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**COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE APPROACH
FOR DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE LEARNING SYSTEM LEARNERS'
ENGLISH COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

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27 September 2024

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Studies, U.P. Open University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
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Biographical Sketch

Jacquelyn Herradura Basilan is a licensed professional teacher since 2018 and has experience in proofreading, copyediting, and checking media and educational materials. She is best known as “Ma'am Jaki” to her students and “Jaki” to everyone she knows and loves.

She graduated from the University of the Philippines Baguio and pursued teaching after her stints in the private sector. Each day, she aspires to become a better person and hopes to help her students and others in the best way she can. Her greatest dream is to see the day when Filipinos collectively choose to take a stand and fight for their future.

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Dedication

For every Juan, Peewee, and Alab.

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ABSTRACT

One hundred fourteen ALS secondary respondents from Pasig City were surveyed to analyze how can the Communicative Competence Approach be used to develop English communication skills in learners of the Alternative Learning System. Thus, the study determined their level of communicative competence, the effective communication-based approach, and factors that influence their English language use in different communication contexts. Guided by Canale and Swain's Communicative Competence Framework (1980), results of the study revealed that the ALS secondary learners' level is between the needs improvement and basic levels. The Communicative Competence Approach was identified as effective for developing their communicative competence, encouraging participation in authentic communication scenarios and practices. Using Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient and data triangulation, results showed no significant relationship between the dimensions of communicative competence: (1) grammatical competence and strategic competence and (2) sociolinguistic competence and discourse competence. However, other dimensions, such as technological competence, digital literacy, and establishing clear communication between teachers and learners, emerged as important aspects of language use and competence. As presented in the study, the respondents' level of English communicative competence and use of the language in different communication settings were influenced by several factors such as age, employment status, learning experience, stage of development, exposure to the native language (Filipino and other dialects or Philippine languages) and English, and access and familiarity with ICT tools.

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Nonformal education program offers opportunities to vulnerable and marginalized sectors such as Alternative Learning Systems (ALS) learners. The ALS program is the government's response to capacitate students who have not completed basic education which could either be in the elementary or high school level who dropped out from school. Despite being school dropouts due to various reasons like early pregnancy, working early to support the family, peer pressure (e.g., bad influences, romantic relationships), financial problems (Yamauchi et al., 2016), and the COVID-19 pandemic, the ALS learners are given a fighting chance to have a better future by developing an essential skill that of communicating in English.

Based on the studies of Balatero (2023), UNICEF (2021), Zulueta et al. (2021), Tindowen et al. (2017), and Compe (2017), English as the language of instruction and underlying factors (e.g., ALS learners' diverse status, learning environment, and learning styles) could influence the quality of education and the decision of the ALS learners to complete the program. As reported by UNICEF (2021), 20 percent to 40 percent of learners raised concerns about the delivery of instructions, expressed difficulty in understanding the challenging sessions, and indicated the use of English by mobile teachers when delivering the lessons as the factors why they left the program. Such difficulties are further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in a worsening learning crisis. Particularly, it

has led to learning gaps in reading, speaking, writing, and listening, affecting the communication skills of learners in general.

The K-12 Basic Education Curriculum places a strong emphasis on developing communicative competence because language is the primary means of thought (Bautista & Del Valle, 2023). The same curriculum is parallel to the ALS-K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum as it reiterates the importance of developing communication skills in English and Filipino to become a productive member of society and encourage participation in the community and economic development (DepEd, 2017). The successful integration of the English language into the curriculum is believed to boost human capital and drive global economic competitiveness (Lee et al., 2021).

The majority of the existing studies only focused on the grammatical aspect of learning the English language, acquisition of 21st-century skills, and language teaching and proficiency, disregarding other important aspects that influence second language learning. Michael Canale and Merrill Swain used the Communicative Competence Approach in teaching a language through authentic communication. They direct communicative competence towards other dimensions beyond content and structure. Instead of focusing only on the knowledge of the rules of grammar or grammatical competence, communicative competence also points out the importance of sociolinguistic competence or contextual language use, discourse competence or appropriateness of a language in relation to a specific situation, and strategic competence or exercise of the appropriate communication strategies. Both theorists agree that one dimension is interrelated to another dimension, and

psychological and environmental conditions affect communicative competence as applied in different communication contexts.

Despite the transformation of the English curriculum from content-based, literature-based, skills-based, and competency-based to outcomes-based (Bernardo, 2022) to develop a future workforce who can communicate in English effectively, learners still encounter difficulties in developing the competencies needed to keep pace with the changes brought about by the globalized world. The same inference was determined in the study, placing the English communicative competence of ALS secondary learners between the needs improvement and basic levels—they have a foundational understanding of communicative principles but struggle to apply relevant communication skills in various communication contexts effectively. The study determined the communicative approach based on the communicative competence model of Canale and Swain and anchored in the educational communication paradigm as an effective communication-based approach to cater to out-of-school youth and adult (OSYA) learners under the ALS program. The Communicative Competence Approach promotes the use of a communication-based learning and teaching method that can help develop the ALS learners' English communicative competence in the four dimensions through authentic communication or real-life situations. Integrated with educational communication, such an approach can be utilized when designing learner-centered activities and assessments to induce and facilitate learning among ALS learners. Educational communication is defined as “the study and practice of communication that constitutes and facilitates learning that is empowering, ethical, and inclusive among various learners in different development contexts” (Devcom, 2023). Its paradigm is appropriate for

developing learner-centered communication-based activities and assessments designed to enhance the English communicative competence of ALS learners with diverse characteristics and needs.

The study identified age, employment status, learning experience, stage of development, exposure to the native language (Filipino and other dialects or Philippine languages) and English, and access and familiarity with ICT tools as factors that influence the ALS learners' English communicative competence in various communication contexts, i.e., in school, at home, and in the environment (e.g., community, social community, or workplace). Furthermore, the study found other important aspects in the evolving nature of language use and competence. They consist of technological competence, and digital literacy, and clear/effective communication between learners and teachers. Integrating these aspects into English language learning can help ALS learners achieve the learning goals indicated in the ALS-K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum. The result of the study can help the Department of Education and school administration to understand the ALS learners' needs in terms of communicative competence in English as applied in different communication contexts. In effect, it may facilitate the strengthening of ALS-appropriate pedagogy and the development of learner-centered assessments and learning materials to motivate ALS learners to participate and eventually, complete the program, thus, unleashing their potentials as their contribution to improving the country's social capital.

Statement of the Problem

Today's communication landscape encourages learners to acquire English communicative competence or the ability to utilize the English language in a functional and meaningful communicative interaction, considering their knowledge of their native language, life experience, social contexts, and culture. Despite the Department of Education and academic institutions' efforts to develop English communicative competence that would improve the quality of life of OSYA learners, the number of school dropouts has been increasing through the years. According to a UNICEF study, the ALS program only reached around five million learners from 2016 to 2021 (Chi, 2023). The ALS learners identified communicating in English, concern on the delivery of instructions, and difficulty understanding challenging sessions as reasons why they left the program (UNICEF, 2021).

Despite the flexibility in the medium of instruction to be used in terms of language and educational medium, ALS learners still experienced difficulty in understanding the lessons delivered in the English language. This condition is evident in the decreasing passing rate for the A&E (Accreditation and Equivalency) test (Briones, 2018), which consists of multiple-choice tests and composition and essay writing, and such a result would mean "low expected returns in the future" (Yamauchi et al., 2016) in the context of finding job opportunities that fit the ALS learners' abilities and industry needs. Pasig City, as one of the pioneer implementers of the ALS Program, has been serving ALS learners with the hope of producing higher-education-ready and industry-ready citizens. Despite its efforts, it has also

experienced setbacks in terms of ALS learners completing the program, especially during the pandemic.

Circumstantially, the COVID-19 pandemic paved the way for the digitalization of learning materials and pedagogical transformation, which was seen as a silver lining of education amid a global crisis. The schools employed a blended learning modality—a combination of face-to-face learning, distance or online learning, and digital SLMs to counter the problem of mobility caused by the pandemic. However, it failed to ensure inclusive and quality education for all because learners still experienced the same learning gaps in reading, writing, listening, and speaking encountered during the pre-pandemic era. Even after the pandemic, the problem of developing the learners' communicative competence persists, especially for ALS learners under the blended learning modality.

For these reasons, it is only necessary to determine the appropriate communication-based approach to language learning and teaching to enhance the communicative competence of ALS learners and identify the factors that affect their language use in different communication contexts. Hence, in general, the study aimed to answer the question: How can the Communicative Competence Approach be used to develop English communication skills in learners of the Alternative Learning System?

Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the ALS learners' level of communicative competence in English in terms of the following dimensions?

- a. grammatical competence
 - b. sociolinguistic competence
 - c. strategic competence
 - d. discourse competence
2. What communication-based approach will develop the communicative competence of ALS secondary learners?
3. What factors influence the communicative competence of ALS learners?

Objectives of the Study

In general, the study aimed to analyze how can the Communicative Competence Approach be used to develop English communication skills in learners of the Alternative Learning System.

Specifically, the study aimed to:

1. Determine the level of communicative competence in English among ALS learners in terms of the following dimensions:
 - a. grammatical competence
 - b. sociolinguistic competence
 - c. strategic competence
 - d. discourse competence
2. Examine a communication-based approach that will develop the communicative competence of ALS secondary learners; and
3. Analyze the factors that influence the communicative competence of ALS learners.

Significance of the Study

English is a widely used language, evident in the various domains and verbal activities that dominate Philippine society (Borlongan, 2009). As a result, Filipinos have high regard for people who exemplify proficiency in the English language. For instance, this is evident in job posts where companies explicitly state their preference for graduates or applicants who have a strong command of the Filipino and English languages (oral and written).

The present-day economic landscape compels employers to favor a workforce with both technical skills and English communicative competence. The situation poses a difficulty, especially for ALS learners, whose goal is to find better job opportunities but struggle to communicate in English effectively. Most of the studies that dealt with ALS learners only focused on Basic English Grammar, language teaching and proficiency, and 21st-century skills (Pilar, 2015; Pimentel & Bañares, 2020; Zulueta et al., 2021) and overlooked other dimensions of the English language such as sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence, and discourse competence that make up communicative competence. The limited number of works of literature concentrating on the overall communicative competence in English of ALS learners, determining a suitable communication-based approach for developing their communication skills holistically, and the factors that affect their communicative competence in different communication contexts make the study significant.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study focused on the respondents' perceived communicative competence and language proficiency in English to determine the communication-based approach suitable for them and the factors that affect their communicative competence. Since this is based on perception, teachers' experiences and respondents' class standing and summative assessment scores were also investigated to validate the perceived communicative competence of the ALS secondary learners.

The study was participated in by 114 ALS secondary learners in the Division of Pasig City, hence, results are not generalizable. Two English teachers and one ICT teacher were interviewed to validate the perceived communicative competence of the respondents and share their experiences in communicating with ALS secondary learners. Sixteen respondents took part in a summative assessment to validate their perceived communicative competence and get more insights into their level of communicative competence. The study, however, did not look into how the lessons imparted to the respondents were crafted or framed toward building the competencies forwarded by Canale and Swain.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Nonformal Education Landscape

As stated in the policy guidelines, the ALS program helps out-of-school youth and adult learners acquire fundamental and functional literacy skills and lifelong learning opportunities to help them continue their education or secure better job opportunities to help them build a sustainable future (Batuampar & Basmayor, 2023). Functional literacy consists of communication skills, problem-solving and critical thinking, sustainable use of resources/productivity, personal development, and raising a sense of community, expanding one's world vision.

The ALS Curriculum is composed of six learning strands (LS) such as Learning Strand 1: Communication Skills (English), Communication Skills (Filipino); Learning Strand 2: Scientific Literacy and Critical Thinking Skills; Learning Strand 3: Mathematical and Problem-Solving Skills; Learning Strand 4: Life and Career Skills; Learning Strand 5: Understanding the Self and Society; and Learning Strand 6: Digital Literacy. The goal of LS 1 is to develop out-of-school youth and adults' ability to access, critically process, and effectively use available information in various media (DepEd, 2017). In particular, it expects learners to:

- a. function effectively as a member of the family, community, nation, and the world
- b. participate actively in community and economic development

Although not directly stated in the ALS Curriculum, the above guidelines are indicative of the notion of communicative competence.

RA11510 (DepEd Official Gazette, 2022) states that the ALS program, as a nonformal education program, should utilize modalities appropriate to the needs of the learners. The modalities range from modular instruction to online, digital, or mobile learning, face-to-face learning sessions and tutorials, radio or television-based instruction, blended learning, or a combination of various modalities.

The flexible nature of the ALS program entails the use of a blended learning modality, which consists of various modalities such as the use of SLMs (either print or digital), face-to-face learning sessions, and online learning (e.g., mobile and digital learning). It also employs the use of supplementary learning materials developed by the ALS teachers or facilitators and DepEd-BALS (Bureau of Alternative Learning Systems) “to suit the local need or context” of ALS learners (DepEd Region Office XI, n.d.).

Blended Learning Modality for ALS Learners

The COVID-19 pandemic has established the importance of digital technologies in education. As Haleem et al. (2022) put forward, digital technologies have created a paradigm shift in the education system and performed several roles, such as co-creator of information, mentor, and assessor, not boxed into a mere knowledge provider. For example, using Facebook to execute activities promotes active learning in situational contexts. This is considered an effective way to improve language proficiency, perception, and motivation.

However, some setbacks hinder the implementation of the preferred learning modalities. Sasan and Baritua (2022) raised that teachers continue to struggle to

incorporate environmental learning materials into the teaching and learning process. The teachers who participated in the study revealed that they use various media, such as the Messenger application, but lack the IT skills and expertise, which makes online learning harder to navigate. The study of Mupa and Chinooneka (2015) also attributed the poor performance of the grade seven learners in Zimbabwe to the teacher's lack of interest in using media and high preference towards instructional materials such as textbooks and syllabuses, lack of conducive teaching and learning environment, and qualified teachers.

On the other hand, Wongsu and Son's (2022) study yielded positive results. It showed success in using Facebook and drama-based activities in teaching English lessons to 40 grade 12 Thai participants. The applied strategy positively impacted learners' speaking skills and motivation and promoted a positive attitude toward learning English. Facebook and drama-based activities afforded learners and teachers an interactive and flexible learning environment that promotes communication and collaboration between learners and teachers. Therefore, learning outside the classroom becomes possible through the use of different modalities. ALS learners also utilize a blended learning modality consisting of SLMs, face-to-face sessions, and online learning.

The SLMs

The self-learning modules were developed based on a standard format structured by the Department of Education (DepEd CAR, 2020). Its elements include front matter (cover page), body inside page, and back matter. The contents are divided into sections such as:

1. Introduction

- It includes instructions for both the student and the facilitator on how to use the module.
- It has learning objectives that need to be developed for a material.
- It provides an overview of the module's topic and content.
- It must be conversational and utilize the learner's language.

2. Pre-assessment

- This is provided to assess the learner's previous knowledge of the lesson.
- Guide on whether to proceed or skip the module:
 - 100% correct – skip the module
 - 50% to 99% correct – proceed with the module
- Test item-ranged shall be as follows:

Key Stage 1 : 5 items

Key Stage 2 : 10 items

Key Stage 3 : 15 items

Key Stage 4 : 15 items

3. Lesson Proper

- Review
 - Explains previously taught concepts to establish a connection between the present lesson and earlier ones.
- Activity
 - Uses a setting or context, a poem, a song, an activity, a tale, or another method to introduce the new lesson.
- Discussion of the activity
 - Questions that aid in the learner's discovery and comprehension of the concept

- Inquiries need to be made logically with the goal to facilitate formative assessment.

- Mini-lesson

- An overview of the lesson

- Enrichment Activity

- Guided/Controlled Practice

- Guided/Controlled Assessment

- Independent Practice

- Independent Assessment

4. Generalization/ Summary of Learning

- In a form of a question, fill in the blank sentence/paragraph to analyze the learner's takeaway from the lesson.

5. Application

- An exercise designed to apply the knowledge and abilities acquired to real-world issues and circumstances.

6. Post Assessment

- This assesses how well the student has mastered the learning goals.

- The assignment will validate the concepts and offer opportunities for in-depth learning.

- Test item-range shall be as follows:

Key Stage 1 : 5 items

Key Stage 2 : 10 items

Key Stage 3 : 15 items

Key Stage 4 : 15 items

7. Additional Activity

- Any kind of activity that has the power to intensify a response and encourages learning and action repetition.

The introduction part reiterates the use of the learner's language and conversational tone, while the application section echoes the application of skills and knowledge gained into real-life concerns or situations or simply the contextualization of the learners' gained skills, knowledge, and learning. The remaining sections generally focus on the assessments, activities, practice, etc. However, some modules contained factual and computational errors and even failed to meet the standards stipulated by the Department of Education (Magsambol, 2020; Roda, 2020).

For ALS learners who only have limited teacher and classroom interaction and learn through SLMs, the SLMs must be written, formatted, and structured in a manner that motivates them to learn independently. The SLMs should be student-centered and structured based on the learners' needs, such as communication needs, for this study. Therefore, the goal of SLMs is to clearly communicate the message to the learner via the media material. Asimwe (2016) suggested the following good practices in writing modules for distance learning:

- Writing with simplicity, clarity, and logic (parsimony), taking the reader's level of comprehension into consideration. The content ought to be organized so that it addresses the majority of queries, if not all of them, that learners might have.
- Appealing to the five senses of the learner: Make your writing appealing to the learner's senses of taste, smell, hearing, and sight.

- Presenting the content illustratively. Use as much of the text, images, visual aids, etc. as possible. Make sure that the resources also give the learner control. It should include the following:
 - ✓ Clear title (may be with visuals for illustration)
 - ✓ Table of contents
 - ✓ Abstract or general introduction of the material
 - ✓ Explanations of symbols used
 - ✓ Clear headings
 - ✓ Well-formatted paragraphs
 - ✓ Headed figures and table if any
 - ✓ Highlighting significant points that a learner must keep in mind
 - ✓ Summarizing at the end of every unit to assist the learner recap what he/she has just learnt
 - ✓ Further reading references.

Note: The learner control should enhance intra - learner interaction, learner - instructor interaction, learner - environment interaction, and learner - content interaction

Face-to-face sessions

Due to the nature of the program, the ALS learners are only met face-to-face by their teachers once a week. Their limited time in the classroom limits their capacity to absorb and grasp the lessons and establish a sound relationship with their teachers. Their teachers have a huge role in ensuring that they learn the competencies mandated by the Department of Education despite the limited classroom interaction.

Teachers serving in ALS are also the same teachers who handle the regular learners. They use the same delivery methods in sessions for ALS and regular learners, e.g., the traditional lecture-discussion method, which is more appropriate in a formal setup than a nonformal setup, despite the difference in terms of diversity. For example, the ALS and regular classrooms in Antipolo City share the same goals, delivery, and class size but differ in schedule, learning areas, levels of students in a class, age of students, and instructional materials. This observation found in the study of Pimentel and Bañares (2020) established the diversity of learners in an ALS classroom compared to a regular classroom.

Such findings lead to the recommendation that ALS teachers undergo capacity training or lectures on grammar necessary to enhance their knowledge and prepare them for incidental teaching. Incidental teaching promotes activities that incorporate the learner's interest and motivation, e.g., authentic communication or how communication should be utilized in real-life situations rather than multiple-choice questions focusing only on the grammatical aspect. The Alternative Learning System Version 2.0 Strategic Roadmap also advocates the need to produce capable and quality teachers prepared to handle a diverse set of learners in the ALS program (DepEd, 2020).

To bridge the gap between ALS learners' diversity and ALS teachers' limited capability to handle nonformal education learners, the University of the Philippines Diliman has begun offering minor program in Alternative Learning System to both education and non-education majors in 2023. The program aims to mold teachers not just aware of the tenets, strategies, and approaches of alternative education, but

also a proponent of inclusive education and lifelong learning (Chi, 2023). Effective learning can be achieved if teachers employ various teaching methods and strategies and understand the nature of nonformal education and its goals of uplifting the lives of the marginalized. Given the limited time allotted for face-to-face sessions, the contextualization of instructional materials (e.g., based on local needs) and the application of appropriate strategies suited for diverse learners is necessary for smooth knowledge and skills transfer to improve the quality of learning, increase motivation, and induce participation among ALS learners.

Online learning

Digital native learners are said to be the generation born and nurtured under the influence and guise of modern technology in the digital society. The earlier methods of teaching are no longer appropriate for digital natives (Skok, 2019). They have hypertext minds and think parallelly rather than sequentially and tend to multiprocess information, multitask, and explore devices available at their disposal (Skok, 2019). The same holds true for ALS learners. In order to keep up with the era of Industry 4.0, the DepEd ALS Program ensures that it implements programs that are aligned with the needs of the learners (DepEd, 2020).

Digital natives have distinct learning faculties such as the need for individual-based learning, multiprocessing and multitasking, high-speed learning, multimedia orientation, device orientation, collaboration and peer learning and the need for instant gratification and immediate feedback, interactivity, learning via action rather than passively, and playfulness (Skok, 2019). However, due to the learners' limited

resources and lack of access to technology, the advantages of using digital technologies and their chance to reach their full potential are not fully realized.

The use of technology and media does not always guarantee success in learning. Common media issues identified by Lange and Costley (2020) during the processing, transfer, and presentation of information are as follows:

- pace – the rate of speed of delivery of audio and visual content
- intelligibility – the degree to which learners can clearly see or hear certain elements of the video lecture
- quality – presentation and design of media
- media diversity – the utilization of different media types
- congruence – usage of two or more media types at once

ALS learners under the DLSU ALS have identified challenges related to technology as factors that affect their learning during the pandemic (Chavez et al., 2021). The challenges include limited access to a stable Internet connection and the availability of gadgets. Both affect their ability to attend the synchronous class and finish tasks and modules because family members share the gadgets or mobile phones.

The study of Tindowen et al. (2017) exposed the low level of acquisition of 21st-century skills among ALS learners in Northern Philippines. ICT ranked lowest, translating the need for ICT integration. Collaboration, communication, and global connections are skills to be improved further, reiterating the need for meaningful

learning experiences and opportunities to make the learners open to sharing their ideas with diverse individuals locally and globally (Tindowen et al., 2017). The researchers in the study listed the informal sharing of experiences at the beginning of the lesson, the use of various computer-based technologies, especially video clips, and the use of group activities to create a closer relationship among learners as teaching strategies deemed useful for ALS teachers.

Properly structured educational procedures and activities can keep ALS learners encouraged and motivated to continue learning (Alcopra, n.d.). She further explained that educational procedures and activities ought to encourage my out-of-school youth learners to concentrate on issues that directly impact them and encourage them to make use of their senses in order to obtain deeper and more insightful perspectives. Since ALS learners come from different backgrounds, levels of maturity, and understanding, the activities and pedagogies applied to them should be related and contextualized to their practical experience and level of development.

The ALS Teachers

Teachers have a crucial role in transferring knowledge and skills to learners. To successfully fulfill such a role, they should possess digital knowledge or capacities that will help them enhance their relationship with learners, address diverse learning needs, and improve instructional quality (Runge et al., 2023). Digital literacy is considered crucial to developing digital competence, which is the ability to use ICT critically and confidently for work, leisure, education, and communication (Çam & Kiyici, 2017).

Promoting digital pedagogy practices is one way to enhance teachers' knowledge of utilizing technology. Professor Ida Cortoni supported such a move and discussed the importance of the involvement of institutions in the plan to develop initiatives that enhance learners' digital literacy, create online learning environments and tools for digital pedagogy, and introduce digital administrative solutions for educational institutions (Raicevic, 2018). The idea is to include technology in traditional teaching methods.

In the study conducted by Pratolo and Solikhati (2021), the teacher participants exhibited digital literacy by using a computer and smartphone. They aligned the gathered digital information with the syllabus and applied multiple literacies to develop effective teaching strategies. However, issues such as lack of technology, students' background, lack of time, and limited budget hinder the strengthening of digital literacy. Therefore, factors affecting the teachers and students should be considered to mold a holistic learner ready for a digital society.

The ALS Learners' Communicative Competence

Communication is a process that goes beyond the sharing of messages between the sender and receiver through a medium. It is also defined as the process of transforming messages into information usable to the participants involved. It consists of factors that make up meaningful communication experience. Thus, a competent communicator possesses knowledge of effective and appropriate communication and understands the importance of using and adapting the knowledge in diverse contexts (Cooley & Roach, 1984; Adler et al., 2021).

Communication skills make people successful in many areas, such as personal, professional, and academic (Emanuel, 2006). In effect, the schools train learners to master their communication skills, i.e., reading, writing, and speaking. Several studies suggest that communicating effectively reflects a significant social skill that leads to young children's school readiness, social adjustment, and academic success (McClelland et al., 2000 as cited in Chen et al., 2011). On the other hand, for adult learners, a communication-based curriculum is fundamental to lifelong learning (Berryman-Fink, 1982). This communicative approach replaces the traditional, grammar-oriented approach with communication-oriented teaching syllabuses designed based on the learners' needs and the program's objectives (Mustadi, 2012).

As Ho and Lim (2020) discussed, adult learners have diverse experiences, knowledge, learning preferences, and behaviors that require teachers to widen their skills to ensure that the learning goals are met. Kamola (2023) shared the same assumption and considered the unique characteristics of adult learners and the need to structure a teaching approach tailor-fit to their specific needs to help them develop their English language skills and realize communication goals.

The study on lived experiences in teaching Basic English Grammar among ALS teachers in Bacolod City by Pilar (2015) supported the conjecture of considering the learners' needs. The ALS teachers noticed that learners are less interested and not motivated to learn when Basic English Grammar is mainly taught using the English Language. The ALS learners' interest only increased when their teacher integrated Hiligaynon, their mother tongue language, into the learning experience. It

only shows the importance of considering the learners' needs and applying pragmatically appropriate and effective uses of language in conversational contexts delivered in the mother tongue and translated into the target language.

The Communicative Competence Approach

Most traditional classrooms observe the banking model of education. It is one of the earlier methods of teaching that applies a vertical or top-down approach—it places the teachers on top of the knowledge food chain, representing absolute control and authority that leaves behind students (Collo, 2020). The model sees the students as repositories of knowledge. Teachers communicate with them by expecting them to receive, file, and store the deposited knowledge, making the learners collectors or cataloguers (Freire, 2005) and nonparticipative members in the learning process.

To resolve the problem of the banking model of education, Freire suggested problem-posing education instead, where the teacher steps outside the role of being “the one who teaches” and becomes a facilitator of knowledge that creates a dialogic atmosphere that encourages participation and growth. The dialogic atmosphere reflects a communication-oriented approach that develops communicative competence among learners.

In communicative language teaching or Communicative Competence Approach, learners are encouraged to learn the second language by “communicating meaning to others” and being part of activities that involve speaking in the performance of meaningful tasks (University of Louisiana Monroe, 2021). Michael

Canale and Merrill Swain (1980) introduced the below guiding principles for the Communicative Approach to Second Language Teaching:

1. Communicative competence comprises of grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, and communication strategies or strategic competence, while the communicative approach facilitates the integration of the four types of knowledge. The latter ensures that the learner learns each type of knowledge in which no type of knowledge overpowers the other.
2. The learner's communication needs in the context of the four types of knowledge, i.e., grammatical competence (e.g. the levels of grammatical accuracy that are required in oral and written communication), sociolinguistic competence (e.g., needs relating to setting, topic, communicative functions), and strategic competence (e.g., the compensatory communication strategies to be used when there is a breakdown in one of the other competencies) are the basis of a communicative approach. Using the notion of Widdowson, the communication needs are divided into two types: relatively fixed and terminal, transitional and interim. The communication needs change with factors such as the learners' age and stage in the language learning process.
3. It is highly encouraged that the second language learner participate in meaningful communicative interaction with highly competent speakers of the language. This practice ensures that the learner can respond to genuine communicative needs in almost actual second-language situations. Being exposed to a realistic situation rather than indirect tests of proficiency, e.g., pencil-and-paper, tape-recorded listening and speaking tests, etc., is vital if the teacher's goal is to build communicative confidence out of communicative competence.

4. The second language learner should use in the best possible way the aspects of communicative competence developed through the acquisition and use of the native language that is common to those communication skills required in the second language. The more arbitrary and less universal aspects of communication (e.g., certain features of the grammatical code) should be presented and practiced in the context of less arbitrary and more universal aspects (e.g., the fundamental appropriateness conditions in making a request, the basic rules of discourse involved in greeting a peer).
5. The primary goal of a communication-oriented second language program is to give learners information, practice, and much experience that would help them reach their communicative needs in the second language. A curriculum-wide approach to developing communicative competence in the second language would facilitate continued study of the language.

Canale and Swain (1980) recommended teaching grammatical accuracy and meaningful communication in tandem, a form of organized communication based on the learner's basic communication needs, communicative functions, and social contexts. This is supported by Savignon (1972 as cited in Canale & Swain, 1980) who posited that enhancing fundamental communication abilities should not impede grammar skill development. In terms of language testing data, findings from Schulz (1977 as cited in Canale & Swain, 1980) suggested a communicative approach implemented through teaching or syllabus design inside the classroom and not through a testing program.

Schools today promote the use and practice of language in meaningful and real-life situations by employing a communicative language teaching approach (CLT). The focus of this teaching technique is for learners to acquire language through its actual use and participate in collaborative activities whose aim is not to master linguistic rules but to apply them in actual communication experience. The suggested activities are not limited to the following (University of Louisiana Monroe, 2021):

- **Talk the Talk** – Learners do most of the talking with minimal direct correction. Teachers promote indirect feedback or conversational redirections to avoid awkwardness and minimize the fear of mistakes. Age and proficiency influence the effectiveness of direct and indirect feedbacking.
- **Real-Life Scenarios** – The activity is based on role-playing in the context of real-life scenarios, e.g., discussing hobbies, popular culture, negotiating prices, describing the plot of a book or movie, etc. The focus is on practicing language for context and content, giving less emphasis on grammatical rules and structure. Teachers can employ modeling, repetition, and pair and group work to develop their communicative competence.
- **Working Together** – Pairing and grouping activities reflect realistic communication that promotes fluency over grammatical competence. Doing the activities with other learners increases self-confidence and makes them comfortable practicing the English language. It also increases the level of learners' engagement with the language meaningfully and provides opportunities to play and learn, e.g., reverse charades, mock television interviews, etc.

- Integrate Reading, Writing, and Speaking – Integrating these skills with work reading, writing, and listening is vital in developing English language learners. This is known as the integration approach, in which the aforementioned skills are applied in a single activity. For example, learners are tasked to watch an online video (listening), then post opinions in the comments section (writing), and explain the comments of others (reading). Such an activity harnesses multiple skills and helps teachers apply best practices in each skill when guiding the learners.

The study conducted by Ironsi and Popescu (2021) proved the significance of the blended teaching method (BTM) and communicative language teaching (CLT) in enhancing the communicative competence of EFL learners in terms of spoken language and effective language instruction delivery. The researcher utilized the experimental research method on 55 participants who participated in a speaking and listening improvement test and answered a questionnaire. Learners who answered the pre- and post-SLIT (speaking listening improvement test) proficiency test got below 50 percent. It can be deduced that long periods of English lessons do not guarantee a high level of communicative competence (Keshmirshekan, 2019 as cited in Ironsi & Popescu, 2021) in a classroom where learners find it difficult to use the second language in communicating (Paunovic, 2013, Darmajanti, 2018 as cited in Ironsi & Popescu, 2021).

The inconsistent test scores of learners who experienced CLT were above 50 percent. They showed no significant improvement in listening and speaking skills,

but the scores are better compared to the SLIT test. Thus, CLT is effective if the teachers utilize it properly. The group that is the product of BTM scored above 50 percent average in general and showed a slight development in listening and speaking skills. BTM is an effective method because of its goal to learn themes, activities, and situations towards improving second language areas i.e., speaking, reading, writing, and listening (Niu & Zhang, 2019 as cited in Ironsi & Popescu, 2021). As opined in the study, the use of different language methods parallel to the learners' needs is vital in achieving the communication needs of most of the language learners.

However, the discussed teaching methods do not work all the time. CLT and TBLT (task-based language teaching) posed several challenges, such as conceptual constraints (e.g., conflicts with local values and misconceptions regarding CLT/TBLT); classroom-level constraints (e.g., various student and teacher-related factors, classroom management practices, and resource availability); and societal-institutional level constraints (e.g., curricula and examination systems) as observed in the study conducted by Butler (2011). Upon evaluating several studies, he suggested employing more contextually feasible and flexible interpretations of CLT and TBLT (adapting to local environments so the two methods can be embedded in local practices), implementing decentralized or innovative language-in-education policies, and creating communities of learning outside of the classroom as well as in the classroom.

Furthermore, teachers do not always utilize CLT. Gonzales' (2019) study revealed that the beliefs of English teachers do not align with CLT, which they

claimed they used in classroom instruction. The teachers' perspectives are more inclined toward the Audio Lingual Method and Grammar Translation Method, contrary to the CLT concepts. They recognized the concept behind CLT, but their responses to the questions raised by the researcher displayed a lack of comprehensive understanding of CLT. In the study, the teachers revealed some barriers to the implementation of CLT, such as the shyness of the learners and their inability to take an active role in their own learning, the learners' dependence on using their native language during classroom activities, and on the teachers' end, the materials needed for CLT takes a lot of preparation and time. Barrot (2018) generated the same result regarding tertiary teachers' beliefs and the application of CLT in the classroom. The results showed that teachers did not extensively utilize tasks, syllabus, and materials that reflect CLT in language classrooms. Teachers also used the Audio Lingual Method despite asserting that they used CLT. Contextual factors such as class size, limited class hours, and teachers' and students' attitudes were identified as the reasons for the results.

The study of Ironsi and Popescu (2021) suggested using Facebook and WhatsApp applications as a follow-up procedure to encourage communication through website discussion and conference calling. The activity promoted interaction and discussion on topics the teachers found relevant to the learners. Subsequent meetups like joining night film activities developed communicative competence and language learning after class. The activities outside the school setting mirror real-life situations, e.g., communicating with co-workers, interacting with clients, etc., where the learners can practice their language proficiency and communicative competence.

Context (a setting where proficient learners live with native speakers) and the opportunity to interact in the target language are the most important factors influencing language acquisition (Griffiths, 2018). Interaction with highly competent speakers provided learners with an authentic communication experience, which Canale and Swain identified as one of the effective communicative approaches in second language teaching. The interaction imitates a realistic situation wherein learners are given the opportunity to address genuine communication needs. However, not everyone is afforded the opportunity to be in contact with native speakers of the second language. Chang and Suparmi (2020) identified the teachers' limited access to the target language's culture, limited time to develop instructional materials, and lack of training for teachers as some of the factors that hinder the implementation of CLT.

Other Teaching and Learning Communication Strategies Promoting Communicative Competence Approach

The use of the scaffolding method by teachers is an effective way to process information in relation to effective language acquisition. The teacher, viewed as the expert, gradually decreases learning support and slowly allows the learners to do the tasks independently as they master the new skill. The scaffolding method taps into the learners' prior knowledge and experience while they learn new knowledge, concepts, and skills. Such a method supports strategic competence, one of the four dimensions of communicative competence, that focuses on activating background knowledge to enhance communication. It involves verbal and nonverbal strategies to compensate for breakdown, such as self-correction.

The interactional nature of the scaffolding method could be seen in peer learning or collaborative learning tasks. The study of Homayouni (2022) confirmed the influence of scaffolded peer assessment in a group-oriented context toward improving speaking skills and expanding vocabulary knowledge. When applied to developing communicative competence, it is easier to acquire phonological rules, morphological words, syntactic rules, semantic rules, and lexical items because of the presence of an expert who gradually guides the learners to become more independent and self-directed. Therefore, the scaffolding method can also enhance grammatical/linguistic competence.

Dayag-Tungpalan's findings contended that prior knowledge positively influenced learners' understanding of the topics. The study revealed that ESL (English as a Second Language) learners seldom make any connections to their past learning or their situation when understanding topics (Dayag-Tungpalan, 2023). In the context of the correlation between the learners' speaking performance and perceived factors affecting their speaking performance, significant correlations are found between the following factors: degree of social media exposure, listening ability, communication anxiety, knowledge in English vocabulary, mastery of grammar rules, exposure to speaking opportunities both inside and outside of the classroom, exposure to the English language, time required to prepare and deliver a speech act or speaking task, and topical knowledge. (Dayag-Tungpalan, 2023). Based on the study, the most dominant metacognitive strategy is the thought process—an effective method for ESL learners when carrying out speaking activities. It can be deduced that the thought process not only focuses on ways to develop

communicative competence but also on psychological and environmental conditions that may influence speaking performance.

The Socratic method follows the Socratic questioning approach, allowing learners to explore their speaking, listening, reading, and writing abilities. Such a method gives learners the opportunity to utilize English when speaking and allows them to think when they are asked to expound on the subject matter, strengthening their critical thinking ability. The method showcases the learners' sociolinguistic competence. As they participate in the Socratic method, they are exposed to different situations that call for various types of expressions depending on their beliefs, views, values, and attitudes of the person they are speaking to.

The method is also used to find commonality between the teacher and the student's background information and select appropriate themes for the speaking lesson. This teaching also applies to foreign language learning, where learners are encouraged to express their thoughts through dialogue, broadening their vocabularies and grammatical structures (Mott, 2015 as cited in Ramli et al., 2022). The method enhances the learners' discourse competence. As they engage in the speaking activity, they learn to apply cohesion or use grammatical links and observe coherence, combining appropriate communicative actions in the given oral situation.

Based on the study of Al-Darwish (2012), it is an effective approach but takes too much time as it involves two phases: the deconstructive phase (encourages free thinking and not being affected by incorrect beliefs) and the constructive phase

(guides learners to a new understanding by challenging incorrect or misleading ideas). Also, the study revealed that both new and experienced teachers' dependence on personal beliefs about teaching and reliance on recitation and narrow questioning leads to predetermined answers.

Rubin (1981 as cited in Griffiths, 2018) identified two kinds of learning strategies. Direct learning strategies consider the involvement of the learners through interacting with the materials directly. On the other hand, in indirect learning, incidental learning happens in which strategies indirectly contribute to learning. Learners should learn strategies to work out the answers for themselves so they may feel empowered to take care of their own language development (Griffiths, 2018). The language development process from the learners' point of view or considering the learner's perspective is an important aspect of the language development process (Griffiths, 2018). The two learning strategies reinforce strategic competence where contextual guessing, ambiguity, and communication breakdown are part of the language learning process.

Factors that Influence Communicative Competence

Several studies and theories examine concepts, principles, and notions that necessitate factors that influence language learning in the context of developing and harnessing communicative competence. Such factors include the nature of the English language, language proficiency and fluency, diverse characteristics of ALS learners (in terms of age, prior knowledge/memory, way of thinking, learning environment, exposure to the English language, and attitude), teachers' mastery of the lesson, and motivation of ALS learners.

The nature of the English language

The English language is recognized as a lingua franca in the Philippines because of its widespread use. Similar to the Philippines' Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) allies, it has retained its spot as one of the official languages used in the country due to its long history of colonization, cultural developments, migrations, cooperation, exchanges, conflicts, and foreign investments (Hashim, 2023). Through the years, it has evolved into varieties, which makes it challenging to comprehend and use. For instance, the Philippine English lexicon consists of words that have different meanings from other lexicons; the word "salvage" in American English, Australian English, and British English vocabularies means "to save" but in Philippine English, it refers to "kill, destroy, or banish" (Tadeo, 2012). Google search engine showed the Philippine English definition of salvage as to "apprehend and execute (a suspected criminal) without a trial" but when translated into Filipino, it interpreted the word using its American English, Australian English, and British English meanings: *pagsagip*, *pagsasalba* (to save), etc. The confusion could be resolved by learning the sociolinguistic aspect of the word aside from its meaning. Therefore, the sociolinguistic description of contexts is important to language learning and acquisition because it promotes key concepts such as culture and contextual learning (Kurt, 2022).

Despite the prevalence of the English language in the media, social media, businesses, schools, etc., Filipino learners still experience challenges in speaking and understanding the language. They are not native speakers of the English language, and as a result, they have a hard time understanding and analyzing it (Badua, 2022). Additionally, the existence of World English, such as Philippine

English, American English, UK English, and other varieties in the Philippines, makes learning to communicate in English effectively even more challenging. It is aggravated, more so, by the vague specification of the World English variety to be used in the English curriculum. Plata and Quinto (2016 as cited in Bernardo, 2022) pointed out that the country's most recent basic education reform (The K-12 Language Arts and Multiliteracies Curriculum) does not specify whether Philippine English (PE) is a target standard or if it is actually regarded as a non-standard form as stated in the curriculum.

Babanto et al. (2023) support the notion that attitudes toward a language are determined or influenced by several factors such as cultural, social, historical, and political contexts, and language attitudes in Philippine English have changed to exhibit evolving beliefs and values in Philippine culture. They concluded that Philippine English in ESL instruction is an effective and meaningful pathway for learning a language and understanding culture. Philippine English helps learners develop important skills to communicate effectively and, at the same time, cultivate an understanding of their own culture and others.

The unawareness of the essence of language variation in a multilingual society further hampers the learners' quest for better oral fluency and understanding. The English language, like any other language, constantly evolves and changes. Espino et al. (2021) argued that English Language Teaching (ELT) is still subjugated by monolingual viewpoints and methods. In addition to language variation, the existence of varieties of English, translanguaging practices (teachers switch from English to another language while delivering the lesson to assist the struggling

learners), and one-size-fits-all approach are issues that are not tackled despite the country's multilingual and linguistically diverse characteristics. Monolingual bias is a widespread phenomenon since language teachers are trained using traditional models of teachers' competencies and awareness, fixated on the target language (Otwinowska, 2017).

Unfortunately, such preconceptions are unfitting in a modern world where multilingual contexts are the norm rather than the exception due to the existence of around 7,000 spoken or signed languages in the world (UNESCO, 2024). The Philippines is home to more than 175 living indigenous languages (Ethnologue, 2024). Filipino and English are the two official languages in the country. According to the 2020 Census of Population and Housing (PSA, 2023), (1) Tagalog, (2) Bisaya, (3) Hiligaynon/Ilonggo, (4) Ilocano, (5) Cebuano, (6) Bikol/Bicol, (7) Waray, (8) Kapampangan, (9) Maguindanao, and (10) Pangasinan/Panggalato are the top 10 leading languages/dialects generally spoken at home. Language variation and translanguaging practices should be supported in a multilingual and linguistically diverse society like the Philippines.

Language proficiency and fluency

Language proficiency is the capacity to use language correctly and responsibly in both written and spoken forms in a range of contexts (Cloud et al., 2000). It involves three dimensions of academic literacy: linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural. Five components make up the linguistic dimension. National Geographic Society (2023) differentiates each component:

- Vocabulary refers to words familiar to an individual.

- Syntax or grammar indicates the arrangement of words and the structural rules to form a sentence/s.
- Pragmatics signifies the way people utilize the language to communicate.
- Morphology discusses the way words are structured and formed in various languages.
- Phonology is the study of the sound of speech.

The cognitive dimension consists of language, imagination, thinking, reasoning, problem-solving, and memory, allowing people to organize their knowledge and relate it to other areas. On the other hand, the sociocultural dimension comprises factors such as belief and value systems, attitudes, acculturation levels, socialization goals and practices, language use at home, etc. (González, 2011). In the context of second language proficiency, individual differences or internal factors concerning biological, such as age or sex; cognitive, such as language aptitude, intelligence, attention, or working memory, and affective, such as personality, learning styles, or motivation also play a role in successful adult L2 (second language) learning (Luque & Morgan-Shoort, 2021). The learners' working memory capacity is considered the most influential factor as it may affect a learner's capacity to develop native-like sensitivity to linguistic clues in L2, the language they are studying, and to accurately and effectively understand structurally complicated sentences (Miyake & Friedman, 1998).

Oral fluency is a key measure of assessing second language oral proficiency (Peltonen, 2023). It is measurable through evaluating speech rate (the fastness or

the slowness of the learner's speaking), accuracy (signifies correct pronunciation and the use of words and phrases suitable for a specific situation), and utterance (deals with the length of speaking words and phrases between hesitations) (Smarter Language, 2023). It can only be attained through integrating communicative activities. As put forward by Ong and Villegas (2021), despite being one of the most crucial indicators of second language proficiency, oral fluency is sadly undervalued in a communicative classroom setting.

Rossiter et al. (2010) reached the same inference on fluency development in numerous ESL classrooms. The researchers observed that the texts found on the selected learner and teacher resources only focused on communicative free-production activities (e.g., general speaking tasks without a specific focus, traditionally seen as fluency builders in L2 classrooms) undermining other activities such as rehearsal and repetition tasks, consciousness-raising tasks (i.e., to raise awareness of fluency features), and the use of discourse markers (lexical fillers such as *so*; *you know*) that are important in improving oral fluency. Traditionally, repetitions or filled pauses (*uh*, *um*) are deliberated as a precursor for disfluency, but from a strategic perspective, it is a way to have more time, prevent lengthy pauses, and ultimately to develop fluency (Götz, 2013, Peltonen, 2020b as cited in Peltonen, 2023).

Derwing et al. (2009) identified structural properties of the L1 (native language) itself, the proficiency levels of the speakers, the degree of exposure to the L2 (including instruction), and cognitive factors such as working memory as contributory factors in developing fluency. Segalowitz (2010) delved deeper into

fluency using dynamical systems approach theory and explored fluency as a nonlinear phenomenon involving interrelated factors: speakers' first and second language skills and experiences as well as their emotional and cognitive states when speaking; speakers' interactions within various social and communicative contexts; and listeners' perceptions. Therefore, speaking style in the first language influences second-language fluency (Peltonen, 2023).

The diverse characteristics of ALS learners

Today's learners are known as digital natives because of their hypertext minds—they think parallelly rather than sequentially and tend to multi-process information, multitask, and explore devices available at their disposal (Skok, 2019). On the contrary, ALS learners are more complex learners because of their diverse ages/generations, status, characteristics, backgrounds, and skills that influence their learning. Adult learners think and process ideas and information differently compared to young learners.

Greig and Bryson (2009) explained that learners undergo inter-language stages either shaped by their native language or the learning process. For example, regular school children do better than adults in acquiring native-like English pronunciation. They have more time to learn the language than adult learners, who only have a limited amount of time—a common situation among ALS learners who need to learn to communicate in English in a short period. The advantage of adult learners over children is the former's ability to think more abstractly, which allows them to talk about and comprehend the structural distinctions that exist between their L1 (native language) and L2 (the language being studied), which a child cannot

understand (Greig & Bryson, 2009). Such differences are rooted in the learners' age difference.

Schema theory explains how adult learners process ideas and information. It strengthens the role of prior knowledge in learning and analyzing concepts and putting them into application. These concepts and relations are not stored randomly in the brain but are combined into "networks composed of knowledge spaces centered on main topics" (Liu, 2015). Aside from improving reading comprehension, the schemata theory also enhances oral competence. The experiment conducted by Gao and Fan (2013) showed improvement in the vocabulary acquisition of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students after applying the schemata method of memorizing. When the oral teaching model based on schema theory was used, the mean length of utterances, the total number of words, word types, the number of phrases or chunks, and the grammatical accuracy and complexity were also improved.

Having a great deal of schemata and the ability to activate them successfully is vital in improving oral competence (Gao & Fan, 2013). As the researchers explained, learned knowledge interacts with new knowledge through relevant schemata and proper activation to facilitate assimilation or comprehension, following the idea of Stephen Krashen's second language acquisition theory, wherein second language acquisition only happens when the language input is comprehensible.

Learning materials

ALS learners sit at the formal operational stage (age 11 and beyond) wherein they have the capability to reason about hypothetical or abstract objects and occurrences in addition to concrete ones. Formal operational stage refers to a period when the person can operate on forms or representations (Thompson, 2019). At this stage, the learners can reason and pose hypothetical questions and mentally reason or manipulate mental representations of objects and actions relevant to the lesson and the environment he, she or they operates in. Basically, they are self-directed learners who need effective learning materials presented successfully by their teachers and a great deal of motivation to succeed.

The study participated in by ALS learners in Sipocot, Camarines Sur pointed out the importance of utilizing actual experiences in the learning process. It showed low results in functional literacy, such as scientific and critical thinking, communication, and digital skills. As interpreted in the study, learners are more inclined and interested in the practical application of knowledge; thus, ALS teachers should utilize localized instructional materials and give time for hands-on experiences relatable to the ALS learners (Ocampo, 2021).

Properly structured educational procedures and activities keep ALS learners encouraged and motivated to continue learning (Alcopra, n.d.). Using inspiring educational procedures and activities for out-of-school youth learners builds focus on things that directly affect them and allows them to utilize their senses to acquire more meaningful and valuable insights (Alcopra, n.d.). Since ALS learners come from different backgrounds, levels of maturity, and understanding, the activities and

pedagogies applied to them should be related and contextualized to their practical experience and level of development.

Teacher's mastery of the lesson

Although adult learners have already formed their own set of ideas, judgments, and thinking, they tend to seek validation and directives from people who matter, like family, peers, teachers, etc., to become motivated. Teachers are expected to be at the forefront in effectively delivering the lesson and possess expert knowledge in the subject they teach. In the case of ALS teachers, they are supposed to have complete mastery of the English language and communication skills since the language is used across the curriculum and is part of the competencies measured in the A&E Test (Pimentel & Bañares, 2018).

Despite the upper mastery level placement of ALS teachers in the diagnostic test facilitated by Pimentel and Bañares (2020), upon further analysis, it was found that teachers registered ten least mastered communication arts skills, i.e., summarize the given text, observe correct subject-verb agreement, identify the text type, choose the synonym of the given word, use correct tenses of verbs, use appropriate transitional devices, get a specific idea, use reflexive/intensive pronouns, observe correct parallelism, and make generalizations out of the 16 competencies indicated in the executed test. The teachers' difficulty is attributed to their lack of expertise in the language taught since most of them are not Communication Arts majors, which may also cause difficulty in understanding and translating the language.

Biryukova et al. (2015) established that teachers must consider the learners' individual difficulties and educational experience, introduce practice-oriented course content focused on the goals and individual needs of adult learners, integrate individual and group forms of activities, and implement the interactive method of teaching because they made the process of learning English more comfortable for adults. The implementation of the activities has shown positive results: learners got rid of their fear of negative evaluation, gained self-confidence, mastered a significantly larger amount of material and improved their understanding; increased their cognitive activity and independence; changed the way they used to interact with each other; group cohesion has also increased. The results placed learners as active subjects of communication in a foreign language, which may help them develop their communicative competence (Biryukova et al., 2015).

On the contrary, it is challenging to apply the activities mentioned earlier, considering the diversity of students and the foreign language expertise of the teachers in a classroom. Al-Mahrooqi and Denman (2022) noted that the limited understanding of teachers of local cultures and languages and the existence of learners with diverse cultures and languages may lead to ineffective teaching and learning. Such a case makes the recognition and integration of a wide range of individual and contextual factors concerning cognition, metacognition, emotion, identity, and socio-cultural background into the classroom a challenging task (Al-Mahrooqi & Denman, 2022).

Adult learners' motivation

Intrinsic motivation works best for adult learners navigating digital society. It refers to internal behaviors that energize the learners to perform an activity successfully because it captures their interest. It can lead to extrinsic motivation, the desire to work harder to finish a task. The results of the study conducted by Valeza et al. (2017) deduced that ALS learners are motivated to be part of the program because of the chance to attain a job, and lack of interest makes them leave the program. For instance, when teaching the English language, teachers should plan activities and design classroom environments that promote motivation toward learning ESL (Azar & Tanggaraju, 2020) relevant to different communication contexts.

Learners are motivated when teachers apply effective teaching, which is manifested when teachers possess both communication skills and content knowledge (Okoli, 2017). As for the adult learners of English as a second language, they have strong academic motivation and instrumental motivation because they understand that learning the language will help them achieve their goals, such as personal, academic, and career or professional endeavors in a global economy that is dependent on the English language in terms of communication (Greig & Bryson, 2009).

Language Use in Different Communication Contexts

Learners need to interact effectively and spontaneously, acquire knowledge beyond linguistic code, and communicate using knowledge and skills appropriate to the given communication situation. The most common settings where

communication takes place are in school, at home, and in the environment (local community, social community, or the workplace). A survey participated by 27 job sectors in Cagayan De Oro City found that speaking, writing, listening, and reading in English are essential in the workplace (Reyes, 2011). It listed the specific communication skills preferred by employers:

- When it comes to speaking, employers require employees with the ability to handle customers/clients/patients' complaints well
- On writing, employers are looking for people who can write comprehensive reports and document meetings/proceedings
- An effective listening skill entails the adeptness to listen to the point of view of others and follow verbal instructions thoroughly
- On reading, employers expect employees to read, understand, and follow written instructions/procedures in handling tasks

The study by Reyes (2011) recommended reviewing the English curriculum to emphasize various communication tasks needed in different disciplines. Therefore, more than content and structure, overall language proficiency is a concern that should also be given priority as it is one of the markers of communicative competence.

More than learning grammar and acquiring a wide vocabulary, developing skills reinforced by communicative competence is important. Myles et al. (1998) found that as the learners progress and their communicative needs develop, formulaic language and well-practiced classroom routines to maintain “conversations” when talking about third parties prove inadequate. Instead, 62.5% of

the learners in the study modified the language formula and routines in several ways and used them as a basis. It only shows that the learners can tweak and fine-tune the language formula and classroom routines based on their skills and needs in a communication situation.

Oral communication is influenced by social and cultural factors present in the home, the environment, and the schools. In the study of Sandigan (2018), learners without training or limited training in reading and classroom interaction showed less progress in English proficiency. The type of school from which one graduated, the income of parents whose income afforded or deprived exposure of children to English reading materials, and the absence of a highly skilled teacher in communication have a significant impact on how the learner would turn out—either to become an effective communicator or less proficient (Sandigan, 2018).

Second Language Acquisition and Communicative Competence Theory

Learning a language is a complex task, especially when acquiring a second language. The main objective is to convey a message meaningfully and apply it effectively in different communication contexts in the most appropriate manner. Second language acquisition (SLA) theory supports the ultimate goal of a teacher in a communicative learning classroom—to develop the learner’s proficiency in communicating using the target language, promote self-development, and enhance intercultural understanding of language in the learning process (Ezeh et al., 2022).

Traditionally, language is taught with an emphasis on teaching language as grammar. However, the dominance of the English language and today's education landscape has evolved to regard language as a means of communication for participation. Rather than defining communication based on sending and receiving messages, its meaning has evolved and is characterized by social interaction that is unpredictable and creative in a form utilized by two or more people using authentic language and nonverbal symbols to achieve successful outcomes (Widdowson, 1978). Communication happens in discourse and sociological contexts wherein speakers use appropriate language and can understand and analyze the underlying message (Gałajda, 2012). The main thrust of the above characteristics of communication relates to the primary goal of second language learning, which is to develop communicative competence.

According to Gałajda (2012), awareness of the difference between language usage and language use is vital in understanding the link between linguistic skills and communicative abilities. Language usage refers to abstract language systems, while language use operates to realize a communication goal (Gałajda, 2012). Successful communication can only be achieved if learners can apply their linguistic skills (speaking, hearing, composing, and comprehending), choose the appropriate language system, and interpret and construct the context of the language to achieve a communication goal. The way people use language in communication should demonstrate a continuous negotiation and assessment process that results from extensive interactional processes (Canale, 2013). Therefore, the principal goal of learning a language is acquiring communicative competence that showcases communicative abilities beyond the classroom (Gałajda, 2012).

Becoming a globally competent individual requires knowledge, communication skills, and competency. One should develop communicative competence—the knowledge and application of various aspects or dimensions of communication that can only be acquired through constant participation in a realistic communication situation (Canale & Swain, 1980). Savignon's definition of communicative competence concurs with Canale and Swain's understanding. Savignon (1976) describes it as a way to interact effectively and spontaneously (i.e., unrehearsed), thus encouraging knowledge more than the linguistic code—the ability to not only know how to say something but what to say and when to say it. Language acquisition is one of the important facets of communicative competence. Hymes (1972) relates communicative competence to “patterns of sociolinguistic behaviour of the target language.” In light of second language learning, Canale and Swain (1980) define communicative competence within underlying systems of knowledge and skill necessary for communication (e.g., knowledge of vocabulary and skill in using the sociolinguistic conventions for a given language).

As Canale and Swain (1980) put forward, the communicative approach applied in communicative competence concerning second language teaching and testing is tackled in an integrative manner. The theory emphasizes the integration of competencies such as grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence, and discourse competence, in which one competence or knowledge should not overshadow the other or be overemphasized.

According to Canale (2013), evaluation of communicative performance is only possible when there is a clear distinction between communicative competence and

actual communication. Communicative competence refers to understanding of the fundamentals of communication rules while actual communication consists of knowledge and skills demonstrated in an actual situation under limiting psychological and environmental conditions, i.e., memory and perceptual constraints, fatigue, nervousness, distractions, and interfering background noises (Canale, 2013). Evaluating communicative competence entails an understanding of the approaches that are applied to second language teaching.

Educational Communication

Educational communication's early definition was in context of the meaning of educational technology: "a complex, integrated process involving people, procedures, ideas, devices, and organization, for analyzing problems and devising, implementing, evaluating, and managing solutions to those problems involved in all aspects of human learning" (Cadiz, 1991). This broad definition was summed up by the Department of Educational Communication (Devcom, 2023) as: "the study and practice of communication that constitutes and facilitates learning that is empowering, ethical, and inclusive among various learners in different development contexts."

The recent working definition of educational communication supports nonformal education and its goal of addressing the individual needs of learners by promoting inclusive learning—the use of teaching and learning methods and strategies appropriate for diverse learners. As reiterated by Cadiz during the roundtable discussion for the presentation of the updated definition, the Bubble

Model used in redefining educational communication should focus on the learner/learning outcome and incorporate learning tasks, mode/media, and mentor/s.

Incorporating the educational communication paradigm into the Communicative Competence Approach ensures that activities and assessments for ALS secondary learners are student-centered and tailored to their diverse characteristics and needs. This will encourage ALS learners to participate in the program as they understand the essence of their communication-related learning tasks and their connection and relevance to real-life experiences.

Theoretical Framework

A theory is used to explain a phenomenon and give predictions. Clearly defined constructs are essential in understanding a theory. They are comprised of key features, concepts, or mechanisms that support the underpinnings of a theory (VanPatten et al., 2020).

The communicative competence theory by Canale and Swain (1980) defines communicative competence based on systems of knowledge and skills that support realistic communication situations. It is based on four interrelated dimensions: grammatical competence or knowledge of grammar rules, sociolinguistic competence or contextual language use, discourse competence or appropriateness of a language in relation to a specific situation, and strategic competence or exercise of the appropriate communication strategies.

The theory supports the premise of the communicative approach to second language education, which is English, for this study. It considers the vital role of using the native language in developing communicative competence in the second language (Canale & Swain, 1980). Furthermore, instead of emphasizing the mastery of the linguistic aspects of learning a language, the theory posits focusing second language learning on applying the four dimensions in a realistic communication situation, where psychological and environmental conditions may influence communication (Canale, 2013). Therefore, the theory's main thrust revolves around interacting effectively and spontaneously, redirecting the learners to not only focus on knowing how to say something but also on what to say and when to say it (Savignon, 1976). The following discusses the characteristics of the four dimensions of communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980; Canale, 2013):

1. Grammatical Competence

It is the use of grammatical knowledge to determine and express accurately the literal meaning of utterances. It includes knowledge of lexical items, morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics, and phonology.

2. Sociolinguistic Competence

This competence comprises two sets of rules: sociocultural rules of use and discourse. Both are essential in analyzing utterances for social meaning, especially in instances where there is a low level of transparency between the literal meaning of an utterance and the speaker's intention. According to Hymes (1967, 1968 as cited in Canale & Swain, 1980), sociocultural rules focus on the appropriateness of certain propositions and communicative functions within a given sociocultural context depending on contextual factors such as topic, role of participants, setting, and norms of interaction. It also

dwells on appropriate attitude, register, or style conveyed by a particular grammatical form within a given sociocultural context. On the other hand, the rules of discourse focus on the combination of utterances and communicative functions and refer to notions such as topic and comment (in the strict linguistic sense of these terms).

3. Strategic Competence

This particular competence is composed of verbal and nonverbal strategies applied when communication breakdown happens because of insufficient competence and performance variables. The strategies are divided into two types: strategies relating to grammatical competence (e.g., how to paraphrase grammatical forms that one has not mastered or cannot recall momentarily) and strategies relating to sociolinguistic competence (e.g., various role-playing strategies, how to address strangers when unsure of their social status).

4. Discourse Competence

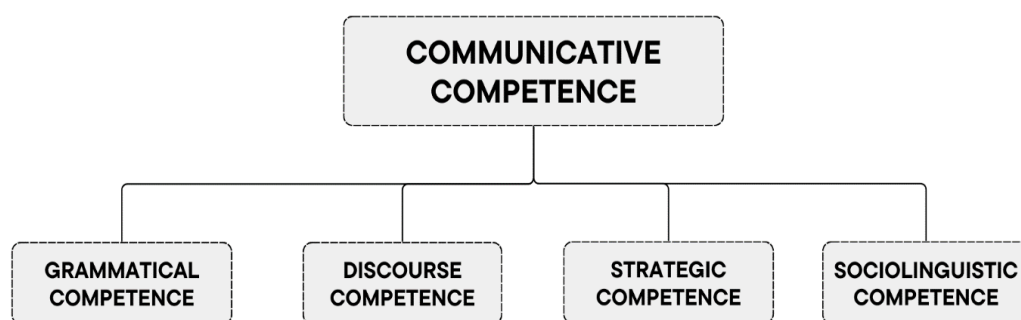
This dimension deals with the ability to effortlessly integrate grammatical constructions with meanings to produce coherent written or spoken language across a variety of genres. Genres represent the type of text, e.g., an oral and written narrative, an argumentative essay, a scientific report, a business letter, and a set of instructions. The main goal is to achieve unity through cohesion in form and coherence in meaning. Cohesion is concerned with the structural relationships between utterances and how they help in text interpretation.

For instance, the successful use of cohesion devices such as pronouns, synonyms, ellipses, conjunctions, and parallel structures shows how a group of utterances should be understood. On the one hand, coherence signifies the

connections between several meanings within a text, which can be implied as literal meanings, communicative functions, and attitudes.

Figure 2.1

Canale and Swain's Communicative Competence Model



Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study is based on the communicative competence theory by Canale and Swain (1980). The theory serves as the basis of the study since it promotes the Communicative Competence Approach or the use of authentic communication in facilitating effective language learning to develop ALS learners' English communication skills. Furthermore, its assumptions and premises on communicative competence and multiliteracies frameworks are aligned with some of the competencies and learning outcomes of ALS-K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum (Learning Strand 1 Communication: English).

The four dimensions discussed by Canale and Swain comprise grammatical competence or knowledge of grammar rules, sociolinguistic competence or contextual language use, discourse competence or appropriateness of a language to a specific situation, and strategic competence or exercise of the appropriate communication strategies. Each dimension covers the following concepts and topics:

1. Grammatical/Linguistic Competence means the acquisition of phonological rules, morphological words, syntactic rules, semantic rules, and lexical items.
2. Sociolinguistic Competence refers to the learning of pragmatic aspects of various speech acts, namely, the cultural values, norms, and other socio-cultural conventions in social contexts. These include the context and topic of discourse, the participant's social status, sex, age, and other factors that influence styles and registers of speech. Since different situations call for different types of expressions and beliefs, views, values, and attitudes, developing sociolinguistic competence is essential for communicative social action.
3. Discourse Competence is the knowledge of rules regarding the cohesion (grammatical links) and coherence (appropriate combination of communicative actions) of various types of discourse (oral and written). Sociolinguistic rules of use and rules of discourse are crucial in interpreting utterances for social meaning, particularly when the literal meaning of an utterance does not lead to the speaker's intention easily.
4. Strategic Competence to DO with the knowledge of verbal and nonverbal strategies to compensate for breakdowns, such as self-correction, and enhance the effectiveness of communication, such as recognizing discourse

structure, activating background knowledge, contextual guessing, and tolerating ambiguity.

The variables in the study were assessed through a survey, assessment, and learners' grades in Reading and Writing Skills and 21st Century Literature from the Philippines. They were represented by the competencies centered on knowledge and skills found in the ALS-K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum (Learning Strand 1 Communication Skills: English) and measured through the Likert scale and analysis of the respondents' responses, attitudes, or behaviors. The independent variable represented by the four dimensions in the Communicative Competence Approach by Canale and Swain were translated into competencies that served as indicators to determine the communicative competence of ALS secondary learners (Appendix A). Part 1 of the survey (Appendix B) taken by the respondents signifies the specific learning competencies from the ALS-K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum (Learning Strand 1 Communication Skills: English) consisting of knowledge, skills, and abilities that equip ALS learners to perform required English communication tasks. The competencies are related to each dimension, i.e., grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence, and are used to determine respondents' perceived level of communicative competence. Meanwhile, parts 1 and 2 of the summative assessment (Appendix C) taken by the selected 16 respondents measured their communicative competence through their ability to answer and analyze questions through writing and applying critical thinking skills. Their written outputs were checked using a research-made rubric designed using the four dimensions of communicative competence (Appendix D). This assessed the extent

of the learners' development in communicative competence in English which served as the dependent variable in the study.

Canale and Swain underscore the interrelatedness of the four dimensions and the importance of the use of the native language in developing communicative competence in the second language, which is English in this study. The Department of Education follows the same premise by recognizing the role of the mother tongue, Filipino, and English in language acquisition. Studies (Darr & Ng, 2023; Kavaliauskienė et al., 2010) show that using native or local language makes the learners acquire the target language easily. Concepts and topics presented by Canale and Swain in the communicative competence theory are also part of the ALS-K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum (Learning Strand 1 Communication Skills: English) competencies. The respondents' profile on the survey revealed that they spoke several languages and dialects, including Bisaya, Waray, Bicolano, and Ilocano, aside from Filipino and English. Part 2 of the survey indicated that they often use these languages and dialects when they are having difficulty expressing their thoughts in English while socializing with other people in the local community, social community, and workplace. The variables were measured using a 4-point Likert Scale using the following indicators: 4 – always, 3 – often, 2 – rarely, 1 – never.

Some factors under psychological and environmental conditions may affect the development of communicative competence in English (Canale, 2013). The results of the previous studies noted methods and strategies of teaching and learning, diversity of learners, age, prior knowledge/memory, way of thinking, learning environment (e.g., technological competence, digital literacy), exposure to

the English language (e.g., communication between learners and teachers), attitude, and motivation as factors that may influence communicative competence and language learning. Parts 2 and 3 of the survey gathered the respondents' English language use in different communication contexts and the factors that affect the development of their communication skills. The indicators in parts 2 and 3 were structured based on the ALS-K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum learning goals and communicative competence dimensions. These are significant in determining whether the Communicative Competence Approach is appropriate for the ALS respondents.

Other dimensions influencing communicative competence, such as technological competence, digital literacy, and clear communication between teachers and learners, are also considered significant aspects of language use and competence. Rapid technological advancement and globalization require learners to learn these competencies to succeed in the 21st century. Traditional solutions based on fixed knowledge and linear thinking are increasingly substituted by approaches emphasizing collaboration, flexibility, and innovation to accommodate diverse perspectives and emerging technologies (ACTRC, 2018). Therefore, technological competence, digital literacy, and clear communication between teachers and learners have become crucial in improving the relationship among the four dimensions by Canale and Swain. Such competencies and literacies build learners' digital capabilities, a factor that may strengthen the application of the Communicative Competence Approach in the 21st century. These primarily aim to enhance learners' skills in utilizing educational applications and digital information, as well as understanding effective combinations of pedagogical, content, and technological

knowledge that facilitate the integration of digital resources into teaching, thereby improving learning outcomes (Falloon, 2020) which is developing English communication skills for this study. These moderating variables may affect the strength of the relationship among the four dimensions found in the Communicative Competence Approach. Technological competence enables learners to utilize software, hardware, and online resources proficiently. Digital literacy encompasses the critical assessment and ethical application of information acquired through online sources. When both teachers and learners are proficient in technology and create a relationship that fosters effective communication, they establish an environment that enhances learning and promotes critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. These aspects enhance learners' English communication skills and enrich the overall learning experience.

Figure 2.2

Determinants of Communicative Competence in Learning the English Language

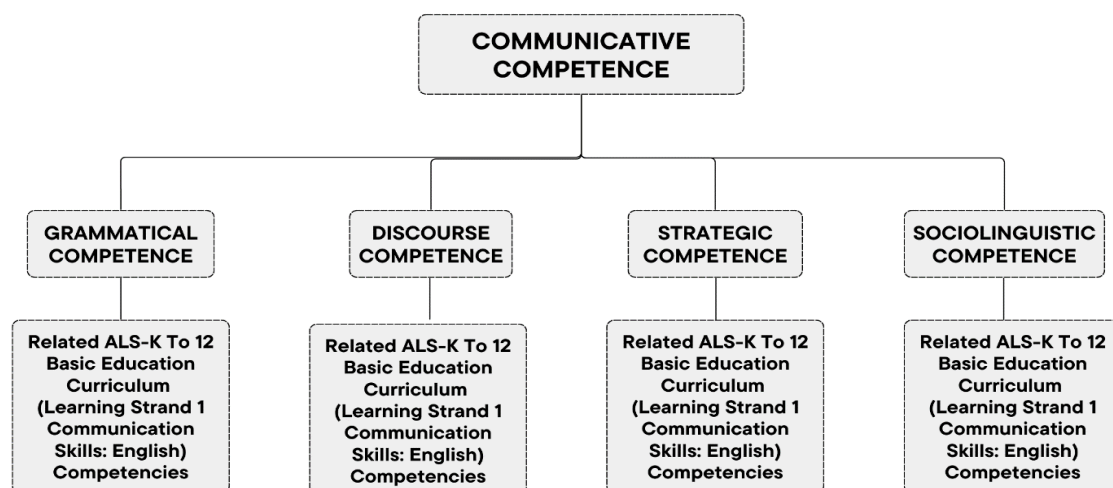
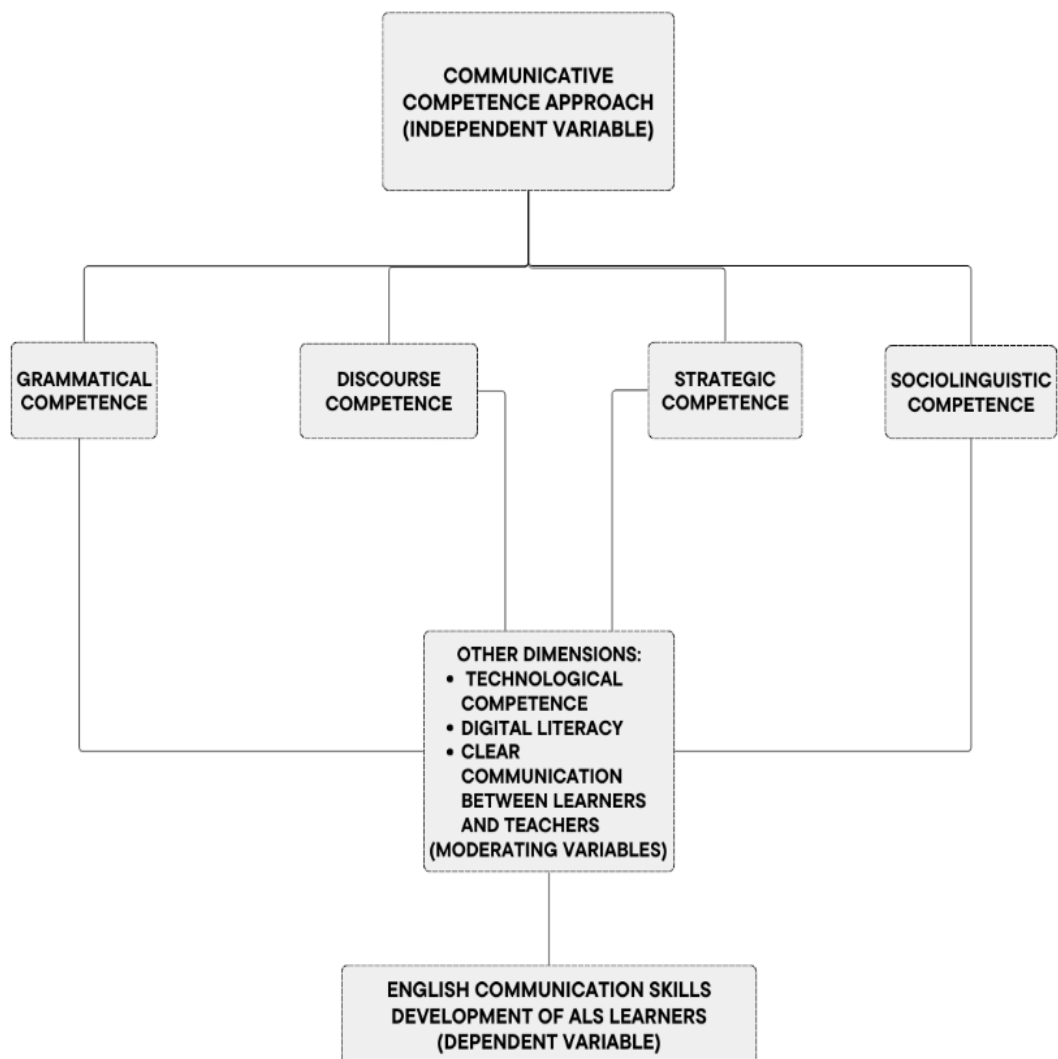


Figure 2.3

Analysis of Dimensions of Communicative Competence Approach and Other Dimensions of Communicative Competence Towards Developing English Communication Skills



Operational Definition of Terms

Communicative	The use of a communication-based learning and teaching method
Competence	that can help develop the ALS learners' English communicative
Approach	competence in the four dimensions through authentic communication or real-life situations.

Grammatical Competence

Phonology	The study of the sound of speech.
Morphology	It discusses the way words are structured and formed in various languages.
Syntax	It indicates the arrangement of words and the structural rules to form a sentence/s.
Vocabulary	It refers to words familiar to an individual.

Discourse Competence

Coherence	It signifies “the relationships among the different meanings in a text” which can be implied as literal meanings, communicative functions, and attitudes.
Cohesion	It deals with how utterances are linked structurally and facilitates interpretation of a text.” For example: The successful use of cohesion devices such as pronouns, synonyms, ellipsis, conjunctions, and parallel structures show how a group of utterances should be understood.

Strategic Competence

Verbal strategies and non-verbal strategies	These are strategies that compensate for breakdown such as self-correction and at the same time enhance the effectiveness of communication such as recognizing discourse structure, activating background knowledge, contextual guessing, and tolerating ambiguity.
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Sociolinguistic Competence

Language usage	It refers to abstract language systems.
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Language use	It operates to realize a communication goal.
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Knowledge of social contexts	It refers to socio-cultural conventions in social contexts that influence styles and registers of speech. For example, cultural values, norms, the participant's social status, sex, age, etc.
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Technological Competence	It enables learners to utilize software, hardware, and online resources proficiently.
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Digital Literacy	The ability to use modern tools and resources effectively to aid the learning process and allows learners to critically evaluate and responsibly use information found online.
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Clear and Effective Communication	It ensures that instructional goals are understood and learners actively engage in the process.
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English	The degree to which the respondents developed their English
Communication	communication skills through Communicative Competence
Skills	Approach.
Development	

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study utilized a quantitative descriptive method approach. It used the survey research design—concerned with studying naturally occurring phenomena to evaluate the “incidence, distribution, and interrelationship of phenomena as they occur in the lives of the people” (Librero et al., 1997). The result of the survey was analyzed using median and mode. It was the basis of the correlational analysis between Canale and Swain’s four dimensions of communicative competence: (1) grammatical competence and strategic competence and (2) sociolinguistic competence and discourse competence calculated using Spearman’s Rank Correlation Coefficient. Aside from the survey, the study also employed data triangulation consisting of grades provided by teachers in two English-related subjects: Reading and Writing Skills and 21st Century Literature from the Philippines and summative assessment conducted on chosen respondents. Three teachers (two English teachers and one ICT teacher) were also interviewed to give more insights and ensure the validity of the respondents’ perceived level of communicative competence.

Locale of the Study

The study was conducted on three secondary schools in the Schools Division of Pasig City since it is one of the pioneer divisions in implementing the ALS program. The target schools in the study include Buting Senior High School, Nagpayong High School, and Rizal High School. They cater to a diverse group of ALS learners in respect of age, interests, skills, and economic status. Such diversity could give an extensive perspective on the communicative competence in English of ALS learners and the underlying factors that may influence their language use in school, at home, and in the environment (e.g., community, social community, or workplace).

Respondents of the Study

The study was participated in by 114 ALS secondary learners with age range of 18-61 years enrolled at Buting Senior High School, Nagpayong High School, and Rizal High School in the Division of Pasig City under the school year 2022-2023 and 2023-2024. Forty males and 74 females participated in the study, and the majority of the respondents belonged to the low-income class (earning less than <Php9,100; Php9,100- Php18,200 a month).

The respondents were selected to participate in the study because they represent the diverse characteristics of ALS learners and have already completed the competencies measured in the study. Three ALS teachers were interviewed to provide more insights into the respondents' communicative competence and class

standing. Sixteen out of the 114 respondents participated in the summative assessments to ensure that their perceived communicative competence was consistent with their school performance and class standing.

Sampling Procedure

The study utilized convenience sampling due to the availability of respondents during the period of the study. Considering the respondents' availability and limited timeline for the study, 114 ALS secondary respondents from three Pasig City schools participated. Sixteen respondents were selected to take a summative assessment.

Table 3.1

Distribution of Survey Respondents

School	ALS Learners Secondary Level	Specialization	Sample - Survey
Buting Senior High School	Senior High School	TVL	30
Nagpayong High School	Senior High School	TVL	18
Rizal High School	Senior High School	TVL	41
Rizal High School	Junior High School	TVL	11
		ACADEMIC	14
Total			114

Table 3.2*Distribution of Respondents Who Took the Summative Assessment*

Respondent	ALS Learners Secondary Level	Specialization
Respondent 75	Senior High School	TVL
Respondent 76	Senior High School	TVL
Respondent 77	Senior High School	TVL
Respondent 78	Senior High School	TVL
Respondent 79	Senior High School	TVL
Respondent 80	Senior High School	TVL
Respondent 82	Senior High School	TVL
Respondent 83	Senior High School	TVL
Respondent 85	Senior High School	TVL
Respondent 86	Senior High School	TVL
Respondent 87	Senior High School	TVL
Respondent 88	Senior High School	TVL
Respondent 90	Senior High School	TVL
Respondent 91	Senior High School	TVL
Respondent 103	Senior High School	TVL
Respondent 107	Senior High School	TVL
Total: 16		

Research Instrument

The study adopted a survey questionnaire by Bautista and Del Valle (2023). It was modified based on the competencies in the ALS-K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum (Learning Strand 1 Communication: English). The selected

competencies are related to the four dimensions, i.e., grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence, and discourse competence by Canale and Swain. Before distributing the research-made survey questionnaire, each item in the three-part survey questionnaire was checked and validated by two key persons: Humanities and Social Sciences Subject Group Head, Mrs. Irene Mondejar, and the English Subject Group Coordinator, Mrs. Jovelyn Espino of Rizal High School.

The survey questionnaire consisted of three parts and was assessed using a 4-point Likert Scale. The first part consisted of five items or indicators per dimension related to the competencies, knowledge, and skills that the respondents should develop according to the ALS-K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum (Learning Strand 1 Communication: English). The second and third parts comprised five items or indicators focused on the language use of ALS secondary learners and factors that may affect their communicative competence.

The first part measured the ALS learners' level of communicative competence in four dimensions, i.e., grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence, and discourse competence. The respondents assessed their level of communicative competence using indicators. They rated their perceived communicative competence on a scale of 1-4. The second part was structured to determine their perceived language use in school, at home, and in the environment (e.g., community, social community, or workplace) using indicators as well. The third part was structured to confirm whether factors such as methods and strategies of teaching, diversity of learners, age, prior knowledge/memory, way of thinking,

learning environment, exposure to the English language, attitude, and motivation affect ALS learners' communicative competence and language learning using the formulated indicators. Data collected were subjected to correlation to answer the research problems.

Since data triangulation was utilized, the grades of 16 respondents in two English-related subjects, Reading and Writing Skills and 21st Century Literature from the Philippines, were gathered, and a summative assessment for the respondents was facilitated. To further substantiate the respondents' perceived communicative competence, three ALS teachers were interviewed to describe the respondents' school performance. The descriptors found on the report card were used to determine the learner's progress and achievement in English-related subjects. The summative assessments were evaluated using research-made rubrics with criteria, descriptors, and scoring levels based on the four dimensions of communicative competence. The quarter 4 modules 5 and 7 from the Reading and Writing subject (Castañeda, 2020; Llagas et al., 2020) were the basis of the summative assessment. The modules discussed critical reading and reasoning and determining textual evidence. The summative assessment was modified to measure the communicative competence of the respondents in terms of the four dimensions. Based on the interview questions (Appendix E), the teachers' accounts provided more insights into the respondents' communicative competence.

Data Gathering Procedure

It is mandatory to follow strict guidelines when gathering data. Before embarking on the data-gathering process, the researcher secured a permit (Appendix F) to conduct a study on ALS secondary learners from the Schools Division Office of Pasig by submitting a research permit application form, a summary of the thesis proposal, and a validated survey questionnaire. When the permit was issued, a consent letter was distributed to the principals of Buting Senior High School, Nagpayong High School, and Rizal High School to seek the school administration's approval for data gathering. The school principal provided an endorsement letter (Appendix G) to begin the data-gathering process.

The unpredictable weather conditions and the availability of respondents were considered when the decision was made to distribute the survey form online. Instead of using a physical survey form, the three-part survey questionnaire was structured and formatted using Google Forms. It was sent out to the respondents via Messenger, and posters with the survey link (Appendix H) were strategically placed in the three participating schools.

Before proceeding to the three-part online survey form, the respondent should agree to the Informed Consent Information section. Considering the financial status of the ALS secondary learners and ensuring a high response rate and online participation, a 40-peso monetary incentive via GCash was given to ALS participants who participated and completed the survey. The amount covered the mobile load expense the respondents spent answering the online survey. According to previous

research, people participate and respond to surveys because they want to be helpful, enjoy the topic, and for tangible benefit in the form of an incentive (SurveyMonkey, 2024).

The first part of the survey determined the level of the respondents' perceived communicative competence in terms of four dimensions: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence, and discourse competence. The indicators were aligned with the competencies listed in the ALS-K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum (Learning Strand 1 Communication: English).

The second part analyzed the perceived language use of ALS learners in school, at home, and in the environment (e.g., community, social community, or workplace) using indicators as well. The indicators were structured following the ALS-K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum learning goals and communicative competence dimensions, which are significant in determining whether the Communicative Competence Approach is an effective approach in developing the ALS respondents' communicative competence. Notably, it ascertained whether the respondents use English in the contexts as mentioned above, applying the communicative competence they learned and acquired in school.

The third part was intended to address factors such as teaching methods and strategies, diversity of learners, age, prior knowledge/memory, way of thinking, learning environment, exposure to the English language, attitude, and motivation that may affect or influence the ALS learners' communicative competence and language learning using the formulated indicators.

Aside from conducting a survey, the study also employed data triangulation. Since perceived communicative competence is influenced by prejudice and personal bias, the grades of 16 learners in Reading and Writing Skills and 21st Century Literature from the Philippines were collected and compared to the survey results. Sixteen out of the 114 respondents were asked to take a summative assessment consisting of three parts: the first part was intended for reading and meaning identification, the second part was for essay writing, and the third part was structured to capture their learning habits. The first and second parts were evaluated using research-made rubrics. Three teachers were interviewed about the respondents' school performance to validate the perceived level of communicative competence of the respondents.

Data Analysis

The gathered data were analyzed by tabulating the results and finding their link to the concepts, principles, notions, and results of existing studies and literature. The data were subjected to statistical treatment. The median was calculated to determine the respondents' communicative competence level. Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient was used to determine the strength of the relationships between the dimensions of communicative competence: (1) grammatical competence and strategic competence and (2) sociolinguistic competence and discourse competence.

The three-part survey questionnaire employed the Likert Scale. All sections used the 4-point scale but differed in terms of legends used. The first part used the following legends: 4 – expert, 3 – advanced, 2 – basic, 1 – needs improvement. The second part used different legends: 4 – always, 3 – often, 2 – rarely, 1 – never, while the third part interpreted the legends as 4 – strongly agree, 3 – agree, 2 – disagree, 1 – strongly disagree.

Data triangulation was employed in the study to ensure the validity of the survey results. The summative assessment taken by the 16 respondents was evaluated using a research-made rubric. The grades of the 16 respondents in Reading and Writing Skills and 21st Century Literature from the Philippines were also used to validate their level of communicative competence. Moreover, the interview transcripts of their teachers were used to substantiate the result of the data triangulation.

Ethical Considerations

Data collected were only used to address the objectives of the study. Only voluntary participation among respondents was encouraged. A 40-peso monetary incentive via GCash was provided to the ALS respondents who participated and completed the survey to cover the mobile load expense. Utmost anonymity and confidentiality were given to the ALS secondary learners. Their names were not revealed with respect to their privacy. All respondents were 18 years old and above at the time of the study.

Chapter IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

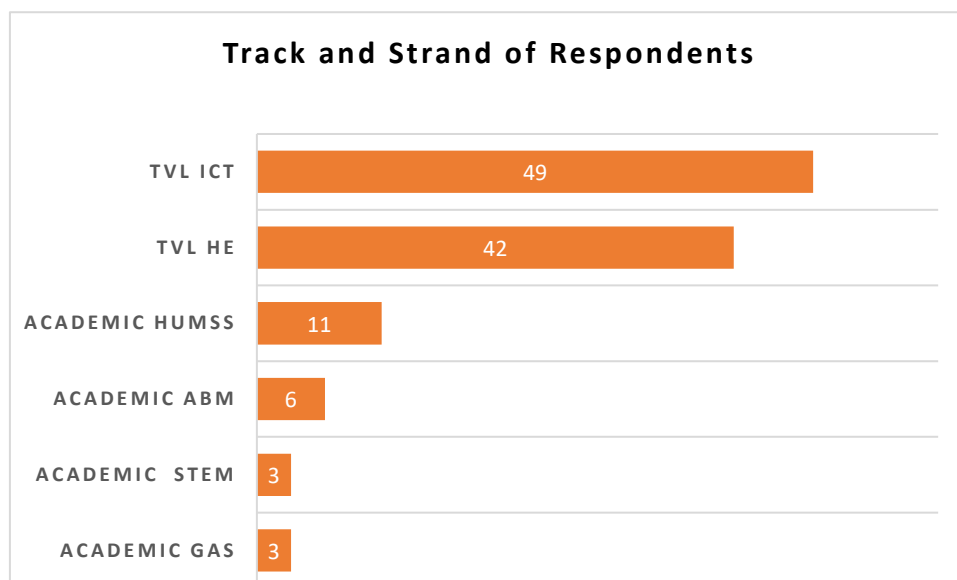
The chapter presents the results of the analysis of the gathered data in the study. Generally, the study aimed to provide data relevant to educational communication as it determined the Communicative Competence Approach as an effective approach in developing English communication skills among ALS secondary learners. Furthermore, the study determined the level of communicative competence among ALS secondary learners and the relationship between (1) grammatical competence and strategic competence, and (2) sociolinguistic competence and discourse competence and the factors that may affect their level of competence in various communication contexts, i.e., in school, at home, and in the environment (local community, social community, or the workplace).

ALS Respondents Profile

One hundred fourteen ALS secondary respondents participated in the perceived level of communicative competence survey. Figure 4.1 shows that the survey group consisted of respondents from the Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) track specializing in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Home Economics and the Academic track with a target path in ABM (Accountancy, Business, and Management), GAS (General Academic Strand), HUMSS (Humanities and Social Science), and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics).

Figure 4.1

Distribution of Respondents Per Track



Based on Figure 4.2, the respondents belonged to different age groups, which implied that the ALS learners are part of different generations, i.e., Gen Z, Millennials, Gen X, and Boomers. It corresponds to diversity in a classroom in which age, economic status, culture, educational experiences, learning styles (access to information, familiarity with technology, and communication with teachers), interests, skills, needs, and goals are unique to each adult learner. The respondents were composed of 74 females and 40 males, as per Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.2

Distribution of Respondents Per Age Range

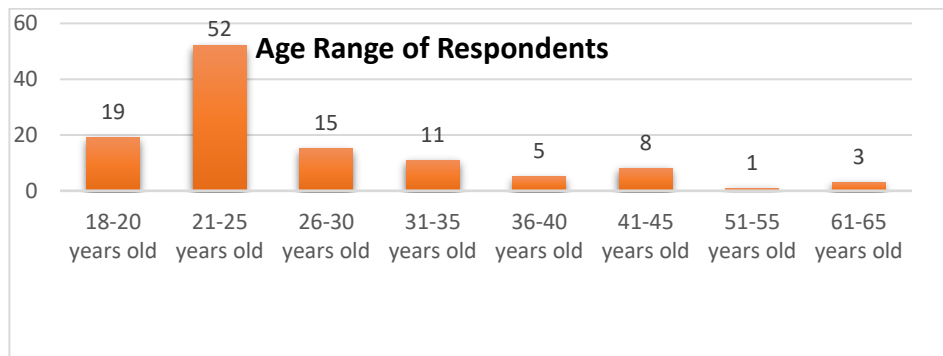


Figure 4.3

Distribution of Respondents Per Assigned Sex at Birth

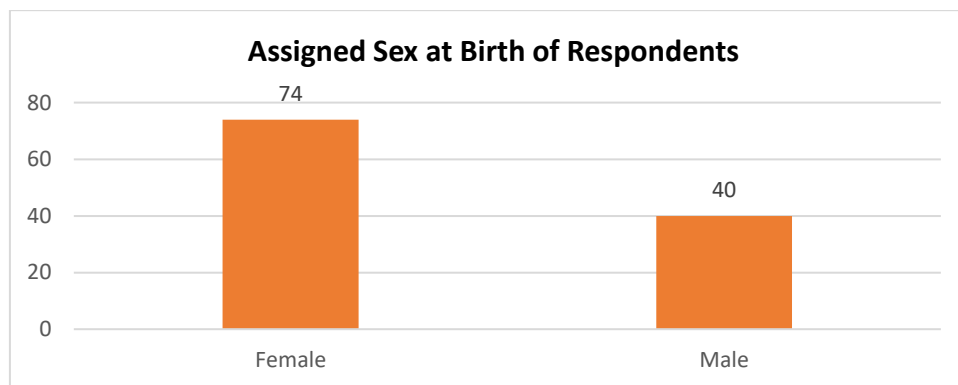


Figure 4.4 presents the languages and dialects spoken by the respondents. Sixty-three respondents spoke Filipino and English, 36 Filipino, and 15 other languages and dialects consisting of Bisaya, Waray, Bicolano, and Ilocano, aside from Filipino and English. On the other hand, Figure 4.5 indicates the respondents' interests, which range from cooking and baking, ICT, reading and writing, arts and music, and gaming and vlogging. According to Ernst-Slavit and Egbert (n.d), resources that can be utilized to provide a strong foundation for language and content learning include native languages, cultures, and life experiences. It can be

Almost all respondents belong to the low-income class, 16 in the middle-income class, and three in the high-income class (Figure 4.6). Their employment status is distributed into four types: not yet employed (71), 36 identified themselves as employed (21 regular employees and 15 are contractual employees), and prefer not to disclose (7). Figure 4.7 shows that most respondents enrolled in the ALS program for the following reasons: better job opportunities and plan to enroll in college or university after completing the program. Factors such as income and motivation (e.g., chance to attain a job) identified in the previous studies (Sandigan, 2018; Valeza et al., 2017) greatly impacted the learners' future in terms of becoming an effective communicator or less proficient.

Figure 4.6

Distribution of Respondents Per Socio-Economic Status

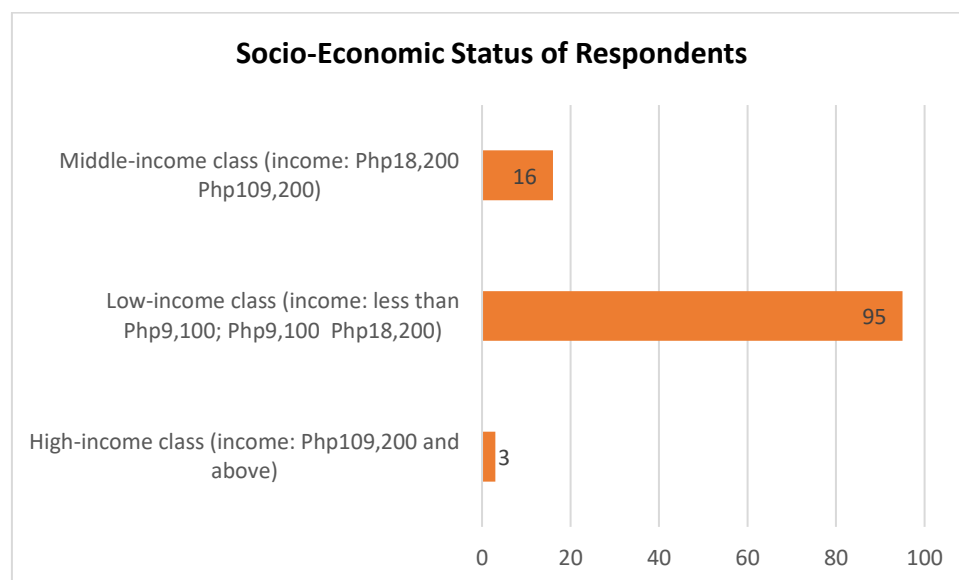
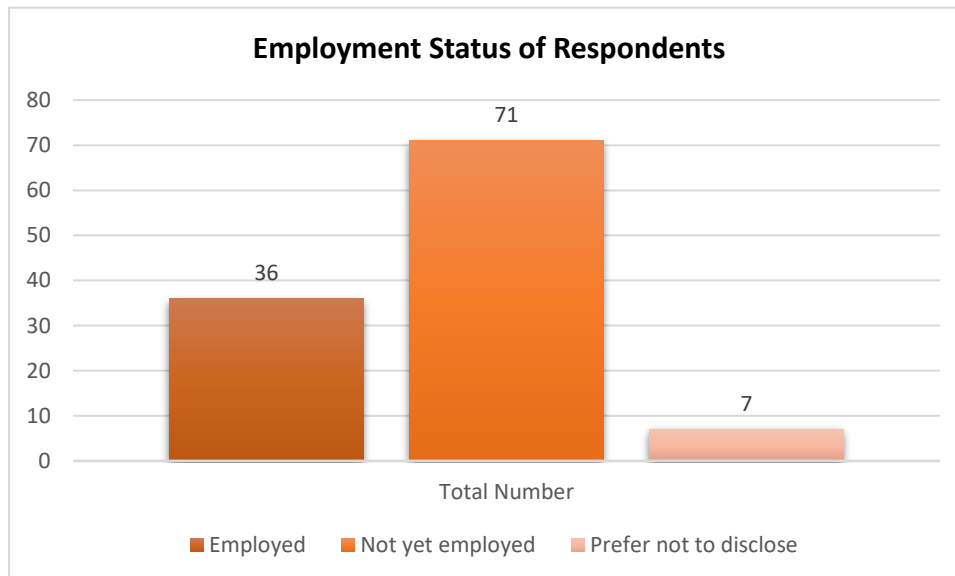


Figure 4.7

Distribution of Respondents Per Employment Status



Selected ALS Respondents Profile

Sixteen respondents were selected to participate in a summative assessment to validate the survey results and ensure objectivity in determining their communicative competence level. Tables 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 present the socio-demographic profile of the selected 16 respondents, which represent the diverse characteristics of the 114 respondents in terms of income, gender, age, language use, interests, educational experiences, learning styles (access to information, familiarity with technology, and communication with teachers), skills, needs, and goals.

Table 4.1*Socio-demographic Profile of Selected 16 Respondents*

Respondent	ALS Learners Secondary Level and Specialization	Income	Gender	Age
Respondent 75	Senior High School - TVL	Low (<Php9,100; Php9,100- Php18,200)	Female	61-65 years of age
Respondent 76	Senior High School - TVL	Low (<Php9,100; Php9,100- Php18,200)	Female	31-35 years of age
Respondent 77	Senior High School - TVL	Low (<Php9,100; Php9,100- Php18,200)	Female	31-35 years of age
Respondent 78	Senior High School - TVL	Low (<Php9,100; Php9,100- Php18,200)	Female	21-25 years of age
Respondent 79	Senior High School - TVL	Low (<Php9,100; Php9,100- Php18,200)	Male	21-25 years of age
Respondent 80	Senior High School - TVL	Low (<Php9,100;	Female	51-55 years of age

		Php9,100- Php18,200)		
Respondent 82	Senior High School - TVL	Low (<Php9,100; Php9,100- Php18,200)	Female	21-25 years of age
Respondent 83	Senior High School - TVL	Low (<Php9,100; Php9,100- Php18,200)	Female	31-35 years of age
Respondent 85	Senior High School - TVL	Low (<Php9,100; Php9,100- Php18,200)	Male	21-25 years of age
Respondent 86	Senior High School - TVL	Low (<Php9,100; Php9,100- Php18,200)	Female	26-30 years of age
Respondent 87	Senior High School - TVL	Low (<Php9,100; Php9,100- Php18,200)	Male	41-45 years of age
Respondent 88	Senior High School - TVL	Low (<Php9,100; Php9,100- Php18,200)	Female	41-45 years of age
Respondent 90	Senior High School - TVL	Low (<Php9,100;	Female	21-25 years of age

		Php9,100- Php18,200)		
Respondent 91	Senior High School - TVL	Low (<Php9,100; Php9,100- Php18,200)	Male	18-20 years of age
Respondent 103	Senior High School - TVL	Middle (Php18,200- Php109,200)	Female	21-25 years of age
Respondent 107	Senior High School - TVL	Low (<Php9,100; Php9,100- Php18,200)	Male	36-40 years of age
Total: 16				

Table 4.2

Language Use and Interests of Respondents

Respondent	Languages and Dialects Used	Interests
Respondent 75	Filipino, English, and other dialects	Information, Communications, and Technology
Respondent 76	Filipino and English	Cooking and Baking
Respondent 77	Filipino and English	Cooking and Baking
Respondent 78	Filipino and English	Information, Communications, and Technology; Arts and

		Music; Cooking and Baking; Reading and Writing; Community Involvement
Respondent 79	Filipino and English	Information, Communications, and Technology; Arts and Music; Cooking and Baking
Respondent 80	Filipino	Cooking and Baking
Respondent 82	Filipino	Cooking and Baking
Respondent 83	Filipino, English, and other dialects	Information, Communications, and Technology; Arts and Music; Multimedia and Design; Cooking and Baking; Travelling and Photography; Reading and Writing; Community Involvement
Respondent 85	Filipino and English	Cooking and Baking
Respondent 86	Filipino and English	Cooking and Baking; Reading and Writing
Respondent 87	Filipino and English	Arts and Music; Cooking and Baking; Gaming and Vlogging; Bonding with my family always

Respondent 88	Filipino and English	Arts and Music; Cooking and Baking; Travelling and Photography; Reading and Writing
Respondent 90	Filipino	Information, Communications, and Technology; Cooking and Baking
Respondent 91	Filipino and English	Cooking and Baking
Respondent 103	Filipino, English, and other dialects	Information, Communications, and Technology; Cooking and Baking; Gaming and Vlogging; Travelling and Photography; Reading and Writing
Respondent 107	Filipino	Cooking and Baking

Table 4.3

Reasons for Enrolling in the Program

Respondent	Reasons for enrolling
Respondent 75	Prefers flexible learning
Respondent 76	Plans to enroll in college or university after completing senior high school
Respondent 77	For better job opportunities; Plans to enroll in college or university after completing senior high school

Respondent 78	Plans to enroll in college or university after completing senior high school
Respondent 79	For better job opportunities; Plans to enroll in college or university after completing senior high school
Respondent 80	Plans to enroll in college or university after completing senior high school
Respondent 82	For better job opportunities
Respondent 83	For better job opportunities; Plans to enroll in college or university after completing senior high school; For convenience and practicality; Prefers flexible learning
Respondent 85	For better job opportunities
Respondent 86	For better job opportunities; Plans to enroll in college or university after completing senior high school
Respondent 87	For better job opportunities; Plans to enroll in college or university after completing senior high school
Respondent 88	For better job opportunities; Plans to enroll in college or university after completing senior high school; For convenience and practicality
Respondent 90	For better job opportunities; Plans to enroll in college or university after completing senior high school; Prefers flexible learning
Respondent 91	Plans to enroll in college or university after completing senior high school
Respondent 103	Plans to enroll in college or university after completing senior high school
Respondent 107	Plans to enroll in college or university after completing senior high school

Perceived Level of Communicative Competence

Self-assessment is a tool used to evaluate the learners' competency. Learners prefer this because another dimension, such as effort, is also considered in this assessment, contributing to student achievement and improved student behavior (Ross, 2006). However, self-assessment may result in inconsistency and inaccuracy. To avoid such pitfalls and maintain accuracy and objectivity, the result of self-assessment can be compared to the judgments of qualified raters such as teachers and the results of performance tests (Brown et al., 2015). The study evaluated the respondents' communicative competence using a survey on the perceived communicative competence of learners and data triangulation that involved collecting the grades of the 16 selected learners and facilitating summative assessment. Selected teachers were also interviewed to gain more insights about their communicative competence.

In the study, 114 respondents participated in a self-assessment that evaluated their perceived level of communicative competence in the four dimensions (i.e., grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence, and discourse competence) by answering an online survey. The median per indicator was calculated to determine the respondents' level of communicative competence. The survey results were compared to the grades of the selected 16 respondents in two English-related subjects and summative assessment results to maintain accuracy and objectivity.

Perceived Grammatical Competence

Table 4.4 summarizes the findings on the perceived grammatical competence level of the respondents and presents a median score of 3, given a descriptive rating of advanced. With this perceived level of grammatical competence, the respondents are considered proficient in using the language because they understand the words and the rules of grammar and structure. The findings only show that the respondents can put into words and express their ideas and feelings correctly because they understand and apply phonological rules (how speech sound changes), morphology (how words are structured and formed), vocabulary (the use of familiar words), syntax or grammar (proper arrangement of words following the rules of grammar), and pragmatics (the way people utilize the language). These are the components of the linguistic dimension as discussed by the National Geographic Society (2023), Canale and Swain (1980), and Swain (2013).

Table 4.4

Respondents' Median Scores of their Perceived Grammatical Competence Level

INDICATORS	Median	Descriptive Rating
1. I am able to speak clearly by uttering the correct sound of the words.	3	Advanced
2. I use appropriate vocabulary or words when I express my ideas and feelings.	3	Advanced
3. I simplify questions or statements by rephrasing, repeating, etc. For example: As I understand it...; What you're saying is...; To summarize	3	Advanced
4. I use specific kinds of sentences when asking permission, making requests, responding to questions, following and giving directions, giving information, explaining, expressing	3	Advanced

opinions/emotions, and making assertions.		
5. Through verbal and nonverbal means such as nodding, smiling and frowning, raising an eyebrow, interpreting and responding correctly to the meaning of a speaker's tone of voice, paraphrasing, citing, and clarifying, I respond to ideas and feelings appropriately.	3	Advanced
	3	Advanced
<i>Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 Expert; 2.51 – 3.25 Advanced; 1.76 – 2.50 Basic; 1.00 – 1.75 Needs Improvement</i>		

Table 4.5 shows that the perceived sociolinguistic competence of the respondents is at the advanced level, with a median score of 3. Such a median score implies that the respondents are aware of the pragmatic aspects of speech acts, such as culture, norms, and socio-cultural conventions. It signifies that they consider their audience, people's intention, topic, purpose, setting, and social context as factors influencing their speech acts (e.g., how they utter words) when communicating. Such a degree of awareness manifests their sociolinguistic competence wherein contexts, beliefs, views, values, and attitudes affect a communication situation (Canale & Swain, 1980; Swain, 2013).

Table 4.5

Respondents' Median Scores of their Perceived Sociolinguistic Competence Level

INDICATORS	Median	Descriptive Rating
1. I respond appropriately to questions in given situations and activities for example economic-livelihood, socio-cultural activities, and health problems.	3	Advanced
2. I employ an appropriate style of speaking, adjusting language, gestures, rate, and volume according to audience and purpose.	3	Advanced

3. I understand and respect the ideas and feelings of other people by paying attention to the speaker, showing interest in their opinions, and interpreting the meaning of the speaker's tone of voice and what is said.	3	Advanced
4. The words I use, my rate of speaking, and my volume of voice are influenced by the topic, audience, and situation.	3	Advanced
5. I consider the meaning, people's intention, setting, social context, etc. when I relay messages, commentaries, news accounts, announcements heard such as weather forecasts, survival messages (e.g., typhoon signals, fire alarms, ringing of church bells, etc.), news reports, advertisements, and government rules and regulations to others.	3	Advanced
	3	Advanced

Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 Expert; 2.51 – 3.25 Advanced; 1.76 – 2.50 Basic; 1.00 – 1.75 Needs Improvement

Table 4.6 indicates the median score of the respondents at 3 with a descriptive rating of advanced in terms of the discourse competence level. This finding insinuates that they understand the rules of cohesion (grammatical links) and coherence (appropriate combination of communicative actions) in oral and written forms. The respondents can write sentences applying the correct grammatical rules and observing appropriate grammatical structures. They can also organize their thoughts by composing grammatically correct and coherent paragraphs. One effective tool for teaching a second language, such as English, is translanguaging, where teachers translate the words and sentences from the mother tongue into the target language. Pilar (2015) in his study deduced that ALS learners are more motivated and inclined to learn a language when it is spoken in Hiligaynon,

translated into English, and then applied to conversational contexts familiar to the learners.

Table 4.6

Respondents' Median Scores of their Perceived Discourse Competence Level

INDICATORS	Median	Descriptive Rating
1. I can compose clear and coherent sentences because I know how to use appropriate grammatical structures: • pluralization of regular nouns • tenses of verbs • aspects of verbs • subject-verb agreement • adverbs of intensity • adverbs of frequency • adverbs of manner • adverbs of place and time	3	Advanced
2. I can write well-organized, coherent, and grammatically correct paragraphs talking about myself, the country, and the world.	3	Advanced
3. When I miss something in a conversation, I do not hesitate to ask the person speaking to restate the part that I missed to clarify its meaning.	3	Advanced
4. I can recognize arguments presented in media material (e.g., print media, broadcast media, social media) and provide counterarguments.	3	Advanced
5. To achieve unity, I can write steps/instructions or directions for an activity (e.g., preparing land for planting, following a recipe, arranging historical events, and implementing a project) observing correct sequence and coherence.	3	Advanced
	3	Advanced

Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 Expert; 2.51 – 3.25 Advanced; 1.76 – 2.50 Basic; 1.00 – 1.75 Needs Improvement

Table 4.7 reveals that the median score of the respondents in terms of strategic competence level is at 3, with a descriptive rating of advanced. Learners with this rating know how to use appropriate expressions when reacting to familiar social situations and can adjust words, rate of speaking, and volume of voice to suit the topic, audience, and situation. However, they may have confused the use of lexical fillers (e.g., so, you know), repetitions, or filled pauses (e.g., uh, um) as an indicator of incompetence. Götz (2013) and Peltonen (2020b as cited in Peltonen, 2023) regard such strategies as a way to acquire more time, prevent lull, and eventually enhance fluency.

Table 4.7

Respondents' Median Scores of their Perceived Strategic Competence Level

INDICATORS	Median	Descriptive Rating
1. I use appropriate expressions when reacting to social situations such as talking to familiar people and strangers, social media interactions, brainstorming with classmates, and meeting with friends.	3	Advanced
2. I understand phrases in English containing familiar vocabulary in different contexts.	3	Advanced
3. I adjust the words that I use, my rate of speaking, and my volume of voice to suit the topic, audience, and situation.	3	Advanced
4. I use my personal experiences to make predictions about text viewed and listened to.	3	Advanced
5. I write down important details from the announcement I heard to maintain accuracy and avoid confusion.	3	Advanced
General Average	3	Advanced

Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 Expert; 2.51 – 3.25 Advanced; 1.76 – 2.50 Basic; 1.00 – 1.75 Needs Improvement

Overall Communicative Competence Based on Data Triangulation

The result of self-assessment tends to be biased and inaccurate. Learners only choose what they want to disclose because of the fear of being talked about in front of the class regarding their weaknesses and to address the need to get the self-assessment “right” to match the teacher’s expectations (Raider-Roth, 2005). Data triangulation was employed to observe accuracy and objectivity in the findings. The survey results were compared to the summative assessment result and grades in two English-related subjects: Reading and Writing Skills and 21st Century Literature from the Philippines of 16 selected respondents.

Before proceeding to data triangulation, two English teachers who handled ALS secondary learners were interviewed to get more insights into the communicative competence of the respondents. Teacher A’s overall rating is 1 within the needs improvement bracket, while Teacher B’s overall rating is 2 with a descriptive rating of basic. Table 4.8 shows Teachers A and B’s median scores of 1.5 with a descriptive rating of needs improvement on every dimension of communicative competence. Both teachers evaluated the respondents’ communicative competence based on the indicators included in the self-assessment survey. A median score of 1.5 was indicated for each dimension.

Table 4.8

Summary of Teachers A And B's Median Scores for the Selected Respondents'
Communicative Competence

Dimensions of Communicative Competence	Teacher A	Teacher B	Median	Descriptive Rating
Grammatical Competence	1	2	1.5	Needs Improvement
Sociolinguistic Competence	1	2	1.5	Needs Improvement
Discourse Competence	1	2	1.5	Needs Improvement
Strategic Competence	1	2	1.5	Needs Improvement
Overall Competence	1	2	1.5	Needs Improvement

Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 Expert; 2.51 – 3.25 Advanced; 1.76 – 2.50 Basic; 1.00 – 1.75 Needs Improvement

When the results of the respondents' perceived level of communicative competence and the ALS teachers' evaluation were compared, there was a gap between the conducted self-assessment and teachers' evaluation. Respondents have high regard for their communicative competence, while the teachers' overall evaluation expressed disapproval of the advanced rating the respondents gave for their skills.

To bridge the gap, data triangulation was employed. Table 4.9 presents the grades of selected 16 ALS secondary learners in two English-related subjects. Despite the needs improvement rating given by their teachers, most of the selected 16 ALS learners got a mark within the satisfactory bracket. One learner even achieved an outstanding mark. When asked about the observed discrepancy between respondents' self-assessment, teachers' evaluation, and learners' report cards, teacher B raised concerns about adjusting the grades so most learners will

get a passing mark. According to Teacher B, *“Di nga ba ma’am, yung grading system ng school, ihahabol natin sa passing as much as we can. But the truth is they should get a failing mark.”* Although DepEd expressed its commitment to addressing mass promotion concerns (Hernando-Malipot, 2023), it is still practiced in some schools. Such a mass promotion culture, which gives points to efforts and considerations (attendance and rare occasions of engagement during discussion), may leave an impression on learners that their present skills satisfy the standard — rating themselves as advanced in every dimension of communicative competence.

Table 4.9.

Summary of Selected Respondents’ Average in Two English-Related Subjects

RESPONDENTS	Reading and Writing Grades			Descriptor	21st Century Literature from the Philippines			Descriptor
	1ST	2ND	AVE		3RD	4TH	AVE	
RESPONDENT 75	85	88	87	Very Satisfactory	79	85	82	Satisfactory
RESPONDENT 76	80	91	86	Very Satisfactory	89	90	90	Outstanding
RESPONDENT 77	83	75	79	Fairly Satisfactory	83	77	80	Satisfactory
RESPONDENT 78	80	84	82	Satisfactory	87	85	86	Very Satisfactory
RESPONDENT 79	80	84	82	Satisfactory	78	83	81	Satisfactory
RESPONDENT 80	78	86	82	Satisfactory	82	80	81	Satisfactory
RESPONDENT 82	80	77	79	Fairly Satisfactory	76	83	80	Satisfactory
RESPONDENT 83	88	89	89	Very Satisfactory	84	87	86	Very Satisfactory
RESPONDENT 85	78	84	81	Satisfactory	83	85	84	Satisfactory
RESPONDENT 86	82	82	82	Satisfactory	83	86	85	Very Satisfactory
RESPONDENT 87	81	83	82	Satisfactory	86	86	86	Very Satisfactory
RESPONDENT 88	86	89	88	Very Satisfactory	87	90	89	Very Satisfactory
RESPONDENT 90	81	83	82	Satisfactory	86	87	87	Very Satisfactory
RESPONDENT 91	88	82	85	Very Satisfactory	82	89	86	Very Satisfactory
RESPONDENT 103	83	85	84	Satisfactory	86	85	86	VERY SATISFACTORY
RESPONDENT 107	86	87	87	Very Satisfactory	79	83	81	SATISFACTORY
MEDIAN			82	Satisfactory			86	Very Satisfactory
OVERALL MEDIAN:								
84							Satisfactory	

Legend: 90 – 100 Outstanding; 85 – 89 Very Satisfactory; 80 – 84 Satisfactory; 75 – 79 Fairly Satisfactory; Below 75 – Did Not Meet Expectation

To further validate the results, the selected 16 respondents were asked to participate in a summative assessment. The activity was done to test their skills in the four dimensions of communicative competence. It was checked using a research-made rubric. Table 4.10 shows the summary of the median scores: one respondent is at the expert level, three respondents are at the advanced level, six respondents are at the basic level, and six are at the needs improvement level. The overall median score is at a basic level based on the summative assessment scores. Respondents who directly copied the answer from the passage read and left the spaces blank were given a needs improvement level rating.

Table 4.10

Summary of Selected Respondents' Median Score in Summative Assessment

Respondents	Part 1 Preliminary Assessment	GC	Part 2 SC	DC	STC	Median	Descriptive Rating
RESPONDENT 75	2	2	2	3	2	2	Basic
RESPONDENT 76	3	3	3	3	2	3	Advanced
RESPONDENT 77	1	1	1	1	1	1	Needs Improvement
RESPONDENT 78	1	2	2	2	2	2	Basic
RESPONDENT 79	2	2	2	1	2	2	Basic
RESPONDENT 80	2	1	1	1	1	1	Needs Improvement
RESPONDENT 82	1	1	1	1	1	1	Needs Improvement
RESPONDENT 83	3	3	2	3	3	3	Advanced
RESPONDENT 85	2	3	3	3	3	3	Advanced
RESPONDENT 86	2	1	1	1	1	1	Needs Improvement
RESPONDENT 87	2	2	2	3	2	2	Basic
RESPONDENT 88	2	3	2	2	2	2	Basic
RESPONDENT 90	4	4	4	4	4	4	Expert
RESPONDENT 91	2	2	1	1	1	1	Needs Improvement
RESPONDENT 103	2	3	2	3	2	2	Basic
RESPONDENT 107	1	2	2	1	1	1	Needs Improvement
Overall	2	2	2	2	2	2	Basic

Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 Expert; 2.51 – 3.25 Advanced; 1.76 – 2.50 Basic; 1.00 – 1.75 Needs Improvement

**GC – Grammatical Competence; SC – Sociolinguistic Competence; DC – Discourse Competence; STC – Strategic Competence*

The summative assessment is composed of two parts: meaning-making and essay writing. Table 4.11 shows the general evaluation for each part answered by

each respondent to determine their mastered and least mastered skills per communicative competence dimension.

Table 4.11.

Summary of General Evaluation for Parts 1 and 2 of Summative Assessment

Respondents	Part 1: Meaning-Making	Part 2: Essay Writing	Median	Descriptive Rating
RESPONDENT 75	Limited vocabulary, incomplete sentences, and wrong spelling. The definition is within context.	Limited vocabulary, incomplete sentences, and wrong spelling. The definition is within context. Relates personal experience sometimes. Use details from the read article.	2	Basic
	Preferred to use fragments in defining the words	With good vocabulary, and used various expressions. Provided personal inputs aside from the details read from the article. Failed to paraphrase some of the sentences used.		Advanced
RESPONDENT 76	Preferred to use fragments in defining the words. Used unrelated vocabulary to the definition.	Copied the answer from the article read. Showcased limited vocabulary and committed grammatical errors. Used complex sentences. Attempted to relate the topic to personal experience and article read.	3	Needs Improvement
RESPONDENT 77	Used irrelevant vocabulary. Attempted to answer but wrote illogical content and structure.	Used incoherent and illogical sentences. Failed to clearly express ideas due to limited vocabulary and linguistic skills.	1	Basic
RESPONDENT 78	Attempted to express an idea but failed to use the correct vocabulary and grammar.	Copied the answer from the article read.	2	Basic
RESPONDENT 79	Showcased awareness of the words to be defined but lacked linguistic skill.		2	Needs Improvement
RESPONDENT 80			1	

	Attempted to define the words by directly copying the article read.			Needs Improvement
RESPONDENT 82	With good vocabulary. Did not commit major grammatical mistakes. Used complete sentences.	Did not write anything. Showcased good vocabulary and used various expressions. Provided personal insights and attempted to relate it to the article read.	1	Advanced
RESPONDENT 83	The words to be defined were only used in the written sentences but failed to provide meaning in relation to the passage read.	Showcased good vocabulary and used various expressions. Generally wrote coherent and logical sentences. Provided personal inputs aside from the details read from the article.	3	Advanced
RESPONDENT 85	Attempted to express ideas but failed to use the correct vocabulary and grammar.		3	Needs Improvement
RESPONDENT 86	The words to be defined were only used in the written sentences but failed to convey meaning related to the passage read.	Copied the answer from the article read Showcased awareness of the topic but lacked linguistics skills (wrong spelling). Preferred to use fragments. Sentences are generally coherent and logical. Failed to relate personal experience in answering the question.	1	Basic
RESPONDENT 87	The words to be defined were only used in the written sentences but failed to convey meaning related to the passage read.		2	Basic
RESPONDENT 88	With good vocabulary. Defined the words based on the passage read.	Showcased awareness of the topic but failed to expound ideas. Wrote error-free, coherent, and logical sentences. Showcased strong awareness of the topic.	2	Expert
RESPONDENT 90	Showcased awareness of the words to be defined but lacks the linguistic skill		4	Needs Improvement
RESPONDENT 91		Failed to expound on the topic. Wrote only one sentence.	1	

RESPONDENT 103	Defined words but failed to define them based on the passage read.	Sentences were generally coherent and logical. Did not relate personal experiences in answering the question.	2	Basic
RESPONDENT 107	Attempted to express ideas but failed to use the correct vocabulary and grammar. In general, written definitions were incomprehensible.	Used fragments instead of complete sentences. Failed to showcase linguistic skills, failed to expound an idea, and did not consider socio-cultural contexts.	1	Needs Improvement

Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 Expert; 2.51 – 3.25 Advanced; 1.76 – 2.50 Basic; 1.00 – 1.75 Needs Improvement

Tables 4.12 and 4.13 show the respondents' mastered and least mastered skills, respectively. The evaluations from Table 13 were analyzed to identify the respondents' mastered and least mastered skills in terms of the four dimensions of communicative competence.

Table 4.12

Summary of the Mastered Skills

Respondents	Mastered Skills	Communicative Competence Dimension
R83, R85, R87, R90, R103	Can write well-organized and coherent sentences.	Discourse Competence
R76, R83, R85, R90	With good vocabulary.	Grammatical Competence
R83, R90	Can write complete sentences.	Grammatical Competence
R75, R90	The definition is within context. / The essay written is within context.	Sociolinguistic Competence
R76, R83, R85	Used various expressions	Strategic Competence
R76, R83, R85, R90	Provided personal inputs and additional information aside from the details read from the article.	Strategic Competence
R87, R88, R90, R91	Showcased awareness of the topic.	Strategic Competence

Table 4.13*Summary of the Least Mastered Skills*

Respondents	Least Mastered Skills	Communicative Competence Dimension
R78	Wrote illogical content and structure.	Discourse Competence
R75, R78, R79, R91, R107	Used unrelated/irrelevant and limited vocabulary to the definition.	Grammatical Competence
R75, R87, R107	Used incomplete sentences/fragments.	Grammatical Competence
R75, R87, R91	Committed wrong spelling of words	Grammatical Competence
R78	Committed grammatical errors (syntax, unnecessary complex sentences)	Grammatical Competence
R77, R80, R86	Copied the answer from the article read.	Grammatical, Sociolinguistic, Discourse, and Strategic Competence
R82	Did not write anything.	Grammatical, Sociolinguistic, Discourse, and Strategic Competence
R87, R88	The words to be defined were only used in the written sentences but failed to provide meaning in relation to the passage read.	Sociolinguistic Competence
R107	Did not consider socio-cultural contexts.	Sociolinguistic Competence
R75, R78, R87, R103	Related personal experience sometimes. Attempted to relate the topic to personal experience	Strategic Competence
R76	Failed to paraphrase some of the sentences used.	Strategic Competence
R87, R91	Showcased awareness of the words to be defined but lacked the linguistic skill.	Strategic Competence
R88, R91, R107	Showcased awareness of the words but failed to expound on the topic.	Strategic Competence

Table 4.14 presents the consolidated mastered and least mastered skills per respondent. The respondents' most mastered skills are under strategic competence

based on the number of occurrences. On the other hand, most of the respondents lacked sociolinguistic competence, grammatical competence, discourse, and strategic competence.

Table 4.14

Summary of Mastered and Least Mastered Communicative Competence Dimension

Respondents	GC	STC	SC	DC
RESPONDENT 75	X	X	✓	X
RESPONDENT 76	✓	X	X	X
RESPONDENT 77	X	X	X	X
RESPONDENT 78	X	X	X	X
RESPONDENT 79	X	X	X	X
RESPONDENT 80	X	X	X	X
RESPONDENT 82	X	X	X	X
RESPONDENT 83	✓	✓	X	✓
RESPONDENT 85	✓	✓	X	✓
RESPONDENT 86	X	X	X	X
RESPONDENT 87	X	✓	X	✓
RESPONDENT 88	X	✓	X	X
RESPONDENT 90	✓	✓	✓	✓
RESPONDENT 91	X	✓	X	X
RESPONDENT 103	X	X	X	✓
RESPONDENT 107	X	X	X	X
Total	✓ - 4 X - 12	✓ - 6 X - 10	✓ - 2 X-14	✓ - 5 X-11

Legend: GC – Grammatical Competence; SC – Sociolinguistic Competence; DC – Discourse Competence; STC – Strategic Competence; ✓ - mastered; X – least mastered

The data triangulation results suggest that the respondents' communicative competence level is between basic (based on the result of the summative assessment) and needs improvement (based on the English teachers' accounts) levels. Therefore, learners need to develop the four dimensions of communicative competence. One dimension to be improved is grammatical competence. As the sender of the knowledge, teachers should focus on vocabulary, syntax, and

sentence construction. They should also look for effective strategies to bridge teachers' and learners' communication and learning gaps. However, teachers still follow traditional approaches such as the banking model, monolingual bias, and the one-size-fits-all strategy despite the diversity of learners (Espino et al., 2021). Otwinowska (2017) asserts that most language teachers are trained based on the traditional models of competencies and awareness focused on the target language.

It is good to note that some teachers communicate and encourage learners by using strategies designed for them. Teacher B shared her strategy for teaching ALS learners regarding grammatical competence. Her strategies are: *“Promoting the use of first languages or dialects as a means of assisting students in learning English or Filipino; encouraging students to adeptly transition between languages in order to maximize their expressive potential.”* The strategy is known as translanguageing, an effective practice that supports a multilingual and linguistically diverse society.

Another dimension to be developed by ALS learners is sociolinguistic competence. It can be inferred that even though the respondents are aware of the pragmatic aspect of speech acts, it does not necessarily mean that they have the same degree of understanding and awareness regarding sociolinguistic patterns, such as external and regional language patterns. Since they are not native speakers of the English language and their teachers are not native speakers, their style of speaking, rate of speaking, and intonation patterns may not be as accurate as the way the native speakers communicate. According to Sandigan (2018), the lack of classroom interaction focused on different forms of dialogues that illustrate sociolinguistic competence where learners are given the opportunity to do various

speech acts also affects the learners' level of sociolinguistic competence. The respondents who participated in the study have only limited classroom interaction due to the nature of the ALS program, where blended learning is followed and only limited classroom interaction occurs.

There will be instances where learners encounter familiar words (probably discussed by their teachers) used inappropriately in specific communication contexts. For instance, in Philippine English, the meanings of the words may change because the views and ideals within the Philippine culture are continuously evolving (Babanto et al., 2023). Teacher B pointed out the importance of the sociolinguistic dimension of communicative competence. She reiterated: *“Encouraging language awareness involves assisting students in recognizing the distinctions and commonalities among languages.* According to Kurt (2022), sociolinguistic descriptions of contexts are essential in language learning and acquisition because they encourage cultural and contextual learning.

Learners also need to improve their discourse competence. Their level of discourse competence can be attributed to their limited experience since 62% of the respondents are unemployed, preventing them from engaging in social relationships where communication normally occurs. They do not have the opportunities to practice discourse strategies such as appropriate language use (applying the rules of cohesion pertaining to grammatical links and coherence/appropriate combination of communicative actions) in various communication situations. Unemployment reduces young people's social contact, affecting their social relationships (Zeng, 2012), which may affect their communication skills.

Furthermore, learners should hone their ability to exercise appropriate communication strategies or strategic competence. The majority of the respondents in the study failed to apply appropriate communication strategies and quickly withdrew interest in the activity. For instance, Respondents 77, 80, and 86 simply copied the answers from the passage, while Respondent 76 failed to paraphrase some of the answers taken from the passage. Respondent 82 did not exert effort and submitted a blank part 2. Their lack of awareness that they can apply self-correction and effort to ask questions made them give up quickly on the activity. For instance, learners are encouraged to apply self-correction or the use of verbal and nonverbal techniques to compensate for communication breakdown when engaging in conversation. However, overusing fillers/hesitation devices, self-repetition, and mumbling may lead to message distortions, unsuccessful information transfers, and total communication breakdowns (Lemana, 2022).

Strength of Relationship Between Grammatical Competence, Sociolinguistic Competence, Strategic Competence, and Discourse Competence

As Canale and Swain explained, communicative competence comprises interrelated dimensions such as grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence, and discourse competence. The Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient was used to determine the strength of the relationship between the dimensions. The association between the two data sets is determined by applying nonparametric measurement correlation (Spearman ρ) (Springer, 2008).

The study calculated the strength of the relationship between (1) grammatical competence and strategic competence and (2) sociolinguistic competence and discourse competence. The strength of the relationship could either be positive if the value of the correlation coefficient is positive, negative if the value of the correlation coefficient is negative, or not correlated if the value is close to zero. A positive correlation denotes that as one variable increases, the other variable also increases. In contrast, a negative correlation suggests that as one variable decreases, the other variable also decreases.

The results in Table 4.15 and Figure 4.8 show that there is a significant positive relationship between grammatical competence and strategic competence ($r(112) = .682, p < .001$). Both competencies increase in tandem, resulting in a correlation of +1. The higher the grammatical competence, the level of strategic competence also advances. It only shows the connection between grammatical competence and strategic competence in language learning. The following example illustrates the relationship between grammatical competence and strategic competence. Learners are more independent and self-directed when learning grammar through the help of an expert. By applying the scaffolding method, the expert slowly reduces learning support to let the learners improve their speaking skills and expand their vocabulary independently (Homayouni, 2022). It activates the learners' prior knowledge of the subject, allowing them to do trial and error, which involves verbal and nonverbal strategies to compensate for possible communication breakdown.

Table 4.15

Analysis of the Degree of Relationship Between Grammatical Competence and Strategic Competence Using Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient

Level of Grammatical Competence	Rank	Level of Strategic Competence	Rank	d	d ²
4	108.5	4	109.5	1	1.00
4	108.5	3.2	80.5	28	784.00
3	67.5	3	61	6.5	42.25
3.2	81.5	3.6	97	15.5	240.25
3.6	95.5	3.8	103.5	8	64.00
2	23.5	2.4	32.5	9	81.00
2	23.5	1.8	8.5	15	225.00
2.4	37.5	3.2	80.5	43	1849.00
2.6	45.5	2.6	37	8.5	72.25
3	67.5	3	61	6.5	42.25
3.4	89	3	61	28	784.00
3	67.5	3	61	6.5	42.25
2.6	45.5	2.4	32.5	13	169.00
3.6	95.5	3.6	97	1.5	2.25
4	108.5	4	109.5	1	1.00
3.2	81.5	3.6	97	15.5	240.25
3.4	89	3	61	28	784.00
1.8	14.5	3.2	80.5	66	4356.00
1	2	1	1.5	0.5	0.25
3	67.5	3	61	6.5	42.25
1.6	9.5	2.8	43	33.5	1122.25
2.6	45.5	3	61	15.5	240.25
3	67.5	3	61	6.5	42.25
3.4	89	3	61	28	784.00
4	108.5	3.4	88.5	20	400.00
3.8	100.5	2	17.5	83.5	6972.25
3	67.5	3	61	6.5	42.25
3	67.5	3	61	6.5	42.25
2.2	32.5	2.6	37	4.5	20.25
2.8	54.5	2.8	43	11.5	132.25
2.8	54.5	3	61	6.5	42.25
3	67.5	3.2	80.5	13	169.00
3.6	95.5	3.2	80.5	15	225.00
3	67.5	3	61	6.5	42.25
3	67.5	2.8	43	24.5	600.25

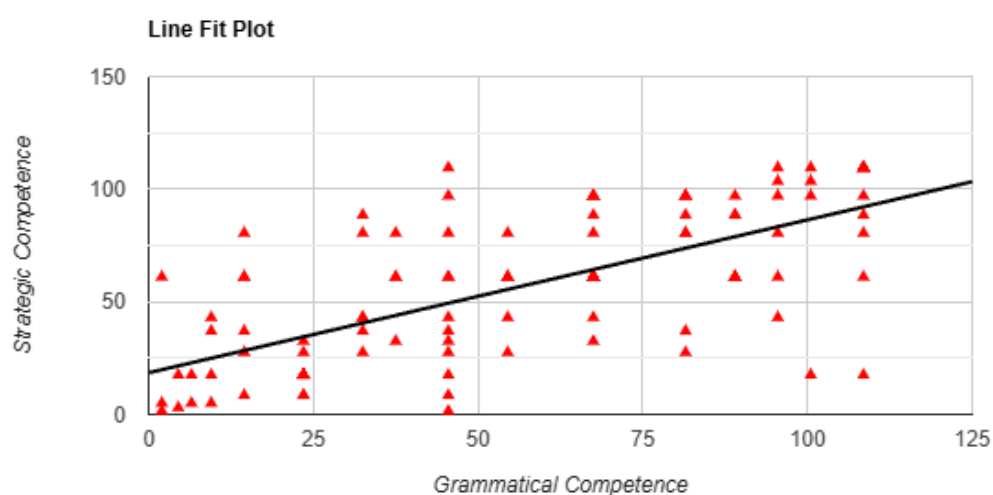
3.4	89	3.4	88.5	0.5	0.25
1.8	14.5	2.2	27.5	13	169.00
2.2	32.5	2.8	43	10.5	110.25
2.6	45.5	1	1.5	44	1936.00
2	23.5	2	17.5	6	36.00
2.2	32.5	3.4	88.5	56	3136.00
3	67.5	3	61	6.5	42.25
3.2	81.5	3.6	97	15.5	240.25
3.6	95.5	3	61	34.5	1190.25
2.8	54.5	3	61	6.5	42.25
2	23.5	2	17.5	6	36.00
1.8	14.5	3	61	46.5	2162.25
2.4	37.5	3	61	23.5	552.25
1.8	14.5	3	61	46.5	2162.25
1.6	9.5	2.6	37	27.5	756.25
2.6	45.5	2.8	43	2.5	6.25
3.2	81.5	3.2	80.5	1	1.00
2.6	45.5	2	17.5	28	784.00
1.6	9.5	2	17.5	8	64.00
3	67.5	3.6	97	29.5	870.25
2.6	45.5	1.8	8.5	37	1369.00
3	67.5	3	61	6.5	42.25
4	108.5	4	109.5	1	1.00
2.2	32.5	2.8	43	10.5	110.25
1.8	14.5	1.8	8.5	6	36.00
1.2	4.5	1.2	3	1.5	2.25
2.2	32.5	2.2	27.5	5	25.00
4	108.5	4	109.5	1	1.00
2.8	54.5	3	61	6.5	42.25
2	23.5	2	17.5	6	36.00
2	23.5	2	17.5	6	36.00
1.8	14.5	2.6	37	22.5	506.25
3	67.5	3	61	6.5	42.25
2.6	45.5	2.2	27.5	18	324.00
3.8	100.5	4	109.5	9	81.00
3.4	89	3.6	97	8	64.00
3	67.5	3.6	97	29.5	870.25
2	23.5	1.8	8.5	15	225.00
2	23.5	2.2	27.5	4	16.00
2	23.5	2	17.5	6	36.00
2.6	45.5	3.2	80.5	35	1225.00
2.6	45.5	4	109.5	64	4096.00
2.6	45.5	3.6	97	51.5	2652.25
3.2	81.5	3.2	80.5	1	1.00
4	108.5	2	17.5	91	8281.00
3	67.5	3	61	6.5	42.25

3	67.5	3	61	6.5	42.25
1	2	3	61	59	3481.00
2	23.5	2	17.5	6	36.00
3.8	100.5	3.6	97	3.5	12.25
2.8	54.5	3.2	80.5	26	676.00
3.6	95.5	2.8	43	52.5	2756.25
3	67.5	3.6	97	29.5	870.25
2	23.5	2	17.5	6	36.00
2.4	37.5	3	61	23.5	552.25
3.4	89	3	61	28	784.00
3.2	81.5	3.4	88.5	7	49.00
3	67.5	2.4	32.5	35	1225.00
1.4	6.5	1.6	5	1.5	2.25
1.4	6.5	2	17.5	11	121.00
1.6	9.5	1.6	5	4.5	20.25
2.2	32.5	3.2	80.5	48	2304.00
4	108.5	4	109.5	1	1.00
4	108.5	3	61	47.5	2256.25
4	108.5	4	109.5	1	1.00
3.4	89	3.4	88.5	0.5	0.25
4	108.5	3.6	97	11.5	132.25
2.8	54.5	2.2	27.5	27	729.00
3	67.5	3.4	88.5	21	441.00
1.2	4.5	2	17.5	13	169.00
3.2	81.5	2.2	27.5	54	2916.00
1	2	1.6	5	3	9.00
2.6	45.5	3	61	15.5	240.25
4	108.5	4	109.5	1	1.00
3.8	100.5	3.8	103.5	3	9.00
3.2	81.5	2.6	37	44.5	1980.25
2.4	37.5	2.4	32.5	5	25.00
2	23.5	2	17.5	6	36.00
3.6	95.5	4	109.5	14	196.00

Parameter	Value
Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (r_s)	0.6824
r^2	0.4657
P-value	0
Covariance	733.8429
Sample size (n)	114
Statistic	9.8802

Figure 4.8

Grammatical and Strategic Competence Increase in Tandem Showing a Significant Positive Relationship



The findings in Table 4.16 indicate that there is a significant positive relationship between the two variables: sociolinguistic competence and discourse competence ($r(112) = .714, p < .001$). Figure 4.9 shows variables increase in tandem resulting in a correlation of +1. The relationship between the two competencies manifests the crucial role of the sociolinguistic rules of use and rules of discourse in understanding the meaning of utterances (Canale & Swain, 1980; Swain, 2013). Simply put, the rules of discourse follow guidelines to be adhered to by everyone in normal writing and conversation so that people's speech or message is interpreted the way it is intended to be understood (Dowden, 2024). The rules of discourse take into account sociolinguistic rules to deliver meaningful messages.

Table 4.16*Analysis of the Degree of Relationship Between Sociolinguistic**Competence and Discourse Competence Using Spearman's Rank**Correlation Coefficient*

Level of Sociolinguistic Competence	Rank	Level of Discourse Competence	Rank	d	d ²
4	108	4	109	1	1.00
4	108	1	3.5	104.5	10920.25
3	57	2.4	40	17	289.00
2.4	30	2.8	58.5	28.5	812.25
3.2	75	3.4	93.5	18.5	342.25
2.4	30	1.8	12.5	17.5	306.25
1.6	11	1.4	8.5	2.5	6.25
3.4	83	2.2	31.5	51.5	2652.25
2.4	30	2.2	31.5	1.5	2.25
3	57	3	74	17	289.00
2.8	39.5	2.2	31.5	8	64.00
3	57	3	74	17	289.00
2.6	34.5	2.8	58.5	24	576.00
4	108	3	74	34	1156.00
4	108	3.4	93.5	14.5	210.25
3.8	98	4	109	11	121.00
3	57	3	74	17	289.00
3	57	2	20.5	36.5	1332.25
1	3	1	3.5	0.5	0.25
3	57	3	74	17	289.00
2.6	34.5	2.8	58.5	24	576.00
2.8	39.5	2.8	58.5	19	361.00
3	57	3	74	17	289.00
3	57	3.2	88	31	961.00
4	108	4	109	1	1.00
3.8	98	4	109	11	121.00
3	57	3	74	17	289.00
3	57	3	74	17	289.00
2.8	39.5	2.6	49.5	10	100.00
3.6	91	2.4	40	51	2601.00
3	57	3	74	17	289.00
3.6	91	3.2	88	3	9.00
3.4	83	3.6	100	17	289.00
3	57	2.6	49.5	7.5	56.25
2.6	34.5	2.4	40	5.5	30.25

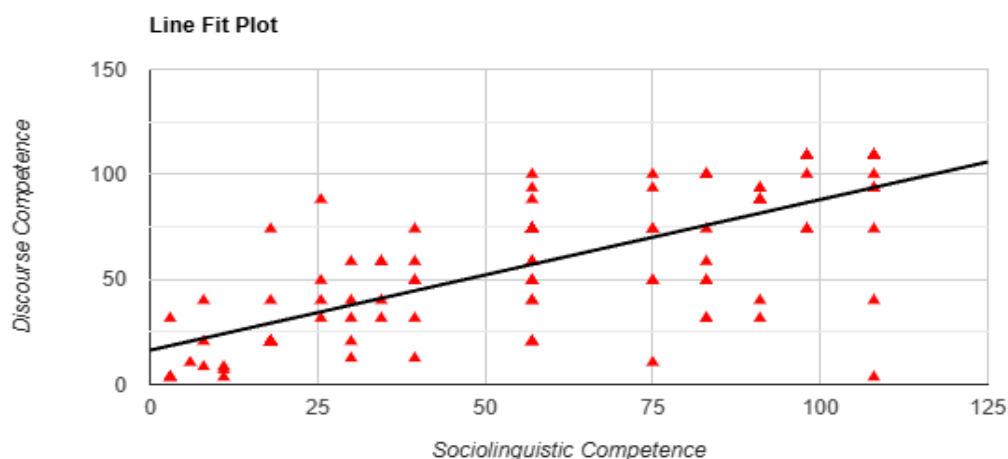
3.6	91	3.2	88	3	9.00
1	3	1	3.5	0.5	0.25
3	57	2.8	58.5	1.5	2.25
1	3	2.2	31.5	28.5	812.25
2	18	2	20.5	2.5	6.25
3	57	2.4	40	17	289.00
3	57	3	74	17	289.00
3.4	83	3.6	100	17	289.00
3.4	83	3	74	9	81.00
3	57	3	74	17	289.00
2	18	2	20.5	2.5	6.25
3.4	83	2.6	49.5	33.5	1122.25
3	57	2	20.5	36.5	1332.25
1.4	8	2	20.5	12.5	156.25
1.6	11	1	3.5	7.5	56.25
3	57	2.6	49.5	7.5	56.25
3.2	75	3	74	1	1.00
3	57	2	20.5	36.5	1332.25
2	18	2	20.5	2.5	6.25
3.6	91	3.4	93.5	2.5	6.25
2.8	39.5	1.8	12.5	27	729.00
3	57	3	74	17	289.00
4	108	4	109	1	1.00
2.6	34.5	2.2	31.5	3	9.00
2.2	25.5	2.4	40	14.5	210.25
1.6	11	1.2	7	4	16.00
2.2	25.5	2.2	31.5	6	36.00
4	108	4	109	1	1.00
3	57	2.6	49.5	7.5	56.25
2	18	2	20.5	2.5	6.25
2	18	2	20.5	2.5	6.25
2.2	25.5	3.2	88	62.5	3906.25
3	57	3	74	17	289.00
2.2	25.5	2.6	49.5	24	576.00
3.8	98	4	109	11	121.00
3.6	91	3.2	88	3	9.00
3.2	75	2.6	49.5	25.5	650.25
2.4	30	2.4	40	10	100.00
3.2	75	1.6	10.5	64.5	4160.25
2	18	2	20.5	2.5	6.25
4	108	2.4	40	68	4624.00
3.8	98	4	109	11	121.00
3.2	75	3	74	1	1.00
3.4	83	3.6	100	17	289.00
4	108	4	109	1	1.00
3.4	83	2.8	58.5	24.5	600.25

3	57	2.8	58.5	1.5	2.25
2	18	3	74	56	3136.00
2	18	2	20.5	2.5	6.25
3.6	91	3.4	93.5	2.5	6.25
3.4	83	2.2	31.5	51.5	2652.25
3.4	83	2.6	49.5	33.5	1122.25
3.2	75	3.6	100	25	625.00
3	57	3	74	17	289.00
3.2	75	2.6	49.5	25.5	650.25
3.8	98	3	74	24	576.00
3	57	3.6	100	43	1849.00
1.4	8	2.4	40	32	1024.00
1.4	8	1.4	8.5	0.5	0.25
2	18	2	20.5	2.5	6.25
1	3	1	3.5	0.5	0.25
2	18	2.4	40	22	484.00
4	108	4	109	1	1.00
2.8	39.5	3	74	34.5	1190.25
4	108	4	109	1	1.00
3	57	3	74	17	289.00
4	108	3.6	100	8	64.00
3.6	91	2.2	31.5	59.5	3540.25
3.8	98	3	74	24	576.00
1	3	1	3.5	0.5	0.25
2.4	30	2	20.5	9.5	90.25
1.2	6	1.6	10.5	4.5	20.25
3	57	3.4	93.5	36.5	1332.25
3	57	3	74	17	289.00
3.8	98	3.6	100	2	4.00
3	57	2.8	58.5	1.5	2.25
2.8	39.5	2.6	49.5	10	100.00
2	18	2	20.5	2.5	6.25
4	108	3.4	93.5	14.5	210.25

Parameter	Value
Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (r_s)	0.7145
r^2	0.5105
P-value	0
Covariance	767.3717
Sample size (n)	114
Statistic	10.8068

Figure 4.9

Sociolinguistic and Discourse Competence Increase in Tandem Showing Significant Positive Relationship



However, a significant relationship between (1) grammatical competence and strategic competence and (2) sociolinguistic competence and discourse competence was not observed when the selected 16 respondents participated in a summative assessment. Table 4.17 shows the summary of the mastered and least mastered skills grouped according to the dimensions of communicative competence. The results of the summative assessment indicate that there is no significant relationship between grammatical and strategic competence. Respondent 76 exudes competency in terms of grammar (good vocabulary) but failed in strategic competence (failed to paraphrase sentences written). On the other hand, Respondents 87, 88, and 91 showcased awareness of the topic (strategic competence) but lacked linguistic ability, such as spelling words correctly and expounding ideas through the use of vocabulary. Table 19 also shows no significant relationship between sociolinguistic and discourse competence. Respondent 75 exudes sociolinguistic competence as the respondent applied context in meaning-

making but failed to showcase discourse competence since the respondent used incomplete sentences, lacking logic and coherence. Respondents 83, 85, 87, and 103 lacked sociolinguistic competence (failed to incorporate sociolinguistic aspects) but could write coherent and logical sentences.

Table 4.17

Summary of the Strength of the Relationship Between the Mastered and Least Mastered Skills Per Communicative Competence Dimension

Respondents	GC	STC	SC	DC	Relationship Between Grammatical and Strategic Competence	Relationship Between Sociolinguistic and Discourse Competence
RESPONDENT 75	X	X	✓	X	YES	NO
RESPONDENT 76	✓	X	X	X	NO	YES
RESPONDENT 77	X	X	X	X	YES	YES
RESPONDENT 78	X	X	X	X	YES	YES
RESPONDENT 79	X	X	X	X	YES	YES
RESPONDENT 80	X	X	X	X	YES	YES
RESPONDENT 82	X	X	X	X	YES	YES
RESPONDENT 83	✓	✓	X	✓	YES	NO
RESPONDENT 85	✓	✓	X	✓	YES	NO
RESPONDENT 86	X	X	X	X	YES	YES
RESPONDENT 87	X	✓	X	✓	NO	NO
RESPONDENT 88	X	✓	X	X	NO	YES
RESPONDENT 90	✓	✓	✓	✓	YES	YES
RESPONDENT 91	X	✓	X	X	NO	YES
RESPONDENT 103	X	X	X	✓	YES	NO
RESPONDENT 107	X	X	X	X	YES	YES

Legend: GC – Grammatical Competence; SC – Sociolinguistic Competence; DC – Discourse Competence; STC – Strategic Competence

Moderating Variables

Based on the survey among ALS learners, the learning environment has a huge role in the success of the ALS learners' learning process. The ALS program employed a blended learning modality, promoting the use of available technology. Findings in the survey suggest that how respondents use the technology could influence their communicative competence. Technological competence, digital literacy, and effective communication between teachers and learners play pivotal roles in enhancing the relationship between various competencies. Specifically, these moderating variables can bridge the gap between grammatical competence, which involves the proper use of language rules, and sociolinguistic competence, which encompasses the ability to use language appropriately in social contexts. Furthermore, they facilitate the connection between sociolinguistic competence and discourse competence, the latter being the ability to construct coherent and meaningful communication in extended texts or conversations. By leveraging technology and fostering clear, interactive communication, teachers can create more engaging and supportive learning environments, ultimately leading to a more profound and practical understanding of language use among learners.

Table 4.18 shows the summary of the respondents' access to technology and the ratings given by the ICT teacher in terms of their technological competence or digital literacy—the ability to find, evaluate, organize, create, and communicate information. Technological competence enables learners to navigate software, hardware, and online resources efficiently, while digital literacy encompasses the ability to critically evaluate and responsibly use information found online. Without these skills, learners may struggle to access information, communicate effectively,

and engage with various digital tools that can enhance their learning experiences. Despite having access to different forms of technology, the summative assessment ratings of respondents 82, 87, and 88 are at the basic and need improvement levels. Therefore, without technological competence and digital literacy, it would be hard for learners to learn the necessary skills that would improve their communicative competence.

Table 4.18

Summary of How Respondents Utilize Technology, Their Technological Competence, and Summative Assessment Rating

Respondent s	Uses the Internet to attend classes	Uses gadgets for asynchronous learning	Accesses other resources or references aside from modules	Technological competence as rated by the ICT teacher	Summative assessment rating
R75	✓	X	X	Basic	Basic
R76	✓	✓	✓	Basic	Advanced
R77	X	✓	X	Basic	Needs Improvement
R78	✓	✓	X	Basic	Basic
R79	X	✓	X	Basic	Basic
R80	✓	X	X	Basic	Needs Improvement
R82	✓	✓	✓	Basic	Needs Improvement
R83	✓	X	X	Basic	Advanced
R85	✓	✓	✓	Basic	Advanced
R86	✓	✓	X	Basic	Needs Improvement
R87	✓	✓	✓	Basic	Basic
R88	✓	✓	✓	Basic	Basic
R90	X	X	✓	Basic	Expert
R91	✓	X	X	Basic	Needs Improvement
R103	X	X	✓	Basic	Basic
R107	X	✓	✓	Basic	Needs Improvement

Teacher C (ICT teacher) explained, “Since most of the age of the students are pretty advanced, they still learn better if a teacher guides them as teacher incorporates technology in the learning process.” Therefore, technological competence coupled with clear communication between teachers and learners may lead to a successful transfer of knowledge and skills. Clear and effective communication ensures that instructional goals are understood and learners actively engage in the process. When teachers and learners are adept with technology and communicate effectively, they create an environment that not only facilitates learning but also fosters critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The following communication cycle explains the processes involved in clear communication between teachers and learners:

- Encoding: How the instructor formulates the message
- Transmitting: The mediums used to convey the message
- Decoding: How the learner interprets the message
- Feedback: The response from the learner that shapes further communication

The lack of a relationship between the dimensions of communicative competence contradicted Canale and Swain’s assumption of the interrelatedness of the dimension. The theory overemphasized the dimensions, oversimplifying the complex nature of communication situations. As the theory focuses on the four dimensions, it neglects the evolving nature of language use and competence, which involves other moderating factors such as technological competence and digital literacy, as well as clear and effective communication between learners and teachers. For instance, Respondent 90’s level of communicative competence is at

the expert level based on the summative assessment result but only got a satisfactory rating on the report card. Her exposure to different resources aside from the modules and her ability to utilize them to her advantage was the reason for garnering such a high level of communicative competence in the summative assessment. The respondents were allowed to use the Internet and other resources while participating in the summative assessment when they asked if they could access information besides the one provided.

The Communicative Competence Approach

The Communicative Competence Approach offers learners opportunities to use English in various communication contexts to prepare learners for authentic or real-life communication scenarios. The indicators used in the survey determined the perceived language use of the respondents in school, at home, and in the environment (e.g., community, social community, or workplace). The respondents rated each indicator using the 4-Point Likert Scale by choosing the most appropriate frequency, such as Always (4), Often (3), Rarely (2), and Never (1). The survey results ascertained whether the respondents use English in various contexts, applying the communicative competence learned and acquired in school. The average score for each indicator was calculated by dividing the total scores by the total number of respondents (N=114)

Table 4.19 reveals the summary of the findings on language use at home. With a general average of 2.59 and a verbal interpretation of often, English is frequently used in communication situations at home. It can be deduced that

respondents are more inclined to use their communicative competence in English when it is integrated into the movies they watch and the music they listen to with relatable themes. Respondents in the study are interested in cooking and baking, ICT, reading and writing, arts and music, gaming, and vlogging, as stated in their profile.

Indicator 1 garnered the lowest score with a verbal interpretation of rarely. Based on the profile of the respondents, 83% belong to the low-income class, which may imply that they lack the context or the opportunity to interact with native speakers of the English language or simply with family members speaking the target language. Griffiths (2018) explains that learners easily acquire a second language when they participate in an authentic communication experience with an expert or native speaker of the target language.

Table 4.19

Summary of Findings on Language Use at Home

INDICATORS	Average	Verbal Interpretation
1. I speak in English when communicating with family members.	2.33	Rarely
2. I use the appropriate vocabulary or words in English when expressing my feelings and reactions.	2.62	Often
3. I watch and analyze English movies with themes about everyday situations and activities e.g. economic-livelihood, socio-cultural activities, health problems, etc.	2.94	Often

4. I listen to English music and understand its explicit and implicit meanings.	3.24	Often
5. I use the appropriate English vocabulary or words when taking a stand in an argument.	2.81	Often
General Average	2.79	Often

Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 Always; 2.51 – 3.25 Often; 1.76 – 2.50 Rarely; 1.00 – 1.75 Never

Table 4.20 presents the frequency of the language use of respondents at school. Among the places where communication takes place, language use at school got the highest general average of 2.87 with a verbal interpretation of often. This means that the respondents use the English language when answering their modules and portfolios, reciting in class, and participating in group activities that require them to use the language.

The 2019 ALS-K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum promotes using the English language to develop learners who are confident in communicating their ideas and feelings. As reflected in the selected indicators, the curriculum applies the spiral progression approach, where the topics are organized from the most basic to the most complex. Indicator 2 got an average of 2.82, in which the respondents tended to simplify complex statements by applying strategies such as rephrasing them to gain a better understanding. However, Indicator 1, communicating in English with their teachers when reciting in class, got the lowest score of 2.61 within the often range. The lack of frequent classroom interaction may have affected their confidence and readiness to speak in English when communicating with their teacher.

Table 4.20*Summary of Findings on Language Use in School*

INDICATORS	Average	Verbal Interpretation
1. I communicate in English with my teachers when reciting in class.	2.61	Often
2. I simplify questions or statements in English by rephrasing them in such a way that I can understand them clearly.	2.83	Often
3. I use the English language when answering my modules and portfolios for subjects that require me to use the English language.	3.05	Often
4. During subjects that I need to use the English language, I use basic and common English vocabulary and words when interacting with my classmates in group discussions.	2.89	Often
5. I participate in performance tasks that require me to communicate in English.	2.95	Often
General Average	2.87	Often

Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 Always; 2.51 – 3.25 Often; 1.76 – 2.50 Rarely; 1.00 – 1.75 Never

Table 4.21 summarizes findings on language use in the local community, social community, or the workplace. The general average is 2.79, with a verbal interpretation of often. The average of the respondents in the five indicators is within the often range. Based on the survey results, the respondents employ methods and strategies that may have showcased their grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence outside the home and school contexts. Indicator 1 demonstrates strategic competence by applying translanguaging practice where respondents switch from English to their native

language. Indicators 2 and 3 consider sociolinguistic rules of use and rules of discourse, while indicator 5 exhibits knowledge of grammar and coherence.

Of the 114 respondents, 36 identified as employed, and seven did not disclose their employment status. People at work have more opportunities to communicate with others and practice the language they need to learn. Although 71 respondents are not yet employed, they acknowledge that being part of the ALS program gives them leverage for better opportunities, as revealed in their profile. The ALS program is designed to develop the learners' 21st century skills, such as communication skills in Filipino and English. According to a Statista survey report, English is the most practical language to learn for work and professional development (Balita, 2021).

Table 4.21

Summary of Findings on Language Use in the Local Community, Social Community, or the Workplace

INDICATORS	Average	Verbal Interpretation
1. I speak in English when I socialize with others. When having a hard time expressing my thoughts, I express them first in the language I am comfortable using (e.g., Filipino, Tagalog, Ilocano, Hiligaynon, or other Philippine languages and dialects) and then translate them into English.	2.85	Often
2. When I communicate with other people, I consider the situations (e.g., formal in the workplace and conversational in social media) by	2.82	Often

selecting carefully the English words and phrases to use.		
3. I apply various communicative strategies in different situations when greeting someone, expressing complaints, inviting people, complimenting a friend or someone, etc.	2.79	Often
4. I express my approval or disapproval of specific instructions using the English language.	2.68	Often
5. I present my views and opinions by constructing well-organized, coherent, and grammatically correct paragraphs.	2.80	Often
General Average	2.79	Often
<i>Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 Always; 2.51 – 3.25 Often; 1.76 – 2.50 Rarely; 1.00 – 1.75 Never</i>		

Based on the above results of the self-assessment survey, it was believed that the respondents exhibited advanced and expert levels of communicative competence. However, upon further examination through data triangulation, it became evident that the respondents' communicative competence predominantly falls between the needs improvement and basic levels. While they possess a foundational understanding of communicative principles, they struggle to apply these skills in various communication contexts effectively. Most likely, they rarely or never use English in different communication contexts. Specifically, the respondents face challenges in grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competencies based on the summative assessment results, grades in English-related subjects, and evaluation of their teachers. This significantly hinders their ability to proficiently use English in different communication situations.

The challenges faced by learners in acquiring language skills are multifaceted and significant. Limited classroom interaction poses a major barrier, as it restricts the essential communication between learners and teachers that facilitates language acquisition. Without adequate opportunities for verbal practice and feedback, students struggle to develop fluency and confidence. Additionally, limited access to technology and low digital literacy further aggravate these issues. Many learners lack the resources or skills to effectively use digital tools that could support their learning outside of the classroom.

Moreover, the absence of a specially designed curriculum tailored to the unique needs of adult learners worsens these difficulties. Teacher A supports this observation: “The curriculum structure we are using is not well-constructed specifically for Alternative Learning System (ALS) learners.” A curriculum not aligned with the learners’ needs and interests can fail to engage them or provide the necessary scaffolding to build their language proficiency. Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive approach that includes enhancing classroom interaction, improving access to technology, boosting digital literacy, and enhancing the current curriculum to support activities and assessments tailored to the learners.

Factors that May Affect Communicative Competence

The survey results show the factors that may have affected the respondents' communicative competence in English. The 4-Point Scale was utilized to rate their level of agreement using the following ratings: Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3),

Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). To get the average score for each indicator, the total scores were divided by the total number of respondents (N=114).

Table 4.22 summarizes the level of agreement for each indicator that represents the factors that may have affected the communicative competence of the respondents. Indicator 5 translated to the ALS learners' motivation or willingness to complete the program earned the highest average of 3.32 with a verbal interpretation of strongly agree. Indicator 1, which pertains to methods and strategies used by ALS teachers, placed second with an average of 3.16, while indicators 3 (exposure of ALS learners to Filipino or other dialects and the English language) and 4 (attitudes of ALS learners toward learning in the context of using ICT tools) got the same average of 3.15 with a verbal interpretation of agree.

Table 4.22

Summary of Factors That May Affect Communicative Competence

INDICATORS	Average	Verbal Interpretation
1. Methods and strategies used by ALS teachers (e.g. the use of scaffolding method that taps the learners' prior knowledge and experience to introduce new knowledge and skills) and mastery of the lessons	3.16	Agree
2. Diversity of learners in terms of age, prior knowledge/memory, way of thinking, and learning environment help in developing communicative competence in English.	3.13	Agree
3. Exposure of ALS learners to native (Filipino or other dialects) and the English language	3.15	Agree

4. Attitudes of ALS learners toward learning in the context of using ICT tools (e.g., Zoom, Messenger, Discord, etc.)	3.15	Agree
5. Motivation/willingness of ALS learners to complete the ALS program	3.32	Strongly Agree
General Average	3.18	Agree

Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 Strongly Agree; 2.51 – 3.25 Agree; 1.76 – 2.50 Disagree; 1.00 – 1.75 Strongly Disagree

The respondents in the study are already adults. Indicator 5, which pertains to motivation, supports the conjecture that adults have developed intrinsic motivation or internal behaviors that may lead to extrinsic motivation or the desire to learn the necessary competencies, such as developing English communication skills to complete the program. Based on the profile of the respondents in the study, the majority of the learners agree that one of their motivations for completing the program is to have better job opportunities. The study of Valeza et al. (2017) reached the same results on ALS learners' motivation and the chance to attain a job.

Indicator 1 specifies methods and strategies used by ALS teachers as a factor that may affect the development of communicative competence among ALS learners. As adult learners, they are at the cognitive development stage where cognition development is already taking place (Thompson, 2019). At this stage, they can ask relevant questions and reason appropriately (mentally reason or manipulate mental representations). They can relate their experience, prior knowledge, and environment to the lessons and apply it in real-life situations. There are methods of teaching, such as scaffolding, that tap into the learners' prior knowledge to gradually

introduce knowledge and skills until such time that they can operate independently. Teacher B uses the following strategies: “Organizing complicated tasks by creating smaller, more achievable steps for developing communication abilities. Offering direction, criticism, and help as students advance. Removing assistance gradually as students gain greater independence.” Teacher A applies realism and other methods tailored to the ALS learners’ unique circumstances. She elaborated on the approach: “My first priority was getting them into a Learning Mode, which took creativity and patience. We even had a Boodle Fight during one meeting to build rapport and foster a sense of community. It’s not all about academics; an ALS teacher must truly understand each learner’s needs and situation to create a supportive environment that encourages growth and learning.”

Although the majority of the respondents are adults, the age gaps, self-esteem, and varied learning experiences (indicator 2) are the reasons why some of the respondents need further improvement in their overall communication skills as exemplified in the results of the survey. According to Teacher A: “One significant factor is their age, which can affect language acquisition and adaptation. Another factor is the time gap since they last attended school, during which many may have been occupied with work, marriage, or other responsibilities.” Teacher B added: “Limited access to opportunities and resources for schooling might impede the development of language skills.” The survey results and teachers’ accounts support the observation of Tindowen et al. (2017) about the effect of low self-esteem, age gaps, and learning experience on the learners’ 21st century skills, which include ICT, collaboration, communication, and global connections.

The exposure of learners to the native language (Filipino and other dialects or Philippine languages) (indicator 3) and English and attitudes towards using ICT tools in the transfer of knowledge and skills (indicator 4) may also affect their communicative competence. Teacher C raised concern about the learners' digital competency and limited teacher-student interaction: "Not everyone is exposed to different forms of technology. Since most of the age of the students [are] pretty advanced, they still learn better if a teacher guides them as teacher incorporate technology in the learning process." As determined in the study of Dayag-Tungpalan (2023), there is a correlation between learners' speaking performance and perceived factors affecting their speaking performance. The factors indicated in her study are exposure to social media, listening ability, communication anxiety, knowledge of English vocabulary, mastery of grammar rules, exposure to speaking activities in and outside the classroom, exposure to the English language, amount of time needed to prepare and perform in a speaking task, and topical knowledge.

The perceived communicative competence survey and data triangulation findings revealed a contradicting result. Based on the survey, the communicative competence of the respondents per dimension was at an advanced level. However, the data triangulation method indicated that the respondents' level of communicative competence is between basic and needs improvement levels, further supported by the ALS teachers' accounts.

The respondents are between the basic and need improvement levels which could be attributed to traditional teaching approaches such as the banking model, monolingual bias, and one-size-fits-all strategy, lack of classroom interaction due to

the nature of the ALS program, confusion brought about by the complexity of the English language wherein words' meaning depends on the sociolinguistic aspect, the respondents' profile (e.g., income level, employment status, native and target language exposure, and age gap), and the misconception of the use of lexical fillers (e.g., so, you know), repetitions, or filled pauses (e.g., uh, um) as an indication of incompetence. Therefore, limited practice, classroom interaction, technology access, digital literacy, and curriculum alignment issues contribute to ALS secondary learners' low English communicative competence. Addressing learning gaps in communicative competence requires a communication-based approach that includes targeted interventions, the development of technological competence and digital literacy, and nurturing clear and effective communication between learners and teachers. Tailored interventions and communication-based activities specifically designed for ALS learners can help identify and bridge individual learning gaps by focusing on their specific needs and diverse profiles.

Based on Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient was utilized, there is a significant positive relationship between grammatical competence and strategic competence ($r(112) = .682, p < .001$). The same inference was reached on the strength of the relationship between sociolinguistic competence and discourse competence. The results indicated that there is a significant positive relationship between the two variables: sociolinguistic competence and discourse competence ($r(112) = .714, p < .001$). The variables for each relationship increase in tandem, resulting in a correlation of +1. This only proves the interrelationship between the dimensions of communicative competence. However, when the observations were applied to the summative assessment result, no significant relationship was found

between the dimensions of communicative competence. Therefore, proficiency in one dimension does not necessarily correlate with proficiency in other dimensions, suggesting that targeted interventions are necessary to address the specific learning gaps. Canale and Swain put too much emphasis on the four components and disregard other aspects. In the study, technological competence, digital literacy, and establishing clear communication between teachers and learners are important components in developing communicative competence in English. Enhancing technological competence and digital literacy ensures learners can use modern tools and resources effectively to aid their learning process. Additionally, fostering strong communication channels between learners and teachers enhances understanding and feedback, which is crucial for continuous improvement in terms of skills related to communicative competence.

The survey results determined that the Communicative Competence Approach is one way to develop the learners' communicative competence. It provides opportunities for learners to use English in various communication contexts in preparation for authentic communication scenarios. The use of the English language in real-life scenarios such as in school, at home, and in the environment (e.g., community, social community, or workplace) supports the assumptions on the Communicative Competence Approach. The frequency of the respondents' language use in English in the aforementioned communication contexts was rated as often. Based on the survey results, the respondents are more inclined to apply their communicative competence in English when integrated into activities that interest them, such as watching movies, listening to music, and reading and writing with relatable themes. However, the result of data triangulation revealed that

respondents' communicative competence ranges from "needs improvement" to "basic." Therefore, they rarely or never use the English language. They struggle to apply English skills due to limited practice across contexts. Challenges in grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competencies hinder proficiency. Limited classroom interaction, technology access, digital literacy, and a curriculum mismatch further impede learning. Interventions include improving classroom interaction, technology access, digital literacy, and developing a tailored curriculum for adult learners.

The respondents use the English language depending on the situation and the context of their communication. The respondents are encouraged to use the English language when answering their modules and portfolios, reciting in class, and participating in group activities. They do not communicate in English when speaking with family members. This could be due to the fact that almost the majority of the respondents belong to the low-income class. Their lack of context or the opportunity to interact with native speakers of the English language or simply with family members speaking the target language makes them rarely use the target language. Learners easily acquire a second language when they participate in an authentic communication experience with an expert or native speaker of the target language. Also, working individuals have more opportunities to communicate with others and apply what they have learned in school in real communication situations.

On the topic of factors that may have affected the communicative competence of the respondents in English, four factors were rated as agreed. It comprised of methods and strategies used by ALS teachers, exposure of ALS learners to Filipino

or other dialects and the English language, attitudes of ALS learners toward learning in the context of using ICT tools, diversity of learners in terms of age, prior knowledge/memory, way of thinking, and learning environment. One factor that stood out in the list and was rated by the respondents as “strongly agree” is the motivation or willingness of ALS learners to complete the ALS program.

The influence of the factors mentioned above on the speaking performance of the learners in English is linked to the profile of the respondents (age, employment status, learning experience), stage of development, exposure to the native language (Filipino and other dialects or Philippine languages) and English, and attitudes toward using ICT tools.

Chapter V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The chapter presents the summary, conclusion, and recommendations on the perceived level of communicative competence in English of ALS secondary learners, the appropriate communication-based approach to develop the ALS learners' English communicative competence, and factors that may have affected or influenced their communicative competence.

Summary

The study aimed to analyze how can the Communicative Competence Approach be used to develop English communication skills in learners of the Alternative Learning System. Particularly, it sought to: (1) determine the level of communicative competence in English among ALS learners in terms of grammatical, sociolinguistic, strategic, and discourse competence; (2) examine a communication-based approach that will develop the communicative competence of ALS secondary learners; and (3) analyze the factors that influence the communicative competence of ALS learners.

A total of 114 ALS secondary learners from Buting Senior High School, Nagpayong High School, and Rizal High School participated in the study. The quantitative approach was utilized by means of the survey research design in analyzing the gathered data. The Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient was used to determine the strength of relationships between the four dimensions of

communicative competence. Existing studies and literature about language teaching and acquisition, language use, and factors affecting communicative competence in English conducted by other researchers were used to analyze how can the Communicative Competence Approach be used to develop English communication skills in ALS learners.

Communicative competence pertains to the ability of people to utilize the English language in a functional and meaningful communicative interaction, considering their knowledge of their native language, life experience, social contexts, and cultures. Based on the notions and assumptions of Canale and Swain, communicative competence consists of four interrelated dimensions, namely grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. The Communicative Competence Approach helps learners apply English in various contexts, preparing them for real-life communication scenarios. The results of the data triangulation and the perceived communication survey showed a contradicting outcome. The survey results suggested that the respondents' communicative competence was at an advanced level. The ALS teachers' accounts corroborate the data triangulation method's findings that the respondents' communicative skill falls between the basic and needs development levels. Survey results show that respondents use English more effectively when integrated into relatable themes from movies and music. However, the lack of context and limited classroom interaction may affect the development of their English communication skills. In particular, they struggle with grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competencies and rarely use English in different communication situations. Activities not aligned with a curriculum specifically

designed for learners' needs and interests further aggravate their struggle to enhance language proficiency.

The survey results revealed that ALS secondary learners are at an advanced level of communicative competence in English. Based on the results of Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient, there is a significant positive relationship between the two associations: (1) grammatical competence and strategic competence ($r(112) = .682, p < .001$) and (2) sociolinguistic competence and discourse competence ($r(112) = .714, p < .001$). This only shows that as one dimension develops, the other dimension also progresses, reaching the same level of communicative competence. However, by employing data triangulation, it was found that they are between basic and needs improvement levels. When the observations in Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient were tested with the result of the summative assessment, it was revealed that there is no significant relationship between dimensions. The following reasons were raised: (1) overemphasizing the components or dimensions of communication may result in oversimplifying the complex nature of actual communication situations, and (2) the theory disregards the evolving nature of language use, such as the need to incorporate technology in the learning and teaching process. Based on the survey results and teachers' accounts, digital literacy, technological competence, and effective communication between teachers and learners are also crucial in developing English communicative competence among learners.

The Communicative Competence Approach supports the application and the use of the English language in different communication contexts: in school, at home,

and in the environment (e.g., community, social community, or workplace). Authentic communication experience and practice are crucial in developing the four dimensions of communicative competence. Every presented instance of using the English language is rated as often, except for speaking in English when communicating with family members, which was rated as rarely. The study revealed that the respondents' frequency of English language use is influenced by the context of communication and their profile (age, interests, native and second language knowledge, and employment status).

Data triangulation results reveal that respondents' communicative competence predominantly falls between needs improvement and basic levels. While they have a foundational understanding of communicative principles, they struggle to apply these skills effectively across various contexts. This difficulty is likely because they rarely or never use the English language in diverse communication scenarios. Challenges in grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competencies, as evidenced by summative assessments, English subject grades, and teacher evaluations, significantly hinder their ability to use English proficiently. Limited classroom interaction restricts essential communication between learners and teachers, impeding fluency and confidence development.

Additionally, limited access to technology and low digital literacy exacerbate these issues, as many learners lack the resources or skills to use digital tools that could support learning outside the classroom. The absence of a specially designed curriculum tailored to adult learners' unique needs further exacerbates these difficulties. A curriculum misaligned with learners' needs fails to engage them or

provide the scaffolding necessary to build language proficiency. Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive approach, including enhancing classroom interaction, improving technology access, boosting digital literacy, and developing a curriculum tailored to the specific challenges faced by adult learners.

The level of communicative competence of the respondents is also influenced by the following factors: methods and strategies used by ALS teachers, exposure of ALS learners to Filipino or other dialects and the English language, attitudes of ALS learners toward learning in the context of using ICT tools, and diversity of learners in terms of age, prior knowledge/memory, way of thinking, and learning environment. The motivation or willingness of ALS learners to complete the ALS program was identified in the survey as the most agreed-upon factor that may influence their communicative competence. Those factors are related to the profile of the respondents (age, employment status, learning experience) (Tindowen et al., 2017), stage of development (Thompson, 2019), exposure to the native language (Filipino and other dialects or Philippine languages) and English, and attitudes toward using ICT tools (Dayag-Tungpalan, 2023).

Conclusions

The study found contradicting results in terms of the level of the English communicative competence of the learners. Prejudice and personal bias both have an impact on the learners' perceptions of their own communicative competence. Data triangulation was utilized to address this issue. The survey results indicate that

the respondents' communicative competence across various dimensions (i.e., grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competencies) was at an advanced level. Nonetheless, the data triangulation method, as indicated by summative assessments' results, English-related subject grades, and teacher evaluations, revealed that the respondents' level of communicative competence falls between basic and needs development levels. Although ALS learners possess a fundamental understanding of communicative principles, they encounter difficulties in effectively applying these skills in diverse contexts. For instance, limited classroom interaction restricts essential communication experiences between learners and teachers, thereby hindering the development of English communication skills. Consequently, they are deprived of the opportunity to enhance their grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competencies. Also, the difficulty they encounter in developing their English communication skills arises from infrequent or limited use of the English language in varied communication contexts. The majority of the respondents in the study were only met by their teachers once a week, even though most of them were not yet employed. Moreover, the lack of a curriculum tailor fit or specifically designed to address the needs of adult learners also influence the development of their English communication skills. The modules used by the respondents are the same ones used by the regular learners. Despite teachers' efforts to create activities suited to the unique circumstances of ALS learners, the absence of a well-structured curriculum specifically designed for this group renders the teaching and learning of English communication difficult. As revealed in the study, despite the promotion of 21st-century skills to keep up with technological advancement and address the issue of diversity of learners, teachers continue to adhere to conventional methods like the banking model, monolingual bias, and a

standard approach for every learner. This may be attributed to the reality that most language teachers receive training rooted in conventional competency models and awareness centered on the target language, often overlooking other crucial elements in developing English communication skills in the 21st century. Additionally, teachers in charge of English-related subjects often lack degrees in English or Communication, restricting learners' opportunities for authentic English language acquisition. Furthermore, the learners' limited exposure and access to advanced technology and low digital literacy hinder the development of their English communication skills.

Based on the above findings, the Communicative Competence Approach can help ALS learners utilize English across diverse contexts, equipping them for authentic communication situations in educational settings, at home, and in broader contexts such as the community or workplace. This approach fosters authentic communication experiences and practices to enhance the four dimensions of communicative competence: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence, and discourse competence. Twenty-first-century developments pave the way for technological advancement and globalization, which require learners to explore and develop other dimensions or competencies, such as technological proficiency, digital literacy, and effective communication between teachers and learners to enhance English communication skills. Therefore, improving technological competence and digital literacy enables learners to effectively utilize contemporary tools and resources and critically evaluate information, promoting collaboration, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities that are also crucial in developing English communication skills in the 21st century.

For instance, respondent 90 demonstrates expert communicative competence. Her competence is attributed to her exposure to diverse resources beyond the modules, including those found on the Internet. Based on research findings, learners benefit more from guided instructions, particularly when technology is integrated into the learning process.

Additionally, strengthening communication channels between learners and teachers enhances understanding and feedback, which is essential for the continuous development of English communication skills. Teachers can leverage the diverse ages, economic statuses, cultures, educational experiences, learning styles (including access to information, familiarity with technology, and communication with instructors), interests, skills, needs, and goals of ALS learners to design and prepare customized activities to motivate and engage them to participate actively. Examples of communication-based activities encompass those that foster active learning within situational situations, such as drama-based exercises relevant to workplace roles and incidental learning. Tailored interventions and communication-based activities designed for ALS learners can effectively identify and address individual English communication learning gaps by concentrating on their specific needs and profiles. Therefore, factors related to the profile of the learners, such as age, employment status, learning experience, stage of development, exposure to the native language (Filipino and other dialects or Philippine languages) and English, and attitudes toward using ICT tools should be taken into account when designing communication-based activities for ALS learners as these factors are influential in developing their English communication skills.

Recommendations

The study proposes the following recommendations:

- Conduct research on the use of specific communication-based activities to prove whether it would improve the English communication skills among ALS secondary learners

Based on the result of the study, ALS secondary learners are motivated to finish the program when their interests are heavily integrated with the lessons. When their tasks are aligned with their interests, they recognize its significance, helping them achieve their individual learning goals. It is recommended that communication-based activities be incorporated into the lessons, taking into account the learner's prior learning, needs, and goals. Suggested communication-based activities include activities that promote active learning in situational contexts (drama-based activities in the context of their workplace role) and incidental learning where learners are assessed based on how communication is utilized in authentic communication or real-life situations rather than traditional assessments such as identification, multiple-choice questions, etc.

- Further research on increasing classroom-based time for ALS learners

Limited classroom interaction may affect the ALS secondary learners' communicative competence. It is suggested that ALS secondary learners should be given more classroom-based time so that ALS teachers can monitor their progress. Based on the results of the study, 62% of the

respondents are unemployed yet only met by their teachers once a week. A study focused on increasing classroom-based time to facilitate communication-based activities can be facilitated to prove whether continuous practice and monitoring would induce motivation and participation among ALS learners. For instance, the same study can be conducted on BJMP ALS to validate whether increased classroom interaction could enhance the communicative competence of ALS learners.

- Develop learning materials integrated with ICT tools specifically designed for ALS learners

ALS learners who participated in the study used the modules utilized by regular learners. As presented in the study, ALS learners have diverse profiles in terms of age, economic status, culture, educational experiences, learning styles (including access to information, familiarity with technology, and communication with instructors), interests, skills, needs, and goals. Given their unique circumstances, school administrators should develop learning materials tailored to their needs and learning goals. They should also provide ICT tools relevant for ALS secondary teachers and learners since the majority of the respondents in the study lack access to advanced technology, hence hampering their opportunities to cultivate 21st-century skills such as cooperation, critical thinking, and problem-solving capabilities.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Related ALS-K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum (Learning Strand 1 Communication Skills: English) Competencies (DepEd, 2017)

Four Dimensions of Communicative Competence by Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (2013)	Related ALS-K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum (Learning Strand 1 Communication Skills: English) Competencies (DepEd, 2017)
Grammatical/Linguistic Competence The acquisition of phonological rules, morphological words, syntactic rules, semantic rules, and lexical items.	Read aloud the sound of each letter
	Use appropriate vocabulary in expressing one's ideas and feelings in formal situations (e.g., speeches and presentations) and informal situations (e.g., ordinary conversations)
	Identify ways to simplify questions/statements (rephrasing, repeating, etc.) • As I understand it... • What you're saying is... • To summarize...
	Use a particular kind of sentence for a specific purpose and audience: • asking permission • making requests • responding to questions • following and giving directions • giving information • explaining • expressing opinions/emotions • making assertions

	Respond appropriately to ideas and feelings through verbal and nonverbal means (nodding, smiling and frowning, raising an eyebrow, interpreting and responding correctly to the meaning of a speaker's tone of voice, paraphrasing, citing, clarifying)
Sociolinguistic Competence The learning of pragmatic aspect of various speech acts, namely, the cultural values, norms, and other socio-cultural conventions in social contexts. They are the context and topic of discourse, the participant's social status, sex, age, and other factors which influence styles and registers of speech.	Respond appropriately to questions in given situations e.g. everyday situations and activities e.g. economic-livelihood, socio cultural activities, health problems
	Employ an appropriate style of speaking, adjusting language, gestures, rate, and volume according to audience and purpose
	Show understanding and respect for ideas and feelings of others by responding appropriately, e.g., concentrating on the person speaking, showing interest in others' spoken opinions, interpreting correctly the meaning of a speaker's tone of voice, interpreting what a speaker has said
	Adjust one's words, rate of speaking and volume of voice to suit the topic, audience and situation
	Relay correctly messages, commentaries, news accounts, announcements heard. • Weather forecast • Survival messages such as typhoon signals, fire alarms, ringing of church bells, etc. • News reports • Advertisements • Government rules, regulations, laws, etc.
Discourse Competence The knowledge of rules regarding the cohesion (grammatical links) and coherence (appropriate combination of communicative actions) of various types of	Compose clear and coherent sentences using appropriate grammatical structures: • pluralization of regular nouns • tenses of verbs • aspects of verbs • subject-verb agreement • adverbs of intensity • adverbs of frequency • adverbs of manner • adverbs of place and time

discourse (oral and written).	Write in well-organized, coherent, and grammatically correct paragraphs that talk about oneself, country, and the world
	Restate portions of a text heard in conversations to clarify meaning
	Recognize arguments employed in a media material and provide counterarguments
	Write in correct sequence the steps/instructions or directions for an activity (e.g., preparing land for planting, following a recipe, arranging historical events, and implementing a project)
Strategic Competence The knowledge of verbal and nonverbal strategies to compensate for breakdown such as self-correction and at the same time to enhance the effectiveness of communication such as recognizing discourse structure, activating background knowledge, contextual guessing, and tolerating ambiguity.	Use appropriate expressions in reacting to social situations such as: happy events in family life
	Show understanding of phrases containing familiar vocabulary in different contexts in the language being acquired.
	Adjust one's words, rate of speaking and volume of voice to suit the topic, audience and situation.
	Use personal experiences to make predictions about text viewed and listened to
	Note important details from the announcement heard

Appendix B

Perceived Communicative Competence Survey

Communicative Competence in English Among Alternative Learning System's Learners Survey

Dear Respondent,

I would like to humbly request your participation in the study that I am conducting entitled, "Communicative Competence in English Among Alternative Learning System's Learners." The study aims to:

1. Determine the level of communicative competence in English among ALS learners in terms of the following dimensions:
 - a. grammatical competence
 - b. sociolinguistic competence
 - c. strategic competence
 - d. discourse competence
2. Determine the factors that influence the communicative competence of ALS learners.
3. Analyze the effect of ALS learners' level of communicative competence in English on their language use in school, at home, and environment (e.g., community, social community, or workplace).

The questionnaire takes only 15-20 minutes to answer 40 items using a 4-point Likert scale. By taking part in the survey, it means that you are giving your consent to use your personal data for the purpose of the study. However, you can also stop or withdraw anytime you please.

Rest assured that data will only be used for academic purposes and be kept with utmost confidentiality.

Many thanks for your usual support and kind assistance.

Kind regards,

Jacquelyn H. Basilan

I. Profile of Respondents

Direction:

- ✓ Provide the necessary information.
- ✓ Check the item that is most applicable to you.

Name (optional):

Assigned sex at birth:

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Age:

- ☐ 21-25 years old
- ☐ 26-30 years old
- ☐ 31-35 years old
- ☐ 36-40 years old
- ☐ Others (Please indicate here):

Socio-economic status:

- ☐ Low-income class (income: less than Php9,100; Php9,100 – Php18,200)
- ☐ Middle-income class (income: Php18,200 – Php109,200)
- ☐ High-income class (income: Php109,200 and above)

Employment:

- ☐ Regular employee
- ☐ Contractual employee
- ☐ Not yet employed
- ☐ Prefer not to disclose

Languages and dialects used at home, in school, and the community (local community, social media, workplace) (Select the item/s applicable to you):

- ☐ English
- ☐ Filipino
- ☐ Tagalog
- ☐ Ilocano
- ☐ Hiligaynon

- Others (Please indicate here):

Name of School attended as ALS learner:

Senior High School Level during the school year 2023-2024:

- Grade 11
- Grade 12

Track and Strand:

- Academic – ABM
- Academic – STEM
- Academic – HUMSS
- Academic – GAS
- TVL – ICT
- TVL – HE
- TVL – IA
- TVL– SMAW
- Arts and Design
- Sports
- Others (Please indicate here):

Interest (Select the item/s applicable to you):

- Information, Communications, and Technology
- Arts and Music
- Multimedia and Design
- Cooking and Baking
- Gaming and Vlogging
- Travelling and Photography
- Reading and Writing
- Community Involvement
- Others (Please indicate here):

Reasons for enrolling in the ALS Program (Select the item/s applicable to you):

- For better job opportunities
- Plans to enroll in college or university after completing senior high school

- For convenience and practicality
- Prefers flexible learning
- Others (Please indicate here):

II. Part I: Communicative Competence in English

Part I measures the level of communicative competence in four dimensions, i.e. grammatical, sociolinguistic, strategic, and discourse. **You will rate your perceived communicative competence on a scale of 1 to 4 using the following indicators:**

4- Expert

3- Advanced

2- Basic

1- Needs Improvement

The indicators embody the learning outcomes that are related to the four dimensions and based on the ALS-K To 12 Basic Education Curriculum (Learning Strand 1 Communication: English) competencies.

Direction: Please read each of the following items carefully. **Check the rating that reflects your level of competency and proficiency in communicating using the English language.**

Example:

INDICATORS	4	3	2	1
I am able to speak clearly by uttering the correct sound of the words.	✓			

A. Grammatical Competence

INDICATORS	4	3	2	1
I am able to speak clearly by uttering the correct sound of the words.				
I use appropriate vocabulary or words when I express my ideas and feelings.				

INDICATORS	4	3	2	1
I simplify questions or statements by rephrasing, repeating, etc. For example: As I understand it...; What you're saying is...; To summarize				
I use specific kinds of sentences when asking permission, making requests, responding to questions, following and giving directions, giving information, explaining, expressing opinions/emotions, and making assertions.				
Through verbal and nonverbal means such as nodding, smiling and frowning, raising an eyebrow, interpreting and responding correctly to the meaning of a speaker's tone of voice, paraphrasing, citing, and clarifying, I respond to ideas and feelings appropriately.				

B. Sociolinguistic Competence

INDICATORS	4	3	2	1
I respond appropriately to questions in given situations and activities for example economic-livelihood, socio-cultural activities, and health problems.				
I employ an appropriate style of speaking, adjusting language, gestures, rate, and volume according to audience and purpose.				
I understand and respect the ideas and feelings of other people by paying attention to the speaker, showing interest in their opinions, and interpreting the meaning of the speaker's tone of voice and what is said.				
The words I use, my rate of speaking, and my volume of voice are influenced by the topic, audience, and situation.				
I consider the meaning, people's intention, setting, social context, etc. when I relay messages, commentaries, news accounts, announcements heard such as weather forecasts, survival messages (e.g., typhoon signals, fire alarms, ringing of church bells, etc.), news reports, advertisements, and government rules and regulations to others.				

C. Discourse Competence

INDICATORS	4	3	2	1
I can compose clear and coherent sentences because I know how to use appropriate grammatical structures: • pluralization of regular nouns • tenses of verbs • aspects of verbs • subject-verb agreement • adverbs of intensity • adverbs of frequency • adverbs of manner • adverbs of place and time				

INDICATORS	4	3	2	1
I can write well-organized, coherent, and grammatically correct paragraphs talking about myself, the country, and the world.				
When I miss something in a conversation, I do not hesitate to ask the person speaking to restate the part that I missed to clarify its meaning.				
I can recognize arguments presented in media material (e.g., print media, broadcast media, social media) and provide counterarguments.				
To achieve unity, I can write steps/instructions or directions for an activity (e.g., preparing land for planting, following a recipe, arranging historical events, and implementing a project) observing correct sequence and coherence.				

D. Strategic Competence

INDICATORS	4	3	2	1
I use appropriate expressions when reacting to social situations such as talking to familiar people and strangers, social media interactions, brainstorming with classmates, and meeting with friends.				
I understand phrases in English containing familiar vocabulary in different contexts.				
I adjust the words that I use, my rate of speaking, and my volume of voice to suit the topic, audience, and situation.				
I use my personal experiences to make predictions about text viewed and listened to.				
I write down important details from the announcement I heard to maintain accuracy and avoid confusion.				

III. Part II: Language use of ALS learners in school, at home, and in the environment (e.g., local community, social community, or workplace)

Part II determines the perceived language that you use in school, at home, and in the environment (e.g., community, social community, or workplace). The following indicators ascertain whether the respondents use English in various contexts, applying the communicative competence learned and acquired in school.

Direction: How often do you use the English language? Check the rating that reflects your answer.

Ratings:

4- Always

3- Often

2- Rarely

1- Never

Example:

INDICATORS	4	3	2	1
I speak in English when communicating with family members.		✓		

A. English language use at home

INDICATORS	4	3	2	1
I speak in English when communicating with family members.				
I use the appropriate vocabulary or words in English when expressing my feelings and reactions.				
I watch and analyze English movies with themes about everyday situations and activities e.g. economic-livelihood, socio-cultural activities, health problems, etc.				
I listen to English music and understand its explicit and implicit meanings.				
I use the appropriate English vocabulary or words when taking a stand in an argument.				

B. English language use in school

INDICATORS	4	3	2	1
I communicate in English with my teachers when reciting in class.				
I simplify questions or statements in English by rephrasing them in such a way that I can understand them clearly.				
I use the English language when answering my modules and portfolios for subjects that require me to use the English language.				
During subjects that I need to use the English language, I use basic and common English vocabulary and words when interacting with my classmates in group discussions.				
I participate in performance tasks that require me to communicate in English.				

C. English language use in local community, social community, or workplace

INDICATORS	4	3	2	1
I speak in English when I socialize with others. When having a hard time expressing my thoughts, I express them first in the language I				

am comfortable using (e.g., Filipino, Tagalog, Ilocano, Hiligaynon, or other Philippine languages and dialects) and then translate them into English.				
When I communicate with other people, I consider the situations (e.g., formal in the workplace and conversational in social media) by selecting carefully the English words and phrases to use.				
I apply various communicative strategies in different situations when greeting someone, expressing complaints, inviting people, complimenting a friend or someone, etc.				
I express my approval or disapproval of specific instructions using the English language.				
I present my views and opinions by constructing well-organized, coherent, and grammatically correct paragraphs.				

IV. Part III: Factors that affect the ALS learners' communicative competence

Part III consists of factors that affect the level of communicative competence in English of ALS learners.

Direction: Rate your level of agreement on the following factors that may have affected your communicative competence in English. Check the rating that reflects your answer.

Ratings:

- 4- Strongly Agree
- 3- Agree
- 2- Disagree
- 1- Strongly Disagree

Example:

INDICATORS	4	3	2	1
Methods and strategies used by ALS teachers (e.g. the use of scaffolding method that taps the learners' prior knowledge and experience to introduce new knowledge and skills) and mastery of the lessons		✓		

INDICATORS	4	3	2	1
Methods and strategies used by ALS teachers (e.g. the use of scaffolding method that taps the learners' prior knowledge and experience to introduce new knowledge and skills) and mastery of the lessons				

Diversity of learners in terms of age, prior knowledge/memory, way of thinking, and learning environment help in developing communicative competence in English.				
Exposure of ALS learners to native (Filipino or other dialects) and the English language				
Attitudes of ALS learners toward learning in the context of using ICT tools (e.g., Zoom, Messenger, Discord, etc.)				
Motivation/willingness of ALS learners to complete the ALS program				

Appendix C

Summative Assessment for Selected 16 Respondents

Name: _____ Score: _____
Year and Section: _____ Date: _____

Instruction: Answer the following questions carefully.

I. Read the passage carefully.

Eastern Samar is an underdeveloped place. It is one of the most disaster-prone places in the Philippines. Because of poverty, residents are forced to live in high-risk locations, which makes them prone to disasters. Disasters in Eastern Samar affect many people by destroying their houses, farmlands, livelihoods, and other personal assets.

Define the meaning of each word based on how it is used in the paragraph. Write your answers in English. Write your answers in the space provided.

1. high-risk locations

2. disasters

3. underdeveloped place

4. assets

5. disaster-prone

II. Read the excerpts from the following article "Nature-based solutions in climate response"

In the 2022 World Risk Index, the Philippines ranked first among 193 countries with the highest disaster risks. The PDP noted that between 2011 and 2021, the country incurred P673.30 billion worth of damage and losses due to tropical cyclones alone. These damages and losses from climate change are expected to reach up to 7.6 percent and 13 percent of the country's gross domestic product by 2030 and 2040, respectively, if there is no adequate action to address the impact of climate change. Hence, the PDP strategy framework to Accelerate Climate Action and Strengthen Disaster Resilience will prioritize enhancing adaptation as a priority climate action in the country.

Nature-based solutions (NBS) are key to sustaining the provision of ecosystem goods and services, reducing the intersecting vulnerabilities, and addressing complexities in managing the compounding and cascading risks posed by climate change across forestry, biodiversity, water, and other sectors.

NBS, or actions meant to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecosystems, can address climate change in three ways:

1. Avoid or reduce greenhouse gas emissions related to deforestation and land use change and degradation;
2. Capture and store carbon dioxide from the atmosphere;
3. Enhance the resilience of ecosystems, and support communities to adapt to climate hazards such as flooding, sea-level rise, and more frequent and intense droughts, floods, heat waves, and wildfires.

The protection and restoration of forests, mangroves, and wetlands, conservation of biodiversity, coastal and marine resources, and creation of urban greenspaces are major adaptation measures the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) will relentlessly pursue using integrated and ecosystem-based approaches. These initiatives demonstrate the positive role that nature plays in delivering tangible climate benefits and the potential of NBS for disaster risk reduction.

Integrating nature and climate change as a climate solution provides co-benefits such as job creation, addressing biodiversity loss, and a healthier environment. For instance, the use of a riparian wetland for flood mitigation may also support local fisheries, water quality, recreation, erosion control, biodiversity, and water nutrient management.

The private sector plays an important role in better driving meaningful initiatives for the planet. For example, the Land Bank of the Philippines has been implementing the Gawad Sibol (Adopt-A-Watershed) Program in partnership with the DENR since 2006, which pursues the environmental rehabilitation of open and degraded watershed areas through tree planting.

Just recently, Nestlé, One Tree Planted, and EcoPlanet Bamboo started a major reforestation project in Lanao del Sur to plant 3.5 million bamboo clumps and native trees by 2024. I took part in the tree-growing activity at the La Mesa Watershed and Eco Park that was conducted in support of the project's launch and to demonstrate the spirit of volunteerism among Nestlé PH employees and their partners.

6-15. How can Filipinos resolve climate change's effects? Write your answers in English. Write your answers in the space provided. (10 points):

Encircle the letter that suits your answer/s.

16. Did you read the entire article?

- A. Yes
- B. No

17. What strategies did you employ to understand the article? You may choose more than one answer.

- A. skimming
- C. speed reading
- E. context clues
- G. Others (Please specify): _____
- B. scanning
- D. detailed reading
- F. critical thinking and reasoning

III. Learning Habits

18. When you are in asynchronous class, identify the methods that your teachers in subjects related to English used in teaching the lessons. You may choose more than one answer.

- A. Video lessons
- C. Messenger
- E. Others
- B. Modules
- D. Zoom

19. Does the learning environment (home setup, school setup, etc.) affect your understanding and learning of the lessons?

- A. Yes
- B. No

20. How conducive to learning is your home setup? You may choose more than one answer.

- A. I have a stable Internet connection.
- B. I have an unstable Internet connection.
- C. I have the gadgets necessary for home setup/asynchronous learning.
- D. I don't have the gadgets necessary for home/asynchronous learning.
- E. I have access to other sources or references aside from my modules.
- F. I don't have access to other sources or references aside from my modules.

-Thank you for participating-

Appendix D

Research-Made Rubrics for Evaluating Summative Assessment to Measure Communicative Competence

Criteria	4 (Expert)	3 (Advanced)	2 (Basic)	1 (Needs Improvement)
Grammatical Competence	The learner consistently uses appropriate vocabulary in expressing ideas and writes error-free sentences in terms of grammar and structure.	The learner has a good vocabulary and attempts to use various expressions to convey meaning. The learner commits minor grammatical and syntax errors that do not change the meaning of the sentences.	The learner uses limited vocabulary and writes incomplete sentences. The learner prefers to use fragments when writing and expressing ideas.	The learner uses irrelevant vocabulary and does not attempt to write any sentences.
Sociolinguistic Competence	The learner responds to questions by considering socio-cultural contexts and conventions when expressing ideas. The response of the learner is relevant to the given situations and activities.	The learner can relate to the given situations and activities with a limited understanding of the topic and socio-cultural contexts and conventions.	The learner is aware of the topic but lacks the linguistic skills to express an understanding of the topic and socio-cultural contexts and conventions.	The learner's response is irrelevant to the given situations and activities. The learner does not consider socio-cultural contexts and conventions when expressing ideas.

Discourse Competence	The learner recognizes the arguments presented in the article and writes well-organized, coherent, logical, and grammatically correct sentences and paragraphs about the given topic or situation.	The sentences and paragraphs written by the learner are generally coherent and logical and have enough details to convey meaning.	The learner often writes incoherent and illogical sentences and paragraphs. The paragraphs lack details and organization.	The learner fails to recognize arguments in the article and writes incoherent and illogical sentences and paragraphs.
Strategic Competence	The learner employs techniques such as paraphrasing sentences, and repeating words to emphasize and clarify ideas and convey meaning. The learner shows an understanding of phrases containing familiar vocabulary in different contexts and uses personal experiences to show understanding of the article being read.	Most of the time, the learner uses techniques such as paraphrasing sentences, and repeating words to emphasize and clarify ideas and convey meaning. The learner often uses vocabulary appropriate to a given context and recognizes the connection between personal experiences and the article being read.	The learner sparingly employs techniques such as paraphrasing sentences, and repeating words to clarify ideas and convey meaning. The learner finds it hard to relate personal experiences when writing about the article being read.	The learner does not paraphrase and repeat words when confusion in writing arises. The learner fails to use personal experiences in elaborating ideas and expressing understanding of the article read.

Appendix E

Interview Questions for Teachers

Communicative Competence in English Among Alternative Learning System's Learners

- Name:
- Highest Educational Attainment:
- Major:
- Years in Service:
- Level of competence in English based on the *scale of 1-4:
- Subject/s taught to ALS learners:

*Indicators:

4- Expert

3- Advanced

2- Basic

1- Needs Improvement

Answer the following questions based on your experience in teaching the ALS learners.

1. On the scale of 1 - 4, how will you rate the overall communication skills and communicative competence of ALS learners? Identify their strengths and weaknesses in terms of the four dimensions of communicative competence: grammatical, sociolinguistic, strategic, and discourse competence. You may refer to the survey attachment for the competencies related to the aforementioned dimensions.

Indicators:

4- Expert

3- Advanced

2- Basic

1- Needs Improvement

2. Do you think the ALS learners' level of communicative competence and communication skills is attuned to the industry needs? Why?

3. With the ALS learners' communication skills and communicative competence, do you think they are ready to become part of the industry or workforce? Why?

4. What factors may have influenced the ALS learners' communication skills and communicative competence?

Appendix F

Permit Issued by the Schools Division Office of Pasig



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION
SCHOOLS DIVISION OF PASIG CITY

Office of the Schools Division
Superintendent

July 4, 2024

JACQUELYN H. BASILAN
Researcher
University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU)

Ms. Basilan:

This is to inform you that your request for permission to gather data relative to your study titled **"Communicative Competence in English Among Alternative Learning System's Learners"** has been approved. All persons involved in this project are expected to observe the following fundamental research ethics:

- Ensure that the data to be gathered is correct, accurate, and validated;
- Properly cite all sources of information;
- Maintain integrity by avoiding plagiarism, fabrication and falsification of results;
- Protect the confidentiality and privacy of the participants;
- Explain clearly the objectives of the research to the participants; and
- Secure the consent of student participants and their parents (if applicable).

Please take note that participation of school shall be subject to the no disruption of classes policy stipulated in DepEd Order No. 9, s. 2005 entitled *Instituting Measures to Increase Engaged Time-On-Task and Ensuring Compliance Therewith*. Please coordinate with the Principal and School Research Coordinator for the success of this activity.

Furthermore, kindly provide this office with a copy of your completed research/project through the **Planning and Research Section** on the 3rd Floor, Office of the Schools Governance and Operations Division.

SHERYLL T. GAYOLA CESOV
Schools Division Superintendent

sgo4/jjn/2024
EXTERNAL/07/04/2024



Address: Caruncho Ave., San Nicolas, Pasig City
Tel: 641-88-85, 628-28-19
Email: sdo.pasigcity@depd.gov.ph
Website: <https://sdopasigcity.ph>

Appendix G

A Sample Indorsement by a School Principal



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
National Capital Region
Schools Division of Pasig City
RIZAL HIGH SCHOOL
CANIOGAN, PASIG CITY

Office of the Principal

1st Indorsement
July 10, 2024

Respectfully referred to **Jacquelyn H. Basilan**, communication dated July 8, 2024, regarding your request for your research study entitled *"Communicative Competence in English Among Alternative Learning System's Learners"* to conduct a survey and interview.

This office interposes no objection provided, you adhere to **No Disruption of Classes as stipulated in DepEd No. 9, 2005, "Instituting Measures to Increased Time on Task and Compliance therewith"**.

Participation is purely on a **voluntary basis**.

Non-disclosure of personal information and identity of the respondents to any public documents or sites and assurance that confidentiality clause will not be violated as stipulated in **RA 10173, Data Privacy Act**.

Please coordinate with Jacqueline E. Juan, research coordinator, for details.

RICHARD T. SANTOS
Principal IV



Address: Dr. Sixto Ant. Ave., Canlogan, Pasig City
Tel: 641-04-72
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"Strives for Excellence for the Glory of God"

Appendix H

A Poster with Survey Link



#ALSSHSSURVEY

CALL FOR RESPONDENTS





SCAN ME TO ACCESS THE SURVEY

We're looking for respondents to participate in a Study on Communicative Competence in English among Pasig City ALS Secondary Learners.

- ✓ Answer a 20-minute survey
- ✓ Load will be provided for the first 100 respondents

LINK FOR THE SURVEY IS ALSO AVAILABLE HERE:
[HTTPS://FORMS.GLE/Z3TBQRIYHCZUR4MZ8](https://forms.gle/Z3TBQRIYHCZUR4MZ8) 