sharing. Elicit as much positive responses as you can. Other possible follow-up questions).

B. Dream

Student Task

I. Reflect on what you have shared in the previous session and answer the following questions:
   - What are your personal strengths/strong suit? What things are you good at? What are your best qualities? Your assets?
   - What areas in oral communication do you perform well in?
   - What do you think is your core life-giving factor or value?
   - What do you think is the core life-giving value of your school community? What is it that, if it did not exist, would make your school totally different than it currently is?

II. Present your answers to the group. Feel free to exchange insights and validating comments.

Student Task 2: “A Journey to the Future”

I. Reflect on the following: It is 2030. You have been done with school for ten years. When you return, you see that many of your dreams for your school have been realized. As you visit your former school,
   - What do you see?
   - What are people talking about?
   - Who are the decision-makers? What are the achievements?
   - What has pleased you most about what you have seen and heard?

II. Present your answers to the group. Feel free to exchange insights and validating comments.

Teacher’s Task: Facilitate the peer/group discussion

C. Design

Student Task

I. Reflect and answer the following questions:
   - What specific goals can you achieve by the end of the 2021?
   - What vision do you have for your oral communication skills improvement?
   - What actions do you plan on taking to fulfill these improvement goals?
II. Draft an action plan with specific steps for the goals you have identified in the first step. Note the following:
- Write down the steps you truly believe you can accomplish and help you achieve the goals you set. Be as specific with each one as possible. Refer to the table format below:

III. Share the steps you wrote down with your co-participants and acknowledge the good points of each one.

Teacher Task: Aid in breaking down the action plan/goals into smaller steps to make them more manageable

III. Destiny
Student Task: Follow through your action plan all throughout the year. Finish what you planned on starting.
1. What steps will be taken to sustain the success of achieving the goals?
2. Share with the group the steps you wrote down and acknowledge the good points of each one. Refer to the table format below:

Teacher Task: Follow up with the students in subsequent classes to acknowledge accomplishments. Encourage positive reinforcement and recognition among the participants during this stage. Let the students recognize each other’s progress, no matter how small it is.
Appendix 5

Observation Guide for Oral Communication Skills Assessment Test

I. Verbal cues to look out for:

A. Content: Was the speaker able to introduce, explain and reiterate the important details of the text immediately or did he/she ramble and beat around the bush? Was the speaker confident about the organizational pattern of his demo?

B. Language: Did the speaker look comfortable with the language used? Was the grammar flawless? Did he/she hesitate at one or several points in terms of grammar, pronunciation and articulation?

C. Technique: Was the introduction creatively and confidently presented? Was the speaker able to catch the audience’s attention in good way? Was the speaker able to put emphasis on the most essential parts?

D. Delivery: Did the speaker hesitate and buckle at some point in the introduction? Was the nervousness apparent? Was there vocal variety in pitch, tone, intensity and rate, or was the speaker monotonous?

II. Non-verbal cues to look out for:

A. Posture: How was the speaker’s stance? Did he/she look smart and prepared or slacking and unconfident at first glance?

B. Eye contact: Was the speaker looking at the camera directly as though looking at the audience more often than not?

C. Sharpness/firmness: Were the hand gestures consistently snappy and sure or awkward?

D. Movements: Were there distracting mannerisms shown throughout the demo? Was the speaker pacing, dancing, excessive moving at some point?

E. Facial expression: Were the facial expressions appropriate for the kind of delivery performed? Were they appropriate for the material/topic? Was there a variety of expressions that made the demo interesting?

III. Over-all style and confidence: Did the speaker look confident in the demo? How much of the time was he/she confident? below 50%, 50-60%, 70-90% or 100% of the time? What was his/her unique style?
Appendix 6

Interview Questions for Post-Intervention Phase

1. What was it like to open up in front of your peers?
2. How did you feel when you were asked to talk about your strengths and not your problems? Did anything hold you back; if yes, what were those things?
3. What approach were you used to dealing with when you need to address a room for improvement? How was it different from the AI approach?
4. What lesson/s did you get from AI?
5. Do you think AI is an effective approach to be used in education? Would you use it when you become a teacher yourself? Why or why not?
6. In what other ways would you use the AI approach?
7. Do you think AI is a viable/plausible approach or is a theory too good to be true?
8. What did you find negative/wrong about AI?
9. Overall, did AI help you improve your oral comm skills? How so?

Additional probing questions:
1. What did you appreciate about the workshop series? What were its best aspects for you?
2. What would the workshop series have been like in an ideal world where it would be done face to face and not virtually?
3. What practical changes could we make to the workshop to make it better?
4. How have you been using the Appreciative Inquiry methods you learned on the workshop? What are you doing differently now?
5. Would you recommend the workshop series to others? Why or why not?
6. If you were to write a short testimonial about the Appreciative Inquiry Workshop Series? What would you say?
Appendix 7

Sample Action Plan Output from Student Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Desired Result</th>
<th>Action Needed</th>
<th>Resource</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-improvement in my grammar &amp; vocab. skills</td>
<td>-read &amp; watch -YoutTube, e-book</td>
<td>Vids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Time needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-phone, internet</td>
<td>-I will be the one responsible in doing</td>
<td>Jan. 24 - Oct/10/23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>Skills needed</td>
<td>Valuer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-comprehension skills</td>
<td>-Committed</td>
<td>&amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-consistency</td>
<td>-perserverence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal skills</td>
<td>-perserverence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Activity Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Desired Result</th>
<th>Action Needed</th>
<th>Resource</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-Reading articles &amp; resources</td>
<td>-Read books -Search web -Join online study groups</td>
<td>Library -Internet -classmates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Improve writing skills</td>
<td>-Join writing classes -Join writing groups -Write daily</td>
<td>Classmates -Writing groups -Writing prompts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Improve speaking skills</td>
<td>-Practice speaking with a partner -Join speaking clubs</td>
<td>Partner -Speaking clubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Improve listening skills</td>
<td>-Listen to podcasts -Watch movies</td>
<td>Podcasts -Movies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responsibility:
- I am responsible for completing all tasks.
Appendix 8
Actual Scored Rubric Sample from the Pre-Intervention Assessment