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Article



CONTENT ANALYSIS ON VIDEOGRAPHED DEBATE ACTIVITIES OF GRADE 9 MERANAW STUDENTS AMONG SELECTED PRIVATE AND PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS IN MARAWI CITY

Nasif T. Macaslang

Mindanao State University – Marawi City

Abstract

This study was conducted to make a video content analysis on debate activities of Grade 9 Meranaw students among selected private and public schools in Marawi City. The study employed a mixed-method approach, analyzing ambiguous and incomprehensible sentences or utterances made by the respondents while tallying errors in phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics. After the analysis and interpretation of the data, the following were the findings: (1) In phonology, the 5 grade 9 Meranaw speakers had difficulty in pronouncing the sounds /θ/, /ð/, /æ/. (2) In morphology, they frequently committed pluralization, derivation and inflections. (3) In syntax, they committed prepositions, pronouns, diction, verb and articles. (4) In semantics, the speakers frequently commit unclear meaning, incomprehensible sentences, unclear idea, and inappropriate word choice. Since this study focuses on debate, it can be concluded that a debater must be a critical speaker to effectively convince the audience. Hence, he must also have some rhetorical skills, that is, he is not only good in phonology and morphology but also in syntax and semantics. Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn: Those errors committed were made apparent in their written constructive speeches. The respondents had an increasing level of committing errors in semantics because they had no experience, and they lacked exposures in debating activities since they were non-debaters.

Keywords

Content analysis, Video graphed debate, mixed method, Philippines

Corresponding Author:

Nasif T. Macaslang, Mindanao State University-Marawi Campus

Email: nasif.macaslang@msumain.edu.ph

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Introduction

The English language requires ample and complex practices and trainings to achieve fluency and competence. For this, learners may find it a tall order to grasp and master the language especially when the schools they are enrolled in do not give them the chance to speak or talk in English. It would be worse when the schools do not give them the opportunity to practice communicating in English, like engaging them in some debate activities in which they do not only write their ideas but also speak out their opinions in class. It is sad to note, however, that there are schools which do not give this kind of opportunity to students. It has been said that practice makes perfect. So, when students are regularly engaged in some debate activities they would know where they would fall short and they would know what errors they would commit and avoid committing them in the future.

Debate has long been a vital part of speaking. Training in debate improves speaking skill, whether scientific, historical, religious or political. It can contribute to the intellectual and ethical development of its participants by challenging them to make defensible judgments, critically investigate complex issues, and question assumptions. Debate stimulates and refines communication skills that empower individuals to speak from themselves (Branham and Meany, 1998).

The achievement of good speaking activity is when the people who interact can understand each other. One obvious example of speaking activity is any interaction between teacher and student. In the interaction, the teacher should have strong speaking competence to help students understand the material through speech (Clark, 1977).

As a model of the second language, a teacher must possess a high level of competence in English to impart genuine knowledge to students. He corrects his students' errors in grammar, in writing, in speaking, etc. Also, training people to be able to communicate well is not an easy task to teach since it is an active skill which involves one's ability to convey meaning and being able to make oneself understood. Learning the active skills does not only involve the mastery of the knowledge of a language around lexical, grammar and phonology as in the spoken skill. It also incorporates the ability to use the knowledge in real communication (Canale, 1983; Canale & Swain, 1980). To communicate naturally and successfully the language learner needs to engage in intensive language practice overtime to yield satisfying results. The study was undertaken to examine the types of errors committed by the Grade 9 students from the four participating schools. The discoveries of the inquiry may help the Marawi English teachers in addressing the difficulty of the students in English language proficiency. Similarly, it may also help the English teachers to design and innovate new teaching techniques and approaches which will be of great help for them to take a significant progress as they elevate the quality of education in Marawi City.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the errors committed in debate activity among Grade 9 Meranaw students in the aspect of:
 - a. Phonology,
 - b. Morphology,
 - c. Syntax, and
 - d. Semantics?
2. Which categories of error are dominant in the following aspects:
 - a. Phonology,
 - b. Morphology,
 - c. Syntax, and
 - d. Semantics?
3. What generalizations can be formulated from the findings of the study?

METHODOLOGY

The source of data of the study was the recorded and transcribed speeches of the respondents during the debate tournament. In order to determine the errors committed by the respondents, a closer look into the structure and content of their speeches was done, hence, the error analysis of the said data through content analysis.

The errors identified were listed and grouped together. Then their occurrences were tallied and recorded to determine their frequencies. Thus, simple counting and addition of the occurrences were done.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The video content analysis on the debate activities of Grade 9 Meranaw students was done among the private and public schools in Marawi City. Specifically, there were three (3) public schools: the MSU Institute of Science and Education (MSU ISED), MSU Saguianan Community College, MSU Integrated Laboratory School (ILS), and there was only one (1) private school—the Philippine Integrated School (PIS), since the second private school—Hadiyyah International School—was inhibited to join by the school president himself because the contest debate was held in his school. In short, there were only four participating schools in this study. During the first two rounds of the debate, there were 24 student debaters. In the third round, their number was reduced to 18. In the fourth and final round, only 5 of them succeeded. These were those who were never defeated or got beaten from the first round till the last round. Speakers 1, 3, and 5 were males; speakers 2 and 4 were females.

Phonological Errors Committed by the Students

To have a clearer view of the phonological errors, these were presented into two tables.

1. Table 1A is the error on vowel sounds while table 1B is on the consonants sounds.
2. Table 1A on the next page presents the errors on vowels sounds committed by the five grade 9 Meranaw students.
3. Table 1A presents the phonological errors as to vowel sounds committed by the 5 Grade 9 Meranaw students.

Table 1A. Phonological Errors (Vowel Sounds)

ROUND	Debaters	vowel sounds							TOTAL	
		/au/	/ɪ/	/e/	/a/	/i/	/ɔ/	/ʰ/		/æ/
1	Speaker 1		1						1	2
	Speaker 2					2	1	3	7	13
	Speaker 3						2		8	10
	Speaker 4									0
	Speaker 5					7	2		8	17
2	Speaker 1					1			3	4
	Speaker 2			1			1		3	5
	Speaker 3								3	3
	Speaker 4								1	1
	Speaker 5		1		1		1		14	17
3	Speaker 1							3		3
	Speaker 2	1					2		3	6
	Speaker 3			1			1	3	5	10
	Speaker 4				1					1
	Speaker 5							8	7	15
4	Speaker 1								1	1
	Speaker 2					1	1	1	2	5
	Speaker 3						1		1	2
	Speaker 4						1	1	1	3
	Speaker 5					2	5	1	9	17
TOTAL ERRORS	Speaker 1		1			1		3	5	10
	Speaker 2	1		1		3	5	4	15	29
	Speaker 3			1			4	3	17	25
	Speaker 4				1		1	1	2	5
	Speaker 5		1		1	9	8	9	38	66
	GRAND TOTAL	1	2	2	2	13	18	20	77	135

Of the five speakers, Speaker 5 had the greatest number of phonological errors as to vowel sounds with a total of 66. Out of the eight vowel sounds, (/aʊ/, /I/, /ε/, /a/, /i/, /ɔ/, /^o/, /æ/), the /æ/ sound was where he committed most of the time. He committed only once the /I/ and /a/ sounds. Speaker 4, on her part, committed twice the vowel sound /æ/ and once the /a/ and /ɔ/ vowel sounds. On one hand, Speaker 3 had 17 vowel sound errors on /æ/ and committed only once the /ε/ sound. Speaker 2 had 15 vowels sound errors on /æ/ sound and Speaker 3 had committed only once the sound /ε/. Also, Speaker 1 had 5 vowel sound errors on /æ/ sound and committed once the sounds /I/ and /i/. In addition, it was also reflected in the table that Speaker 5 had the greatest number of errors in vowel sounds from /aʊ/ sound to /æ/ sound. Speaker 4 had 4 total number errors in vowel sounds. Speaker 3 had 25 total number of errors in vowel sounds. Speaker 2 also had a total number of errors in vowel sounds with a total of 29. Speaker 1 had 10 total errors as well in vowel sounds.

At present, there is no existing theory that proves why these sounds (/æ/, and /ð/) are hardly produced by Meranaw speakers or students. On the other hand, as far as those professors of the English Department in the College of Social Sciences and Humanities of this University were concerned, who have been handling English 3 (Oral Communication) subject are concerned, they have shared their personal insights related to this finding. According to Prof. Abdelgafur, the very reason why Meranaw speakers can hardly produce these sounds is because they were not present in their own dialect. Similarly Filipino language only has /a/ /i/ /e/ /o/ /u/ sounds. It does not have the sound /æ/. That is why when Filipino students read the word exam with an /æ/ sound, they did not read the word as [exæm] but instead [exam]. Prof. Masorong, also attested to the fact that /æ/ sound might sound different to Meranaw speakers because it did not naturally appear in their sound system. Similarly, Prof. Jali as well supported this idea. According to her, it was because of fossilization that causes Meranaw speakers not to utter the sound /æ/ correctly as much as possible.

Furthermore, Table 1B this time shows the phonological errors as to consonant sounds committed by the 5 Grade 9 Meranaw students.

Table 1B. Phonological Errors (Consonant Sounds)

ROUND	Debaters	consonant sounds					TOTAL	
		/z/	/dz/	/ʃ/	/tʃ/	/θ/		/ð/
1	Speaker 1			6			2	8
	Speaker 2		1	2			4	7
	Speaker 3			2	3		39	44
	Speaker 4			3			17	20
	Speaker 5				18	1	35	54
2	Speaker 1					3	4	7
	Speaker 2				3		3	6
	Speaker 3		1	2	6		9	18
	Speaker 4			1	2		1	4
	Speaker 5			3	18	23	56	100
3	Speaker 1					5	4	9
	Speaker 2			1	1	2	4	8
	Speaker 3		1	1	4	1	3	10
	Speaker 4					2		2
	Speaker 5			1	2	17	38	58
4	Speaker 1	1				1	1	3
	Speaker 2		6		1	11	3	21
	Speaker 3					6	5	11
	Speaker 4	1				2		3
	Speaker 5		5	3	5	16	18	47
TOTAL ERRORS	Speaker 1	1	0	6	0	9	11	27
	Speaker 2	0	7	3	5	13	14	42
	Speaker 3	0	2	5	13	7	56	83
	Speaker 4	1	0	4	2	4	18	29
	Speaker 5	0	5	7	43	57	147	259
	GRAND TOTAL	2	14	25	63	90	246	440

As shown in the table, Speaker 5 had the most phonological errors (259) as to consonant sounds followed by Speaker 3 with 83 errors, then Speaker 2 with 42, Speaker 4 with 29, and Speaker 1 with 27. Of the six consonant sounds, the /ð/ sound was the one committed most of the time (246) by them. Specifically, Speaker 5 had the most commission (147). Out of the six consonant sounds, the /ð/ sound was where he committed most of the time. However, Speaker 5 had the least number of errors on /dʒ/ sound with a total of 5. Speaker 4 had 18 errors on /ð/ sound and had committed once the sound /ʒ/. Speaker 3 had 56 errors on /ð/ sound and had committed twice the sound /dʒ/. Speaker 2 also had 14 errors on /ð/ sound and committed thrice the /ʃ/ sound. Speaker 1 committed 11 errors on /ð/ sound and had committed once the /ʒ/.

Prof. Abdelgafur said that there were also Meranaw speakers who could produce those sounds. She reasoned out:

That's where "facilitation" comes in for instance, if you learn the English language at home, this will basically help you to produce the sound as good as it should be. In other words, there is the presence of facilitation which means that even if this sound is not present in the Meranaw language, it can still be produced correctly. On the contrary, even if you know how a particular sound should be produced if you did not experience it or you were not able to practice it, then it will become a hindrance. That is why Meranaw speakers cannot correctly produce these sounds no matter how they try.

However, Prof. Masorong contradicted Abdelgafur's idea. Masorong said:

There are sounds that are not learned but are innate or natural to Meranaws. And that, any sound that they have not stored or any sound alien to them, results to misproduction.

Finally, Table 1C below gives a clearer view on the phonological errors committed by the speakers.

Table 1C Phonological Errors

ROUND	Debaters	vowel sounds							TOTAL	consonant sounds						TOTAL	GRANDTOTAL	
		/au/	/l/	/e/	/a/	/i/	/ɔ/	/o/		/æ/	/ʒ/	/dʒ/	/ʃ/	/t/	/θ/			/ð/
TOTAL ERRORS	Speaker 1		1			1		3	5	10	1		6		9	11	27	37
	Speaker 2	1		1		3	5	4	15	29		7	3	5	13	14	42	71
	Speaker 3			1			4	3	17	25		2	5	13	7	56	83	108
	Speaker 4				1		1	1	2	5	1		4	2	4	18	29	34
	Speaker 5		1		1	9	8	9	38	66		5	7	43	57	147	259	325
	GRAND TOTAL		1	2	2	2	13	18	20	77	135	2	14	25	63	90	246	440

On the preceding page, it was found out that Speaker 5 committed the most number of errors, from vowel sounds to consonant sounds with a total of 325. Speaker 4 had 34 committed errors in phonology, Speaker 4 had 108 committed errors in phonology which is next to the highest, Speaker 5. Speaker 2 also had 71 errors in phonology, and Speaker 1 had 37 number of errors in Phonology from vowel sound to consonant sounds.

In addition, it was observed by the researcher that one factor that allowed the speakers to commit these errors was because of haste. Considering that there was a prescribed time allotted for them to speak (7 mins only), they had to speak as fast as they could to finish their constructive speeches on the dot. Because of this short time allotment, committing errors by them could be expected to happen. The researcher observed that the debate competition was cognitively demanding according to the prescribed organization of their motions. Hence, it made the speakers commit errors in the production of vowels and consonant sounds. In other words, although the speakers did have the knowledge as to how to produce these sounds, they missed producing them orally.

This fact is mirrored in Chomsky's theory on Competence Vs. Performance. He emphasized that performance is an imperfect reflection of competence, for instance, the fact that people make occasional "slips of the tongue" which is inevitable in everyday conversation does not mean that they do not know their language or do not have fluency (i.e. competence) in it. "Slips of the tongue" and similar phenomena are, for Chomsky, performance errors attributable to a variety of performance factors like tiredness, boredom, drunkenness, drugs, external distraction and so forth. These phenomena are attributed by Yule (1996: 165) to the difficulty in getting the brain and speech production to work together smoothly.

Al- Tamimi (2006) also confirms that the errors that do not reflect the structure of the learner's native language (NL) or mother tongue (MT) are caused by intralingual interference from the target language itself. He considers this type of interference as one of the major factors that might affect the process of second language acquisition (SLA). They are independent learners of L1 (Jiang, 2009). Therefore, the errors, which are caused by the effect of the TL itself, are called intralingual errors. This indicates that interference from the learners' L1 is not the only cause for committing errors. More specifically, intralingual errors can occur because of negative interference or transfer from applying different general learning strategies similar to those noticeable in L1 acquisition.

This finding attests the idea of Corder (1981) who distinguished between an error and a mistake. According to him, error is associated with checking the consistency of the second language learner's performance. When a learner sometimes uses the correct form of a certain structure or rule and later subconsciously uses the wrong one, then it is a mistake and therefore can be self-corrected. However, if he/she always uses it wrongly, then it is an error.

Finally, this finding is also supported by Sigmund Freud's theory called Freudian's Slip also known as "parapraxes". Freud discussed in his theory that not every mistake was a symbolic revelation of the unconscious. He conceded, perhaps half-heartedly, that there were a set of 'psycho-physiological factors' – such as fatigue, excitement and distractions – which by themselves could account for a few errors in speech. Nevertheless, he remained convinced that unconscious forces were at the heart of such errors in most cases.

Morphological Errors Committed by the Students

At this point, the morphological errors to be presented in the table are the dominant errors committed by the speakers.

Table 2 on the next page presents the dominant morphological errors committed by the 5 Grade 9 Meranaw students.

Table 2. Morphological Errors of the Student

ROUNDS	Debaters	MORPHOLOGICAL ERRORS			
		Dvtn	Infltn	plrztzn	TOTAL
1	Speaker 1		6		6
	Speaker 2		2	3	5
	Speaker 3		2		4
	Speaker 4			1	5
	Speaker 5	2		2	8
2	Speaker 1		2		2
	Speaker 2	2	2		5
	Speaker 3		7	2	9
	Speaker 4	6	5	4	16
	Speaker 5		6	2	10
3	Speaker 1		3		3
	Speaker 2		3	3	8
	Speaker 3		3	2	5
	Speaker 4		5	3	8
	Speaker 5		5	1	7
4	Speaker 1		4	2	7
	Speaker 2	1	2	3	6
	Speaker 3		3	1	4
	Speaker 4		3		4
	Speaker 5		6	1	9
TOTAL ERRORS	Speaker 1	0	15	2	18
	Speaker 2	3	9	9	24
	Speaker 3	0	15	5	22
	Speaker 4	6	13	8	33
	Speaker 5	2	17	6	34
	GRAND TOTAL	11	69	30	131

Legend: Dvtn – derivation, Infltn – inflection, Plrztzn – pluralization

As shown in Table 2, the morphological errors that were frequently committed by the respondents from the first elimination round up to the final round were the following: pluralization, derivation (be it Noun and Adverb), and inflections (i.e. Verb, Noun, and Tense). The highest number of errors committed was under inflection with a total of 69. In pluralization the speakers committed a total number of 30 errors. In terms of derivation, they had 11 errors.

Specifically, Speaker 2 had the most number of errors with a total of 9. Speaker 4 had 8 errors. Speaker 5 followed next to Speaker 4 with 6 number of errors. Speaker 3 had 5 errors. Speaker 1 had the lowest number of errors of 2. In derivation, there were a total number of 11 errors. These were a combination of nouns and adverbs. Speaker 4 had the most number of errors with a total of 6. Speaker 2 followed next to Speaker 4 who had 3 errors. Speaker 5 had the lowest number of errors with a total of 2. Speaker 3 did not commit any error in derivation. In inflection, there were a total of 69 errors. These were a combination of Verbs, Nouns and Tenses. Speaker 5 had the most number of errors with a total of 17. Speaker 3 and Speaker 1 followed next to Speaker 5 with 15 errors. Speaker 4 had 13 errors. Speaker 2 had the lowest number of errors with a total of 9.

Speaker 5 had the most morphological errors with a total of 34. He was followed by Speaker 4 with 33 errors. Speaker 2 followed Speaker 4 with 24 errors. Speaker 3 followed next to Speaker 2 with 22 errors. Speaker 1 had the least number of errors with a total of 18.

These three dominant errors committed by the speakers are very important not only in writing communication but also in debating activities. When a speaker commits a mistake while talking (e.g. debate), the errors s/he commits become obvious to the audience and it will become a blunder for the speaker. And worst, s/he gives a bad impression to the audience.

Abi Samara (2003) claimed that L2 learners produce deviant structures based on

their previous experience of some other linguistics structures in the target language (TL), which is English. In other words, these morphological errors: pluralization, derivation and inflection are manifestations that the speakers have produced deviant structures of the TL. When speakers deviate from the TL, Samara (2003) said that overgeneralization seems to be almost associated with redundancy reduction. Similarly, Sulaiman (2006) said that overgeneralization involves applying a certain rule in more contexts than it should. He refers to an extension of a rule in the TL to an environment in which it does not apply. He explains that L2 learners find overgeneralization as a good language learning strategy without paying any attention to realizing the contexts to which it can be applied.

These findings attest to that of Dandoy's and Maravilla's (2014) study which disclosed that learning and or understanding the rules of grammar specifically morphology is of great importance. This is to construct and make meaning to become proficient users of the target language.

Beretta (1989) as cited in Ano (2005) also supports this idea by claiming that grammar can be acquired while the focus is on meaning. Therefore, teachers should focus the learners on form while carrying out communicative activities. Hence, as far as Mark B. Ulla (2012) is concern, who made mention in his study that practitioner of English language must have a strong command of English both fluency and accuracy, for they are the models being imitated by the students. However, their statements contradict Stephen Krashen's Monitor model which emphasizes that students should do as much acquiring as possible for them to attain fluency in communication. If they only focus on the rules of grammar, they will end up unsuccessful in the acquisition of the second language.

Syntactical Errors Committed by the Students

Table 3 below presents the syntactical errors committed by the 5 Grade 9 Meranaw students.

Table 3. Syntactical Errors of the Students

ROUND	Debaters	SYNTACTICAL ERRORS					TOTAL
		V	A	D	prep.	pro.	
1	Speaker 1	5	1		7	9	29
	Speaker 2	1	1	1	6	1	12
	Speaker 3	5	2	3	1	4	28
	Speaker 4	7	2	3	4	5	26
	Speaker 5	4	2	4	3	4	17
2	Speaker 1	2	2	2	7	1	16
	Speaker 2		2	7	8	7	30
	Speaker 3	6	2	10	8	4	38
	Speaker 4	2	3	8	8	3	37
	Speaker 5	2	2	3	3	3	16
3	Speaker 1	3	1	1	5	3	21
	Speaker 2			1	1		3
	Speaker 3	2	2	1	5	1	17
	Speaker 4	3	3	2	7	5	27
	Speaker 5	5	2	5	6	5	28
4	Speaker 1			1	3	1	10
	Speaker 2						0
	Speaker 3	2	1	1	4	2	12
	Speaker 4	3	3	6	4	3	27
	Speaker 5	8	3	1	7	4	33
TOTAL ERRORS	Speaker 1	10	4	4	22	14	76
	Speaker 2	1	3	9	15	8	45
	Speaker 3	15	7	15	18	11	95
	Speaker 4	15	11	19	23	16	117
	Speaker 5	19	9	13	19	16	94
	GRAND TOTAL	60	34	60	97	65	427

As shown in the table, among the dominant syntactical errors committed by the speakers were the following: preposition, pronoun, diction, verb and article. In preposition, the speakers used it incorrectly and unnecessarily. Their statement also lacked prepositions and sometimes they also used double prepositions. The total errors they committed were 97. In pronouns, they used wrong or incorrect demonstrative and relative. They also used pronouns unnecessarily. The total errors on pronouns were 65. Moreover, the speakers also committed errors on their use of verbs. They used unnecessary helping verbs. Their sentences or statements lacked linking verbs, and their verbs did not agree with the subject of their sentences. In verbs, they committed 60 times.

As to articles, they used them unnecessarily, and incorrectly. Sometimes, their statements lacked articles. The total errors they committed was 34. Finally, they also committed errors in diction. Specifically, they used unnecessary words, inappropriate words, unnecessary intervening words, and incorrect word order. In diction their total errors committed were 60 (Please see Appendix F).

Speaker 4 had the most number of syntactical errors (117). She was followed by Speaker 3 with 95 errors. Speaker 3 was also followed by Speaker 5 with 94 errors. Speaker 1 followed Speaker 5 with 76 errors. Lastly, Speaker 2 had 45—the least number of errors.

The data shows that of the five dominant errors; preposition was the leading error committed by the speakers. The second leading error was on pronouns, third was verbs, fourth was diction, and last was on articles.

Although prepositions are small words like in, on, at, they are function words that express a modification or predication. It then implies that learning or studying prepositions should be a must in junior high school. For pronouns, which are next in rank, the speakers also find it problematic. They seem not to know when, how and what pronouns to use. This finding is supported by the study of Razul (2013) on “The CPC Students’ Errors in Their Compositions and Their Language Learning Strategies,” in which pronoun got the highest percentage (12.4) among the other errors.

The verb was also another problem for the speakers. They were poor in subject verb agreement. In his study, “An Error Analysis of the Written Compositions of Selected English (Advance Grammar and Composition) Students,” Macarambon (2010) found that in the subject – verb agreement took the highest rank. This clearly implies that students really had difficulty in subject-verb agreement. He recommended that English teachers should give more drills in this area for the students to hone their competency in English.

However, in his study, Razul (2013) contradicted Macarambon’s findings. Razul’s respondents committed very few errors in subject-verb agreement. compared to the other errors like prepositions which have a percentage of 9.04. This only implies that even if the students commit errors in subject-verb agreement when it comes to writing and debating activity, there is a significant difference in committing errors in writing and in speaking activity. In writing the students could just simply correct themselves whenever they commit errors. In debating on the other hand, there are a lot of contributing factors that trigger the students to commit errors.

In his study, Razul (2013) also supports the findings of the present study. It was revealed in his study that subject-verb agreement, articles, verb tense, and word order, are among the errors which were committed by the students during their writing compositions. This clearly justifies that not only in debating activity or any oral-related activity do students commit syntactical errors but also in

writing compositions.

Furthermore, diction was another problem for the speakers. They had difficulty in the appropriate choice of words that they will use in a debate activity. This is further supported by T.S. Elliot. He said that:

Since English is not our native language we should learn and abide by the basic rules of the language. Hence, we must know the three factors responsible for the poor pronunciation. These are the influence of the mother tongue, influence of the environment and fear of embarrassment.

Since these five Maranaw speakers were poor in diction, their speeches could not be understood by the audience, and more so by the judges. This would then make them poor speakers, if not bad debaters.

On the other hand, there were also syntactical errors committed by the speakers. But these were not tabulated or shown in the table since there were only minor errors. These were modifiers, conjunction, infinitive, parallelism and expletive. These minor errors were also found in the study of Razul and Macarambon.

The last or number five dominant errors committed by the speakers were in articles. In her study, "Error Analysis and Its Implication in Communicative English Language Teaching." Ano (2003) found out that one of the three most occurring grammatical errors was article. This only implies that truly the speakers had difficulty with articles. She concluded in her study that fossilization is seen as the primary cause of this error. Although these errors could be minimal, this is part of grammar. Thus, students should at least be equipped with grammar. How small the error is, is still an error.

This notion also supports the concept which was reinforced in Doughty and Williams (1998) as cited in Ano (2005), that fluency and accuracy are inseparable to being competent in communication. Ano (2005) emphasized that "the aim of focus-on-form studies is to determine how learner approximation to the target can be improved through instruction that draws attention to form but is not isolated from communication". Thus, grammar instruction from time to time is also suggested to be taught explicitly in context with attention and care since it is one of the means that facilitate students to express themselves effectively. Beretta (1989) as cited in Ano (2005) also supports this idea by claiming that grammar can be acquired while the focus is on meaning therefore teachers should focus the learners on form while carrying out communicative activities.

This is also clearly supported by Dell Hymes Communicative Competence. He stressed in his theory the four dimensions of communicative competence. One of them is "grammar competence" which truly attests that being able to get exposed and familiarized to rules and structure of grammars, and the accurate use of words, is the road to attain the fluency and accuracy in the English language. In other words, if the students have a poor knowledge of grammar rules, then there is really a big chance of committing errors.

Semantic Errors Committed by the Students

Table 4 on the next page presents the semantic errors committed by the 5 Grade 9 Merani students.

Table 4. Semantic Errors of the Students

ROUNDS	Debaters	SEMANTIC ERRORS				TOTAL
		UN	Inc. Sent.	UI	IWC	
1	Speaker 1	1	3	2	9	18
	Speaker 2	3		1	2	8
	Speaker 3				5	5
	Speaker 4		2	2	2	8
	Speaker 5	2		2	2	10
2	Speaker 1				3	3
	Speaker 2		1		4	7
	Speaker 3		1	1	5	7
	Speaker 4			1	4	5
	Speaker 5	2	1	2	2	9
3	Speaker 1			3	4	7
	Speaker 2			2	3	7
	Speaker 3			3	3	7
	Speaker 4				3	3
	Speaker 5		2	1	2	7
4	Speaker 1		1			1
	Speaker 2			1	3	5
	Speaker 3		2	1	1	5
	Speaker 4			4	2	7
	Speaker 5		2	7	11	22
TOTAL ERRORS	Speaker 1	4	5	12	17	48
	Speaker 2	0	2	7	11	23
	Speaker 3	0	3	5	14	24
	Speaker 4	3	1	4	12	27
	Speaker 5	1	4	5	16	29
	GRAND TOTAL	8	15	33	70	151

Legend: UM – unclear meaning, Inc. Sent – incomprehensible sentence, IWC – inappropriate word choice, UI – unclear idea

As shown in the table, among the dominant semantic errors committed by the speakers were the following: unclear meaning, incomprehensible sentence, unclear idea, and inappropriate word choice. In inappropriate word choice, the speakers had the greatest number of errors with a total of 70. This was followed by an unclear idea in which the speakers committed 33 number of errors. As to incomprehensible sentences, the speakers committed 15 errors. In unclear meaning, the speakers had 8 total number of errors.

These only manifest that the students found it very hard to construct their speeches orally. This is because the debate activity puts them under so much pressure that they made them speak vaguely. Also, since the medium of instruction is English, it is also one of the factors that made the speakers commit such errors because they were running out of words and or vocabulary. Even if they all have the idea to counterattack their opponents, their ideas only ended up hanging because they could not express or translate them well in English.

This finding is supported by Carmelita and Evelyn in their book entitled Oral Communication, Fifth Edition. They said that one of the great factors resulting to either effective or ineffective communication of a person is the absence of using the process of oral communication such as stimulus, transmission, encoding, speaking, receiver action, decoding, and responding. Hence, it may cause or lead the speaker to commit errors and or mistakes in using the English language.

This is also attested by Vigil and Oller (1976) as cited by Ellis (1994) that positive cognitive feedback results in fossilization whereas negative feedback causes learners to work on their error. Here, positive cognitive feedback means the recipient signals that he or she understood the message independent of the number of errors. Negative feedback refers to a reply which says that the learner's utterance has not been understood.

Generalizations Formulated from the Findings of the Study

Based on the findings that shed light on the study, the following generalizations could be deduced: Phonologically speaking, Grade 9 Merani speakers or students could hardly produce the sound /æ/, and the sound /ð/ because these sounds are "alien" in their native tongue. Nonetheless, they can still produce these sounds when they use and practice them repeatedly and constantly. As the saying goes: "Practice makes perfect." Morphologically speaking, they are not specifically concerned with what is the most appropriate word to use in their speeches. They commit syntactical errors like on verbs, particularly on subject-verb agreement because they tend to overgeneralize grammar rules. In fact, they are negligent about and disregard subject-verb agreement in their statements or pronouncements for as long as they are understood. Semantically speaking, they find it difficult not to organize their thoughts in English orally since Maranao speakers are too much pressured and tensed when they are discoursing in a foreign language, their L2, which is far different from their L1.

For this is a study on debate activities, a generalization that can be made is that a debater should be a critical speaker to be convincing and impactful to the audience. Hence, he must also have some rhetorical skills, that is, he is not only good in phonology and morphology but also in syntax and semantics. No matter how good a speaker is in terms of logical and critical reasoning, if he does not have good command of English, it will affect his overall performance.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The Grade 9 Maranao speakers or students could not properly pronounce the following sounds /θ/, /ð/, /æ/. In morphology, they committed pluralization, derivation and inflections most of the time. In syntax, they committed prepositions, pronouns, dictions, verbs and articles. In semantics, they always use inappropriate words which make their sentences or utterances unclear and incomprehensible.

These errors were made apparent in their written constructive speeches. The respondents had an increasing level of committing errors in semantics because they had no experience, and they lacked exposures in debating activities since they were non-debaters. The respondents could lessen or minimize their errors in debating when they become experienced – exposed to contest debates, taught how to debate, and their rhetorical skills enhanced by their English teachers.

Based on the findings and the conclusions that shed light to the study, the following recommendations are highly offered:

The students should be encouraged to join in any debate activities and should be trained in actual debates. The English 9 teachers should give more drills, practices, and give the students a battery of test on vocabulary and comprehension. Teachers should provide debating activities or any engaging classroom activity to elicit the active participation of the students as they acquire and learn the second language. All English teachers should be a model for their students – phonologically, morphologically, syntactically, and semantically since they play a vital role on the academic growth of the students. On the one hand, the school administrator should organize an oral or a speaking

camp. Along with it is a reading camp that would make students familiarize themselves with new vocabulary that they could then use in their day-to-day conversations with their classmates, teachers, and school personnel. On the other hand, future researchers should do research like this in the elementary and college levels. Finally, another study be done on the following topics in which the respondents are experienced debaters: "Content Analysis on Debate Activities among College Students of MSU Main Campus"; "Error Analysis on Constructive Speeches of the MSU, Marawi Debaters"; "Video Content Analysis of the Debate Activities of Grade 9 Non-Muslim Debaters in MSU, Marawi".

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Authors Bio note

Asst. Prof. Nasif T. Macaslang is a proud alumnus of the College of Education, Mindanao State University, Marawi Campus, where he obtained his four-year degree, Bachelor of Secondary Education major in English in the year 2012. He completed his master's degree in English Language Teaching in the same university where he is also soon to cap off his Doctor of Philosophy in Language Studies. He is a licensed professional teacher whose passion to teaching is his driving force to attend various international conferences in the country and abroad.

Furthermore, he attended national and international conferences to name a few, he attended the Asian Graduate Studies Summit 2025 (AGRASS 2025) held on May 21-24, 2025, at Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, where he presented his research paper. In the same year, he was invited as one of the resource speakers during the conduct of the Asia World Muslim Summit 2025 held in Kuala Lumpur Malaysia last March 13-15, 2025. Asst. Prof. Macaslang also participated the Japan International Youth Innovation Summit 2024 held in Tokyo, Japan on November 11-14, 2024, and has been appointed as one of the TOP 20 World Leader Innovator Awardees. He likewise represented MSU-ILS in the global stage as IC3 full scholar recipient during the International Career College Counselling (IC3) Conference at Grand Hyatt, Mumbai, India and attended the Leadership for Educators conducted in Flame University, Bangalore, Pune, India. He also participated during the YALE MUN KOREA 2024 held on November 29 to December 1, 2024, at KINTEX, Goyang, Seoul, South Korea of which he served as coach of the MSU-ILS student delegates. Another international conference that he participated in was during the International School Award held in

Chitkara University, Punjab, India in the year 2018.

At present, he is a full-time faculty member of the Mindanao State University-Integrated Laboratory School (MSU-ILS)—The Laboratory School of the College of Education. Moreover, Asst. Prof. Macaslang is a member of the English Technical Review Committee, and member of the MSU-ILS Policy Revision Committee. He also authored the Policies and Guidelines governing all the learning modules (Nine subject areas) in MSU-ILS from grades 1 to grade 10.

Asst. Prof. Macaslang is an accredited faculty member of Graduate Studies Department of the MSU College of Social Sciences and Humanities handling students under MA English Language Teaching Program. Moreover, he does lecture in the College of Education handling thesis writing and some major courses in the English Department of the said college. He is a writer contributor of the Mindanao State University Newsletter and of the S'bang ka Marawi Newsletter, and member of the Panel of Peers (evaluator) of the MSU Campus Textbook and Instructional Materials Development and Production Board (TIMDPB).