

Communicative Modes in Oral Communication in Context

Katerin Marquez Ledesma

Edrak Training Centre, Curriculum Development Department, Sanabis, Bahrain

The purpose of this study investigates the extent of use of communicative modes along Oral Communication in Context (OCC) tasks, the differences in the extent of use along types of schools and educational attainment, and the conditions encountered by the OCC teachers which facilitated the use of communicative modes. The respondents of this research was the population of 63 private and public senior high school teachers who taught Oral Communication in Context to grade 11 students in the school year of 2016 to 2017 in Baguio city, Philippines. A survey questionnaire was used to gather the data needed. General weighted mean was used to address the extent of use of communicative modes in OCC tasks along Visual, Aural, Read/write, and Kinesthetic (VARK). The Mann-Whitney U Test was used to determine the difference of the computed weighted mean in the extent of use of communicative modes along VARK in connection to type of school, and educational attainment. Lastly, frequency and percentage was used to determine the facilitating conditions for communicative modes. The results showed that Aural had a very high extent of use as compared to Visual, Read/write/ and Kinesthetic for OCC tasks which were only high. The difference was highly significant for Aural and Kinesthetic ($P < 0.01$) along types of school but only a significant difference in the extent of use of Visual and Read/Write ($P < 0.05$) communicative modes in relation to educational attainment. The type of oral communication tasks was the top condition which facilitated the use of communicative modes for OCC classes.

Keywords: communicative modes, oral communication in context, senior high school, multimodality

I. INTRODUCTION

As people progress into a new age and time, the skills, competencies, and literacies needed to live and to have a career evolve. The 21st century has created an array of different needs which must be met starting with the years where a child is getting basic education. To that effect, the Philippines has begun to embark on a new journey with the implementation of the added two years in basic education— Senior High School (SHS). The goal of SHS is to holistically nurture Filipinos to possess college and livelihood readiness for the 21st Century (ACTRC, 2016). These skills were identified as information, media and

technology skills, learning and innovation skills, and effective communication skills which lead to a fourth set: life and career skills (ACTRC, 2016). Communication in the 21st century is seen as a major skill in connection to information media and technology as well as learning and innovation. Learning a language is no longer seen as a subject to be learned, but ought to have the goal of communication for life and career skills as its target. In order to cater to the needed skill sets, diverse modes in teaching language should be considered to acquire and or learn the 21st century skills.

The concept of linking communicative modes stems from the theory of multimodality which was referred to by Cubillo and Garrido (2010) as “the combination of various communicative modes (sound, images such as graphs or pictures, video, written text, transcribed speech, etc.) within one text.” The interactive process of communication makes “Meaning central to communication. Communication is symbolic because it involves not only words but also symbols and gestures that accompany the spoken words because symbolic action is not limited to verbal communication (Rahman, 2010, p.3).” The notion of comprehending not only spoken words but also the symbolic gestures is vital in courses such as Oral Communication in Context (OCC) due to its nature.

Oral communication in particular reflects the perverse and significant role of language and communication in human society (Rahman, 2010), and since it is also but a part of a whole on what effective communication demands from Filipinos, the use of communicative modes holds latent possibilities in aiding the demand for effective communication.

OCC in the Philippine K to 12 curriculum has a particular objective description for grades 11 and or 12. It was stated as, “The development of listening and speaking skills and strategies for effective communication in various situations (DepEd, 2016, p. 1).” It is connected to the communicative competence goal seen in the K to 12 Curriculum Guide: English as a goal which showcases the integration of multiple language skills, spiral progression, interaction, contextualization, and construction towards communicative competence and multiliteracies (DepEd, 2016). Specifically the formative and summative assessment types are tasks for OCC and seen as opportunities to use communicative modes in the current SHS curriculum.

The Department of Education requires for teachers to do formative assessments before lesson proper, during lesson proper, and after the lesson proper. Formative assessments were defined as the information or feedback that teachers can get from learners to ensure that they are developing and understanding the competencies related to the curriculum standards (DepEd Order no. 8, S. 2015, pg. 7). The assessment tasks, also used to determine the grades of the students, is dependent on summative assessments as described in the Department of Education Order no. 8, series of 2015: 1) written work (WW)- ensures that students are able to express skills and concepts in written form; 2) performance tasks (PT)- allows learners to show what they know and are able to do in diverse ways; and 3)

quarterly assessment (QA) – measures student learning at the end of each quarter (pp. 7-8)”.

The choice of mode or the change in the mode used in a task creates differences in the understanding of meaning communicated. Because modes are recognized and understood by a social collective (Sanders and Albers, 2010), some modes then may not represent universal conceptions of the idea they carry within different speech communities. There is then a need to investigate what modes OCC teachers use in their tasks as well as the affordances that come with choosing those modes in their practice as well as the conditions that help facilitate the modes.

II. RELATED LITERATURE

Multiple teaching of modes within the same package creates an effective balance for students who do not understand one mode to turn to an alternative mode or modes that are suited to their preferences (Fleming, 2012). Jewitt (2009), Kress (2010), Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) introduce the multimodality theory as “broadly [a] semiotic approach to analyzing most communicative forms, including spoken and written language, still and moving images, sound, music, gesture, body posture, movement and the use of space and so on (as cited by Bazalgette and Buckingham, 2013).

The modes and mediums of communication are resources that aid in the learning, understanding, and production of language. Mode of communication is understood as a semiotic system of contrasts and oppositions, a grammatical system while a medium of communication is the physical means of inscription or distribution such as a printed or handwritten text, making the sounds of speech, body movements, or light impulses on a computer screen (Scollon and LeVine, 2004). These resources may either signify or carry meaning as physical mediums and are human generated through input and output, and use computer interaction and media (Bernsen, 2012). Gilakjani, Ismail, and Ahmadi (2011) support the use of communicative modes in the second language acquisition saying that, “Language is not only a cognitive phenomenon, the product of the individual’s brain; it is also fundamentally a social phenomenon, acquired and used interactively, in a variety of contexts for myriad practical purposes (p.1325).”

The use of various combinations of communicative modes has the potential to tap into the biological makeup of the human body in order for language acquisition and learning to take place in a social environment. Marchetti and Cullen (2015) explain this as helping students attend to new information by creating a variety of stimuli channels through different modes to which students can attend to by often accessing different channels at different times over the course of a lesson or assignment.

Jewitt and Kress (2003) defined the term mode to be generally understood as a “regularized organized set of resources for meaning-making, including, image, gaze, gesture, movement, music, speech and sound-effect (as cited by Early,

Kendrick, and Potts, 2015). The proposition that modes and their possible roles and contributions to meaning relates to language learning in the 21st century reinforces the idea that communicative modes could be used in a language course like OCC.

While the importance and functions of communicative modes were extensively researched on by various proponents, the lack of a conclusive classification of communicative modes is where Fleming (2012) comes in with VARK, an acronym made for Visual, Aural, Read/write and Kinesthetic as modes used for communication. VARK was defined by Fleming as follows:

Visual (V): This preference includes the depiction of information in charts, graphs, flow charts, and all the symbolic arrows, circles, hierarchies and other devices that teachers use to represent what might have been presented in words; Aural (A): This perceptual mode describes a preference for information that is spoken or heard; Read/write (R): These learners place importance on the precision in language and are keen to use quotes, lists, texts, books and manuals. They have a strong reverence for words; and Kinesthetic (K): By definition, this modality refers to the perceptual preference related to the use of experience and practice (simulated or real). (2012, p.1)

In order to optimize learning in the context of modal preferences, Fleming and Baume (2006) claim that modal preferences are not fixed, and that the use of learning strategies that are aligned with a modality preference is also likely to lead to persistence in learning tasks, a deeper approach to learning, active and effective metacognition, as well as an important condition for improving one's learning. In the 21st century, the elements that need to be taught in oral communication classes have become socially oriented. Awareness of broad rules that govern social interaction, non-verbal behaviors, and rules for listening and speaking (PDST, 2012) are only some of which that needed to be taught. These elements are holistic in the sense that when learned, it can be used in academics, professional careers, and also everyday real-life conversations.

III. METHODOLOGY

Subjects

This research had the population 47 private teachers and 16 public senior high school teachers who taught Oral Communication in Context to grade 11 students in the school year of 2016 to 2017 as the respondents. At the end of the data gathering, there were 63 respondents from 37 different schools that offered senior high in Baguio City. The respondents were classified based on the type of school and educational attainment. Educational attainment was classified into two: baccalaureate and graduate. Baccalaureate was treated as the teachers who have finished their tertiary level education (32 teachers) while graduate was treated as teachers who have finished their master degree (31 teachers).

Research Design

The research design was descriptive by nature using a survey approach to collect data. In the survey research method, participants answered questions administered through questionnaires. The nature of this research needed the experiences of the past and its present effect on the population to be able to get data that allowed the researcher to investigate the statement of the problems and create a teaching guide for the use of communicative modes in OCC tasks. The data was collected through survey using a questionnaire in September 2017.

Treatment of the Data

The survey questionnaire had two parts. Part I comprised of 20 modes adapted from Flemming's (2012) VARK modes but was described in the tool to fit OCC tasks. The respondents were asked to identify the extent of use of each described mode by putting a checkmark in the box that corresponded to the extent of use of the tasks according to their practice. The general weighted mean was used to address the extent of use of communicative modes in OCC tasks along VARK. The Mann-Whitney U Test was used to determine the difference of the computed weighted mean in the extent of use of communicative modes along VARK in connection to type of school, and educational attainment. The statistical tool determined whether there is, or there is no significant difference in the extent of use of OCC teachers along types of schools and educational attainment through the U (computed value) to be interpreted by the P-value where if the p-value is lower than .05 or .01 shows a significant difference.

Part II addressed the existing conditions and instructional elements in the teachers' use of the described communicative modes in Part I. The respondents were asked to put a checkmark on the box which they found was true to their practice and an X-mark if the existing condition of instructional element was not true. The answers for each item on the part II checklist were tallied and the frequency and percentage was determined. The findings were analyzed and interpreted with their implications forming part of the teaching guide on the use of communicative modes in OCC tasks.

IV. RESULTS

The following were the major findings in the study:

1. The extent of use of the communicative modes was highly used for OCC tasks along:
 - a) Visual was sometimes used pertaining to a high extent of use;
 - b) Aural was frequently used showing a very high extent of use in OCC;
 - c) Read/write was sometimes used having a high extent of use; and
 - d) Kinesthetic was sometimes used proving that it had a high extent of use.

Table 1. Extent of Use of Communicative Modes in OCC tasks

Communicative modes	Mean	Extent of use	Qualitative descriptor
Visual	2.96	High	Sometimes used in OCC tasks.
Aural	3.38	Very high	Frequently used in OCC tasks.
Read/Write	2.87	High	Sometimes used in OCC tasks.
Kinesthetic	3.24	High	Sometimes used in OCC tasks.
Weighted Mean	3.11	High	Sometimes used in OCC tasks.

2. The differences in the extent of use of communicative modes in the OCC tasks among senior high teachers along VARK were compared between types of schools and educational attainment:

a) Type of school. The difference in the extent of use was highly significant for Aural and Kinesthetic communicative modes while Visual and Read/ Write resulted to no significant difference in the extent of use of the modes. The hypothesis was accepted for Aural and Kinesthetic but rejected for Visual and Read/ Write.

Table 2. Comparison of Communicative Modes between Types of School

Communicative modes	Mean		U	p-value
	Public	Private		
Visual	3.05	2.93	318.5 ^{NS}	0.3579
Aural	3.18	3.45	201*	0.0053
Read and Write	2.64	2.94	267.5 ^{NS}	0.0851
Kinesthetic	3.01	3.32	208*	0.0072

NS = not significant

* = significant at 1% level

b) Educational attainment. It was found that there was a significant difference in the extent of use of Visual and Read/Write communicative modes while no significant differences were found in the extent of use of Aural and Kinesthetic between educational attainment for OCC tasks. The hypothesis was accepted for the Visual and Read/Write communicative modes but rejected for Aural and Kinesthetic communicative modes.

Table 3. Comparison of Communicative Modes between Educational Attainments

Communicative modes	Mean		U	p-value
	Baccalaureate	Graduate		
Visual	2.82	3.10	338.5*	0.0283
Aural	3.38	3.39	495 ^{NS}	0.9889
Read/Write	2.71	3.03	351*	0.0451
Kinesthetic	3.19	3.30	401 ^{NS}	0.1860

NS = not significant

* = significant at 5% level

3. The type of oral communication tasks was the top condition which facilitated the use of communicative modes for OCC classes.

Table 6. Conditions that Facilitated the Use of Communicative Modes

Description	Item no.	Frequency	Percent	Overall Rank
Educational facilities				
The blackboard or whiteboard in my classroom is in good condition for writing or illustrating.	2	61	96.83%	2
There is a printing station for the teachers to print out materials needed for their classes.	8	56	88.89%	8
The classrooms are spacious enough for small group performances.	1	53	84.13%	11
Projectors that are provided by the school are available to be borrowed.	3	47	74.60%	13
There is an internet library with computers available for teachers to use when looking for resources.	9	40	63.49%	17
Availability of resources for tasks				
Print-based materials such as books, newspapers, and magazines are available resources within school premises.	1	50	79.37%	12
Literature based materials such as drama, short stories, poems, and essays are available resources within school premises.	3	42	66.67%	15
Maps, graphs, and charts are available resources for within school premises.	5	42	66.67%	15
Pictures, photographs, and images are available resources within school premises.	6	40	63.49%	17
Posters and illustrations are available resources within school premises.	9	39	61.90%	19
Oral Communication task types				
Collaborative small group speaking tasks such as role playing situations and advertisement making are done in OCC classes.	4	62	98.41%	1
Small group presentation and reporting tasks are done in OCC classes.	6	62	98.41%	1
Dyad speaking tasks such as think-pair-share are done in	3	61	96.83%	2

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OCC classes.

One-to-many speaking tasks such as delivering speeches are done in OCC classes. 1 61 96.83% 2

Viewing to speaking and listening to speaking tasks are done in OCC classes. 10 61 96.83% 2

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Material preparation				
One to two hours spent for material preparation	1	30	47.62%	20
In school planning and creation of materials for tasks	2	54	85.71%	10
Time to prepare instructional materials at home	3	46	73.02%	14
Materials produced, provided, or prepared by the teachers themselves.	4	58	92.06%	7
Materials are based or adapted from internet resources	5	56	88.89%	8

V. DISCUSSION

Extent of use of Communicative Modes

Each mode used in OCC contributes to meaning construction making communication more than just a task of speaking and listening but also creating visuals, reading information, writing out plans, and involving oneself in the task for communication. Ajayi (2012) supports this in her research where it was found that the use of a combination of communicative modes "...in ELL classrooms often foster greater student participation, freedom to communicate, collaboration and negotiation of meanings (p.17)." The teachers were able to actualize these modes of communication in their OCC classes at a high extent, thus giving much assistance to the development of the skills that the 21st century learner needs.

The use of communicative modes for OCC tasks allowed an array of information and concept presentation for meaning-making, understanding, and application. Visual, with a high extent of use, allows students to plan and present information through illustrations, diagrams, graphs, and charts. Aural, having a very high extent of use, gives opportunities to students to discuss concepts and issues among themselves as small groups and pairs, as well as listen to speak and discuss with each other. Read/write, with a high extent of use, gives students chances to have reading materials that are dense with texts and summaries to be able to have exemplars for speeches that need to be written with internal rationale for the purpose they intend it to have. Lastly, Kinesthetic modes had a high extent of use which give chances for students to use real-life examples and their senses in the observation of contexts to be able to use their meaning-making rationale for strategies that can be used in various situations.

Difference in the Extent of Use of Communicative Modes in OCC Tasks

1. Type of school

The use of communicative modes for OCC classes differ for Aural and Kinesthetic where private schools are more inclined to use Aural and Kinesthetic

in their OCC classes when compared to the public schools. When it came to Visual and Read/write, it was found that there was no significant difference in the use of the aforementioned communicative modes between schools. The difference in the extent of use of Aural and Kinesthetic between schools was associated to the available educational facilities of the schools. The absence of statistical difference for Visual and Read/write was associated to the regularized and organized set of resources available to both types of schools.

2. Educational attainment

Visual and Read/write has a significant difference in the extent of use due to the further professional and educational development that graduate teachers have over the baccalaureate teachers. In the results of educational attainment however it can be seen that regardless of availability of resources, the difference in the use of Visual and Read/write is not connected to the availability of the resources. This implies that the presence of these resources is somewhat irrelevant when compared to the educational attainment.

Aural and Kinesthetic showed no significant difference in the extent of use because of the understanding of the OCC's course objective by both baccalaureate and graduate teachers. The course objective is to develop the listening and speaking skills and strategies of students for effective communication in various situations (DepEd, 2016), the teachers use communicative modes that comply with the demands for development of the said skills. The implication is that educational attainment does not affect the fact that the said modes had the topmost mean (see table 1) for the extent of use of communicative modes for OCC tasks.

Conditions that Facilitated the Use of Communicative Modes

Oral communication task types, educational facilities, in-school material preparation, and creation by the teachers themselves based on internet resources were conditions that facilitated the use of communicative modes. These were the found conditions that facilitated the high use of communicative modes in Oral Communication in Context Tasks. Among the four however, the type of oral communication task was the top condition which facilitated the use of communicative modes for OCC classes. Since communicative modes aid in the understanding of concepts, and facilitates tasks in relation to content standards, the careful decision making and planning of OCC teachers on the types of OCC tasks proved to be empirical.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In light of the findings of the study, the following were the conclusions:

1. The extent of use of the communicative modes was highly used for OCC tasks along:

- a) Visual was used every so often by OCC teachers to plan and present information through illustrations, diagrams, graphs, and charts thus proving essential for in OCC tasks that require visual communicative modes;
- b) Aural was frequently used to discuss concepts and issues among students as small groups and pairs, as well as listen to speak and discuss with each other, hence making Aural the most integral communicative mode for OCC tasks;
- c) Read/write was at times used by OCC teachers in situations where reading materials that are dense with texts and summaries were employed as examples for speeches that need to be written with internal rationale for specific OCC tasks, hence was needed for specific content standards; and
- d) Kinesthetic was used from time to time to exemplify real-life examples and in the observation of contexts to be able to use students' meaning-making rationale therefore needed for strategy learning that can be used in various communication situations.

2. The differences in the extent of use of communicative modes in the OCC tasks among senior high teachers along VARK relatively varied in terms of types of schools and educational attainment:

- a) Private school teachers are more inclined to the use of Aural and Kinesthetic while no difference in the use of Visual and Read/write was found between types of schools.
- b) Teachers who have finished their graduate, master degree, are more inclined to use Visual and Read/write. Educational attainment plays no role in the use of Aural and Kinesthetic for OCC.

3. Oral communication task types, educational facilities, and in-school material preparation and creation by the teachers themselves based from internet resources were conditions that facilitated the use of communicative modes.

In relation to the findings and conclusions of this research, the following are recommended:

1. Further research should be done to measure the efficacy of use of VARK modes in OCC tasks within the multimodal theory.
2. Future researches should seek for differences in the actual practice or usage of VARK communicative modes for both private and public schools in comparison to a sample of teachers with undergraduate and postgraduate degrees.
3. Focused group discussion could be done by future researchers in relation to the conditions that facilitated the use of communicative modes that could not be reflected on questionnaires. This will allow researchers to give an in-depth understanding of what OCC teachers might have to deal with when teaching and giving tasks to students in relation to educational facilities present, availability of resources, oral communication task types, and material preparation.

Other Recommendations:

4. A teaching guide for Oral Communication in Context tasks was developed with aims to maximize the use of the VARK communicative modes through

multimodality in the OCC tasks. The goal was to create tasks that are achievable regardless of type of school and educational attainment. Correspondingly, the teaching guide supports the maximization of conditions present in school for OCC teachers in using communicative modes in relation to Oral communication task types, educational facilities, and in-school material preparation and creation, and new technologies.

The output was made in such a way that teachers are familiar with the content, framing, and design. The teaching guide used the OCC curriculum guide of DepEd (2013) as its main model. To be specific, the OCC tasks described in the teaching guide were based on the provided content, content standard, performance standard, and learning competencies. From the curriculum guide, before lesson proper, during lesson proper, and after lesson proper were created to maximize the combination of communicative modes for formative assessments, written works, and performance tasks.

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About the Author



Katerin Marquez Ledesma is an English language instructor in Edrak Training Centre, Bahrain. Although born and raised in Baguio City, she has taught in multicultural environments and is mainly interested in creating middle grounds for intercultural communication. She graduated with the course Political Science for her bachelor's degree then shifted to Masters in the Arts of Teaching English when she found passion in teaching language. She graduated with a Ph.D. in Language Education in 2018.