

## Pragmatic Competence and the Performance in Reading and Writing Skills of Grade 12 Students

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### Abstract

This research explores the role of pragmatic competence in English language learning and its correlation with reading and writing skills among Grade 12 students. The study investigates the level of pragmatic competence in terms of speech acts, conversational implicatures, pragmatic routines, and intercultural sensitivity. Additionally, it assesses the performance of students in Reading and Writing Skills and explores the relationship between pragmatic competence and reading and writing abilities. A quantitative research design was employed, utilizing a correlational method of analysis. The study involved 98 Grade 12 students from Divine Word College of Calapan, selected through systematic random sampling. Standardized questionnaires and assessment tools were used to measure pragmatic competence and reading and writing performance. The findings indicate that speech acts were categorized as proficient, while conversational implicatures and pragmatic routines were deemed competent. Intercultural sensitivity was found to be at an acceptance level. Reading and writing skills were rated as very satisfactory. A significant relationship was observed between pragmatic competence (except conversational implicatures) and reading and writing skills, though the correlation was low. Based on these findings, a proposed program, called Project P2P, is suggested to enhance the integrated skills approach, incorporating pragmatic competence, reading and writing skills, and other English-related disciplines.

**Keywords:** Pragmatic competence, reading and writing skills, grade 12 students, correlation, language learning, integrated skills approach

### Introduction:

Lies in the very aim of each educational institution is fulfilling its contributory role in forming and continuously developing the literacy levels of each student. Relatively, in the context of the Philippine Educational System, all through the different curricular reforms, reading and writing have been the most prominent and prioritized areas of English instruction (Cristobal, 2016). Traversing from the Basic Educational Curriculum (BEC) Framework up to Teaching English in the K-12 Curriculum Framework, these two skills have been noted to progress and received the



most number of competencies even with the introduction of the multiliteracies (Magno, 2015).

Evidences can be seen that even before traversing into the current curriculum and learning paradigms of language and literacy instruction, Philippines has its government and Department of Education's thrust towards building projects and programs for Filipino learners' reading and writing development. Cristobal (2016) cited specific examples of the famous BEC's project, in which some are still existent as of today. These include the K-3 Language Curriculum Development, Early Grades Reading Assessment and Assessment Results Associated Teaching Activities (EGRA-ARATA), Every- Child A Reader Program (ECARP) as well as the Journalism Program under the Republic Act 7079. Through these projects, additional time was given apart from those explicit instructions received during formal classroom hours to hone the students' ability in reading and writing.

Gleaning at a more specific view, upon the existence of the different Senior High School tracks and its strands, Reading and Writing Skills has been already regarded as a core subject and not only a sub-governing field of language instruction. This brings the highlight into the permanent status of importance given to these two types of literacies since core subjects are those which are taken by the students regardless of the tracks or more specifically, regardless of the strands that they have chosen (Department of Education, Division of Cagayan Valley, 2018). It has been explained by Mantilla (2016) that this core subject aims to develop the reading and writing abilities of the students that could be applied into a wide range of authentic language use aside from academic and literary writings. This was further strengthened through the presented Framework of Curriculum under the Integrated Language Arts (ILA) and its 11 domains. Reading as a macro skill is present among the nine (9) domains of instruction which makes it the most evident competency together with writing (Magno, 2015).

On the other hand, the K-12 Curriculum has further lead to the existence of a wider range of focus. Specifically, it is observable in terms of the projected outcomes specified under Teaching English in the K-12, as presented by Magno (2015). Within this new framework, the aims toward sociolinguistic competence, that is needed to



function and communicate effectively in different situations, was included. Secondly, the concept of multi-literacies has also been introduced in which the social literacy or being able to communicate across various social processes reflected upon the different cultural and social situation with people across people of different values, ways of thinking and beliefs about the world and themselves.

These concepts and outcomes point at one of the underrated but now an undeniably important field of language studies that is pragmatics, or more specifically, the pragmatic competence.

The learners' capacity to appropriately use the language in authentic contexts has been one of the utmost goals of teaching the English language in the framework of Philippine Secondary Schools (Sell et al., 2018). With this, pragmatic competence has been one of the crucial components of language teaching and, in the same way, one among the indicators of language learning successes. Apart from this, pragmatic competence is one of the identified areas in the development of communicative competence—the over-all aim of English as Second Language Teaching (Rafieyan & Rozycki, 2018).

However, even as essential and interesting facts are pointing to this area, it commonly a taken for granted area of instruction according to various researches. According to Tulgar (2016), this is attributed to a very limited instructional time, artificially constructed language activities, language, instructional and attitudinal inadequacies and lack of pragmatic instruction reflected in textbooks. More specifically it was discussed by Taguchi (2015b) that the inclusion of pragmatics and stressed that formal classroom pragmatics study has a very poor reputation since classroom discourse lack the varied representation of communicative set-ups and books do not sufficiently provide norms and authentic language samples. As a matter of fact books only constitute 4-29% pragmatic information of which 3-20 unique speech acts are offered. Moreover, the lack of negative and very limited feedback coming from teachers is also perceived to be misleading for pragmatic instructions in classrooms as students continuously view language behaviors as pragmatically acceptable.



Focus on pragmatic competence arises with the fact that it is an inseparable goal in the recent adaptation of the K-12 Curriculum. More specifically, as Department of Education puts the general expectation that Senior High School graduates are better prepared for Higher Education and are even more capable than ever in landing at a decent job even without a baccalaureate degree (Department of Education, 2018).

On a more specific paradigm, pragmatic competence is directly linked to the 21st Century Skills whose development is emphasized through K-12 Curriculum's Implementation. Specifically, through analyzing Chu et al. (2016) work on 21st Century Skill, it projects a direct relationship with the attainment of the Learning and Innovation Skills, specifically in Communication and Collaboration Component as well as the Life and Career Skills, particularly the Social and Cross-Cultural Interaction Component. On the other hand, an indirect connection can still be indicatively drawn on the third 21st-century aspect that is Information Media and Technology, specifically on Information Literacy that enables one to effectively evaluate when to appropriately, effectively, and ethically use information.

On the other side, this imbalanced emphasis had brought the so-called “cognitive-social gaps”. In the context of the Second Language Learning, this refers to the cognitive knowledge commonly pointing out to the conceptual and “in-class” inputs being given and achieved by students which are commonly being measured by tests. In these tests, students are commonly known to perform differently than if asked to produce language in authentic contexts (Hulstijn et al., 2015). This creates a gap between what students know and what they can actually do using the language they know in different settings outside school—pointing out to pragmatic competence.

The spiral competencies in reading and writing, anchored on the Framework of Teaching English in the K-12 curriculum, enable students to revisit foundational skills and integrate higher levels of difficulty and sophistication in language use. This framework emphasizes the effective use of language in understanding cultures and the facilitation of meaning-making through language. Consequently, the development of pragmatic competence is seen as a desired outcome of English teaching within the K-12 curriculum.



Despite the framework's existence, there is a limited and underrated focus on pragmatic competence in the current research landscape. Many students demonstrate proficiency in reading and writing tasks and assessments but struggle to use language effectively and authentically in different contexts. This gap between classroom performance and authentic language use hinders the achievement of successful and appropriate language use.

This study aims to identify the correlation between spiral competencies in reading and writing and the pragmatic competence of Grade 12 students at Divine Word College of Calapan. Additionally, it seeks to determine if the re-intensification.

### **Research Questions:**

1. What is the level of the pragmatic competence in English of the respondents in terms of:
  - a. Speech Acts;
  - b. Conversational Implicatures;
  - c. Pragmatic Routines; and
  - d. Intercultural Sensitivity?
  
2. What is the level of performance in Reading and Writing Skills of the Grade 12 Students of Divine Word College of Calapan?
  
3. Is there a relationship between the pragmatic competence and performance in Reading and Writing Skills of the Grade 12 Students of Divine Word College of Calapan?
  
4. Based on the results of this study, what program could be proposed for the Enhancement of Integrated Skills Approach in teaching pragmatic competence together with Reading and Writing Skills and other English- related disciplines?

### **Methods**



This study utilized a quantitative research design employing the descriptive-inferential statistics utilizing the correlational method of analysis. The 98 respondents of the study were taken using a systematic random sampling from a total of 294 Grade 12 students enrolled for the second semester of the Academic Year 2020-2021 at Divine Word College of Calapan. These students belonged to eight different sections, with three strands in the Academic Track (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics [STEM]; Accountancy, Business and Management [ABM]; Humanities and Social Sciences) and two sections each in ABM and Humanities and Social Sciences. The Technical Vocational and Livelihood (TVL) Track consisted of students in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Home Economics (HE).

The aforementioned sampling technique was chosen considering the population size and to ensure the efficient and effective conduct of the research, considering the educational challenges posed by the pandemic.

A standardized questionnaire was used to measure pragmatic competence across four different variables, ensuring the validity and internal consistency of the test items. The questionnaire included three variables related to pragmatic competence: speech acts, conversational implicatures, and situational routines, each consisting of 10 items using Multiple Choice Discourse Completion Tasks. To assess intercultural sensitivity, the fourth indicator, a 4-point Likert scale adopted from Chen and Starosta (1998) was utilized. The scale comprised 24 statements capturing the respondents' overall self-assessment and was selected to effectively measure intercultural sensitivity, focusing on the population's overall behavior rather than cognitive or closed-ended questions.

To evaluate performance in Reading and Writing Skills, spiral competencies from the Curriculum Guide, ranging from English 7 to English 10, were mapped. Relevant competencies aligned with the Reading and Writing subject for the 12th grade in Divine Word College of Calapan's Senior High School curriculum were selected. Based on these competencies, separate 30-item assessment tools were formulated to measure reading and writing performance. The number of test items was carefully determined to adequately measure the competencies and ensure a



congruent distribution of test items. The assessment tools included cognitive behavioral tasks as indicated in the competencies.

## Results

### 1. What is the level of the pragmatic competence in English of the respondents in terms of:

#### a. Speech Acts

**Table 1. Frequency and Percentage Distribution Table for the Level of Pragmatic Competence in terms of Speech Acts**

Scale	Frequency	Percentage	Qualitative Description
95%-100%	10	10.20	Expert
90%-94%	44	44.90	Proficient
85%-89%	14	14.29	Competent
80%-84%	14	14.29	Approaching Competence
75%-79%	12	12.24	Advance Beginner
74%-Below	4	4.08	Novice
Mean: 93			Proficient

From the presented tabulation it was gleaned that the performance of 44 out of the 98 students who acted as the respondents of the study got a transmuted grade of 90%-94%. This makes the number of students on the proficient category to be classified as the level from which most of the student performance lies.

While it is interesting to note that some of the respondents are already classified as expert, proficient and competent according to the qualitative description provided by the scales, it is as equally important to note that some respondents are still on the emergent levels in terms of speech acts. By stating this, the research points out to the 12 out of the 98 respondents or 12.24% of the total respondents who were identified to be in the range of transmuted scores ranging from 75%-79% qualitatively described as Advance Beginners.

With this, what constituted to the high over-all mean gathered from students' performance in terms of speech acts could be attributed from the nature of performances and types of assessments that they have as students under the K-12 curriculum, which is in congruence to the demands pointed out by Brookfield (2017). In the context of the learning environment provided to the students, since in



Divine Word College of Calapan, Senior High School students are engaging at different types of culminating activities in their English subjects and are being asked to perform different tasks through different platforms which allow them to practice the use of English language, especially now that students are engaged in virtual classroom environments.

#### b. Conversational Implicature

**Table 2. Frequency and Percentage Distribution Table for the Level of Pragmatic Competence in terms of Conversational Implicatures**

Scale	Frequency	Percentage	Qualitative Description
95%-100%	3	3.06	Expert
90%-94%	29	29.59	Proficient
85%-89%	22	22.45	Competent
80%-84%	20	20.41	Approaching Competence
75%-79%	21	21.43	Advance Beginner
74%-Below	3	3.06	Novice
Mean: 86			Competent

From the table it was reflected that the over-all group's performance, or mean is 86 that belongs to the range of transmuted scores 85%-89%, qualitatively labeled as competent.

Though the mean falls under the competent level, it must also be pointed out that the category with the most number of noted student scores fell under the Proficient level, a level above the noted mean. In figures, a total number of 29 or 29.59% of 98 respondents obtained scores within the range of 90%-94%, the level qualitatively classified as proficient.

Following the trend of arrangement, a total of 22 students or 22.45% of the total number of respondents obtained scores ranging from 85%-89% which is qualitatively interpreted as competent. The figures in terms of frequency and percentage projects very little differences in the number of transmuted scores obtained by the respondents in the two following range.

Students who obtained transmuted scores ranging from 75%-79% differs by 1.02% or 1 respondent lesser than the preceding and proceeding levels in terms of the



frequency and percentage distribution. They are the 21 respondents noted to be under the Advance Beginner classification. This means to say that the proceeding level, with the range 80%-84%, qualitatively described as Approaching Competence is comprised of 20 respondents, constituting to 20.41% of the total sample size.

In this pragmatic competent indicator, it is notable that the number of respondents who obtained a classification in both of the extremes, the lowest and the highest categories, are equal. There are only 3 respondents out of 98 or 3.06% of the total sample size who fell on the range 95%-100%. They fell under the category qualitatively described as expert. This is equal to the number of students whose obtained transmuted scores were marked on the range of 74%-below. They are qualitatively described as the novice in terms of conversational implicatures.

Analyzing the noted level of pragmatic competence in terms of the over-all mean gathered from conversational implicatures, the figures support the claim made by Nigar (2017). It was stated that English as Second Language Learners are performing beyond just the formulaic level of understanding conversations but also shows proficiency in terms of the idiosyncratic types of implicatures. This was attributed since the research instrument that was used for measuring the level of pragmatic competence in terms of conversational implicatures involved non-formulaic but instead varieties of standardized idiosyncratic forms of implicatures.

Moreover, the overall level of performance in terms of the conversational implicatures could also be attributed to the social media networks that students are immersed at since they belong to the generation of digital natives. These platforms enable the learners to be better equipped at the social and contextual norms of the target language, enabling them to move from a structuralist and formalist view of language into a functional one.

Equally worth paying attention is the very small percentage of respondents that were able to perform at the expert level and the numerous respondents falling into advance beginner and novice levels. With this, the mean obtained out of the performance of the students fell in the competent level even though the category with the most number of occurrences in terms of transmuted scores fell in the proficient level, a category higher than the competent level.



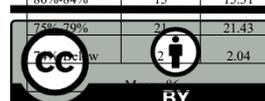
Even more, as students are pre-programmed with various sets of language-related behaviors coming from their native language, the views that students have towards the English language and its communicative value also differs.

On the analysis and abstraction of related constructs on the gathered results and related studies, the Grade 12 students of DWCC executes their ability to perform in terms of various conversational implicatures with inputs that could come from personal, instructional and perspective- related mixtures. Furthermore, the development that the respondents have towards developing conversational implicatures shows a good trajectory since a lot of students have been noted to be at proficient and competent levels already.

### c. Pragmatic Routines

**Table 3. Frequency and Percentage Distribution Table for the Level of Pragmatic Competence in terms of Pragmatic Routines**

Scale	Frequency	Percentage	Qualitative Description
95%-100%	5	5.10	Expert
90%-94%	34	34.69	Proficient
85%-89%	21	21.43	Competent
80%-84%	15	15.31	Approaching Competence



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The table above shows the level of pragmatic competence of the students in terms of the pragmatic routines. The over-all performance of the respondents, the Grade 12 students of Divine Word College of Calapan, is 86, as reflected in the mean and was qualitatively described as competent. As per the preceding tables analysed, the mean for the pragmatic routines is equal to the performance attained by the students in terms of the speech acts, the first indicator for pragmatic competence.

Discussing the table further, it has been found out that the occurrences of the scores ranging from 90%-94% is the most frequent among the respondents. This range was noted to have a total of 34 occurrences, equivalent to the 34.69% of the total population of respondents. Using the qualitative description set, it fell into the proficient level.

Portrayal of membership in a specific group specifically in the English communities in school context and appropriate interpretations and responses to instructions given by the teachers are particular enabling situations for increasing the performance of learners in terms of pragmatic routines (Harlig, 2015) .

Following this is an equal number of 21 respondents whose scores were noted to fall on first, the competent level, one of the mediate levels in terms of pragmatic routines and second, on the advance beginner, a level after the lowest. The 21 respondents in each of the two levels is equivalent to the 21.43% of the over-all population of respondents.

On the succeeding data, there is a total of 15 occurrences on the scores ranging from 80%-84%, qualitatively described as approaching competence. They constitute to a total of 15.31% of the over-all number of the respondents.

The varying levels of performances specifically those noted in the low levels of performance could be explained with the nature of another work conducted by Harlig (2015). It was stated that even with the given enabling situations, students'



performances can only be defined and improved by their levels of engagement and self-directed practices of the pragmatic routines. This goes to show that practices and self-efforts are the de-equalizing factors towards development of pragmatic routines.

Marked with the second to the lowest number of frequency is the expert level with a total of 5 or 5. 10% of the over-all number of respondents. The findings of the study revealed that there is a very little portion of students who are already on their highest levels of performance of pragmatic routines while most are still on the proceeding level. This leaves the room for improvement that they could still acquire in their tertiary education.

While this can be interpreted as is, that they can still develop on tertiary levels of education, the ESL context of pragmatic routine acquisition and learning was discussed by Sirkel (2016) in a holistic and integrative way that she was able to reason out the integrative nature of language development. She stressed that ESL learners are commonly taking longer to be experts or are frequently unable to learn pragmatic routines. It was emphasized in her work that even at intermediate levels, grammar and vocabulary are taught in separate boxes, with little to no connection at all. This results to the inability to actively use pragmatic routines since pragmatic routines are expression and phrases with fillable slots that speakers must be able to appropriately fill themselves.

Following it, the range with the lowest number of occurrences is 74%-Below. There is only a total of 2 occurrences equivalent 2.04% of the respondents' total number. Generally discussing this indicator, since the nature of the curriculum in the Philippines allow for the early exposure of the students to the English, early foundational skills in terms of English language learning including formulaic languages have been introduced early. However, through the discussion of the different findings and the related constructs from supporting literatures, different factors and instances have been noted to either facilitate and/or interfere such progress.

Pragmatic routines, though beneficial for ESL learners, Tageddin et al., (2017) also emphasized that the continuous redefinition and checking should be integrated. Moreover, high degree of explicit instruction and feedbacks are needed in English



classroom. This is with the danger of fossilization, inappropriate and incorrect usage of these utterances.

**d. Intercultural Sensitivity**

**Table 4. Level of Pragmatic Competence in terms of Intercultural Sensitivity**

STATEMENT	Mode	Percentage	Description	Interpretation
1. I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.	3	55.10	Agree	Acceptance Level
2. I do not think of people from other cultures as narrow-minded.	3	56.12	Agree	Acceptance Level
3. I am pretty sure of myself in interacting with people from different cultures.	3	56.12	Agree	Acceptance Level
4. I find it manageable to talk in front of people from different cultures.	3	66.33	Agree	Acceptance Level
5. I always know what to say when interacting with people from different cultures.	2	65.31	Disagree	Minimization Level
6. I can be as sociable as I want to be when interacting with people from different cultures.	3	51.02	Agree	Acceptance Level
7. I like to be with people from different cultures.	4	58.16	Strongly Agree	Adaptation and Integration Level
8. I respect the values of people from different cultures.	4	90.82	Strongly Agree	Adaptation and Integration Level
9. I get along easily when interacting with people from different cultures.	3	46.94	Agree	Acceptance Level
10. I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures.	3	50.00	Agree	Acceptance Level
11. I tend to wait before forming an impression of culturally-distinct counterparts.	3	66.33	Agree	Acceptance Level
12. I often get encouraged to talk when I am with people from different cultures.	3	65.31	Agree	Acceptance Level
13. I am open-minded to people from different cultures.	4	52.04	Strongly Agree	Adaptation and Integration Level
14. I am very observant when interacting with people from different cultures.	3	48.98	Agree	Acceptance Level
15. I do not feel useless when interacting with people from different cultures.	3	58.16	Agree	Acceptance Level
16. I respect the ways people from different cultures behave.	4	77.55	Strongly Agree	Adaptation and Integration Level
17. I try to obtain as much information as I can when interacting with people from different cultures.	3	56.12	Agree	Acceptance Level

Table 4 reflects the percentage and mode in each of the 24 indicators in terms of intercultural sensitivity of the Grade 12 students of Divine Word College of Calapan. Out of 24 statements, 17 statements are classified under the Acceptance level, therefore making 3 as the grand mode of the scale used for intercultural sensitivity. This is the second to the highest level when it comes to intercultural sensitivity, after Adaptation and Integration Level. These statements are centered towards participating, speaking and being to actually able to become active members of an intercultural interactions. Students agree that they enjoy the act of interacting about people from other culture, knowing what to say and being able to handle cross-cultural beliefs and ideas. Additionally, students agree that they can easily get along, get sufficient level of confidence and positively learn and engage with people from other cultures.

Senior High School graduates are expected to be prepared for either higher education, entrepreneurship or even landing at decent jobs without baccalaureate



degree as expressed by the Department of Education (2018). With this, acquiring an ample amount of intercultural sensitivity is a necessary requirement, specifically as it could manifest in the way one uses language both in written and oral forms. As affirmed by Kriauciuniene (2015), this is a very important value to acquire and display most importantly in a workplace environment. With this, abilities to make decisions and resolve conflicts are carried out through display of non-verbal and verbal expressions.

Likewise, the statement with the highest percentage of respondents noted and one of the statements under the Adaptation and Integration level is the respect given to the ways people from different cultures behave. Specifically there is a total of 77.55% of the students who marked 4 interpreted as strongly agree or qualitatively described as belonging to the highest level of intercultural sensitivity.

Elaborating on the aspect of respect in terms of cultural sensitivity, according to Sieck (2020), ability to respond well to intercultural differences plus appropriate levels of respect results to intercultural sensitivity. The ability of individuals across different cultures to traverse from an ethnocentric to having an ethnorelativistic attitude is being activated through converting tolerance into respect and moving away from stereotypes.

Going into further discussion of the findings presented in the table, it could be seen that the respondents strongly agree on the statements involving the recognition, respect and positive outlook when it comes to people coming from other cultures. Indicatively, these statements include accepting opinions of people from other culture, being sensitive to their culturally distinct counterparts during conversation, always respecting people from other cultures, being open-minded to people from other cultures, respecting their values and their liking to be with people from different cultures. These statements were all classified as behaviors belonging to the highest level of intercultural sensitivity which is Adaptation and Integration Level.

These behaviors indicating that an individual is already at the adaptation and integration level are directly projecting relationship with the existing literatures and studies. In a multicultural context, students were able to identify differences between their cultures and that of others are commonly those having highest levels of



intercultural sensitivity as compared to those who did not identify according to Baños (2017).

While dominated by positive responses, it is noteworthy that students disagree that they always know what to say when interacting with people from other culture. This was marked by 65.31% of the total population of the respondents and was categorized under the Minimization Level.

This would be better to analyze this in lieu with the dimensions involved in intercultural sensitivity. Fatalaki (2015) states that the nature of ESL contexts and native English speaking contexts speak of the limitations that affect intercultural sensitivity. The research explains that the dynamicity of culture and interactions revolving it affects the way people form the automaticity when it comes to responding.

With this, it is important to understand that instruction itself must be wide in terms of scope and rich in terms of breadth to allow a wide range of possible situation both in oral and written forms. This will benefit the students as they will know how to conduct themselves and effectively sustain intercultural communication.

## **2. What is the level of performance in Reading and Writing Skills of the Grade 12 Students of Divine Word College of Calapan?**

**Table 5. Frequency and Percentage Distribution Table for the Level of Performance in Reading and Writing Skills of the Grade 12 Students of Divine Word College of Calapan**

Table 13. Frequency and Percentage Distribution Table for the Level of Performance in Reading and Writing Skills of the Grade 12 Students of Divine Word College of Calapan

Scale	Frequency	Percentage	Qualitative Description
90%-100%	48	48.98	Expert
85%-89%	21	21.43	Very Satisfactory
80%-84%	23	23.47	Satisfactory
75%-79%	6	6.12	Fairly Satisfactory
Below 74	0	0	Did not meet Expectations
Mean: 87			Very Satisfactory



Generally, the respondents obtained an over-all mean of 87, qualitatively described as very satisfactory in the scale. The level from which their performance was marked is the second to the highest level.

Going into a specific analysis, the level that has acquired the highest number in terms of frequency of occurrences in terms of students' performance is the expert level. There are 48 students whose performances fell on the range 90%-100%. This constitutes to a total of 48.98% of the total number of respondents

The high level of performance noted in terms of Reading and Writing Skills as a core subject for Senior High School could be drawn from the nature of the competencies included within the subject itself. It was stated under the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 that the spiral progression approach will be utilized both in teaching and learning. This was according to the Republic Act 10533. This allowed the learners to build mastery of the concepts within the concept of repetition and increasing levels of complexity (Dunton & Co, 2018).

Aside from the nature of the competencies itself, it has been noted by Magno (2015), in his work that the reading and writing competencies even before in the Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) up to the present curriculum received the most number of competencies. Specifically, in terms of the 11 domains of instruction as projected in the framework, Magno (2015) stated that there are 9 domains linked to reading which made it the most evident in terms of curriculum competencies.

Taylor (2017) seems to be right in expressing that introducing these spiral competencies in reading close the achievement gap of the learners and stretch the abilities to apply reading skills in both academic and non-academic contexts.

It was also reflected on the data that there are 23 or 23.47% of the respondents whose performance in terms of reading and writing is noted to be under the satisfactory level, the middlemost level when it comes to the scale used for the performance in reading and writing. This is the set of scores ranging from 80%-84%.



This was followed by the 21 students or 21.43% of the total respondents who attained the scores ranging from 85%-89%, qualitatively described as very satisfactory. It could be seen from the data that the number of respondents that fell on the satisfactory level is greater than those in very satisfactory.

Subsequent to this, there is a total number of 6 students or 6.12% of the over-all number of respondents whose performances lie within the scores ranging from 75%-79% . This is the level qualitatively described as fairly satisfactory. It is on the other hand, positive to know, that none of the student performances were noted under the lowest level or the “did not meet expectations”.

Leading to the variety of factors that lead to the lower levels of achievements of the students are enumerated by Jaca et al., (2015) in their study. She pointed out competencies are broad and there are numerous time constraints that affects the full achievement of student desired outcomes.

This difficulty was further elaborated by Jaca et al., (2015). It was stated that a factor that affects the over-all performance of the students in Reading and Writing could be the oversimplification of concepts, most of the time just defining the terms rather than in-depth discussion. Since there is a limited time, teachers have the tendency to just focus on the introductory concepts and fail to integrate in-depth performances. Lastly it has also been pointed that as learners lack the basic command in language and grammar, this automatically hinders them from achieving higher.

More so, low student performances could be attributed to what has been termed as “Broken Spirals”. According to Orale (2018), the competencies left unmastered at the end of preceding levels will and can hinder the students in performing at the succeeding levels since they failed to master the prerequisite skills. In addition, this progression must also happen according to Orbe et al., (2018) both horizontally and vertically.

In order to address this issue, Falcon (2018) introduced the Balanced Literacy Approach (BAL) from which the teachers and student must include in day to day English instruction balanced number of activities centered towards reading and writing.



Other than the factors revolving around the academic setting, Yamashita (2015) cited that emotional involvement can be beneficial in improving a variety of cognitive processes specifically that of reading.

The sufficiency of the skills learned in terms of reading and writing, according to the Enderun Colleges (2020) are the two main benefits of the current curriculum strengthening the capabilities of K-12 graduates to land at a good job. Furthermore, it has been added by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2020) that the introduction of Senior High School has been very advantageous for uplifting the current reading literacy, a lot higher than the tracked performances in Junior High School.

3. Is there a relationship between the pragmatic competence and performance in Reading and Writing Skills of the Grade 12 Students of Divine Word College of Calapan?

**Table 14. Correlation Analysis of the Level of Pragmatic Competence in English and the Performance in Reading and Writing Skills of the Grade 12 Students of Divine Word College of Calapan**

Indicators of Pragmatic Competence	P- value	r comp	r <sup>2</sup>	Interpretation		
				Direction	Degree	Significance
Speech Acts	0.001132	0.3242	0.1050965626	Positive	Low correlation	Significant
Conversational Implicature	0.487229	0.0711	0.0050523664	Positive	Negligible correlation	Not Significant
Pragmatic Routines	0.013692	0.2483	0.06165289	Positive	Low correlation	Significant

Since the absolute value of  $r$  computed is greater than the absolute value of  $r$  critical that is  $|0.3242| > |0.199|$ , at 5% significance level with 96 degrees of freedom, the null hypothesis is rejected. There is a significant relationship between speech acts and the performance in Reading and Writing Skills of the Grade 12 students of Divine Word College of Calapan.

Even noted to have a significant influence in terms of the performance in Reading and Writing Skills, this was noted to lie only on the low levels of correlation. According to Borer (2018) pragmatic competence as area of language teaching is regarded only as a residual or secondary factor in class in terms of teaching the macro language skills. This results to the existence of the abilities in “boxed” components, disintegrated and non-continuous. Therefore, if taught more integratively, according



to Rusmawan (2017), it could help the Senior High School students to be able to perform at informational, extended as well as interpersonal levels of communication and deal with texts to access a profound understanding in their tertiary education and independent sought of knowledge.

Additionally, other than speech acts, there has been numerous factors in the previous literatures and studies affecting the performance in terms of reading and writing as the macro language skills. For reading, the repetition and practice all throughout the educative years has been seen by Andres (2020) as a significant factor specifically in ESL class. Results of the study conducted by Fauziah et al., (2017) stated that exposure to authentic texts has also been noted as a factor contributory in improving reading performances.

Similar factors has also been noted in terms of writing. Basilan (2016) stated that writing skill is highly influenced by the time in which writing in the target language is introduced and the span of time learners are exposed to it.

Integratively, in terms of Reading and Writing subject for Senior High School, Jaca (2019) stated that the law of readiness is a factor and the manner of connectedness of concepts in such a way that it could tap concentration and eagerness of the learners. Likewise, the null hypothesis is also rejected in terms of pragmatic routines. There is a significant relationship between the pragmatic routines and the performance in reading and Writing Skills of the Grade 12 students of Divine Word College of Calapan. This is since the absolute value of  $r$  computed is greater than the absolute value of  $r$  critical that is  $|0.2483| > |0.199|$ , at 5% significance level with 96 degrees of freedom.

In relation to this, Argashi and Gorjian (2018) stated writing ability is commonly embedded in the ability to carry out pragmatic routines and functions. Moreover, the results of study in terms of pragmatic routines revealed significant differences for those already in the proficient levels of writing. Thus, it was concluded that since writing in a foreign language requires contextual knowledge, pragmatic knowledge must first be effectively brought into the dimension of writing.

Though noted on a significant level of relationship, the correlation between the pragmatic routines and reading and writing skills is marked on a low level. In terms of



writing, this could be attributed from the claim made by Safa (2018) stating that the writing skills is the over-all manifestation of the accurate and coherent expression that students acquired in terms of grammar, vocabulary, writing conventions, linguistic knowledge and thinking strategies. Through this, it could be seen that pragmatic aspect is not integrated and is not regarded among the important factors that enables writing skill to progress. With this, it is helpful to cite the claim made by Sukandi (2016). He stated that writing is a process and must be interpreted as a social act and medium of expression not just in academic realm

Similarly, the computed  $r$  value is greater than the absolute value of  $r$  critical that is  $|0.2102| > |0.199|$ , at 5% significance level with 96 degrees of freedom. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between the intercultural sensitivity and the performance in Reading and Writing Skills of the Grade 12 students of Divine Word College of Calapan.

Reading skills can be developed integratively alongside with intercultural sensitivity through carefully selecting the types of reading materials introduced in class. Reading global forms of literature, for example as stated and found to have bi-directional effects by Yehezkel (2016), is already a form of socialization and acculturation through which ESL learners can learn appropriate behaviors and conceptual knowledge of second language context while developing reading comprehension.

This claim could be further explained through the work of Nie (2017). It has been found out that identified reading difficulties in second language are commonly attributed to cultural differences and not on the linguistic aspects. Recommendation has been made that it is very important to provide gradual and increasingly rich cultural input through developing learner's behavior and types of literatures.

Writing and intercultural sensitivity on the other hand is seen as an aspect that can be developed through careful construction of instructional materials, topics and activities that are inter-culture based. To project integrated developments, teacher must consider different needs of the students specifically related to inter-cultural understanding. (Haerazi et al., (2018).



On the other hand, since the computed  $r$  value is greater than the absolute value of  $r$  critical that is  $|0.0711| < |0.199|$ , there is no significant relationship between conversational implicatures and the performance in Reading and Writing Skills of Grade 12 students of Divine Word College of Calapan.

This result is in contrast with the findings of the study conducted by Rizaoglu & Yavuz, (2017). In the study, it was explained that implicature is not just a conversational skill but also a reading skill in such a way that the learner's rate of reading comprehension is affected by the knowledge of implicatures. In the same manner, the knowledge of conversational implicature is also seen as a significant factor with an emphasis on knowing the different maxims. It was highlighted on the research made by Abdelhafez (2016) that learners tend to perform at a lower level because of language limitations particularly as to knowing to what extent they should write and to what extent of information must be written.

To explain further, the inability of the variables to show significant relationship since for the nature of education in terms of literacy skills in the Philippine context according to Caturay (2018) has long been leaning heavily towards linguistic competence while pragmatic aspects receives limited inclusion. With this, it could be stated that learners for the long run have been learning this concepts in separate files and circles in their minds, instead of in an integrated manner.

### **Conclusions:**

Considering the findings, analysis and discussion of results presented in Chapter 4, the following conclusions were formed:

1. The pragmatic competence of the Grade 12 students of Divine Word College of Calapan in terms of the presented mean is considerably good, as marked either in the second to the highest or middlemost scores. But since the mean and range in which the mode has been noted falls in different levels, it could be concluded that specific attention must be given to the different needs of the students and differences in terms of the first and second language and that still, there must be a continuous effort to uplift the over-all group performance.



2. The performance in Reading and Writing Skills of the Grade 12 Students of the Divine Word College of Calapan is marked as very satisfactory from the presented mean. Therefore, repeated competencies in the K-12 curriculum is effective in terms of attaining higher retention and performance. More so, this means that early and constant exposure and practice is effective in developing this literacy skills since the number of competencies noted in reading and writing skills the highest. On the other hand, it is also conclusive that presence of learners who fell behind the group's performance still exists as the mean is affected by the total number of students whose performances fell on lower levels.
3. Pragmatic competence, in all its indicators, except for conversational implicatures, is projecting a significant relationship with Reading and Writing Skills but on a low level of correlation. Therefore, transfer of academic skills to real-life and authentic use of language is an aspect that needs to be improved and maximized in order to bridge academic success and real-life linguistic capabilities. More so, this also implies that other significant factors act in the interplay of variables for either facilitating or hindering the reading and writing skills development.
4. The project Project P2P, the proposed output in this study will address comprehensively the findings and conclusions of this study. The output will act as an avenue for Grade 12 students to capitalize on the instruction and performances being given in school such as in Reading and Writing Skills classes into actualizing and learning real-world application of these skill set, tapping and integrating the pragmatic aspect.

## Recommendations

1. To attain continuously increasing pragmatic competence, immersion, early and repeated exposure to the language must be done while building and bridging on the inputs provided in academic settings. This will help students to overcome and



- be familiarized with differences in their native language and the English language.
2. English teachers should take into consideration the important factors surrounding the learners as the prime movers in the educative setting and instructions. This may involve introducing variety of authentic English language resources, integrating actual language practice or even providing explicit instruction about English language norms, speech acts, implicatures, intercultural differences and pragmatic routines from which they could start with.
  3. Further aspects of pragmatic competence in English language could be explored by future researchers to find more about pragmatic competence in terms of academic settings to enrich further linguistic studies bound to affect future English performance of the students. They could also explore on other English-related disciplines for Senior High School such as Oral Communication and/or English for Academic and Professional Purposes in order to dig further important findings since these subjects are still on its early years of implementation.
  4. The institution, Divine Word College of Calapan, can embark in new sets of practices and programs that could add to the student development and in terms of producing globally competitive English language speakers. More so, the institution can further encourage similar types of studies in the same language fields as a response to trifocal functions of education, specifically in terms of research.

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