

# On Travails and Triumphs: A Mixed-Method Exploration of Public Speaking Experiences Among Senior High School Students in Hagonoy

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Date received: May 15, 2025

Date revised: June 17, 2025

Date accepted: July 10, 2025

Originality: 99%

Grammarly Score: 99%

Similarity: 1%

## Recommended citation:

Marfil, C., & Rulona, M. (2025). On travails and triumphs: A mixed-method exploration of public speaking experiences among senior high school students in Hagonoy. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, 3(8), 395-409. <https://doi.org/10.69569/jip.2025.408>

**Abstract.** Impromptu speaking is a vital skill that enhances students' ability to communicate effectively in various academic and real-world contexts. This study examined the difficulties and coping mechanisms of Grade 11 Technical Vocational Livelihood (TVL) track students at Hagonoy National High School in impromptu speaking. Using a mixed-method approach, surveys were conducted with 236 students, and eight were interviewed for deeper insights. The study assessed six key linguistic factors: organization of ideas, coherence and cohesion, verb usage, confidence and delivery, time management, and proper punctuation and intonation. Results indicated that students faced moderate challenges across all areas, particularly in structuring ideas, using correct grammar, and maintaining fluency under pressure. Key struggles included difficulty in organizing thoughts, reliance on simple vocabulary, and hesitations in speech. Additionally, fear of judgment and anxiety contributed to their speaking difficulties. To cope, students practiced independently, simplified their speech, and focused on key points. Some sought peer support or used relaxation techniques to manage speaking anxiety. Emerging themes highlighted students' adaptability, self-reliance, and determination in overcoming challenges related to impromptu speaking. Beyond immediate speaking improvements, impromptu speaking fosters readiness for future academic and professional settings by enhancing confidence, emotional control, and listening skills. Findings underscored the need for targeted interventions, such as structured speaking activities, tailored instructional strategies, and supportive learning environments. Addressing these gaps will significantly enhance students' communication skills, leading to improved academic performance and better career preparedness. This study provides valuable insights into enhancing impromptu speaking support within educational settings, highlighting the importance of structured guidance in helping students develop their speaking skills effectively.

**Keywords:** Hagonoy; Impromptu speaking; Mixed method; Organization of ideas; Time management.

## 1.0 Introduction

Speaking is essential for language learners. It plays a crucial role in the communicative process, as it is an indispensable skill that facilitates students' fluency and accuracy in using the language, and serves as a tool to succeed academically, personally, and professionally. To achieve this, learners must be exposed to speaking in daily interactions through various speaking tasks conducted in the classroom, one of which is public speaking, which requires students to present a speech in a public setting. This practice helps build not only linguistic

competence but also self-confidence and adaptability. Effective speaking instruction must, therefore, strike a balance between content delivery and opportunities for spontaneous verbal expression. Among the most demanding forms of oral communication is impromptu speaking, which places both cognitive and emotional demands on the learner. Without consistent training, students may find themselves unprepared to speak under pressure or deliver their ideas logically.

However, impromptu speaking is a valuable skill that can be challenging to master, as it requires the spontaneous and accurate expression of ideas in spoken form. It refers to the unplanned expression of thoughts and ideas without prior preparation. It can be observed in the way students struggle to say when asked to participate in different speaking activities in the classroom. It is further noted that some of them struggle to speak fluently because they lack preparation for the topic at hand. These problems are also manifested in the poor results of the Phil-Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) conducted at the onset of classes, which indicated that 24.54% of the total Grade 11 population belonged to the Frustration Level, of which 18.81 % were coming from the TVL track, as they read a passage orally. Additionally, when asked to perform structured performance output, such as impromptu, they fell short of expectations, leading to frustration and disappointment. These results indicate that a number of Grade 11 students did not meet the required level of competency in speaking. Hence, these speaking setbacks necessitate the conduct of a study on students' multi-realities in public speaking and exploring their distinct challenges.

Globally, when it comes to impromptu speech, students often face challenges related to coherence and cohesion. The use of such linguistic features is crucial. However, students may struggle with cohesiveness and coherence, which can affect their ability to communicate their ideas effectively (RahmtAllah, 2020). Additionally, in impromptu settings, students can excessively utilize specific cohesive devices, causing repetitive patterns that impede the flow of their speech (Alfitri & Yuliasri, 2021). In the Philippines, public speaking is embedded in the Department of Education's curriculum. There are numerous activities that require this skill to be demonstrated. However, some students exhibit inverse reactions when given such public speaking tasks. Additionally, the study of Tamayo and Caber (2022) explicated that students are apprehensive during public speaking tasks, which was noticeably a result of their fear of negative feedback. In the local context, there is a notable lack of research on public speaking among students in Region 11. Pascual (2019) investigated the relationship between exposure to the English linguistic environment and oral proficiency in Tagum City. The findings revealed that students have moderate exposure to their English linguistic environment; however, they exhibit low levels of vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and grammar. Furthermore, the results indicated that the student's speaking performance was inadequate.

At Hagonoy National High School, some senior high school students experience apprehension about impromptu speaking during presentations. Language teachers observe stuttering, loss of focus, and incoherent responses, especially when students are required to speak in a specific language. Many struggle to organize their ideas within a limited time, leading to hesitation, lack of coherence, and reduced confidence. These issues hinder effective communication. However, current observations lack sufficient evidence to draw general conclusions. The scarcity of local research emphasizes the need to explore students' experiences in public speaking. This study aims to provide insights that can help improve educational programs and support students' literacy skills. It also contributes to existing literature and serves as a basis for future research.

## **2.0 Methodology**

### **2.1 Research Design**

This study focused on exploring the challenges faced by senior high school students in public speaking, particularly impromptu speaking. Thus, it used a mixed-methods research design. Mixed methods refers to the integration of qualitative and quantitative methodology elements. This method comprised collecting data through both quantitative and qualitative approaches within the same study.

The study aligned with Creswell's criteria; quantitative measures, including Likert scale-type survey questionnaires, were used to assess attitudes and anxiety levels, while interviews were employed to gain a broad understanding of individual student experiences. This study utilized different datasets to provide a comprehensive and qualitative description of public speaking experiences. Phenomenology (Moustakas, 1994) was employed to unravel the travails of the students through the description of their lived experiences.

A proper selection of participants was established, and preconceived ideas and biases were discarded during the data gathering and analysis process. This approach was deemed appropriate because it provided flexibility in data collection, and data saturation was achieved. Therefore, this design, as a means of ascertaining their levels of difficulties and exploring their lived experiences, was effective in describing the students' travails.

**Table 1.** *Qualitative Description of the Level of Students' Impromptu Speaking Difficulties*

| Range of Means | Descriptive Level | Interpretation                                                                             |
|----------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4.2-5          | Very High         | This means that the students' impromptu speaking difficulties are manifested at all times. |
| 3.4 - 4.19     | High              | This means that the students' impromptu speaking difficulties are often manifested.        |
| 2.6 - 3.39     | Moderate          | This means that the students' impromptu speaking difficulties are sometimes manifested.    |
| 1.8 - 2.59     | Low               | This means that the students' impromptu speaking difficulties are rarely manifested.       |
| 1.0 - 1.79     | Very low          | This means that the students' impromptu speaking difficulties are minimally manifested.    |

## 2.2 Research Locale

The study selected the senior high school students of Hagonoy National High School who had taken the Oral Communication subject as research participants. Hagonoy National High School, formerly known as Doña Gabriela Walstrom Memorial High School, had a total population of 1,592, with 816 students belonging to the Senior High School program. The program comprised the Academic and Technical, Vocational, and Livelihood (TVL) track. Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), Accountancy and Business Management (ABM), and Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) were part of the academic track. Oral Communication was a core subject offered to all tracks and was usually taught in the first semester of Grade 11.

## 2.3 Research Participants

The participants in this study were bona fide Grade 11 students enrolled in the Technical Vocational and Livelihood (TVL) track at Hagonoy National High School, who were taking the Oral Communication subject during the 2023-2024 school year. A total of 236 students participated in the study. The sample size was determined using Slovin's formula at a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error.

## 2.4 Research Instrument

The respondents were distributed equally using purposive sampling, ensuring representation from each specialization in the track, with a total of 154 student-respondents. This method was employed to collect data from the entire target population. Accordingly, the results of this survey provided relevant data for the succeeding parts of the study.

Moreover, based on the indicators of quantitative data, eight students were purposely chosen as participants for the qualitative aspect to ensure diverse experiences in public speaking. They were subjected to Key Informant Interviews to gather their varying experiences. Additionally, a survey questionnaire and the researcher served as the primary research instruments for data collection. The survey questionnaire, adopted from Tamonob (2015), was pilot-tested to ensure its reliability and appropriateness for the current study. Meanwhile, the self-made interview guide protocols (IGP), developed by the researcher, were validated by language experts to ensure clarity and relevance. Thematic saturation was achieved when no new themes emerged from the interviews, indicating sufficient depth of data and allowing the researcher to conclude data collection for the qualitative strand.

## 2.5 Data Gathering Procedure

The study underwent various procedures to gather the data, described step by step as follows:

1. Gathering of Instruments –The researcher collated the necessary instruments, including a survey questionnaire for the quantitative aspect and an Interview Guide Protocol for the qualitative aspect.
2. Selection of Respondents and Participants – The TVL students were selected as respondents. One hundred fifty-four students, determined through Slovin's formula, answered the survey. After analyzing the quantitative data, eight students with the highest difficulty levels were selected for the second phase of data collection.

3. Informed Consents and Permission Letters –Permission letters were secured from the head of Hagonoy National High School. Participants for the KII were provided with consent or assent letters to ensure they were fully informed and willing to participate.
4. Survey Proper – The researcher administered the survey questionnaires to the different strata on a predetermined schedule. Respondents rated the Likert scale accordingly.
5. Examining the Responded Survey Questionnaire – After the responses were gathered, the questionnaires were scanned to identify students who met the inclusion criteria for the KII. Eight students were selected as participants for the following phase of data collection.
6. Key Informant Interviews – The eight participants underwent interviews, sharing their unique experiences. The interview guide protocols ensured that the necessary information was gathered.
7. Data Analysis – The data were collated, analyzed, and interpreted. Conclusions were drawn from the analyzed data, and possible implications or recommendations were highlighted.

## 2.6 Ethical Considerations

This research study followed ethical guidelines. To adhere to these moral standards, the researcher had obtained permission letters from the research panels and the institution, namely Hagonoy National High School. Potential participants had been approached, and their willingness to participate in the study was confirmed through the distribution of informed consent forms. The researcher also emphasized the importance of transparency in explaining the study's purpose and methods, particularly the focus on the impromptu speaking experiences of Grade 11 TVL students, which helped build trust between the participants and the researcher. Participants were assured that they could withdraw from the study at any time if they felt uncomfortable with the study's terms and conditions. The researcher also upheld the principles of doing good and avoiding harm to the participants, considering aspects such as accessibility, confidentiality, fairness, justice, meeting arrangements, timing, and scheduling. Furthermore, measures were taken to ensure the confidentiality of the collected data, including the anonymization of participant information and the safeguarding of survey and interview responses.

## 3.0 Results and Discussion

Research Question 1 aims to investigate the level of difficulties faced by students in impromptu speaking across various linguistic and delivery aspects. These aspects include Organization of Ideas, Coherence and Cohesion, Verb Usage, Confidence and Delivery, Time Management, and Proper Punctuation and Intonation. Examining these dimensions is crucial to understanding the specific challenges students encounter, which can help develop targeted strategies to enhance their impromptu speaking skills.

### 3.1 Difficulties in the Organization of Ideas

Table 2 shows that students demonstrated a moderate level of difficulty in organizing ideas during impromptu speaking ( $M = 2.11$ – $2.24$ ). The lowest mean score ( $M = 1.99$ ) indicates particular difficulty in clearly structuring main points, while the highest score ( $M = 2.24$ ) reflects a slightly better ability to maintain a general structure. These findings suggest that although students can follow a basic speech format, they often struggle to prioritize and sequence their ideas effectively under time pressure, likely due to limited exposure to organizational strategies and anxiety during spontaneous speech tasks (Gumartifa et al., 2022).

**Table 2.** *Linguistic Features as Used in the Delivery of Impromptu Speaking*

| Organization of Ideas                                                       | Mean | Descriptor |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------------|
| 1. My ideas are logically organized when I speak impromptu                  | 2.20 | Moderate   |
| 2. I can clearly and concisely introduce my topic.                          | 2.06 | Moderate   |
| 3. My speeches have a well-structured body with main points clearly stated. | 1.99 | Low        |
| 4. I conclude my impromptu speeches with a clear summary of my points.      | 2.06 | Moderate   |
| 5. My impromptu speeches have a clear structure that is easy to follow.     | 2.24 | Moderate   |

To address this, educators are encouraged to implement structured scaffolding techniques such as mind maps, guided outlines, and brainstorming templates, which can help students arrange their ideas more logically. Incorporating activities such as debates, guided presentations, and peer feedback sessions can further enhance students' fluency and confidence in organizing speech content. As emphasized by Alisoy and Oglu (2024), structured speaking strategies are crucial for enhancing coherence, clarity, and delivery.

### 3.2 Challenges in Coherence and Cohesion

Table 3 reveals that students exhibited moderate challenges in coherence and cohesion during impromptu speaking, with mean scores ranging from 2.11 to 2.36. The highest score ( $M = 2.36$ ) suggests some ability to present logically flowing ideas, while the lowest ( $M = 2.11$ ) indicates difficulty maintaining a consistent theme. These results suggest that students frequently deviate from their central message, which can impact clarity and speech organization. Such inconsistencies are likely due to the cognitive demands of spontaneous speaking, including managing anxiety, limited preparation time, and unfamiliarity with the topic. According to Li (2024), coherence involves the logical connection of ideas, while cohesion depends on the use of linguistic markers to signal these connections. When these elements are lacking, speech can become fragmented or complex to follow (Emiroglu, 2015; Guvey, 2021).

**Table 3.** *Linguistic Features as Used in the Delivery of Impromptu Speaking*

| Coherence and Cohesion                                                     | Mean | Descriptor |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------------|
| 1. My ideas flow logically from one point to the next.                     | 2.36 | Moderate   |
| 2. I use appropriate transitions to connect different parts of my speech.. | 2.27 | Moderate   |
| 3. I can maintain a consistent theme throughout my impromptu speeches.     | 2.11 | Moderate   |
| 4. My speeches are easy to follow.                                         | 2.34 | Moderate   |
| 5. I maintain a consistent line of reasoning throughout my speech.         | 2.31 | Moderate   |

To improve performance, instruction should emphasize the use of discourse markers, transitional phrases, and consistent thematic development throughout the text. Regular practice in structured impromptu speaking activities, along with a supportive learning environment, can help students enhance their confidence, reduce disfluencies, and improve overall speech cohesion.

### 3.3 Issues in Verb Usage

**Table 4.** *Linguistic Features as Used in the Delivery of Impromptu Speaking*

| Verb Usage                                                      | Mean | Descriptor |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------|------------|
| 1. I correctly use verb tenses in my impromptu speeches.        | 2.36 | Moderate   |
| 2. I avoid overusing certain verbs in my impromptu speeches.    | 2.27 | Moderate   |
| 3. I choose strong and precise verbs to convey my ideas.        | 2.11 | Moderate   |
| 4. My verb choices enhance the clarity and impact of my speech. | 2.34 | Moderate   |
| 5. I avoid overusing simple verbs.                              | 2.31 | Moderate   |

Table 4 indicates that students demonstrated moderate proficiency in verb usage during impromptu speaking, with mean scores ranging from 2.12 to 2.26. The lowest score ( $M = 2.12$ ) reflects challenges in applying consistent verb tenses, while the highest ( $M = 2.26$ ) suggests a developing ability to vary verb choices and avoid repetition. These findings imply that grammatical uncertainty, particularly under time pressure, can disrupt speech fluency and clarity. As Gani et al. (2022) note, verb accuracy is fundamental to sentence structure, and frequent errors can significantly impair comprehension. Additionally, Gvishiani (2020) observed that in spontaneous settings, students may default to informal or simplistic verb forms, which further weakens the effectiveness of communication.

To address these issues, educators should incorporate targeted grammar instruction, including verb conjugation drills, tense consistency exercises, and contextualized speaking tasks that provide opportunities for students to practice their language skills in real-world settings. Regular, structured speaking practice can help students internalize grammatical patterns, enhancing both accuracy and fluency in impromptu speech.

### 3.4 Confidence and Delivery during Impromptu Speaking

Table 5 reveals that students exhibited moderate confidence in impromptu speech delivery, with mean scores ranging from 2.14 to 2.54. The highest score ( $M = 2.54$ ) suggests some strength in conveying emotions, while the lowest ( $M = 2.14$ ) indicates difficulty in projecting confidence during spontaneous speaking. These findings highlight the psychological demands of impromptu speaking, particularly the need to manage anxiety, maintain composure, and engage the audience in real time. As noted by Raja et al. (2004) and Lungay (2023), nervousness and self-consciousness can disrupt fluency and focus, especially under pressure. Students' limited eye contact and hesitations suggest that emotional regulation plays a significant role in their speaking performance.

**Table 5.** *Linguistic Features as Used in the Delivery of Impromptu Speaking*

| <b>Confidence and Delivery</b>                                    | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Descriptor</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| 1. I maintain good eye contact during my impromptu speeches.      | 2.44        | Moderate          |
| 2. I can effectively convey emotions in my impromptu speeches.    | 2.54        | Moderate          |
| 3. I use facial expressions to convey my message in my speech.    | 2.34        | Moderate          |
| 4. I feel confident when speaking impromptu.                      | 2.14        | Moderate          |
| 5. I speak at an appropriate pace, neither too fast nor too slow. | 2.22        | Moderate          |

To improve delivery, educators should incorporate frequent low-stakes speaking activities, such as peer feedback rounds or timed mini-speeches, to gradually build students' confidence and composure. Nadiyah et al. (2019) and Lumettu et al. (2017) emphasize that exposure and practice in high-pressure situations help develop emotional resilience, ultimately enhancing clarity, fluency, and speaker-audience connection.

### 3.5 Time Management under Pressure

Table 6 shows that students exhibited moderate difficulties in time management during impromptu speaking, with mean scores ranging from 2.05 to 2.17. The lowest score ( $M = 2.05$ ) reflects challenges in managing overall speaking time effectively, while the highest ( $M = 2.17$ ) suggests some ability to stay on topic. These results indicate that students struggle to pace their responses appropriately, often failing to prioritize key points or allocating disproportionate time to specific ideas. As noted by Lungay (2023), the pressure of limited time can lead to rushed, disorganized delivery and incomplete thoughts. Without conscious control over pacing, students may conclude abruptly or leave ideas underdeveloped.

**Table 6.** *Linguistic Features as Used in the Delivery of Impromptu Speaking*

| <b>Time Management</b>                                                                                                | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Descriptor</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| 1. I can adjust the length of my impromptu speech to fit the available time.                                          | 2.08        | Moderate          |
| 2. I avoid rambling or going off-topic during my impromptu speeches.                                                  | 2.17        | Moderate          |
| 3. I can effectively manage my speaking time in an impromptu setting.                                                 | 2.05        | Moderate          |
| 4. My impromptu speeches are concise and to the point.                                                                | 2.09        | Moderate          |
| 5. I can quickly think of thoughts or ideas in the short time given to prepare before delivering an impromptu speech. | 2.08        | Moderate          |

To address this, educators should incorporate structured, timed speaking exercises that simulate real-time conditions. These activities can help students develop a sense of pacing, focus on key content, and improve their ability to balance brevity with completeness. Research by Andriani et al. (2019), Sekkal (2020), and Granger et al. (2015) supports the use of time-constrained tasks as a means to enhance both idea development and delivery efficiency in spontaneous speech.

### 3.6 Use of Punctuation and Intonation in Speech Delivery

Table 7 shows that students demonstrated a moderate ability to use punctuation and intonation effectively in impromptu speaking, with mean scores ranging from 2.14 to 2.26. The highest score ( $M = 2.26$ ) reflects a relative strength in using pauses and vocal modulation to enhance clarity, while the lowest ( $M = 2.14$ ) indicates difficulty mimicking punctuation through speech pauses. These results suggest that students' delivery may lack precision and expressive variation, key elements for maintaining audience engagement and conveying meaning effectively. As Lungay (2023) observed, monotone delivery and poorly timed pauses can hinder listener comprehension and reduce emotional connection. The cognitive demands of spontaneous speaking, organizing ideas while also managing delivery, may contribute to inconsistent pacing and intonation.

**Table 7.** *Linguistic Features as Used in the Delivery of Impromptu Speaking*

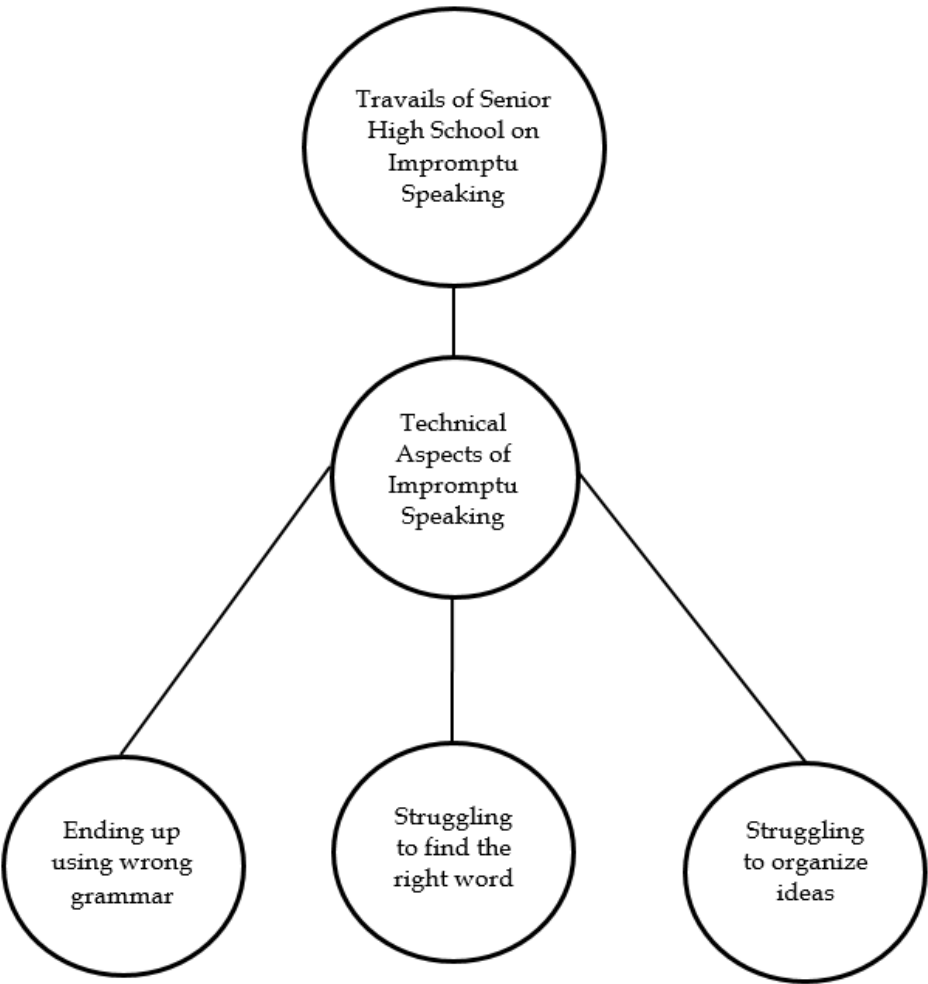
| <b>Proper Punctuation and Intonation</b>                                                      | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Descriptor</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| 1. I pause appropriately to mimic proper punctuation in my speech.                            | 2.14        | Moderate          |
| 2. My intonation reflects the punctuation, such as raising my voice at the end of a question. | 2.20        | Moderate          |
| 3. I effectively use pauses to separate ideas, similar to using commas or periods.            | 2.25        | Moderate          |
| 4. I use pauses and intonation to enhance the clarity and impact of my speech.                | 2.26        | Moderate          |
| 5. My delivery indicates exclamations or questions clearly through voice modulation.          | 2.25        | Moderate          |

Improving these skills requires deliberate instruction in vocal techniques, such as intonation patterns, pause placement, and emphasis control. Andriani et al. (2019) and Sekkal (2020) stress that vocal variation is essential in capturing attention and conveying intent. To support development, educators can integrate targeted vocal

exercises and utilize speech analysis tools (Granger et al., 2015) to provide individualized feedback, helping students fine-tune their delivery for clarity and impact.

**3.7 Travails of Senior High School Students in Impromptu Speaking**

This section presents the findings from the qualitative research derived from the Key Informant Interviews (KII) conducted with the participants. The analysis identified recurring patterns in students' experiences, with a particular focus on how linguistic factors contributed to their struggles. Research question 2 specifically examined the difficulties students encountered in impromptu speaking, leading to the emergence of one essential theme: 1) technical aspects of impromptu speaking. The researcher employed a phenomenological approach, allowing participants to share their personal experiences and interpretations.



**Figure 1.** *Thematic Framework in the Travails of Senior High School Students on Impromptu Speaking*

***Technical Aspects of Impromptu Speaking***

The following indicates that, after the fundamental subject of linguistic challenges in impromptu speaking was identified, three additional subthemes emerged: using incorrect grammar, struggling to find the right words to say, and difficulty in organizing ideas. The first category, where informants used incorrect grammar, was expressed by Informants 2 and 5, who shared that those grammatical errors often hindered the clarity of their responses. The second category, struggling to find the right words to say, was highlighted by Informants 1 and 3, who mentioned that limited vocabulary left them unable to articulate their thoughts effectively, resulting in incomplete or unclear statements. Lastly, Informants 3 and 4 struggled to organize their ideas, which made it difficult for them to structure their responses logically, further affecting the coherence of their speech. These linguistic challenges underscore the need for targeted interventions to improve students’ vocabulary, grammar, and organizational skills, thereby enhancing their performance in impromptu speaking tasks.

**Ending up using an ungrammatical structure.** The first category, which involved using incorrect grammar, was a challenge highlighted by Informants 2 and 5, who shared that during impromptu speaking activities in the classroom, they often made grammatical errors. In addition, during the interview with the student-informants, they expressed that these errors made it difficult for their listeners to understand their intended message, further diminishing their confidence in their speaking abilities and leaving them feeling frustrated as they struggled to communicate their thoughts effectively. This highlights the need for greater emphasis on grammar practice and support in classrooms to help students build confidence and improve their ability to express ideas clearly.

*"Sometimes, the grammar you use is incorrect, ma'am." (RQ2KI2)*

*"I don't know if my grammar is correct." (RQ2KI5)*

Grammatical errors present a significant challenge for students during impromptu speaking activities, as these errors often hinder the clarity of their intended message, making it difficult for listeners to comprehend their ideas fully. The difficulty of managing grammar while organizing thoughts and speaking spontaneously highlights the need for targeted support in developing grammatical accuracy. Research indicates that students struggle with grammar due to factors such as interference from their native language and the pressure of real-time communication, which often results in reduced clarity in their verbal expression (Wicaksono, 2022; Muradi, 2024). To address these challenges, integrating grammar practice into speaking tasks, along with structured feedback and continued practice, can help students improve both clarity and fluency. This approach not only enhances grammatical accuracy but also builds confidence and reduces frustration in real-time communication, ultimately fostering more effective impromptu speaking.

**Struggling to find the right words to say.** The second category is struggling to find the right words to say. Informants 1 and 3 reported that during impromptu speaking activities, they frequently struggled to select the appropriate vocabulary. This struggle was particularly evident when they needed to speak spontaneously, leading to pauses, hesitation, and incomplete thoughts. The student-informants reported that these challenges made it more difficult for them to convey their ideas clearly, which in turn impacted the overall effectiveness of their communication. This underscores the importance of providing students with regular opportunities to expand their vocabulary and improve the overall effectiveness of their communication. This underscores the importance of providing students with regular opportunities to expand their vocabulary and engage in speaking exercises that allow them to practice quick thinking.

*"I don't know many words, ma'am, in terms of vocabulary." (RQ2KI1)*

*"I struggle with finding the right words to say." (RQ2KI3)*

The challenge of struggling to find the right words during impromptu speaking activities is a common obstacle faced by students, often stemming from a limited vocabulary that hinders the ability to express ideas clearly and effectively. When students cannot recall or access appropriate words quickly, their responses become disorganized or incomplete. The pressure of thinking and speaking spontaneously further exacerbates this issue, as students may feel rushed or overwhelmed by the need to respond in real time. Zaitun et al. (2021) suggest that students with limited vocabulary often struggle to express their thoughts clearly, particularly in impromptu speaking situations. To address these challenges, integrating vocabulary-building strategies into speaking activities is crucial for enhancing students' ability to communicate effectively in real-time scenarios.

**Struggling to organize ideas.** The last category was struggling to organize ideas, also narrated by two student-informants who found it difficult to structure their thoughts clearly during impromptu speaking activities. The pressure to speak without preparation often led to disorganized responses, making it hard for listeners to follow their points. This issue highlights the importance of strategies or frameworks to help students organize their ideas effectively before speaking, thereby enhancing both clarity and communication during spontaneous speaking tasks.

*"I don't know how to organize my ideas, like I don't even know where to start, ma'am." (RQ2KI3)*

*"I also don't know how to organize my ideas properly, ma'am." (RQ2KI4)*

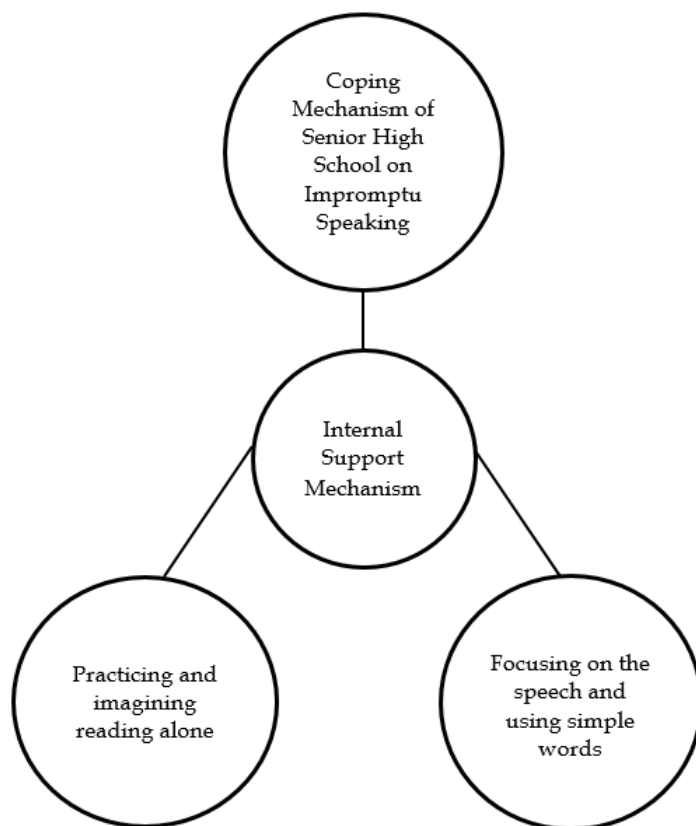
The difficulty in organizing ideas during impromptu speaking is a common challenge among students, as highlighted by the informants. Their responses reveal struggles with structuring thoughts coherently, often



resulting in uncertainty about how to begin or continue. This disorganization can hinder effective communication, leading to incomplete or unclear expression of ideas. Saputro et al. (2023) emphasize that students frequently face obstacles in articulating their thoughts, identifying it as a key barrier to effective communication. Improving students' ability to organize ideas could significantly enhance their impromptu speaking performance, underscoring the need for strategies that support both cognitive and expressive communication skills. Additionally, Muftianti (2024) points out that developing speaking skills not only helps individuals express themselves clearly but also fosters critical thinking.

### 3.8 Coping Mechanism of Senior High School Students towards Impromptu Speaking

This section presents the findings from the Key Informant Interviews (KII) with senior high school students, offering an in-depth examination of their experiences and strategies for impromptu speaking. Research Question 3 aimed to gain insight into how senior high school students perceive impromptu speaking. From the analysis, one central theme stood out: the internal support mechanism.



**Figure 2.** Thematic Framework of the Coping Mechanism of Senior High School Students Towards Impromptu Speaking

#### **Internal Support Mechanism**

The following indicates that, after overcoming the challenges of impromptu speaking, four additional subthemes emerged. The following exercises involve practicing and imagining reading aloud while focusing on the speech, using simple words. The first category, which was practicing and imagining reading alone, was answered by Informants 3 and 4, who found that rehearsing and mentally preparing enhanced their readiness. The last category focused on the speech and using simple words. Informants 3 and 6 emphasized the value of staying focused on the topic and using simple language to communicate clearly.

**Practicing and imagining reading alone.** The subtheme of practicing and imagining reading alone was shared by Informants 3 and 4, who explained how practicing by themselves and mentally preparing for impromptu speaking activities helped them feel more confident. In the interviews, participants emphasized that taking time to practice alone gave them a sense of control and allowed them to work through their thoughts in a way that made them feel more capable and in control. This theme emphasizes the importance of self-practice and mental rehearsal in overcoming the challenges of impromptu speaking. By practicing on their own, students had the space to refine their ideas and become more comfortable with how they wanted to express themselves. Imagining different

scenarios and mentally running through their speeches helped them feel more prepared for the unpredictability of impromptu speaking. This private practice allowed students to build their confidence, experiment with different ways of organizing their thoughts, and ultimately feel more at ease when speaking. In the end, these individual practices helped them feel more ready and equipped to face the challenge of impromptu speaking with greater confidence.

*"I think carefully, and reading gives me ideas." (RQ3KI3)*

*"I listen carefully and choose simple words." (RQ3KI4)*

Students employ various strategies to prepare for impromptu speaking, emphasizing thoughtful planning, clear communication, and mental rehearsal to make their responses more structured and meaningful. By carefully considering the task, they can generate ideas and organize their thoughts effectively, ensuring relevance and coherence. Reading expands their vocabulary and familiarizes them with diverse sentence patterns, which is essential for fluent speech. Mortaji (2018) notes that breaking down goals into smaller tasks during practice can significantly enhance public speaking skills, especially for those who struggle with spontaneity. Methodical practice, including speaking in front of others, builds confidence and fluency, which are crucial for unprepared speaking situations. The psychological aspect also plays a key role, as practicing impromptu speaking reduces anxiety and helps students feel more at ease in front of an audience. Gumartifa et al. (2022) highlight that impromptu speaking sharpens spontaneous thought expression, while solo reading and topic discussion strengthen cognitive skills needed to organize ideas quickly. Visualization techniques, such as imagining a calm speaking environment, can help ease pressure during actual performance. By combining strategies such as careful thought, consistent practice, and visualization, students can face impromptu speaking with improved clarity, confidence, and composure.

**Focusing on the speech and using simple words.** The subtheme of concentrating on the speech and using simple words emerged strongly with Informants 3 and 6, who shared how focus on the message and keeping their language simple made impromptu speaking more manageable. In their interviews, they expressed that by concentrating on what they needed to say rather than worrying about using fancy words, they could communicate more clearly and stay on track. This strategy helped them avoid getting tangled in the clear and stay on track. This strategy helped them avoid getting tangled in complicated language, allowing them to convey their ideas in a clear and easy-to-understand manner. For these students, using simple words was a way to stay grounded and organized, especially when faced with the unpredictability of impromptu speaking. It removed the pressure of having to sound perfect or use complex vocabulary, which often led to confusion or hesitation. Instead, they were able to communicate their thoughts directly and effectively, helping them stay composed.

*"I carefully think about my words." (RQ3KI3)*

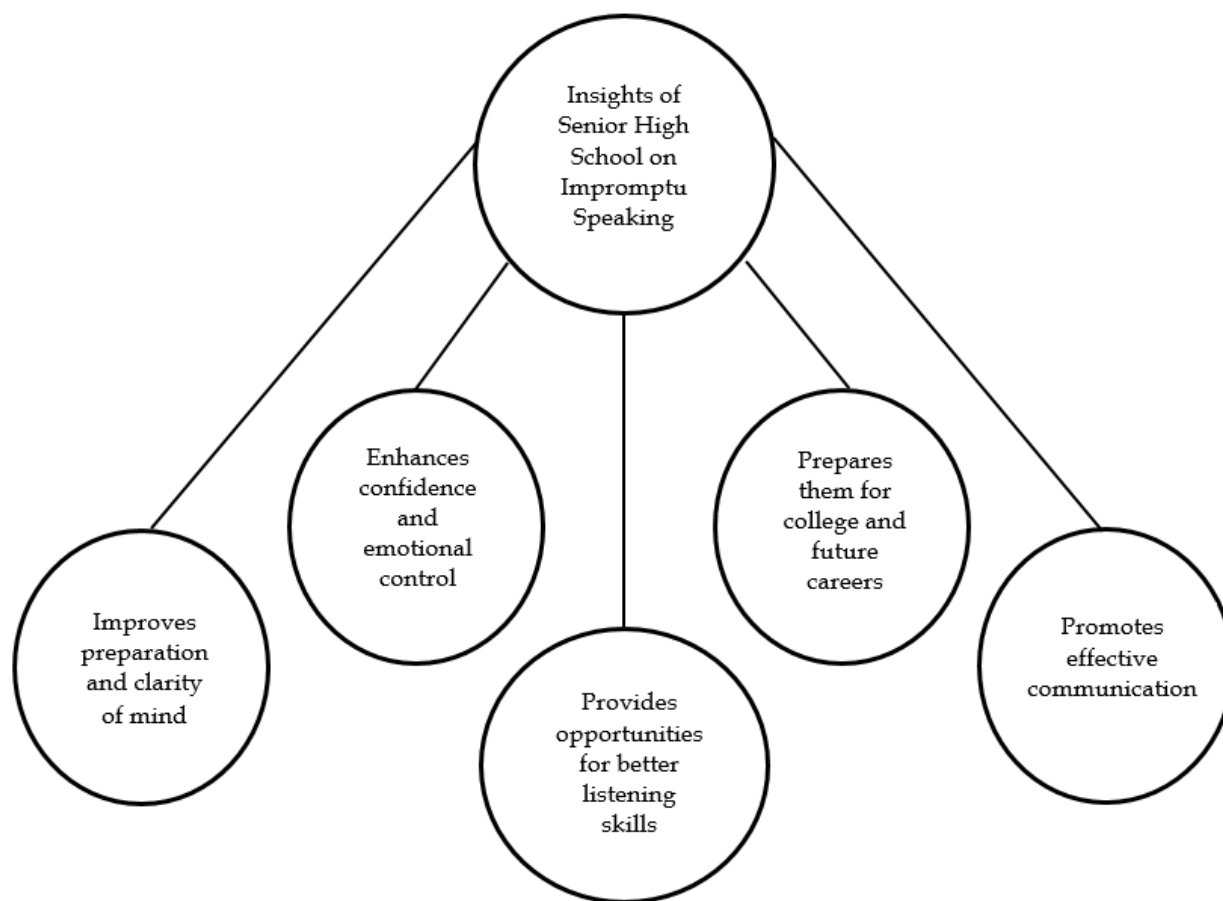
*"I use simple words to make my answers clear." (RQ3KI6)*

Students employ a range of strategies to navigate the challenges of impromptu speaking, focusing on remaining calm, managing their attention, and selecting their words carefully. By concentrating solely on their speech and setting aside distractions, they can approach the task with greater clarity and composure, allowing them to deliver their message without feeling overwhelmed. Many students find that focusing on themselves rather than the audience helps reduce the pressure of being observed, creating a mental space where they can think more clearly and speak more comfortably. Ananda (2023) also emphasizes that confident students are more motivated and optimistic about their learning. Pausing to reflect before speaking helps ensure that their responses are clear, structured, and intentional, thereby reducing errors and confusion. Together, these strategies enable students to maintain control over their thoughts and express themselves confidently and clearly in impromptu situations.

### **3.9 Insights of Senior High School Students towards Impromptu Speaking**

This section presents the findings from the qualitative research based on key informant interviews (KII) conducted with senior high school students. The results highlighted the common challenges students faced and the strategies they employed during impromptu speaking tasks. Research Question 4 focused on the insights of senior high school students regarding impromptu speaking. Five essential themes emerged from the analysis: 1) improves preparation and clarity of mind; 2) enhances confidence and emotional control; 3) provides opportunities for better listening skills; 4) prepares them for college and future careers; and 5) promotes effective communication,

which highlights the importance of practice, skill development, and real-world application in becoming proficient in impromptu speaking.



**Figure 3.** *Thematic Framework of the Insights of Senior High School Students Towards Impromptu Speaking*

### ***Foundational Readiness towards Impromptu Speaking***

The theme of foundational readiness towards impromptu speaking emerged strongly from the participants' experiences, with three subthemes identified: 1) preparation and mental clarity, 2) confidence and emotional regulation, and 3) adaptability and listening skills. These subthemes underscored the importance of mental readiness, emotional control, and adaptability in effectively handling impromptu speaking tasks. The ability to prepare mentally before speaking is crucial for effective impromptu speaking. Students emphasized that organizing their thoughts and staying calm under pressure were key to delivering clear and effective responses. Despite feeling nervous, many recognized that proper preparation helped them perform better, as it allowed them to focus and avoid mistakes. Confidence and emotional regulation were also seen as foundational elements for success. Students highlighted that building self-assurance helped them express themselves more clearly and manage anxiety, leading to more effective responses. Furthermore, adaptability and strong listening skills were essential for handling spontaneous speaking situations. Being sociable, imaginative, and observant helped students quickly grasp the topic or question, allowing them to formulate appropriate and thoughtful responses. Overall, the findings suggest that mental clarity, emotional control, and adaptability are vital for students to succeed in impromptu speaking tasks.

**Improves preparation and clarity of mind.** The participants shared valuable insights into the importance of preparation and clarity in impromptu speaking. Informant 2 emphasized that preparation and practice are crucial

for handling the challenges of impromptu speaking. They pointed out that these factors help organize thoughts and improve clarity, especially when nerves are involved.

On the other hand, Informant 7 raised concerns about the emotional challenges that accompany impromptu speaking. Both participants pointed out that nervousness and lack of readiness make it harder to respond effectively, as anxiety can cloud judgment and disrupt the flow of thoughts. Informant 7 noted that unpreparedness leads to increased stress, which in turn further impairs clarity and delivery. Furthermore, Informant 8 added that while impromptu speaking can be valuable in various contexts, its effectiveness is greatly enhanced when combined with proper preparation and the ability to stay calm under pressure.

*"Study and memorize early so that the answers are clearer." (RQ4KI2)*

*"Practice and reading help improve answers." (RQ4KI7)*

The findings reveal that preparation and practice play a crucial role in overcoming the challenges of impromptu speaking, as they help organize thoughts, reduce nervousness, and improve clarity under pressure. Mental preparation enhances composure and confidence, addressing both cognitive and emotional barriers such as anxiety and fear of judgment. These observations are supported by Suthiwartnarueput (2017), who noted that while impromptu speaking fosters natural speech skills, it presents significant challenges for beginners and those with limited language proficiency, particularly due to time constraints and nervousness. Additionally, Gumartifa et al. (2022) emphasized that a lack of confidence can hinder performance, often causing students to forget their prepared content during delivery. Thus, preparation not only strengthens students' ability to stay on topic and recover from confusion but also reduces the risk of errors and boosts resilience in public speaking.

**Enhances confidence and emotional control.** This subtheme emphasizes the importance of confidence and emotional regulation in overcoming the challenges of impromptu speaking. Informants noted that confidence is crucial for delivering precise and effective responses. Informant 1 recommended staying calm and addressing weaknesses, while Informant 8 stressed the importance of regular practice for improving both skills and composure. Informant 2 noted that impromptu speaking is challenging without confidence, further highlighting the connection between emotional control and confidence.

*"Stay calm, think carefully, and focus on weaknesses to improve." (RQ4KI1)*

*"Impromptu speaking is difficult without preparation and confidence." (RQ4KI2)*

The responses highlighted a strong connection between confidence and emotional regulation in impromptu speaking, as both are essential for delivering precise and effective responses under pressure. Confidence enables individuals to express their thoughts calmly and clearly, while emotional regulation helps manage anxiety and maintain focus despite time constraints or nervousness. These two elements work together to enhance clarity, composure, and overall performance during spontaneous communication. Supporting this, Salim (2015) emphasized that students who communicate fluently and confidently benefit significantly from their self-confidence, which plays a significant role in reducing anxiety and improving academic success in speaking tasks. Similarly, Nadiyah et al. (2019) noted that self-confidence is vital for conveying ideas effectively, as it allows speakers to articulate thoughts more clearly and perform with greater impact and satisfaction. Together, these studies affirm the critical role that both confidence and emotional regulation play in achieving success and personal fulfillment in impromptu speaking situations.

**Provides opportunities for better listening skills.** This is observant, and a good listener to better engage with the audience and respond appropriately to unexpected topics. Informant 4 also emphasized the importance of anticipating questions and practicing answers, noting that this preparation enables speakers to feel more confident during impromptu speaking situations. Furthermore, Informant 8 noted that being attentive, analyzing situations quickly, and practicing consistently are essential for effective delivery. These skills allow speakers to adapt to the demands of the moment, ensuring they can respond clearly and effectively regardless of the circumstances.

*"Anticipate questions, practice answers, and don't fear speaking." (RQ4KI4)*

*"Be attentive, analyze quickly, and practice for better delivery." (RQ4KI8)*

Adaptability and listening skills are essential for successfully navigating impromptu speaking situations, as they enable speakers to remain flexible and responsive, adjusting their responses based on the conversation's flow or the specifics of the prompt. Active listening, in particular, enables individuals to quickly pick up cues from both the audience and the context, allowing them to tailor their responses effectively while reducing anxiety and building confidence. This attentiveness, combined with the ability to analyze situations on the spot, enhances clarity and relevance in spontaneous speech. Alisoy et al. (2024) emphasized that active listening extends beyond simply hearing—it involves understanding the deeper context and meaning of what is being said, which enables more thoughtful and aligned responses. Furthermore, engaging in active public speaking forums helps students become more comfortable in unfamiliar settings, gradually lowering anxiety levels and improving their ability to communicate with confidence and ease.

**Prepares them for college and future careers.** This subtheme emphasizes how impromptu speaking equips students for success in both college and their careers. According to Informant 1, impromptu speaking proves to be especially beneficial in college, aiding in tasks such as delivering reports and presentations. Informant 2 further emphasized that developing these skills not only boosts confidence but also helps in presenting well-organized reports in academic settings.

*"Impromptu speaking helps in college for reports and presentations."* (RQ4KI1)

*"Skills help in college, especially in reports and boosting confidence."* (RQ4KI2)

As highlighted by the participants, impromptu speaking is a vital skill for success in both academic and professional settings. In college, it enhances students' ability to present ideas clearly and confidently during presentations and reports, thereby improving assessment outcomes. In the workplace, particularly in roles involving customer service or teamwork, the capacity to speak spontaneously proves valuable for explaining products or services and responding effectively to unexpected situations. These skills not only boost self-confidence but also prepare individuals for unplanned speaking opportunities in diverse contexts. Proficiency in impromptu speaking supports academic excellence and career preparedness, equipping individuals with the essential communication skills they need. Research supports this, showing that university students can improve their English-speaking abilities through impromptu speech practice, which fosters independence and continuous improvement (Mortaji, 2018). Developing strong thinking skills further supports students in initiating and sustaining their growth in public speaking.

**Promotes effective communication.** This subtheme underscores impromptu speaking performance. Informants stressed that preparation through study and regular practice significantly reduces errors and builds confidence. Informant 3 emphasized the importance of reading, practicing, and thinking critically to avoid hesitation, suggesting that careful preparation helps mitigate uncertainty. The role of preparation in fostering clarity was further emphasized by Informant 5, who noted that effective speaking requires preparation through practice and reading to avoid hesitation when answering.

*"Read, practice, and think carefully to avoid hesitation."* (RQ4KI3)

*"Preparation is key for effective speaking. Practice, read, and avoid hesitation when answering."* (RQ4KI5)

Effective communication is built on preparation, focus, and consistent practice, which together contribute to a clear and impactful delivery. Taking time to study, concentrate, and speak at a steady pace helps minimize errors and ensures the message is easily understood. Thoughtful and deliberate speech enhances comprehension and reduces misunderstandings. Engaging in reading, practicing, and reflecting is crucial for lowering hesitation and fostering confidence. Proper preparation enables individuals to articulate their ideas effectively and maintain a natural, organized flow in both conversations and presentations. Clear pronunciation is equally vital, as it ensures the intended message is conveyed accurately; regular practice helps refine speaking skills and boosts confidence. Effective communication integrates thought, knowledge, and skill, forming the foundation of both speaking and listening, and shapes how people interact and express themselves (Staff, 2024). Moreover, pronunciation plays a critical role in effective communication.

## 4.0 Conclusion

This study offers valuable insights into the challenges that senior high school students face in impromptu speaking, as revealed through meticulous data collection and analysis. The findings highlight that students face various challenges in organizing their responses, maintaining coherence, and using correct grammar and verb

forms. Beyond technical difficulties, emotional factors such as anxiety, fear of judgment, and low self-confidence further contribute to their struggles. These findings highlight the complexity of impromptu speaking and underscore the need for comprehensive strategies to help students overcome these challenges.

The study reveals that linguistic challenges have a significant impact on students' ability to speak spontaneously. Many students struggle with retrieving appropriate vocabulary, ensuring grammatical accuracy, and structuring their responses effectively under pressure. Anxiety and hesitation further hinder their performance, making impromptu speaking a daunting task.

However, students have developed various strategies to cope with these difficulties. Regular practice, self-motivation, and stress management techniques play a crucial role in enhancing their speaking abilities. Some students also benefit from peer support and frequent exposure to spontaneous speaking situations, which helps them gain confidence and fluency. These findings highlight the importance of targeted interventions that address both the linguistic and psychological aspects of impromptu speaking.

Educators should integrate structured impromptu speaking exercises, vocabulary development, and grammar instruction into the classroom. Anxiety-reduction techniques and a supportive learning environment are essential. Teacher training and peer collaboration should be encouraged to assist students further.

The study's scope was limited to a specific group and relied on self-reported data, which may affect the generalizability and depth of the findings. The cross-sectional design also limits understanding of skill development over time.

Experimental studies should test specific teaching methods and anxiety management techniques to improve impromptu speaking. Longitudinal research could track students' progress and the lasting effects of interventions. Exploring technology-based tools may also provide new ways to enhance spontaneous speaking skills.

## 5.0 Contributions of Authors

Author 1: Initial conceptualization, design, formulation of research questions, data collection, organization, and analysis. Also independently led the writing and drafting of the manuscript, ensuring clarity, coherence, and adherence to academic standards.

Author 2: Essential guidance and support, particularly in the areas of editing and refining the work.

## 6.0 Funding

This research was conducted without external financial support from funding agencies, government institutions, private organizations, or academic institutions. The authors covered all expenses related to the study independently, including data collection, analysis, and publication.

## 7.0 Conflict of Interests

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest throughout the entire research process, including the study's design, data collection, analysis, and publication. All findings, interpretations, and conclusions presented in this study are based solely on the researcher's independent analysis and judgment, with no external influence or bias. Furthermore, ethical considerations were strictly adhered to during the entire research process.

## 8.0 Acknowledgment

The researcher would like to express profound gratitude to Maritess A. Rulona, MALIT, for her unwavering support, insightful guidance, and constant encouragement throughout the research process. Her mentorship has been instrumental in shaping this study and driving the researcher toward excellence.

A sincere thank you is extended to the esteemed panelists, Kristoffer Lois B. Tantano, MALIT; Rikka Bianca Condes, MST; Ana Marie J. Matalines, PhD; and Harih G. Lopez, DBM, for their invaluable expertise, constructive critiques, and generous sharing of knowledge. Their input has significantly contributed to the development and completion of this research. The researcher would also like to express her gratitude to her statistician, Levi S. Dumayac, for his expertise in analyzing and interpreting data, which has been invaluable.

The researcher is also grateful to the participants and school administrators for their cooperation and support, which made the study possible.

Lastly, I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to all those who provided encouragement, motivation, and prayers throughout this journey. Their support has played a crucial role in the personal and academic growth I experienced during this process.

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