



The Level of Awareness of the Youth in Speaking English as a Second Language in Mandaue City

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Abstract:

The level of awareness in Speaking English is significant for effective communication, career growth, and educational learning. Speaking is an important part of English skills, along with reading, writing, and listening, which can be challenging to learn. This study explores English language speaking skills among the youth in Mandaue City, aiming to assess their level of awareness of speaking English as a second language. Through the standardized survey questionnaire, the research provides a comprehensive overview of the linguistic abilities of Mandaue City's youth. The study accentuates gaps in English proficiency, including self-awareness, and language environment, which can impact clarity, fluency, and communication effectiveness. The study's findings reveal a positive attitude toward learning English, with the 50 participants from 5 barangays in Mandaue City demonstrating speaking, comprehension, and vocabulary skills. Additionally, the study aligns with Vygotsky's Language Acquisition Theory, and Bronfenbrenner's Bio-ecological Theory emphasizing the importance of using language effectively in real-life situations. Based on the findings, recommendations include increasing exposure to English-speaking environments, engaging in language-related activities, and regular practice with language conversations to enhance proficiency.

Keywords: *Level of Awareness, Speaking English, Second Language, Language Environment, and Youth.*

Introduction:

Speaking is considered as an act of conveying messages, feelings, ideas and thoughts about a certain topic that demands communication through articulation that creates effective conversations from the speaker to the listener. One of the basic parts of English abilities is speaking which students must master other than perusing, composing, and listening. Speaking English as a remote dialect can be difficult to acquired and learned since the student should become proficient in a few elements such as lexicon, proper pronunciation, language structure, and others. When the learners needed to communicate, they should also consider about these rules in speaking English (Haryudin and Jamilah, 2018). As a result, speaking abilities are the most challenging perspective for learners to master. A difficult thing since when individuals needed to



talk or say something to others, they needed to consider a few things that are interrelated like thoughts, dialect that's utilized, what to say, how to utilize linguistic use and lexicon, articulation, as well as listening and reacting to communicators.

The researchers conducted this study to learn about the respondents' strengths and weaknesses in speaking English among Mandaue City youth. Through this study, the researchers will know the reasons why some of the respondents cannot speak fluently in English. This study highlights gaps in the level of awareness in speaking English as a second language, including self-awareness, and language environment. These issues can affect clarity, fluency, and overall communication effectiveness, affecting students' ability to express themselves effectively and engage in English conversations.

This study endeavors to assess the level of awareness of the youth in speaking English as a second language in Mandaue City, serving as a crucial examination of their competency in utilizing English as a second language. By focusing on the youth population, the study aimed to shed light on the effectiveness of language education programs and identify potential areas for improvement. Through the utilization of surveys, interviews, and language proficiency tests, the researcher seeks to provide a comprehensive overview of the linguistic abilities of Mandaue City's youth, contributing valuable insights to the ongoing discourse on language education and its impact on the local community. In addition to evaluating the level of awareness, this study also seeks to explore the factors influencing the youth's English language skills in Mandaue City. Social, educational, and cultural aspects will be examined to identify potential correlations and patterns that may contribute to or hinder language proficiency development. Understanding these contextual factors is essential for devising targeted interventions and educational strategies that can enhanced English language acquisition among the youth. By delving into the intricate interplay of these elements, the research aimed to provide actionable recommendations for educators, policymakers, and stakeholders interested in fostering effective language learning environments in Mandaue City. Ultimately, the findings of this study aspire to contribute to the advancement of language education initiatives and empower the youth with the necessary linguistic skills for their future academic and professional endeavors.

The findings of this study on the level of awareness in Speaking English as a second language among the youth in Mandaue City offer numerous benefits that can positively impact both individuals and the community at large. Firstly, a comprehensive understanding of the youth's levels in English serves as a crucial benchmark for educators and policymakers. By identifying areas of strength and weakness, educational institutions can tailor language programs to address specific needs, ultimately enhancing the overall quality of language education. This tailored approach ensures that the youth are equipped with the necessary language skills to navigate an increasingly globalized world, fostering improved communication and expanding opportunities for academic and professional success.

Literature Review:

Self –Awareness

Proficiency in speaking English facilitates interactions with different languages and plays an important role in education and accomplishment. As the lingua franca of business, direction, and foreign-related, mastering English-speaking skills accepted many offers, offering beginners brainstorming to holdings of chances and doings Sudarmo (2021). Nevertheless, the process of success in this proficiency is often accompanied by doubts Atmojo et al., (2020). A meaningful problem encountered alongside Speaking is the communicative interference and the intellectual aspects of education. Many upperclassmen struggle with failure self-opinion, fear, and its concern of creating errors during communication in an overseas language. The uncertainty is more unrefined through limited agreement of their speaking talents and theoretic. In language learning particularly in developing English-speaking skills, the process of self-concern becomes pivotal. By agreeing that communication possesses unique traits and failures, learners can navigate foreign languages effectively (Oteir & Al-Otaibi, 2019).

According to Basak (2019) Promoting speaking awareness involves encouraging both students and teachers to critically reflect on and evaluate speaking abilities accurately. By fostering a culture of self-awareness and providing tailored support and feedback, educators can empower students to become more confident and effective communicators in English.



A level of awareness in speaking English as a second language is important for a professional or career. To improve speaking skills, students require exposure, engagement, and support in the classroom and outside. It examines program effectiveness and identifies challenges. Results from observations, interviews, and document analysis reveal a comprehensive approach to English skill development, including class activities and creating an English-speaking environment. Challenges include psychological and linguistic factors like confidence and vocabulary (Rani Ligar Fitriani, 2022).

Self-awareness isn't just a trait; it's a tool that empowers public speakers to motivate, educate, and influence others with confidence and credibility. Being more fully conscious of what and how you communicate will make your speaking experiences more enjoyable, memorable, and meaningful for you and the people listening to you. Exercising more awareness will transform the outcomes of your speaking and help you connect better, achieve greater understanding, and leave your imprint on the world around you.

Mindful communication creates mutual understanding, whether addressing one person or a large audience. Regardless of the setting or type of speech, being fully present is essential to connect with your audience and convey your message effectively. English language learners on the discovery-learning road may finally find a way toward autonomous learning if they experience an awareness uprising. Since learners necessarily, boost and set knowledge, English language academics and preceptors before organizing their lectures use different approaches that lead learners of language to discover learning meaningful. Part of the achievable ways to attain this aim is using persuasion. By the means of persuasion, communication educators are able assess or expand their proper and significant skills, which will make them more independent eventually in their sociable competence.

In a different approach, idiom educators become more regardful of their mistakes and errors they need to be better by delivering them with outcomes and evaluation. Once the learners have repeated on their speaking and assess themselves, English language teachers hand over learners with feedback from the learners' evaluation and the points they had miss out correcting due to their inadequate knowledge in English language or paucity in sufficient attention. This ought to be regularly done by the instructors of complementary lessons to make sure learners' breakthrough based on the given feedback. Teaching, learning, and assessment are associated and should be seen as an unbroken cycle.

Teaching and evaluation make easy way of learning if educators and students properly equip the feedback that was given from the assessment successfully that soon may result in positive choices and working about learning. Because these choices and steps are deliberate, students will become more cognizant of what they have learned, which in turn makes them feel less anxious and more secure especially when it comes to communicating abilities. Some teachers assess their learners to see how major they have progressed at the end of the program. This type of assessment directs on the outcome; anyhow, other teachers suggest to evaluate their learners' process of learning. Lantolf and Thorne (2006) called the latter one dynamic assessment.

As stated in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) presented by Lev Vygotsky, there's a difference between what students had accomplished on their own and without assistance and what they can accomplish with assistance and direction from teachers or other more experienced students. Feedback and continuous, dynamic assessment help students advance from their current developmental stage to their potential level. In this sense, evaluation, and feedback can be seen as scaffolding that enables students to reach objectives that they could not have without the support of their teachers. Vygotsky (1987) in "Thinking and Speech" emphasized the importance of the ZPD in instructional usage. Instead of basing educational strategies on kids' real developmental stages, he contends that ZPD should be used. In this instance, students have far less stress throughout the learning process, and instruction and dynamic assessment are interdependent. Learners' anxieties and lack of confidence in handling the assessment medium begin to subside as their learning improves as a result of continuous evaluation, and they begin to recognize the positive benefits of effective assessment in the learning process. Consequently, continuous assessment over time would assist students in perceiving testing as a help rather than a crippling tool for learning.

However, with the great amount of advantages such as strengthen self-awareness, conveyance, intersubjective skills, and team dynamics (Lowes, 2020), it also has its own limitations. The effectiveness depends on the willingness of the participants to engage positively and constructively. The concerns about privacy and negative feedback requires careful management. Learning is a progressive development that significantly influences an individual's mental development



and behavior (Xin et al., 2023). Additionally, effective speaking is considered as an important skill learners must acquire. This skill doesn't only rely on fluency but also it encompasses the ability to coherently connect various points and ideas. However, a common barrier that many students encounter is the lack of confidence, often comes from inadequate self-discovery (Chand, 2021). Self-awareness involves a deep understanding of one's strengths, weaknesses, potential, interests, and skills, which is essential in navigating academic and future career decisions (Vasoya, 2023). Students frequently face challenges in correlating their interests and hobbies with potential career paths, partly due to a lack of self-awareness (Jenkins et al., 2019).

The definition of language awareness is "knowledge of language and language use." Awareness in language is often described as knowledge and understanding as well as conscious perception in the usage, teaching and language learning (Bilgin, 2017). Put differently, awareness in language refers to the person's knowledge of language and their conscious comprehension of how others acquire and utilize language.

The goal of language awareness, according to Irwandi (2014), is to give students knowledge about the target language and teach them how to effectively use and apply language learning. Language awareness suggests a direct correlation between students' knowledge of different aspects of language. In conclusion, Language Awareness is to improve the motivational attention of language use for learners.

In addition, many researchers have consistently pointed out the need to develop skills such as grammatical competence and metalinguistic awareness to help students improve their English (Bessy & Knouse, 2020; Minasyan & Midova, 2016; Putri & Ngadiso, 2019; Roehr-Brackin, 2018).

As cited by Altman et al. (2018), metalinguistic awareness is the perception of the speaker in the structure and forms of the language that develops in the late stages of language acquisition which is around the age of 5–6, that builds on previously acquired linguistic knowledge. Having the attributes of strong sense of metalinguistic awareness is a necessary component of multilingual competency since it distinguishes speakers of several languages from those who only speak one or two languages.

Language awareness refers to a speaker's consciousness in perceiving language conceptually, as well as to examine and grasp the language as flexible (Hofer & Jessner, 2019).

Language Environment

English speaking skills offer speakers many economic and employment opportunities. Therefore, it is important for global competitiveness (Hawkins, 2018; Khang et al., 2018; Lightbown & Spada, 2021). For most students, the ability to speak English and the pursuit of mastery of speaking skills is an effective form of intrinsic motivation for good language learners. Therefore, the relevance of this study is due to the growing demand and interest in studying the communicative aspect of English speaking.

In our current situation, some grammar rules are forgotten and mistakes are not considered rude but accepted. The objective of this study is to impart correct understanding and proper communication among the people.

Students through the given tool can now understand the structure of language that is integrated into almost all of the subjects taught in school. The goal of the guidelines of language competency to native learners can be acquired through the assumption that a linguistically nourished environment to students are through the means of dramatizations, visual presentations, videos, and posters which are accurate tools that are integrated into the language classroom. This can guide learners develop important connections that are related to the sentence structure and phonological aspects (Zhou, 2018).

The functions of speaking skills help students in job interviews and other job training activities. Speaking and communication skills have been placed over inspiration and academic recommendation. Sommerauer and Müller (2018) focused on the increase of learning environments that are useful in facilitating the process of language learning. Learning that is based on collaboration, reflection, and effective feedback that is followed within the given framework lessens students' anxiety and involves students as an active participant in the learning process.

Syafitri (2019) states that English is the official introductory language in 42 countries and serves as an influential international language. One in five people worldwide can speak or understand English. In the country of Indonesia,



English is considered one of the subjects discussed in junior high school, but formal education tends to focus on exam passing rather than practical use which leads to different issues encountered by the learners. According to Kadena (2019) learning English is not simply about producing grammatically correct sentences but it also considers compatibility among the language users. By considering the importance of intercultural competence in English, the students should be provided with some principles that equip them to know the use of English appropriately and accurately.

As reported by some research a large percentage of the world's vocabulary learners study English to develop proficiency in speaking. Therefore, it requires a value of attention to produce studies that which English as a subjects are evident. In most cases, students wants to learn or acquire the knowledge as fast as they can. But with the commitment and passion in learning the language, acquiring it in a short period of time can be possible (Kassem, 2018).

Several observational studies are questioning the protest and challenges faced by foreign language students and their willingness to communicate in class (Abrar et al., 2018; Dewaele et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2018). These studies focus mainly on foreign students in an academic and social surrounding with English as the dominant language. Also examining anxiety in non-native speaking students in oral English classes at the academy predominantly for the most part in developing countries (Ningsih et al., 2018; Oteir & Al-Otaibi, 2019).

Communities where English is valued or essential for economic advancement may have a higher awareness of English proficiency. Exposure to English-language media, such as TV shows and movies, can significantly impact youth awareness. Awareness of English as a global language and its importance for international opportunities motivates youth to prioritize learning English. These factors provide a comprehensive understanding of youth awareness of speaking English as a second language in Mandaue City.

Research Method:

This study used a quantitative research design, utilizing a survey questionnaire to gather vital information from the young students who are living in Mandaue City. This study investigated respondents' speaking ability. It delved into the environment, media exposure in English, and the frequency of English usage. Assessments were also conducted on the attitudes toward English, learning practices, and participants' self-perceived competency. This research was carried out in these 5 selected barangays namely: Bakilid, Alang-Alang, Ibabao-Estancia, Jagobiao, and Mantuyong situated within Mandaue City, Cebu Philippines. The barangay is a place wherein the youth resides and the researchers can collect and gather some data for the study. Sangguniang Kabataan refers to the Youth and students in the barangay who are the chosen respondents of the researchers. Mandaue City is a city in the province of Cebu in the Philippines.

The respondents of this study were the youth of Mandaue City preferably College students from different universities and colleges who are living or residing in the researchers chose 5 barangays out of 27 at the age range of 15 to 17 years old and 18 to 24 who belong and a member of the Sangguniang Kabataan in the barangay. The researchers chose them as the respondents for them to test their level of awareness of speaking English as their second language.

Findings and Discussion:

In this comprehensive analysis, the researchers explored the interpretation and analysis of the level of awareness in speaking English as a second language in Tables 1 to 2. These tables contained standardized questions about the level of awareness when speaking including self-awareness, and language environment. The researchers aim to gain a deeper understanding of how the youth speak by examining these tables, which allows them to pinpoint the level of awareness among the youth in Mandaue City.

Table 1. Self-Awareness

This self-awareness encompasses recognizing strengths and areas for improvement and being conscious of how one native language influences English communication.



Particulars	WM	DE
I speak English in the classroom.	2.96	A
I can confidently express myself clearly in speaking English without difficulties.	2.72	A
I can pronounce English words easily.	3.02	A
I can speak English with good grammar	2.90	A
I have a wide range of English vocabulary.	2.78	A
I find the English subject interesting and enjoyable because it helps me enhance my speaking skills.	3.10	A
Total Score:	2.91	A

Legend: 1.00-1.75 (Strongly Disagree), 1.76-2.50 (Disagree), 2.6-3.25 (Agree), 3.26-4.00

(Strongly Agree)

The table revealed the level of awareness of the youth in the self-awareness variable. The statement with the highest weighted mean is "I can pronounce English words easily." with an average of 3.02. Therefore, the youth agree that they are aware of their inability to use English as their second language and they are confident in speaking English without struggling. The finding of result agrees with the study of Rao S. P. (2018), that English teachers have to think of the needs and interests of the learners while selecting topics for these activities. Teachers must consider the requirements and interests of their students when assigning topics, as this encourages them to work more enthusiastically and with interest on the assigned material. As a result, in order to engage the students, teachers need to adopt a more positive mindset and focus more on activities that improve speaking abilities.

Additionally, several studies have shown that the students are intended to improve linguistic accuracy in their speech although there are no communication problems between them (Suzuki, 2018). Since the concept of task-based learning is learning by doing, the students are expected to experience the language by completing the tasks. Researchers have shown the benefits of employing task-based learning to improve the students' speaking skills. The findings of a study conducted by Namaziandost, Hashemifardnia, & Shafiee (2019), reveal that the students can speak fluently after completing opinion-gap, reasoning-gap, and information-gap activities through task-based learning compared to traditional learning. Role playing utilizes a "complete range of communication technologies to develops language fluency, to promotes student interaction during the class, to increase students' motivation, and to share responsibilities between teacher-students" (Kusnierek in Rojas Rojas (2018)). The pupils talk and act out various personalities in the language they are learning. The responsibilities, vocabulary, and expression they require are planned (Waffa, 2014 in Rojas & Villafuerte, 2018).

The table revealed the lowest weighted mean in the self-awareness variable. The statement with the lowest weighted mean is "I can confidently express myself clearly in speaking English without difficulties." with an average mean of 2.72 means that they are aware that they are confidently enough to speak English language. Youth expressed themselves by responding to the lowest level with an agreement in the statement that they were aware of their level when speaking English. The finding of the result agrees with the study of Herlisya & Wiratno, (2022). English is a communication bridge with the outside world in almost all sectors, including commerce, academia, national security, and development. On the other hand, educators in a global classroom must possess a high degree of expertise in content and pedagogy and high competence in speaking. That is why competence in speaking English is essential for students, especially those who aspire to become language teachers.



Table 2. Language Environment

The environment in which one learns and speaks English as a Second Language plays a difficult role in the acquisition and mastery of the language.

Particulars	WM	DE
The people I always talk to are speakers of English so I also speak English.	2.9	A
I get sufficient time for learning English and someone who helps me with my language learning at home.	3.2	A
I believe that a person I powerful and intelligent when he/she speaks English and that is important to learn English to communicate with international or professional people.	2.58	A
I easily understand what speakers say and mean when they speak the English language.	2.88	A
TOTAL	2.89	A

Legend: 1.00-1.75 (Strongly Disagree), 1.76-2.50 (Disagree), 2.6-3.25 (Agree), 3.26-4.00 (Strongly Agree)

The table showed the results of the calculated weighted mean of the level of awareness in speaking English as second language of the youth is language environment variable with the highest weighted mean is “I get sufficient time for learning English and someone who helps me with my lanugae learning at home,” with an average of 3.2. The result suggested that there are youths who can speak English sufficiently if there is someone who can help them learn to their comfort zone. The result agrees with the study of Benson (2021), defined outside-of-class language exposure term as, “any kind of learning that takes place outside the classroom and involves self-instruction, naturalistic learning or self-directed naturalistic learning.

On the other hand, contact between learners and the target language they are trying to acquire can be characterized as exposure to language. One of the teacher's most important responsibilities in the classroom is to give students enough opportunities to practice the target language with various speakers and in a range of circumstances. Being proficient in the language, teachers are able to provide students with real-world examples of language use in addition to applying natural input from sources like the internet, books, magazines, cassettes, and videos. Generally speaking, language exposure mostly refers to interactions outside of the classroom.

Therefore, the respondents are aware that if they know that they are not capable as English speakers, they will find sufficient time to practice to enhance their speaking skills in English as their second language by asking someone who can help them. While the lowest WM (*weighted mean*) is 2.58, it says in the result that not all the respondents are confident enough to speak English as their second language and shy enough to communicate using English. Overall, the table shows the total that the respondents who are aware of their environment when, where, and how they are going to speak English and ask for help to improve their English speaking.

Conclusion:



The study aimed to determine the level of awareness of speaking English as a second language among the youth in Mandaue City. This research is quantitative and descriptive, focusing on understanding and analyzing the language abilities of the youth in barangays. The study found that many youths in Mandaue City show high self-awareness of their English-speaking abilities, recognizing their strengths and weaknesses. Resources such as libraries, the internet, and language programs aid in skill development, while peer groups and community initiatives foster a supportive environment for language learners. The youth's awareness is driven by educational frameworks, cultural influences, and resource availability. They understand the importance of English proficiency in academic and professional contexts, with schools, peers, and the community playing key roles in their language development. In conclusion, the youth in Mandaue City show a commendable level of awareness of their English-speaking abilities. A combination of educational support, cultural exposure, and access to resources creates a conducive environment for language learning. Continued support in language education will enhance this trend. The findings align with Vygotsky's Language Acquisition Theory and Bronfenbrenner's Microsystem Theory, emphasizing social interaction and environmental influences on language development. Recommendations include developing an English-speaking enhancement module, engaging families and communities, and providing ongoing assessments and goal-setting for youths.

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