
Research Article

Elevate Your English: A Public Speaking and Leadership Program for Grade 11 Students in Balayang High School

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ABSTRACT

Filipinos are proficient English speakers due to historical influences and a collectivist society, yet English skills are declining among younger generations, especially post-COVID-19. To improve competitiveness, the Department of Education focuses on enhancing communication skills in Senior High School (SHS). However, many SHS graduates lack confidence in their employability, citing insufficient preparation and soft skills. The intervention "Elevate Your English," a modified Toastmasters-based program, aimed to improve public speaking skills in Grade 11 students at Balayang High School. Conducted over seven sessions, it included lectures, role assignments, and evaluations. The teacher-researcher, drawing from corporate experience, saw potential in integrating this approach in public schools. The intervention included measuring first the anxiety levels using a modified PSCAS and evaluating performance with a Speech Evaluation Form from Toastmasters. After the program, perceptions were collected via a Likert-scale Satisfaction Questionnaire and validated through interviews, focusing on language improvement, public speaking, and overall program evaluation. As a result, the program significantly enhanced students' abilities. The findings suggested that consistent exposure to English-speaking activities reduces fear and boosts proficiency. The study recommended continued research, support for teachers, and integrating public speaking activities into lessons, including using virtual platforms, to further develop students' skills for academic and professional success.

Keywords: *English proficiency, public speaking skills, toastmasters-based intervention, senior high school students, communication skills development, speaking anxiety reduction*

Introduction

Filipinos are among the largest populations of English speakers in the world. It is believed to stem from the history of colonizers and their influences on our cultures. The pride that Filipinos feel when speaking the English

language is also a result of the society being a collectivist one. A prime example of this is the extent of friendly welcome that a common Filipino offers to various foreigners around the crowded streets of Manila, the nation's capital,

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as captured by video bloggers, or *vloggers* in modern parlance.

While Filipinos continue to be skilled conversationalists, feedback is still not favorable for business and the academe. A gradual deterioration of the English level has been noticeable among the next generation of young people, studies show. This increased at an alarming rate as the students resumed their in-person lessons as the positive cases of COVID-19 declined and their abilities were assessed through participation in communication-intensive activities.

Hence, to further improve their level of competitiveness, the Department of Education, having an absolute aim of honing 21st-century skills has been exposing Senior High School (SHS) students to subjects that have in-demand competencies at the international standards level which include, but are not limited to, effective communication abilities. The skills are to be refined in the subjects: Oral Communication, Media and Information Literacy, Languages, Reading and Writing, and Empowerment Technologies. The goal is to establish a solid foundation which they can use after their graduation.

In a labor market survey conducted by the Philippine Institute of Development Studies (PIDS) in 2020, it has been found that more than 70% of SHS graduates still choose to carry on with a higher level of education instead of entering the labor force (and/or putting up their businesses). Research revealed that there is mixed reluctance on the side of the labor market and the SHS graduates, but interestingly providing a shared ground: Having a low confidence level in employability due to the same worries about insufficient preparations, technical capabilities, behavioral abilities, and even professional soft skills (Orbeta and Potestad, 2020).

It was defined in the study by Fajaryati et al. (2020) that one of the most important non-cognitive skills that employers need and should be implemented as employability skills in schools is communication. According to Robert Anderson, a communication professor at Simon Fraser University, "Communication is an interchange of opinions, information and thoughts through speech, writing or signs." The

common misconception of having good communication skills is not in the fluency of a language but in how effective the information is conveyed during the delivery or conversation (Pervez, 2014). The focus and consciousness on diction, pronunciation, grammar, and accents have made it even harder for non-native English students to demonstrate their speaking abilities, which has led to larger issues such as glossophobia, or the fear of public speaking.

Several factors are responsible for this apprehension of SHS students in English Communication. In the study of Eslit and Bangelisan (2018), gender and parents' highest educational attainment are contributors to the English Competence of the students. While according to Rahayu (2015) and Aranda (2022), previous negative experiences and minimum opportunities have driven anxiety during public speaking classes.

Free short and long courses are digitally offered to help in enhancing public speaking skills. TED-Talks, a program initiated by TED Conferences, LLC, which revolves around international video talks, is now being integrated into some classroom lessons. They even invite brilliant young people to speak and inspire. Some of the schools in the United States and Europe have begun cultivating this skill by partnering with non-profit organizations. For example, Rossmoyne Senior High School in Australia has initiated a Public Speaking Program designed specifically for Teen Home-schoolers and named it "the Gavel Club", as inspired by Toastmasters International, a world-renowned nonprofit educational organization that strongly encourages public speaking and leadership.

Toastmasters International's advocacy has expanded to a Youth Leadership Program (YLP) which helps the younger generation undertake speech training in preparation for their future careers. With younger club members all over the world, access to their events has been made easier through the internet and social media. As of October 2022, the Philippines has already more than 240 clubs and is actively growing to create a secure environment for learning and development in the field of Public Speaking. However, as the adage goes, "There is no such thing as free lunch", the

membership, which includes all of their manuals, educational materials, and the prestige to be part of the community, costs P3,800.00 for the first six months of registration. Even if the promotion would do nothing but merit, the price is not doable for learners in local public schools, particularly in rural and remote areas.

Based on the data gathered from the School Year 2022-2023 pre-test results of the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) Assessment in order to measure reading performance, it has been discovered that among the 160 Senior High School Students in Balayang High School, there are 15 readers that are categorized as Below Standards/ Frustration Readers. These learners were then identified as all belonging to the General Academic Strand (GAS). Numerous research has been conducted that proves a strong relationship between reading and speaking skills, thus it is imperative that students be exposed to speaking programs as well.

As a former participant of the program and an educator in Senior High School, the potential of the proposed intervention has piqued the interest of the researcher as there has been no effort made to have this approach be applied locally in simulating English Communication within the four corners of the classroom. The Grade 11 students were chosen by the researcher because, according to the current curriculum, they have had the most exposure to subjects that improve their ability to communicate and present, as the succeeding year places greater emphasis on the integration of their competencies. This is in addition to the Phil-IRI pre-test results for SHS students. Hence, the study attempted to evaluate the effectiveness of a modified Toastmasters-based Program titled, "Elevate Your English" as intervention in cultivating Public Speaking among Grade 11 learners in Balayang High School in Victoria, a first-class Municipality in Tarlac Province.

Research Question

The study aimed to assess the effectiveness of using an intervention in improving the Public English-Speaking Skills of Grade 11 learners in Balayang High School

Specifically, the study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. How may the level of Public English-Speaking Skills of Grade 11 learners in pre- and post-administration of the intervention be described?
2. Is there a significant difference between the level of Public English-Speaking Skills of the Grade 11 learners in pre- and post-administration of the intervention?
3. What are the perceptions of the Grade 11 learners towards the use of intervention in improving their Public English-Speaking skills?

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference between the level of Public English-Speaking Skills of the Grade 11 learners in pre- and post-administration of the intervention.

Methodology

The study aimed to assess the Toastmasters-based program in improving the Public English-Speaking and leadership Skills of Grade 11 learners in Balayang High School entitled "Elevate Your English". This section included the methodologies, data collection methods and procedures and the estimated costs of the study.

Type of Research

This study used mixed method, both quantitative and qualitative research methodology. This method was used to assess the effectiveness of using a modified Toastmasters-based Program titled, "Elevate Your English", in improving the public English-Speaking Skills of Grade 11 learners. A quantitative method was employed using Descriptive-comparative Research Design and Pre-experimental One Group Pretest-Posttest Design to describe the level of public English-speaking skills through the pretest and posttest and to determine the significant difference between the level of public English-Speaking Skills of the Grade 11 learners. Qualitative research via Focus Group Discussion (FGD) approach was used by the teacher-researcher in gathering the perceptions of the learners after the administration of the modified Toastmasters-based Program.

Participants

The subjects of this research met the following criteria prior to the conduct of the study: A bonafide enrolled Grade 11 student of Balayang High School during the First Semester of the School Year 2023-2024. The Grade 11 learner was enrolled in General Academic Strand (GAS). Lastly, the learner was enrolled in the course of teacher-researcher under the subject: Research in Daily Life or Practical Research 1. There are 13 female and 12 male learners who participated in this action research.

Sampling Method

The study aimed to assess the Toastmasters-based program in improving the Public English-Speaking and leadership Skills of Grade 11 learners in Balayang High School entitled "Elevate Your English". In order to assess the intervention, the level of Public English-Speaking skills of the students were measured pre- and post-administration. The population comprises the GAS learners enrolled under the subject, Practical Research 1. The subjects of the research, GAS learners, were selected primarily based on the results in the most recent pre-test from Phil-IRI which reflected that 15 readers are categorized as Below Standards/Frustration Readers and these learners were identified as all belonging to the said strand. Various research across academia has been conducted that proves a strong relationship between reading and speaking skills, thus it is imperative that students be exposed to speaking programs as well. Purposive Sampling was utilized in order to gain more understanding with this concern faced by the learners. Total enumeration method was selected for more accurate and precise data in understanding the entire population. Moreover, the subject or course, 'Research in Daily Life or Practical Research 1' requires interpretation, report and presentation of the drafted paper. Hence, it is relevant for these students to be equipped with sufficient Public English-Speaking Skills to confidently report the study.

Intervention

The intervention was a modified Toastmasters-based Program, Elevate Your English, in improving the Public English-Speaking Skills of the Grade 11 learners in Balayang High

School during the Second Semester, School Year 2023-2024. The teacher-researcher found the potential of integrating this Approach in the classroom as a former participant of the program in an experience from the corporate industry. The opportunity was realized by the teacher-researcher as a response to the perceived initial impressions of the students' proficiency during the presentation of their research works in the First Semester of the School Year 2022-2023. Moreover, the program has been found to not yet been utilized as an intervention in a Public-School set-up in the country to assess improvement of learners' Public English-Speaking Skills.

Toastmasters International is a world renowned non-profit educational organization that focuses mainly on boosting one's confidence by being proponent on utilizing strategies of Public Speaking and Leadership Trainings. Their programs has expanded towards the younger generation in their Youth Leadership Programs that were adapted by various clubs all over the world. Their impacts have been widely known that they continuously spread out in various places around the globe, including the Philippines.

The intervention was steered in seven (7) sessions, Wednesday of every week during the last hour of their Practical Research 1 class schedule. The first four sessions included lectures and activities that has served as training before the actual performance. A student's handbook was provided for each participant that includes various role, group and individual activities are included based on El-Sayed (2017) handbook of activities. A trainer's manual was made available as a guide for the conduction of the intervention, which is also referenced and modified from the same author. Assignments of roles was given on the fourth day, including Table Topic Speakers which required impromptu speaking. Each of the participants were given scripts and forms as specified below to practice on and to serve as their guidance in executing the roles:

1. Toastmaster of the Day – Script
2. Process Flow Assistant – Script + Process Flow Assistant Guide
3. Timekeeper – Script + Timekeeper Log
4. Photographer – Script + Photographer Log

5. Ah-Counter – Script + Ah-Counter Log
6. Wordsmith – Script + Wordsmith Checklist
7. Table Topics Master – Script + Table Topics Master Checklist

Subsequently, the same approach were done in the following last three sessions. Students have rotated on their roles within the last three-day timeframe through draw lots. The last three sessions covered the actual Toastmasters Meetings that required the teacher-researcher to evaluate the intervention. Specific steps taken and the evaluations made for the intervention are provided in the Appendices section of this study

Instruments

The intervention used to improve the Public English-Speaking skills of the subjects' study. Students were asked to fill out a modified Public Speaking Class Anxiety Scale (PSCAS) adapted from Yaikhong & Usaha (2012) to measure their level of anxiety in speaking English before the intervention. The performance in the pre- and post-administration of the study's subjects were collected through a modified Speech Evaluation Form from the generic evaluation resource from Toastmasters International. The following criteria were listed in the Evaluation Form for the teacher/facilitator to fill out based on the presenters' performance: Clarity, Vocal Variety, Eye Contact, Gestures, Audience Awareness, Comfort Level, Interest (Engagement with the Audience), and Well Supported (Relatedness with the Topic). Also, the perceptions after the administration of the approach were collected first through a Likert-Scale type of questionnaire adapted and modified from Satisfaction Questionnaire by El-Sayed (2017), attached in Appendix A, and students were asked to fill this out anonymously. This Satisfaction Questionnaire gauged their perceptions after the intervention and required responses ranging from 1 (Strongly Agree) to 5 (Strongly Disagree) and includes 22-item statements. The specified statements were categorized: (1) English Language improvement, (2) Public Speaking Improvement, (3) Affective and Social perspective, and the (4) Overall Evaluation of the Program.

For the purpose of response validation, interview questions were asked to the learners during the Focus Group Discussion (FGDs). These data on their perceptions were tabulated and discussed thematically.

Data Collection Procedure

A communication letter was cascaded to the school head of Balayang High School at the time of the study, asking for permission to conduct the research among the Grade 11- GAS students of Balayang High School. Also, the parents of the pupils were given consent and assent forms to complete as proof of compliance and willingness to have their children partake as study participants.

Students were asked to fill out a modified Public Speaking Class Anxiety Scale (PSCAS) adapted from Yaikhong & Usaha (2012) to measure the level of anxiety in speaking English prior to the intervention. An Evaluation Form was used in the pre-administration of the intervention to gauge the current level of the subjects' performance. The Speech Evaluation form to be used is attached in Appendix A. They were invited to speak about a certain topic assigned by the teacher-facilitator for two minutes.

A brief introduction of the roles and responsibilities was initiated for the first session of the intervention. The first four sessions include lectures and activities that served as training before the actual performance. Assignments of roles were given on the fourth day, including Table Topic Speakers which required impromptu speaking. Subsequently, the same approach was done in the following last three sessions.

Each learner is asked to voluntarily participate in the activity. The subjects performed the procedures as specified in the intervention as guided by the teacher-facilitator. The intervention has only steered in seven (7) sessions, Wednesday of every week during the last hour of their Practical Research 1 class schedule. The last three sessions covered the actual Toastmasters Meetings that required the teacher-researcher to evaluate the intervention. A separate Speech Evaluation Form with the same set of criteria (attached in Appendix A) was utilized in the post-administration to

assess changes in the level of their Public Speaking Skills. A Likert-Scale type of questionnaire was provided, adapted from Satisfaction Questionnaire by El-Sayed (2017), attached in Appendix A. Students shared their experiences and ideas after the administration of the approach. FGD was also conducted with selected students to validate their responses.

Data Analysis

The following statistical treatment were employed in this study: For research question no. 1, weighted mean was used to describe the level of public English-Speaking Skills of the learners in terms of Clarity, Vocal Variety, Eye Contact, Gestures, Audience Awareness, Comfort Level, Interest (Engagement with the Audience), and Well Supported (Relatedness with the Topic).

For research question no. 2, Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test was used to compare the level of Public English-Speaking Skills of the learners.

For research question no. 3, analysis of the qualitative findings from the FGD were made through thematic analysis.

Results and Discussion

This portion presents the results of the study and discusses the meaning of the data gathered from the questionnaires. In order to further analyze and validate the results, interviews were conducted after the administration of the intervention.

In order to gauge the skill level of students with their Public English-Speaking, a modified speech evaluation form was used by the teacher-researcher pre- and post- administration of the intervention. This was referenced from the generic evaluation resource from Toastmasters International. The following criteria were listed in the Evaluation Form and was used to evaluate based on the presenters' performance: Clarity, Vocal Variety, Eye Contact, Gestures, Audience Awareness, Comfort Level, Interest (Engagement with the

Audience), and Well Supported (Relatedness with the Topic). The results of the pre- and post- administration assessment of the participants' speeches was presented in Table 3. Further discussion and analysis were also provided.

As reflected in Table 3, participants were seen to have significantly improved in terms of their English communication and presentation skills. While almost half of the participants were seen to still be "Developing" in terms of their competency in their demonstration skills, they have seen to have progressed in their over-all stances after the intervention has been administered. As observed, these learners were priorly not been able to exude the confidence as they deliver the speeches in front of their classmates. Eye contacts were never made and there were no gestures or hand movements (not a mandated but recommended). Also, there were more mumbling of the words rather than pronouncing. Likewise, their vocabulary was limited to simple description of words rather than context and structures.

Public English Speaking Skills of Grade 11 Learners

After the administration of the intervention, the learners were able to utilize the various techniques such as basic fillers and hand movements, including stature. They were also able to come up with more vocabulary in their speeches which they have never used in the duration of the trainings.

Moreover, there were four students who did an exemplary job in accomplishing the competency of Public-Speaking after being subjected to the intervention. As they have been provided feedback after each speech, they were able reflect and apply them in the next sessions for the roles they were subsequently held throughout the meetings.

In order to further examine this data, Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test has been used and presented in the following table.

Table 3.

Public English-Speaking Skills of Grade 11 Learners in Pre and Post Administration of the Intervention

LEVEL OF SKILLS	FREQUENCY		PERCENTAGE (%)	
	PRE	POST	PRE	POST
Exemplary	0	4	0	16
Excels	5	5	20	20
Accomplished	1	13	4	52
Emerging	9	3	36	12
Developing	10	0	40	0
Total	25	25	100	100

Note. Legend: 1 – 1.8= Developing; 1.81 – 2.60 = Emerging; 2.61 – 3.40 = Accomplished; 3.41 – 4.20 = Excels; 4.21 – 5.00 = Exemplary

Significant Difference between the Level of Public English-Speaking Skills of the Grade 11 Learners in Pre- and Post-administration of the Intervention

Table 4 presents the results which shows the significant difference in the level of public

English Speaking skills of the Grade 11 learners in pre and post administration of the intervention. It shows that the scores of the learners from the assessment have a mean difference of -1.25, which indicates that the post-test has higher mean than the pretest.

Table 4.

Significant Difference between the Level of Public English-Speaking Skills of the Grade 11 Learners in Pre- and Post-administration of the Intervention

	Mean Difference	Sig. Level	p-value	Remarks
Pretest	-1.25	0.01	<0.001	Highly Significant
Post Test				

Note. *p < .05. **p < .01.

Based on Table 4, the null hypothesis is rejected since the computed p-value is <0.001 which is less than 0.01 level of significance. It can be inferred that there is a significant difference between the level of public English – Speaking skills of the Grade 11 learners before and after the use of the intervention.

While the results prior of the administration was notably low, the data collected post-administration appeared to have increased which suggested that after an analysis of the data, this leads that there is strong evidence supporting the improvement of the Public English-Speaking skills of Grade 11 learners as a result of the intervention administration.

This outcome is backed-up by Aranda (2022) in terms of the lack of opportunity of learners in practicing their English Verbal Communication. Though they seek exposure for practical applications in their daily lives, the absence of a chance in training communication skills makes the students withhold themselves from improving further.

For triangulation purpose, the views of the Grade 11 learners were also gathered and was presented in Table 6.

This study's results on the perceptions of the learners in using the intervention presented three themes: Confidence Level, Learning Opportunity and Fear and Anxiety.

Table 5.

Themes generated from the Perceptions gathered through FGD

Perceptions based on Themes	Description
Fear and Anxiety	Students usually experience fear and anxiety when faced with being asked to express themselves in front of a public audience. This typically can stem from various reasons such as the fear of being judged/laughed at, performance anxiety, or even concerns about making mistakes.
Confidence Level	Overcoming the fear of public speaking can lead to increased confidence. As students gain experience and improve their speaking skills, they often discover a newfound sense of self-assurance that enable them to withstand the fear of speaking in front of an audience.
Learning Opportunity	Toastmasters Club Meeting is often viewed as a valuable learning opportunity in Public Speaking. Whether through constructive feedback or personal reflection, each speaking engagement provides a chance for improvement.

Perceptions of the Grade 11 Learners in using the Intervention in Improving their Public English- Speaking Skills

In order to further analyze the perceptions of the Grade 11 students after the administration of the Intervention, the following data are

gathered through FGD, and are consolidated through thematic analysis. There are 10 students asked and are named as Respondents A- J for anonymity and confidentiality purposes.

Table 6.

Perceptions of the Grade 11 Learners in using the Intervention in Improving their Public English-Speaking Skills

Respondent	Statement	Theme
Respondent A	“...nadagdagan po ako ng confidence sa sarili ko. May mga techniques po akong nakuha kung paano ko iimprove yung speaking ko infront of the public...” [...I gained confidence in myself. I acquired techniques on how to improve my public speaking...]	Confidence Level
Respondent B	“Hindi po ako aware na maraming ways pala para maexpress mo ang sarili sa public. First kong narealize is yung paggamit po ng more vocabulary. Ever since po, talagang mahina ako sa English. Kapag po Tagalog, confident po ako magvoice out. Sa English po, kahit alam ko yung words sa Tagalog, sa translation po ako na-iistuck up kasi ginagawa ko pong literal yung mga sinasabi ko.” [I wasn't aware that there are many ways to express oneself in public. The first thing I realized is the use of more vocabulary. I've always been weak in English. When speaking in Tagalog, I am confident in voicing out. In English, even if I know the words in Tagalog, I get stuck because I tend to do literal translations of what I'm saying.]	Learning Opportunity

Respondent C	<i>"Ayoko po kasing nagsasalita sa harap kasi natatakot po ako magkamali pero narealize ko na lahat kami pareparehas ng reasons -ayun ay para magimprove kaya tumagal din po ako hanggang end. Marami pong natutunan hanggang dulo po."</i> [I don't like speaking in front because I'm afraid of making mistakes, but I realized that we all have the same reasons - that is to improve. That's why I stayed until the end. I learned a lot until the end.]	Fear and Anxiety
Respondent D	<i>"...kinakabahan pa rin po ako pero yung mga natutunan ko po, mas pinadali kung paano magsalita in front of class. Kapag reporting po kasi nasanay ako na tumitingin sa notes pero dahil sa techniques na tinuro, mas nalaman ko na may way pala para hindi magkaroon ng dead air and at the same time hindi ako nagpapanic na hindi pakinggan."</i> [...I still feel nervous, but what I learned has made it easier for me to speak in front of the class. During reporting, I used to rely on looking at notes, but because of the techniques taught, I discovered that there is a way to avoid dead air and, at the same time, prevent myself from panicking if I'm not being listened to.]	Fear and Anxiety, Learning Opportunity
Respondent E	<i>"...Nagdagdagan po confidence ko and mas dumali yung pag-focus sa sinasabi. Nauunahan po kasi ako ng kaba every time na memental block ako sa mga sinasabi. Natuto rin ako na hindi mapadistract agad. Nawawala rin po kasi ako sa focus kapag may nandidistract sa akin kahit kaunting galaw lang po."</i> [...My confidence increased, and it became easier for me to focus on what I'm saying. I used to be overwhelmed by nervousness every time I had a mental block in my speech. I also learned not to get easily distracted. I used to lose focus when someone distracted me, even with just a slight movement.]	Confidence Level
Respondent F	<i>"...Sa confidence po. Marami po akong natutunan pero yung confidence ko yung nauna ko pong naisip. Dati kasi nanginginig ako sa kaba pero ngayon slight na lang. Saka may mga natutunan po ako na strategies na ginaya ko po sa mga classmates ko po."</i> [...Regarding confidence, I learned a lot, but it's my confidence that came to mind first. Before, I used to tremble with nervousness, but now it's just slight. I also learned some strategies that I copied from my classmates.]	Confidence Level
Respondent G	<i>"Feeling ko po mas dumali ang construction ko ng speech kahit maikli or mahaba kasi nagkaroon po ako ng pattern dahil sa training. Tapos yung mga classmates ko po, hindi tumatawa sa mga sinasabi, pinapalakpakan pa po after ng speech. nakakaboost po ng confidence lalo kung alam mong nakikinig sila sa mga sinasabi without any judgment kung mali ang bigkas sa simula."</i>	Confidence Level, Learning Opportunity, Fear and Anxiety

	[I feel that constructing my speech has become easier, whether it's short or long, because I developed a pattern through the training. Moreover, my classmates don't laugh at what I say; instead, they even applaud after the speech. It boosts my confidence, especially when I know they're listening without judgment if there are pronunciation mistakes at the beginning.]	
Respondent H	<i>"May mga strategies po na itinuro na hindi itinuturo as part ng lessons sa subjects kaya mas naexpand po yung knowledge namin sa speaking. Akala ko po kasi mahirap magsalita, may mga techniques lang po pala. Nagstart din po akong manood ng TEDTalks para mas maimprove pa yung skills ko."</i> [There are strategies taught that are not included in subject lessons, so our knowledge in speaking has expanded. I used to think that speaking is difficult, but it turns out there are just techniques. I also started watching TEDTalks to further improve my skills.]	Learning Opportunity
Respondent I	<i>"...Yung pagsasalita ko po sa harapan nagimprove kasi may live feedback po na binibigay. Dati kasi magsasalita ka lang tapos yung topic ang usapan and hindi po yung way kung paano magsalita. Nakakakaba pa rin po pero hindi na siya ganun katindi gaya noong simula."</i> [...My speaking in front has improved because there is live feedback being provided. Before, you would just speak, and the topic was discussed, not the way of speaking. It's still nerve-wracking, but it's not as intense as it was at the beginning.]	Fear and Anxiety
Respondent J	<i>"...Mas nagkaroon po ako ng more confidence in speaking dahil nagkaroon ako ng additional knowledge sa speaking. Malaking tulong po yung trainings na una kasi nagkaidea po ako kung paano magsalita nang hindi po nabubulol or nahihiya sa sasabihin."</i> [...I gained more confidence in speaking because I acquired additional knowledge in speaking. The initial training was a significant help because it gave me an idea of how to speak without stuttering or feeling embarrassed about what I'm going to say.]	Confidence Level

Note. The perceptions were gathered through FGD

When asked about their feelings after the program and how it can affect him/her with future endeavors in public speaking, Respondent I explained, *"Yung pagsasalita ko po sa harapan nagimprove kasi may live feedback po na binibigay. Dati kasi magsasalita ka lang tapos yung topic ang usapan and hindi po yung way kung paano magsalita. Nakakakaba pa rin po pero hindi na siya ganun katindi gaya noong simula.* [My speaking in front has improved because there is live feedback being provided. Before, you would just speak, and the topic was

discussed, not the way of speaking. It's still nerve-wracking, but it's not as intense as it was at the beginning.] This is supported with the idea by Goodman, L. and Green, A. (n.d.) where they mention that collaborative work will always lead to a stronger finished product – that is improved Public Speaking skills. The use of feedback from peers has always been effective as it is founded with the belief that no one is perfect, and everyone has room for improvement.

Respondent C also added, "*Sabi ko po noong una, one session lang kasi mukhang hindi ko po talaga kayang magsalita. Gusto ko lang itry po. Pero thankful ako na natapos ko kasi ngayon masasabi ko na kaya ko na po magsalita nang hindi masyadong kinakabahan. Ayoko po kasing nagsasalita sa harap kasi natatakot po ako magkamali pero narealize ko na lahat kami pareparehas ng reasons -ayun ay para magimprove kaya tumagal din po ako hanggang end. Marami pong natutunan hanggang dulo po.*" [I said initially that it would only be one session because it seemed like I really couldn't speak. I just wanted to try. But I'm thankful that I finished because now I can say that I can speak without being too nervous. I don't like speaking in front because I'm afraid of making mistakes, but I realized that we all have the same reasons - that is to improve. That's why I stayed until the end. I learned a lot until the end.]

On the other hand, some of the interviewees found themselves with boost in their confidence after the program. Respondents A, E, F, G, and J shared the same opinion. Respondent G, however, further described the experience that it was not the program which directly impacted the boost but the learners in the meeting was, "*Yung mga classmates ko po, hindi tumatawa sa mga sinasabi, instead pinapalakpakan pa po after ng speech. nakakaboost po ng confidence lalo kung alam mong nakikinig sila sa mga sinasabi without any judgment kung mali ang bigkas sa simula.*" [Moreover, my classmates don't laugh at what I say; instead, they even applaud after the speech. It boosts my confidence, especially when I know they're listening without judgment if there are pronunciation mistakes at the beginning.] Respondent A provided a different perspective on where the confidence came from, "*After po ng program, nadagdagan po ako ng confidence sa sarili ko. May mga techniques po akong nakuha kung paano ko iimprove yung speaking ko in front of the public. Kaya ko naman pala, may strategies na pwedeng iapply.*" [After the program, I gained confidence in myself. I acquired techniques on how to improve my public speaking. It turns out I can do it; there are strategies that can be applied.]

There were four respondents (H, B, G and D) who claimed that they saw the program as a learning opportunity. Respondent H expressed, "*May mga strategies po na itinuro na hindi itinuturo as part ng lessons sa subjects kaya mas naexpand po yung knowledge namin sa speaking.*" [There are strategies taught that are not included in subject lessons, so our knowledge in speaking has expanded.] The literal translations from the native language to English has made it difficult for Respondent B, "*Kapag po Tagalog, confident po ako magvoice out. Sa English po, kahit alam ko yung words sa Tagalog, sa translation po ako na-iistuck up kasi ginagawa ko pong literal translation yung mga sinasabi ko.*" [When speaking in Tagalog, I am confident in voicing out. In English, even if I know the words in Tagalog, I get stuck because I tend to do literal translations of what I'm saying].

In order to further analyzed the perceptions of the Grade 11 students after the administration of the Intervention regarding their views of the lapses of the program, the following data are gathered through FGD, and are consolidated through thematic analysis. Participants are named Student 1-10 for anonymity and confidentiality purposes.

Students 1, 3, 5 and 10 have agreed unanimously that there are insufficient sessions provided in the program duration. Students 5 expressed, "*Kulang po yung time ng sessions, gusto ko pong matry yung ibang roles sa meeting.*" [The session times are not sufficient; I want to try other roles in the meeting.] Toastmasters' set-up of roles during its club meetings are typically assigned randomly. These assignments were made also among the students and not everyone was able to experience all the roles due to the limited amount of time

On the other hand, Students 2, 7 and 9 all agreed that the Speech Time given was too short. Student 7 said, "*Kulang po yung time sa speech, marami pa po akong gustong sabihin.*" [The time for the speech is not enough; I still have a lot more to say.] Since the program only uses the teacher-facilitator's time schedule for Practical Research, this time constraint has made it a challenge for some of the participants.

Table 7.*Lapses of the Program based on the perceptions of the Grade 11 Learners*

Themes	Description	Significant Statement among the learners
Insufficient Sessions	The number of sessions of when the intervention was made is not enough for all the learners to be immersed with their roles assigned to them.	- Student 3 stated, "<i>Nabitin po ako sa Toastmaster Sessions, ambilis po, mukhang matagal lang sa simula ng training pero noong mismong meetings na, mabilis lang pala.</i>" [I felt shortchanged in the Toastmaster Sessions; it seemed slow at the beginning of the training, but during the actual meetings, it turned out to be quite fast.] - Student 1 stated, "<i>Sana po mas maraming sessions para maexperience namin lahat ng roles kasi gusto ko pong mag Toastmaster of the Day.</i>" [I hope there are more sessions so that we can experience all the roles because I want to be the Toastmaster of the Day.] - According to Student 5, "<i>Kulang po yung time ng sessions, gusto ko pong matry yung ibang roles sa meeting.</i>" [The session times are not sufficient; I want to try other roles in the meeting.] - Student 8 mentioned, "<i>Nag-enjoy po ako sa mismong meeting na. Sana 5 sessions po para mairotate lahat ng roles.</i>" [I enjoyed the actual meeting. Hopefully, there will be 5 sessions so that all roles can rotate.] - Student 10 added, "<i>Three days lang pala ang activity, akala ko mas mahaba.</i>" [Turns out the activity is only for three days; I thought it would be longer.]
Speech Time	The given time allotted for each student appears to be not enough.	- Student 2 expressed, "<i>Sobrang ikli po ng time sa speech para maexpress lahat ng gustong sabihin. Naprepressure po ako sa time limit.</i>" [The time for the speech is too short to express everything I want to say. I feel pressured by the time limit.] - Student 7 stated, "<i>Kulang po yung time sa speech, marami pa po akong gustong sabihin.</i>" [The time for the speech is not enough; I still have a lot more to say.] - According to Student 9, "<i>Nakakapressure yung timer, bigla na lang siyang sisigaw. Sana mas maraming time ang nabigay pero overall masaya po ako sa flow.</i>" [The timer is pressuring; he/she suddenly shouts. I hope more time is given, but overall, I'm happy with the flow.]
Role Confusion	Multiple roles are assigned per session.	Student 4 burst out, "<i>Marami pong roles, minsan nalilito po ako kung ano po ang kailangang gawin.</i>" [There are many roles, and sometimes I get confused about what needs to be done.]

Module Clarification	Modules were prepared prior to the sessions. There are four modules given which involved various activities in improving their Public Speaking Skills.	Student 6 stated, “During sa session 3 po, struggle po ako sa pagorganize ng outline, sana po may additional examples ng naprovide.” [During session 3, I struggled with organizing the outline. I hope there are additional examples provided.]
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Note. The perceptions were gathered through FGD

In addition, Student 4 give details on how she found the program, “*Marami pong roles, minsan nalilito po ako kung ano po ang kailangang gawin.*” [There are many roles, and sometimes I get confused about what needs to be done.] Though scripts were given ahead of time for the assigned roles and their corresponding responsibilities, and apart from it being fast paced, this may appear overwhelming for beginners.

Student 6 added the request for a module clarification, “*During sa session 3 po, struggle po ako sa pagorganize ng outline, sana po may additional examples ng naprovide.*” [During session 3, I struggled with organizing the outline. I hope there are additional examples provided.] Making an outline may appear daunting and it is not something that can be done in one sitting as it may require practice and familiarization.

The students were also asked about their perceptions on the lectures held prior to the actual Toastmasters’ Meetings. While Students 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 found them interactive and lively, Students 3 and 5 say otherwise. Student 3 elaborated, “*Nakakakaba po every time pinagsasalita during the activities pero since it's part of the process, mas naintindihan ko kung bakit pinagawa yun.*” [It's nerve-wracking every time I'm asked to speak during the activities, but since it's part of the process, I understand why it's done.]

Also, a satisfaction questionnaire was conducted and the Over-all Evaluation of the students for the program garnered a General Weighted Mean of **3.16** which means they neither agree nor disagree with the whole approach as one that they may apply in real life. The FGD conducted supports the positive and

negative sides that the participants encountered and felt throughout the experience.

Recommendations

The study aimed to assess the effectiveness of using an intervention in improving the Public English-Speaking Skills of Grade 11 learners in Balayang High School named “Elevate Your English”, inspired from Toastmasters International.

Its administration within seven sessions has provided significant positive results between the level of public English – Speaking skills of the Grade 11 learners before and after the use of the intervention. Teachers in Public Schools were encouraged to initiate and conduct research and explore different interventions in classroom set-ups to further improve the delivery of the lessons and achieve maximum level of learning among the learners by reducing challenges met as they teach. With these findings, it suggested that the more exposure learners are to English Speaking activities, the more that they eliminate their fear in speaking a foreign language, particularly in English. This lack of opportunity has prompted the teacher-researcher to initiate a program that can be integrated in the lessons as part of a series of activities instead of one sole session. The continuity is envisioned until they graduated in Senior High School to have them fully equipped with English Speaking abilities for work or Higher Education. It is also recommended provision of support and funding professional development for teachers regarding the absolute needs of improving the Public Speaking Skills among High School learners. The integration of a solid assessment of current public speaking programs in schools is

also advised so that teachers would be able to evaluate effectively. Also, in this era of technological advantage, it is already an essential to investigate the use of virtual platforms, online resources, or video analysis tools for improving Public English-speaking skills among students as they much enjoy exposing most of themselves across media. Lastly and most importantly, there is a need for further conduct of research about the long-term effects of effective public speaking skills on students' academic and professional success

Ethical Considerations

All rights of the participants were exercised such as, but not limited to, volunteer participation, informed consent, harm-free conduct, confidentiality, and anonymity, based on the Code of Ethics of Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), as cited by Enago Academy (2022). Since the students are still minors, the learners were given letters of consent and assent addressed to their parents or guardians for approval to participate in the activity. Learners were informed that there are no implications in their grades for failure to perform. The intervention only steered in seven (7) sessions, Wednesday of every week during the last hour of their Practical Research 1 class schedule. Therefore, the safety of the students during the conduct of research is assured. The data collected by the teacher-researcher are recorded and served for academic purposes only. Any video or tape recording were destroyed after data analysis has been made. Participants remained anonymous in the entire research paper.

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