Chapter 1

**THE PROBLEM**

Today, the world is more connected and changing faster than ever. Because of this, communication is not just a simple skill, it is a very important part of doing well in school and in life. Students need to know how to share their ideas clearly, listen to others, and have good conversations. This is especially true for those in the HUMSS (Humanities and Social Sciences) strand, where talking, working with others, and thinking deeply are part of everyday learning.

All over the world, communication skills and being active in school are seen as very important for students, especially those taking HUMSS (Humanities and Social Sciences). These are key abilities that help students do well in their studies and future careers. According to the World Economic Forum (2020), communication skills are among the top 10 most needed skills today. This means students need to learn how to speak and write well to succeed in school and in their future jobs. Studies also show that students with good communication skills are more active in school, they join class discussions, work well with classmates, and understand their lessons better (Toste, et.al, 2020). This idea is also supported by research in education, which shows that HUMSS students who are confident in communicating tend to join activities more, think critically, and collaborate well with others, important signs of academic engagement (Bernard, 2018; UNESCO, 2021).

In Asia, strong communication skills are increasingly recognized as essential in education, especially in countries with high academic expectations. A study by Lee, J. S., et.al (2020) revealed that senior high school students in South Korea and the Swedish who actively develop their oral communication skills show higher levels of class participation, motivation, and collaboration. Despite cultural tendencies in some Asian countries toward reserved classroom behavior, efforts to promote communication-based learning, such as group projects and presentations, have led to improved academic engagement (Zheng, 2022).

In the Philippines, communication skills are a very important part of the HUMSS strand in senior high school. The HUMSS curriculum focuses on activities like public speaking, writing, and social interaction. According to the Department of Education (DepEd), the strand helps students build skills in communication, critical thinking, and research to prepare for jobs in fields like teaching, media, and public service. However, even with this focus, many Filipino students, especially those in areas like Luzon, still find it hard to speak or write confidently. A study by Sevilla, et.al, (2021) found that low confidence and fear of speaking were major reasons why HUMSS students participated less in class, which affected their academic performance. This shows the need for better support and communication training in schools across the country.

HUMSS students often join in class discussions, give presentations, debate, and talk with others. However, despite the clear importance of oral communication in the HUMSS strand, there is limited systematic research in the local that specifically examines how students’ speaking skills influence their academic engagement. Most existing studies focus on general communication skills or language proficiency, but not on the direct connection between oral communication and student participation, collaboration, and motivation to learn. In particular, there is a lack of large-scale, in-depth studies that explore this link among senior high school HUMSS students, especially in public schools or underrepresented regions. As a result, educators and policymakers may lack the necessary data to create targeted interventions that strengthen oral communication and support student engagement in the HUMSS strand.

Filling this research gap is important because speaking skills not only help students express their ideas but also build their confidence, motivation, and ability to work with others, key parts of academic success. Without proper support in developing oral communication, many capable students may continue to struggle in participating and engaging in class activities. Furthermore, in line with the K to 12 Enhanced Basic Education Act, (Republic Act 10533), which aims to prepare students for lifelong learning and employment, schools are encouraged to provide programs that improve communication and 21st-century skills. Understanding the link between speaking skills and student engagement will help create better learning environments that are both academically and socially supportive Republic of the Philippines, 2013.

This study aims to explore the connection between oral communication skills and academic engagement among senior high school HUMSS students. Specifically, it will assess students’ levels of speaking confidence and participation in class activities and examine how these factors are related. According to Bernard (2018) and UNESCO (2021), strong communication skills are linked to better classroom involvement, critical thinking, and teamwork. Therefore, the findings of this study may offer useful insights for teachers and school leaders in designing programs that strengthen oral communication.

More importantly, this research seeks to raise awareness about how challenges in speaking—such as fear, low confidence, and lack of practice can affect students’ ability to join class discussions, group work, and learning activities. As Sevilla, Bansil, and Hila (2021) noted, many HUMSS students hesitate to speak up even when they understand the lesson, which affects their academic performance. By recognizing these barriers, teachers can create more supportive and encouraging learning environments that help students speak more freely and confidently. In turn, this may improve their engagement, performance, and future readiness for communication-heavy careers.

In conclusion, the relationship between oral communication and academic engagement deserves more attention especially within the HUMSS strand. This study aims to provide data that will support better teaching strategies, student development, and the wider goal of inclusive, learner-centered education in line with the K to 12 Enhanced Basic Education Act (RA 10533) and 21st-century skill development (Republic of the Philippines, 2013; DepEd, 2020).

**Statement of the Problem**

This study aims to determine the relationship between oral communication skills and the academic engagement of senior high school students in the HUMSS strand. It explores how students’ speaking confidence and communication abilities may influence their participation in class, motivation to learn, and interaction with others. Specifically, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the level of oral communication skills of senior high school HUMSS students?
2. What is the level of class engagement among senior high school HUMSS students in terms of:
3. Class participation.
4. Group Collaboration; and
5. Motivation to Learn
6. What is the overall level of Class Engagement of SHS HUMSS Students
7. Is there a significant relationship between students’ oral communication skills and their academic engagement?

Hypotheses

H₀ (Null Hypothesis):

There is no significant relationship between students oral communication skills and their class engagement.

**Theoretical Framework**

This study is anchored on two key theories: **Vygotsky’s Sociocultural Theory (1978)** and **Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory (1986).** These theories help explain how communication and social interaction influence student engagement, learning behavior, and confidence in school settings.

**Lev Semenovich Vygotsky Sociocultural Theory** emphasizes the role of social interaction in learning. According to Vygotsky, communication is a central tool for cognitive development, especially through meaningful conversations and guided participation. In the classroom, students develop higher thinking skills when they engage in discussions, share ideas, and receive feedback. For HUMSS students, who often work collaboratively and engage in dialogue-heavy activities like debates, group work, and presentations, communication is essential for learning. The theory supports the idea that oral communication not only helps students express their thoughts but also strengthens their understanding through social interaction.

**Albert Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory**, on the other hand, highlights the importance of self-efficacy—or one’s belief in their ability to succeed in certain tasks. Bandura suggests that students who believe they can speak well are more likely to participate in class, try harder, and stay motivated. When students lack confidence in their speaking abilities, they may avoid engaging, leading to less learning. This theory helps explain why some students hesitate to speak even when they understand the lesson. According to Bandura (1986), learning happens best when students feel capable and supported, especially in performance-based tasks like speaking in front of others.

Together, these two theories explain how oral communication and student engagement are closely connected. They form the foundation of this study, which aims to explore how communication skills—especially speaking confidence—affect the participation, collaboration, and motivation of HUMSS students. By applying these theories, the study seeks to understand how communication influences learning and how schools can better support students’ engagement through communication development.

**Conceptual Framework**

This study follows an **Input-Process-Output (IPO)** model to describe the relationship between oral communication skills and academic engagement. The input includes students’ oral communication skills, especially their speaking confidence, clarity, and ability to interact with others. These skills are shaped by different factors such as personality, previous experiences, and school support systems. Oral communication is treated as the independent variable in this study.

The process Involves the ways in which students use these skills during class activities. This includes how often they participate in discussions, collaborate in group work, and express their ideas during lessons or presentations. These classroom interactions reflect the students’ level of engagement in academic tasks.

The output or dependent variable is academic engagement, measured in terms of three indicators: class participation, group collaboration, and motivation to learn. These outcomes show how communication skills influence students’ involvement and performance in school. Strong oral communication is expected to result in better participation and more active involvement in learning activities.

The conceptual framework assumes that when students have high levels of oral communication skills, they are more confident, more likely to join class discussions, and more engaged with their lessons. On the other hand, students who struggle to speak or fear judgment may avoid participating, which can lower their academic engagement. This framework is based on **Vygotsky’s and Bandura’s theories**, which both emphasize the importance of communication, confidence, and social interaction in learning.

In summary, this conceptual framework guides the study in identifying how communication skills affect student engagement. It supports the goal of the research to provide helpful data for teachers and schools in creating programs that improve oral communication and increase students’ academic involvement.

**Figure 1.**

*Research Paradigm*

**Input Process Output**

Level of Communication Skills & Level of Academic Engagement

Descriptive Analysis, Correlational Analysis

Relationship Between Oral Communication Skills and Academic Engagement

**Scope and Delimitations**

This study is limited to selected Senior High School students enrolled in the Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) strand at Agusan National High School during the academic year 2025–2026. The participants will be from Grade 11, and the study will focus on their oral communication skills and level of academic engagement. It will specifically look at class participation, group collaboration, and motivation to learn. The data will be gathered using survey questionnaires to measure the students’ speaking confidence and engagement in class.

The delimitations of this study include certain boundaries. First, it does not cover students from other strands such as STEM, ABM, or GAS. Second, the study is limited to oral communication skills only and will not explore written or non-verbal communication. Third, it will not investigate other possible factors that may affect academic engagement, such as family background, teaching style, or learning environment. Lastly, the results will be based on self-reported data from students, which may be influenced by their honesty or understanding of the questions. These limitations are set to keep the focus on the main variables and ensure the study remains manageable.

**Significance of the Study**

This research is important for different people in the field of education:

**Students** will benefit by becoming more aware of how their communication skills affect their class performance and participation. They may also gain more confidence in speaking and joining class activities.

**Teachers** will better understand the speaking challenges students face and may adjust their teaching methods to encourage more student interaction and engagement.

**School Administrators and Guidance Counselors** can use the findings to create programs that develop students’ communication skills and boost their involvement in academic activities.

**Parents** will be more informed about how their child’s speaking confidence can affect school performance, helping them support their children at home.

**Future Researchers** may use this study as a basis for further research on the link between communication and academic behavior or explore similar topics in other strands or subjects.

**Definition of Terms**

To help clarify the meaning of important words used in this study, the following terms are defined operationally:

**Academic Engagement –** refers to how active and involved a student is in their school activities. In this study, it is measured through the student’s class participation, involvement in group work, and motivation to learn in the context of the HUMSS Strand at Agusan National High School.

**Collaboration** – the ability of HUMSS Strand students to work effectively with their classmates during group activities or projects. This is observed through cooperation, idea-sharing, and collective problem-solving in school-related tasks.

**HUMSS Strand** – the *Humanities and Social Sciences* strand offered in senior high school at Agusan National High School, focusing on disciplines such as communication, social studies, and the arts.

**Oral Communication Skills –** the ability of HUMSS Strand students to speak clearly, confidently, and effectively during discussions, presentations, and other verbal activities in class at Agusan National High School.

**Speaking Confidence –** the belief of HUMSS Strand students at Agusan National High School in their ability to express thoughts and ideas in front of others without fear or hesitation.

**Chapter 2**

**REVIEW OF RELATED LITERETURE AND STUDIES**

Oral communication is an essential skill in education and daily life, enabling students to express ideas, share knowledge, and interact effectively with others. For HUMSS students, strong oral communication is particularly important because their strand emphasizes discussion, collaboration, and presentation. However, many learners encounter difficulties in developing this skill, which can limit their participation and performance in academic tasks. Class engagement, understood as the degree to which students are actively involved in classroom activities, plays a key role in this process. Students who participate in discussions and group activities tend to practice and strengthen their communication skills, while low engagement can reduce opportunities for improvement.

To understand this relationship more clearly, it is necessary to review existing studies on oral communication skills, class engagement, and how they influence one another in the academic context. By examining research conducted at the global, national, and local levels, this review provides a foundation for analyzing the connection between oral communication skills and class engagement among HUMSS students.

**Oral Communication Skills**

Oral communication skills refer to the ability to express thoughts clearly and effectively through spoken language (Li, 2024). These skills are important in many areas of life, including education, business, and social interaction. Moreover, oral communication involves not only clarity of speech but also confidence, fluency, and the ability to adapt messages to different audiences.

On a global scale, oral communication skills are essential in professional environments, particularly in Asia and other international contexts. Studies have shown that employees require strong communication abilities to collaborate effectively, participate in discussions, and adapt to English-speaking workplaces (Adnan et al., 2024). Furthermore, these skills are critical in diplomacy and international affairs, where clarity, precision, and the ability to present compelling narratives can determine success in negotiations and regional cooperation (Venneri, 2024).

In education, oral communication is equally important. K–12 curriculum in many countries include oral communication as a core component to improve comprehension, presentation, and collaboration skills (Hess, 2015). Research also highlights that training programs and specialized courses can enhance fluency, self-reflection, and confidence in speaking performances. These interventions help students and professionals develop practical skills that support employability, collaboration, and adaptation in global settings.

Overall, oral communication skills are essential for success in education and professional settings. Moreover, both global and national studies highlight their importance for confidence, collaboration, and effective participation, emphasizing the need for programs and strategies that develop these skills.

**Class Engagement**

Class engagement refers to the active participation and involvement of students in the learning process, encompassing cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions. It influences academic achievement, motivation, and overall learning effectiveness. Understanding class engagement requires examining its definitions, factors, and implications across different contexts globally and regionally.

Globally, class engagement is recognized as a multidimensional construct that enhances learning experiences and outcomes. Research indicates that engagement is shaped by cultural contexts, educational systems, and institutional practices, which vary across countries (Tanaka, 2019). The global emphasis on student engagement reflects a shift toward inclusive educational practices that prioritize student involvement, voice, and active participation.

In national and regional contexts, engagement can be influenced by curriculum design, teaching approaches, and classroom environments. For instance, in Australia, the national curriculum emphasizes engagement with Asian cultures to foster cross-cultural understanding (Guo, 2021). Southeast Asia presents a diverse educational landscape, where student engagement varies depending on institutional quality, classroom practices, and external factors (Immanuella et al., 2023). The classroom environment plays a critical role in learning effectiveness, particularly for international students from ASEAN countries studying in China (Fu & Xie, 2024).

Additionally, the interaction of local and transnational influences highlights the complexity of engagement in the region, reflecting broader social and economic dynamics (Sprague, 2015).

Overall, class engagement is a key factor in academic success and effective learning. Globally, it is influenced by cultural, institutional, and instructional factors, while regional contexts demonstrate the interplay of local and broader influences. Understanding these dimensions provides a foundation for exploring how engagement affects students’ learning experiences and outcomes.

**Oral Communication Skills and Class Engagement**

Studies consistently demonstrate a strong positive relationship between oral communication skills and class engagement. Research shows that effective oral communication fosters a more interactive classroom environment, which is crucial for student participation in learning activities. Students with higher levels of oral communication skills tend to show greater engagement, suggesting that enhancing these abilities can lead to improved educational outcomes.

Globally, oral communication skills enhance fluency, promote collaborative learning, and facilitate motivation and interaction among students. Collaborative learning strategies, for instance, have been shown to strengthen students’ oral communication abilities, with speaking skills showing the greatest improvement (Agustina, 2022). These findings highlight the reciprocal relationship between oral communication and engagement: active participation in communication activities further reinforces students’ involvement in learning.

In Asia, oral communication skills help address cultural nuances in classroom interaction, fostering confidence and adaptability among learners (“The Influence of Oral Communication on the Learning Engagement of Students,” 2023). Real-life communication requires pragmatic competence and cultural understanding, emphasizing the need for interactive and contextually relevant learning approaches (Abd Al Qader, n.d.). Similarly, in national contexts, oral communication bridges educational gaps by improving student confidence and fluency, particularly where traditional teaching methods fail to develop these skills effectively.

Experimental and action research studies demonstrate that structured strategies, such as interactive communication models and positive classroom climates, significantly enhance students’ participation and self-expression. Mousena and Sidiropoulou (2017) found that promoting oral language development in preschool classrooms fosters children’s engagement and contributes to their overall learning experience. These findings are relevant not only in early education but also in higher grade levels, showing that oral communication is a foundational skill for sustained academic engagement.

Overall, oral communication skills are strongly linked to class engagement. Globally and nationally, research indicates that improving these skills through collaborative, interactive, and culturally sensitive strategies enhances student participation, motivation, and learning outcomes. Active engagement in oral communication activities thus plays a critical role in creating effective and interactive learning environments.

**Vygotsky’s Sociocultural Theory (1978)** and **Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory (1986).**

This study is anchored on the principles of **Vygotsky’s Social Constructivist Theory** and **Communicative Competence Theory**. Vygotsky (1978) emphasizes the role of social interaction in learning, suggesting that students develop knowledge and skills through collaboration and communication with peers and teachers. In the context of this study, students’ oral communication skills are seen as essential tools for active participation in classroom activities, fostering academic engagement. The more effectively students express their ideas and interact with others, the more engaged they become in learning processes.

Additionally, **Communicative Competence Theory** (Hymes, 1972) highlights that effective communication involves not only grammatical accuracy but also the ability to use language appropriately in social contexts. Oral communication skills allow students to participate meaningfully in discussions, presentations, and collaborative tasks, which directly supports higher levels of class engagement. Collaborative learning strategies, which encourage interaction and dialogue, serve as practical applications of these theories, enhancing both communication proficiency and student involvement (Agustina, 2022; “The Influence of Oral Communication on the Learning Engagement of Students,” 2023).

By combining these theoretical perspectives, this study views **oral communication skills as both a means and a catalyst for academic engagement**. Improving students’ communication abilities is expected to enhance their participation, motivation, and overall learning experience, particularly for HUMSS students whose strand emphasizes discussion, collaboration, and presentation skills.

In summary, the reviewed literature consistently highlights the significant role of oral communication skills in fostering class engagement among students. Globally, regionally, and nationally, learners with stronger oral communication abilities tend to participate more actively in classroom discussions, collaborative activities, and presentations, which in turn enhances their academic performance and confidence. Theoretical frameworks such as Vygotsky’s Sociocultural Theory and Communicative Competence Theory underscore the importance of social interaction and contextually appropriate language use in learning, emphasizing that communication skills are both a tool and a catalyst for engagement. Therefore, in the context of HUMSS students in the Philippines—whose strand emphasizes discussion, collaboration, and presentation—this study seeks to explore how strengthening oral communication can support higher levels of class engagement, motivation, and overall learning outcomes.

**Chapter 3**

**RESEARCH METHODS**

This chapter presents the methods and procedures used in conducting the study on the relationship of oral communication and class engagement of HUMSS students. It describes the research design, participants, research instrument, data gathering procedures, and statistical treatment of the data. Each component is carefully selected to ensure that the research objectives are met and that the results are valid, reliable, and relevant.

**Research Design**

The study will employ a descriptive-correlational research design. This design is appropriate because it allows the researcher to describe the current level of oral communication skills among Senior High School HUMSS students and examine the relationship between oral communication skills and academic engagement. Descriptive research will be used to present the students’ levels of oral communication skills, while correlational research will determine whether there is a statistically significant relationship between oral communication skills and students’ academic engagement. Furthermore, this design enables the measurement of the extent to which oral communication skills affect academic engagement through regression analysis, without manipulating any variables, thus ensuring that the study reflects real-life conditions.

**Research Participants**

The participants of this study will be Grade 11 and Grade 12 Senior High School students enrolled in the Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) strand at Agusan National High School during the academic year 2025–2026. The total population consists of approximately 6,000 HUMSS students. Using Cochran’s formula for sample size determination, and applying the finite population correction, the computed sample size is 361 respondents. This number is considered sufficient to represent the population while ensuring the accuracy and reliability of the findings.

To ensure that both Grade 11 and Grade 12 HUMSS students are fairly represented, the study will employ stratified random sampling. In this method, grade level and class section will serve as the strata, and a proportional number of respondents will be randomly selected from each section. This approach guarantees that the sample reflects the diversity of HUMSS students across both grade levels, reducing sampling bias and improving the generalizability of the results.

Furthermore, the selection of participants will be conducted with fairness and transparency. Randomization within each stratum will be facilitated using a random number generator to ensure that every HUMSS student has an equal chance of being chosen. Students selected as participants will be informed about the purpose of the study, and their consent will be obtained before data collection begins.

**Research Instrument**

The main tool for data collection will be a survey questionnaire composed of two parts. The instrument will employ a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). The first part of the questionnaire will measure the students’ oral communication skills. This section will include items adapted from validated instruments used in previous studies, focusing on areas such as grammar, vocabulary use, fluency, confidence, and clarity in communication. Higher scores will indicate stronger oral communication skills. The second part will assess the students’ academic engagement, specifically in terms of participation, collaboration, and motivation to learn. Items will be designed to capture the extent to which students are actively engaged in classroom activities, contribute to group work, and demonstrate enthusiasm toward learning tasks. Higher scores will reflect higher levels of academic engagement. The use of this structured questionnaire ensures consistency in data collection and provides a reliable measure of the relationship between oral communication skills and academic engagement among HUMSS students.

**Data Gathering Procedures**

The process of gathering data will follow a systematic approach to maintain accuracy and ethical compliance. First, the researcher will prepare a formal letter requesting permission to conduct the study, addressed to the school principal. Once approval is granted, the researcher will coordinate with the Senior High School department head and class advisers to identify and schedule data collection sessions. Prior to the administration of the questionnaire, the purpose of the study will be explained to the respondents, and informed consent will be obtained.

The questionnaire will then be distributed to the selected respondents during their free period or designated class time to avoid disruption. After the responses are collected, the researcher will verify and encode the data for statistical analysis. Finally, the gathered data will be organized, tabulated, and prepared for statistical treatment.

**Statistical Treatment of the Data**

The data gathered in this study will be analyzed through both descriptive and inferential statistical methods to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses. The level of oral communication skills among HUMSS students will be assessed using the weighted mean, based on their responses to the Likert-scale questionnaire. The computed means will then be interpreted using a set range, classifying the skills as very low, low, moderate, high, or very high.

In the same way, the degree of academic engagement—covering participation in class, collaboration in groups, and motivation to learn—will also be examined using the weighted mean and standard deviation. These descriptive measures will help illustrate how actively the respondents engage in their academic tasks.

For inferential statistics, Spearman’s rank-order correlation will be utilized to determine the relationship between oral communication skills and academic engagement, since the data are ordinal and may not follow normality. Furthermore, simple linear regression will be employed to evaluate how much oral communication skills can influence or predict students’ engagement in learning.

Before running the regression, assumptions such as linearity and homoscedasticity will be tested to ensure validity. All analyses will be processed using software like SPSS or Jamovi for accuracy. Results will be presented in tables and graphs for clearer interpretation.