

GRAMMATICAL COMPETENCE AND GRAMMATICAL KNOWLEDGE OF SENIOR SECONDARY STUDENTS IN THE NEW NORMAL: LEARNING INTERVENTIONS



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Grammatical Competence and Grammatical Knowledge of Senior Secondary Students in the New Normal: Learning Interventions

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Abstract

The multi-year pandemic has drawn significant changes in the educational landscape. The shift in instruction has greatly influenced English language teaching and learning, particularly in grammar. This study assessed the levels of English grammatical competence and grammatical knowledge of the selected Grade 11 and Grade 12 Technical-Vocational-Livelihood and General Academic students from the selected Senior High Schools in the Division of Siquijor for School Year 2022-2023. The study sought to answer the demographic profile of the respondents, as well as their grammatical competence and knowledge levels. The descriptive method used frequency counts, straightforward percentages, weighted mean, and Pearson *r* to determine the significant relationship. The findings revealed that most students were 17 years old and female, primarily learning English in school. Most own books, cellular phones, and television at home and come from poor-income households. Their grammatical competence ranged from somewhat to moderate mastery, and their grammatical knowledge ranged from slight to somewhat mastery. Their profiles significantly influenced their grammatical competence, knowledge, and psychological emotions amidst the pandemic. Thus, schools should enrich reading culture to address grammar difficulties while the government should consider giving social welfare benefits to truly deserving yet underprivileged students.

Keywords: Students, English, Pandemic, Second Language, Senior High School, Grammar

INTRODUCTION

English is a widely known international language spoken by over 1.1 billion people worldwide (Ghosh, 2020). The growing demand for English competence has become evident in the academe and industries because not only does the language become the medium of instruction in core subjects, but it also correlates with ample opportunities as the rise in economic globalization leads to an increasingly knowledge-based economy (Ramos & Rodriguez, 2021). According to A'yun (2019), acquiring and fostering macro skills in English primarily requires grammar since grammar keeps the English language intact (Schmeller, 2017; Cagurangan, 2018).

As the term first used by Chomsky, grammatical competence is the prowess to master language rules (morphology and syntactic features), understand and interpret words and sentences, and communicate successfully through them. Meanwhile, grammatical knowledge, as often confusingly described, involves the understanding of numerous grammatical features ranging from voice, such as passive and active voice, such as present, future, and present perfect, numbers, such as singular and plural, and person, such as first, second and third as to how they construct meaning in the text or utterance. This entails excellent

comprehension and analysis of how each word relates or connects to deliver information and convey ideas. It is acquired not through mastery of grammar rules nor isolated explanations of examples and exercises but through applying grammar to real-life scenarios (Xiao, 2019).

Based on the English First English Proficiency Index (EF EPI), English proficiency worldwide has remained relatively the same in 2011. English Proficiency Index (EPI) works by calculating the average scores of students (primarily adults from a broad range of ages) in the online Standard English Test (SET), which includes an assessment of English grammar and vocabulary. Thus, adult English proficiency almost did not progress but showed deterioration for aged 18-20 (EF EPI, 2023). It is a growing concern for the Department of Education and other sectors of society. The Philippines' performance in the EPI has fluctuated in the past years. The Philippines ranked 14th in 2018, 20th in 2019, 27th in 2020, 18th in 2021, 22nd in 2022 and 20th in 2023 (Marcelo, 2023). The EPI performance of the Philippines is crucial in real-world applications such as employment opportunities. According to Valderama (2019), the results may deliver a detrimental effect on the economy and a cynical attitude toward the competitiveness of Filipinos in the international arena. No matter how highly qualified they may be for the job,

job applicants may not be accepted due to cumbersome grammatical errors, especially in writing (Bleske-Rechek et al., 2019).

While the Department of Education-Philippines has adopted a national curriculum that covers kindergarten and grade 1 to grade 12 levels and is specifically designed to hone students' ability to compete at par with global standards, some areas still need to be reviewed. One of the fundamental components of the K-12 program is Building Proficiency through Language. UNESCO has even supported the advocacy of using the Mother Tongue, the student's first language, to preserve, strengthen, and embrace the uniqueness of different languages and people's ways of communication. However, Mother Tongue has also influenced the processes of second language learning. Cagurangan (2018) mentioned that the negative transfer, significant when students acquire the habit of word-for-word translation from the Mother Tongue to English, becomes the primary cause of syntactical errors, which results in performance problems (e.g., lack of grammatical knowledge). In addition, the Senior High School Curriculum heavily focuses on literature rather than grammar (Rosales & Ilagan, 2019). Although the education department claims to observe grammar integration, Philippine schools still need to show more integration in the upskilling of grammar and vocabulary and the practical application of English macro skills (Barrot, 2019).

Reading data on Central Visayas affirmed the deteriorating performance of learners, especially in Kindergarten, Grades 1 and 3. It should be noted that before the pandemic, the Philippines scored lowest in reading, mathematics, and science among the nations that took part in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's triennial Program for International Student Assessment.

Moreover, the radical shift to remote schooling, given the COVID-19 threats, has called for reforms in language teaching (Zhang, 2020). Technological availability and connectivity issues lead to students needing help communicating with teachers and accessing materials (Cariaga, 2022; Nanquil, 2021). During this health crisis, the acquisition of grammatical competence and knowledge has become much more challenging as the COVID-19 pandemic induced the utilization of Flexible Learning Options such as Modular Distance Learning, which schools commonly adopt as an immediate response to deliver educational service to clientele continuously (DepEd Order No. 21, 2019). Hence, the shift of instruction from the physical

environment to the non-physical environment in the form of modules, which push more

independent learning, has affected grammar instruction among English teachers and second-language students. However, further research is needed to assess the grammatical competence and grammatical knowledge of senior high school GAS and TVL students under the influence of modular distance learning.

Knowing the depth of the influence of the new standard of education on the grammatical competence and knowledge of senior high school students is necessary, particularly for language arts teachers, to determine the precise starting point of instruction and provide appropriate remediation and enhancement. Consequently, the purpose of the study was to evaluate the grammatical competence and knowledge of Senior Secondary students in selected Senior High Schools in the Division of Siquijor School Year 2022-2023, the students who experienced Modular Distance Learning, in which the results were considered in developing appropriate learning interventions.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The study assessed the grammatical competence and grammatical knowledge of selected Grade 11 and Grade 12 Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (BPP NCII, Cookery NCII, FBS NCII) and General Academic learners from the selected Senior High Schools in Siquijor for the School Year 2022-2023 as the basis for the crafting of appropriate learning interventions. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of learners in terms of:
 1. age;
 2. sex;
 3. second language acquisition background;
 4. printed reading materials available at home;
 5. Information and Communication Technology are available at home and
 6. monthly family income?
2. What is the level of grammatical competence of senior secondary learners in the following grammar areas:
 1. word classes;
 2. relative clauses, and 3. Subject-verb agreement?

3. What is the level of grammatical knowledge of the senior secondary learners in the following grammar areas:
 1. word classes;
 2. relative clauses, and
 3. Subject-verb agreement?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the learners' grammatical competence and their level of grammatical knowledge?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the learners' identified profile and:
 1. Grammatical competence?
 2. Grammatical knowledge?
6. Is there a significant relationship between the learners' profile, grammatical competence, grammatical knowledge, and academic and psychological impacts of a pandemic on learners?
7. What learning interventions can be crafted to address the needs of the learners relative to the findings of this study and take into account the new normal in education?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Generative Grammar Theory (Noam Chomsky) espoused the presence of the Language Acquisition Device (LAD), an innate device installed in the human mind that allows language production processes regardless of differences in culture or environment. Since language is more of a mental process than a behavioral one, as Chomsky theorized, information processing theory-related knowledge retention can be done when there is a successful link to a network in the human mind. Hence, words and structures of the language are connected, forming the concept of Structuralism (Ferdinand de Saussure). Meanwhile, Processability Theory (Manfred Pienemann) described the developmental stages of the language, including the grammar items in each stage. The proposed amount of input to learners inside the language classroom covered the Input Theory of Stephen Krashen.

The worldwide spread of English led to the formation of the so-called "World Englishes" by Kachru (2006). Philippines' English is quite different from its American parent in terms of the sense of words, a system of sounds, rules, and literary expression. Though there are features unique to Philippine English, its grammatical features are still correlated with its American English (AmE) parent. Bautista (2000) as cited by Martin (2019) identifies 'deviations' in the grammar of Philippine English, such as the concord between subject and verb, omission of articles, use of prepositions, and transformation of the tenses of verbs. The reported use

of these deviations among Filipino English users are 1) the omission of an article 'the' and 'a' to be paired with the word 'majority,' and 2) the omission of the article 'such' to be paired with a singular noun (e.g., such talent).

The Philippine variety of English can be a regional dialect or a Philippine dialect of English. In the presence of this variety, it would be possible to defy the linguistic rules of American English, but it would be an embarrassment to outside countries that speak English (Miranda et al., 2021).

On the other hand, while 21st-century learners live in a technology-driven world, there is an increasing demand for English to be more responsive to the development of the learners' motivation and self-efficacy (Torres & Alieto, 2019). Hakimah (2020) identified insufficient knowledge of grammar as a hindrance to speaking. On the contrary, having the command of correct grammar builds confidence (Yacob & Yunus, 2019). Grammar, when taught the right way, can scaffold the learners' overall learning experience (Ly, 2020).

Gonzales (2006), as mentioned in Martin (2019), emphasized that the Philippine's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) dramatically lies in the booming industry of call centers as well as the remittances of Filipinos working abroad. The English proficiency of Filipinos has served as an edge toward the progress of the country's economy (Jugo, 2020). Hence, developing English proficiency is of utmost concern (Jang, 2018).

The presence of the mother tongue as the primary language of instruction for kindergarten learners and first to third-graders reduces the allotted time for English subjects in the fundamental years of learning. The decreased length of time gave way to promoting and strengthening the Mother Tongue and enhancing other facets, such as home management and survival-related subjects (Barrot, 2018). Using native tongues in the Philippines reportedly facilitates the easy and fast acquisition of English and Filipino languages (DepEd Order 74, 2009).

However, the use of Mother Tongue does not only have pros and cons, such as the degradation of English language literacy and proficiency, for instance, poor vocabulary, grammar, communication issues, and difficulty in learning the second language (Andrino & Arsenal, 2022). Cagurangan (2018) reveals that using a Mother Language could result in negative transfer as language users tend to generate words in their minds through their first language and translate them into the target language (Ngangbam, 2016). Code-switching becomes a way for learners to strengthen their English-speaking performance (Muthusamy et al.,

2017), and the two have an indispensable relationship (Castillejo et al., 2018). Liwanag and Labor (2016; as cited in Gamotin, 2021) observe that in the Philippine context, switching from one language to another usually happens because most Filipinos are bilinguals/ know at least two languages. It explicitly means that code-switching influences language use (Jogulu & Radzi, 2018). However, this linguistic event could become a language interference that would result in a negative transfer, causing significant errors in the arrangement of words and overall problems in communication (Cagurangan, 2018). Learners have difficulties in learning grammar because of the influence of the first language as well as the lack of exposure to real-life interaction using the target language (TL), which is English (Wang, 2019).

Another study discloses that grammar teaching needs to be given proper attention. The Senior High School curriculum focuses more on literary than grammar disciplines (Rosales & Ilagan, 2019). Two (2) years of Senior High School paved the way for learning 31 subjects, divided into Core, Applied, and Specialized subjects, and consuming 2 480 hours. Of the 15 subjects that all learners have to take (Core Subjects), there are only four (4) that tackle language (i.e., Oral Communication, Reading, and Writing), humanities (i.e., 21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World), and communication (i.e., Media and Information Literacy). Meanwhile, Applied Track Subjects equip learners with language proficiency and competencies to be developed depending on the requisites of each track (Fontanos et al., 2020). Only in these subjects can grammar be studied and enhanced.

The application of grammar in genuine communicative acts should be implemented in the classroom and not just focused on language examples found in reference materials or simply explaining grammar topics. Learners claimed that learning and practicing grammar enhances communication abilities (Tarigan & Stevani, 2022). The integration of grammar into other subjects should be done considering the learners' potential and needs (Bentsen, 2017). Language Arts teachers should unleash their creativity in creating varied instructional activities to respond to learners' diverse needs and interests (Torres & Alieto, 2019).

With the pandemic, grammar instruction through distance modalities has been new to teachers and learners (Cariaga et al., 2023; Nanquil, 2021). Thus, assessing similarities and differences between internetmediated and physical classes for teachers is integral in enhancing career development (Bendanillo et al., 2023; Tupas & Linas-Laguda, 2020). Uncertainties

about circumstances challenge teachers to modify and craft appropriate teaching approaches and strategies to develop the grammar competence of learners. If grammar problems are noticeable in in-person classes and corrected in an instant, it is quite the opposite in distance learning.

The necessity to assess the grammatical competence and knowledge acquired by Senior High School learners from their new average education arises. The articles give avenues for in-depth understanding and analysis of whether the emergence of the global pandemic intensifies the pre-existing grammar problems of Senior High School learners.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study utilized a quantitative method with a descriptive-correlational research design. The descriptive-correlational design identifies the variables and describes the relationships between and among them.

Participants

The participants of this study were the 234 Grade 11 and 12 students studying in five selected Senior High Schools in the Division of Siquijor for School Year 2022-2023. They were chosen through a simple random sampling using Slovin's formula ($n = N / (1+Ne^2)$), where n is the sample size, N is the population size, and e is the margin of error set at 0.05 for this study. Table 1 presents the number of respondents per school.

Table 1. (*Refer to Annex 1*)

Instruments of the Study

In order to facilitate a well-organized data collection, a questionnaire adapted from Oxford University Press (Oxford Intermediate Exit Test by John Eastwood, 2019; Oxford Practice Grammar Advanced Tests by George Yule, 2022) was used to acquire the data required. It includes an assessment of grammatical competence and knowledge of word classes, relative clauses, and subject-verb agreement, the profile of the senior secondary students, and the academic and psychological impacts of the pandemic on students. The questionnaire was validated through the Quality Assurance Team, the questionnaire's reliability was tested through pilot testing, and data analysis through Cronbach Alpha was conducted.

Procedure

The endorsements of the Schools Division

Superintendent of Division of Siquijor and approval of the School Principals of the five schools, namely Candaping National High School, DepEd-Lazi National Agricultural School, Catulayan National High School, Cang-alwang National High School, and Banban National High School were sought by writing letter-requests of permission. The finalized questionnaires were given to the identified respondents in coordination with the subject teachers. The explanation was given, and clarifications were answered. After answering the instrument, the data were retrieved personally. Retrieved data were used for tabulation and computation for analysis to develop interpretations and suggestions relative to the results.

Ethical Considerations

The study observed integrity, transparency, and confidentiality. Participants expressed voluntary participation and informed consent. They had full awareness throughout the conduct of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The presentation, data processing, and interpretation of the data acquired are all covered in this chapter. Tables are presented by the order of the specific problems earlier enumerated. The results are presented and analyzed in consonance with the aspects of the problem.

Age Profile of the Respondents

Table 2 presents the age of the respondents. It showed that out of the 234 respondents, the age of 17 got the highest count of 102, which constituted 43.59 percent of the total sample. Meanwhile, the age bracket of 16 and below had 72 counts (30.8 percent), and the age of 18 had 44 counts or 18.80 percent. The age bracket of 19 and below received the lowest counts of 20, equivalent to 8.55 percent. Based on the data, it can be extracted that Senior High School learners are mostly 17 years old.

The study by Datu et al. (2020) revealed that the typical age of senior secondary school learners ranges from 17 to 19. The change in the system that brought the change of entry and exit ages of high school learners can be attributed to what Acosta & Acosta (2016) called the urgent and critical educational reforms that arose from the inadequate qualifications of college graduates in the Philippines deteriorating behind other countries, thereby, failing to be recognized with their degrees. These problems have been solved by introducing Senior High Schools where 16-to-17-year-old youth had a higher rate of educational involvement (Ducanes &

Ocampo, 2020). This suggests that the increased number of years for primary education has given Filipino youth ample time to develop their skills and talents.

Table 2. (*Refer to Annex 2*)

Sex Profile of the Respondents

Table 3 reveals the sex of the respondents. The female respondents earned 130 counts, which comprised 55.6 percent of the sample, while the male respondents garnered 104 counts, 44.4 percent. The data implied that there are more female Senior High School learners than males, although the numbers slightly differ. More females attend senior high school than males. This can be supported by the study of Ducanes & Ocampo (2020), which says that males are more pressured to provide for the financial needs of their families than females. As a result, male dropout rates are higher than female dropout rates among junior high school students. The number of male enrollees who wished to attend senior high school decreased.

Table 3. (*Refer to Annex 3*)

Second Language Acquisition Background Profile of the Respondents

Table 4 presents the respondents' means of acquiring English as a second language. Senior high school learners who primarily learned English at school had the highest counts, 81, which covered 34.6 percent of the sample. It was followed by those learners who learned English at school through self-study and watching movies of 52 counts (22.2 percent).

The data clearly showed that most Senior High School learners primarily learned English at school. This implies that schools have been the primary vehicle for learning English as a Second Language. Learners who are not coming from English-speaking homes rely on schools to give them opportunities to develop their English skills. In schools, social equality should be evident.

Table 4. (*Refer to Annex 4*)

Availability of Printed Materials at Home Profile of the Respondents

Table 5 shows the printed materials available at the respondents' homes. Senior High School learners with books at home logged the highest frequency of 29 or 12.4 percent of the total sample. Next was the availability of the bible and the book at home, which got 23 counts (9.8 percent). Based on the data, books were

the primary printed material used in respondents' homes.

The Senior High School learners' exposure to books at home can usher in increased ability in grammatical parsing and enriched similar skills. Altinkaynak (2019) shared that adolescent exposure to books is crucial in social practices that propagate long-term cognitive competencies involving literary, numeracy, and ICT skills. Hence, schools should scaffold this home-based book reading exposure by initiating reading activities, updating classroom reading corners, and offering library services to ignite a passion for reading among learners.

Table 5. (*Refer to Annex 5*)

Availability of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) at Home Profile of the Respondents

Table 6 portrays the data on the availability of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the respondents' homes. Cellular phones and television incurred the highest availability with a frequency of 56 or 23.5 percent of the total sample. It can be gleaned that cellular phones and televisions are the standard available Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the respondents' homes.

Most Filipinos are cellular phone owners. This corroborates Abadilla's (2016) study, which found Southeast Asia has recognized the Philippines as the fastest-growing smartphone market. In addition, Lucas (2014) stated that adolescents and young adults aged 16-24, to which the Senior High School bracket belongs, are the most significant smartphone users in the country.

Table 6. (*Refer to Annex 6*)

Monthly Family Income Profile of the Respondents

Table 7 revealed the family income of the 234 respondents, who are Senior High School learners. The family income below Php 10,957 (Poor) had the highest frequency of 162 or 69.23 percent of the overall sample.

The family income bracket of Php 10,957-Php 21,194 (Low income but not poor) was followed by 31 counts (13.25 percent). Next was the family income bracket of Php 219,140 and above (Rich), which logged 16 counts (6.84 percent). Both family income brackets of Php 76,669- Php 131,484 (Middle class) and Php 43,828-Php 76,669 (Upper middle class) had four counts each

(1.71 percent). The family income bracket of Php 131,484-Php 219,140 (Upper middle but not rich) had the lowest frequency of 3 (1.3 percent). The data clearly depicted that most respondents have a monthly family income of below Php 10,957. Relating this data to the 2018 income classifications of the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS), it can be deduced that most Senior High School learners come from poor-income households.

Barrot et al (2021) disclosed that families with poor socioeconomic status in developing countries like the Philippines have limited learning space at home and access to quality internet service and online learning resources. Lack of financial resources, among others, has been seen as one of the most challenging learning factors.

Table 7. (*Refer to Annex 7*)

Level of Grammatical Competence

Table 8 presented the level of grammatical competence of the 234 Senior High School learners who were the respondents. The respondents garnered mean scores of 0.61 for Word Classes, 0.46 for Relative Clauses, and 0.69 for Subject-Verb Agreement, respectively. From this data, it can be interpreted that Senior High School learners were moderately competent in Word Classes, somewhat competent in Relative Clauses, and moderately competent in Subject-Verb Agreement.

Senior High School learners exhibited moderate performance in Word Classes and Subject-Verb Agreement. Learners excelled in some grammar points and faced difficulty in others. Conjunctions, prepositions, possessive forms of nouns, and verb tenses under the category of word classes have been excellently and correctly used, while pronounantecedent relationship, noun pluralization, subjectverb agreement, adverb, and pronoun types, adjectives and adverbs order and adjectives' degree of comparison need further enhancements (Merza, 2022).

Table 8. (*Refer to Annex 8*)

Level of Grammatical Knowledge

Table 9 showed the level of grammatical knowledge of the respondents. The 234 Senior High School learners got a mean score of 0.44 for Word Classes; 0.41 for Relative Clauses and 0.36 for Subject-Verb Agreement. The data revealed that Senior High School learners somewhat mastered the Word Classes and Relative Clauses while slightly mastered the Subject-Verb Agreement.

Senior High School learners manifested satisfactory grammatical knowledge in Word Classes and Relative Clauses while poor grammatical knowledge in Subject-Verb Agreement; the performance of which may drop to the lowest level, absolutely no mastery, when left remediated or neglected. It has been disclosed that second language grammar knowledge had strong correlation with second language reading comprehension (Hu et al., 2022). Hence, reading should be given utmost importance in schools as it works not just to develop comprehension but also enhance grammatical knowledge.

Table 9. (Refer to Annex 9)

Table 10 presented the relationship between grammatical competence and grammatical knowledge. It can be gleaned that grammatical competence and grammatical knowledge in terms of word classes, relative clauses and subject verb agreement had p-value of 0.000 except grammatical competence (Relative Clauses) and grammatical knowledge (Subject-Verb Agreement), which had p value of 0.002. The generated data was interpreted as significant which meant positive correlation, thereby coming up with the decision to reject the null hypothesis. Based on these data, it can be implied that grammatical competence is strongly correlated with grammatical knowledge.

Table 10. (Refer to Annex 10)

Relationship between Grades 11 and 12 Learners' Identified Profile and Grammatical Competence

Table 11 reflected the relationship between learners' demographic profile and grammatical competence. All generated data was interpreted as not significant which meant negative correlation and thus, coming up with a decision to accept the null hypothesis but with the exception of the data on the profile variables (sex, second language acquisition, printed materials available at home, and ICT available at home, monthly family income) and word classes, which reflected significance, showing positive correlation and thus, rejecting the null hypothesis.

Accessibility and availability of learning resources at home will likely depend on the financial situation of learners. According to Ducanes and Ocampo (2020), nonparticipation of individuals in the Senior High School program is substantially influenced by economic factors for both men and women. An equity lens rather than a gender lens should be used to understand discrepancies in basic education metrics (Fontanos & Ocampo, 2019). Hence, basic education learners shall be supported with social welfare benefits that could alleviate education discrepancies and maximize SLA.

Table 11. (Refer to Annex 11)

Relationship between Grades 11 and 12 Learners' Identified Profile and Grammatical Knowledge

Table 12 showcased the relationship between learners' demographic profiles and grammatical knowledge. All data generated was interpreted as not significant, which showed negative correlation and thus, rendered a decision to accept the null hypothesis except the following data: [profile variables (second language acquisition, printed materials available at home, and monthly family income) and subject-verb agreement]; [profile variables (gender, monthly income) and word classes]; and [profile variable (monthly income) and relative clauses], which reflected significance, manifesting positive relation and thus, rejecting the null hypothesis.

Adversity increases the likelihood that children may perform below age expectations on language tests (Smith et al., 2021). Hence, it is best to pinpoint and resolve the socioeconomic issues of learners so that they do not hamper an individual's language learning.

Table 12. (Refer to Annex 12)

Relationship among Grades 11 and 12 Learners' Identified Profile, Grammatical Competence, Grammatical Knowledge and Psychological Impacts of Pandemic

Table 13 depicts the relationship among the learners' demographic profile, grammatical competence and knowledge, and psychological impacts of a pandemic. All other generated data was interpreted as insignificant or demonstrated negative correlation, thus, coming up with a decision to accept the null hypothesis. However, there was an exception on profile variables (age, SLA, printed materials) and psychological impacts of the pandemic, which revealed significance and meant a positive correlation. Thus, the decision is to reject the null hypothesis.

Senior High School learners' stagnating to deteriorating grammar results can also be attributed to the feelings of being challenged and stressed. It was affirmed by the study of Noson and Shastri (2016) that the students were influenced by stressors, which include academic pressures and the expectations of becoming successful. Hence, senior high school teachers are encouraged to promote integrative motivation among learners and assist them in maximizing their language learning strategies.

Table 13. (Refer to Annex 13)

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

The common entry age for Senior High School education is 16 to 17, while the typical exit age is 18 to 19. Senior High School enrolment has been seen as

higher in number among females than males. These students primarily acquire English at school. Hence, language classes are encouraged to promote inclusivity in giving grammar learning opportunities to learners while nurturing a child-friendly academic environment.

Regarding the availability of learning resources at home, books constitute the highest available over the other printed materials, while cellular phones and television have the highest number over the other Information and Communication Technology/ies. This indicates the necessity to augment library collection to enhance learners' reading habits, which gives them exposure to the language structures and allows them to link the information they have gained to other pieces of information not just in their homes but even in schools.

On the other hand, almost all respondents are coming from low-income families or low-income households. This strengthens society's call to provide socioeconomic benefits as inputs to less fortunate learners so that they can improve their learning.

After nearly two years of distance education, assessment of Senior High School students' grammar skills in word classes, relative clauses, and subjectverb agreement reveal satisfactory (somewhat) to good (moderate) grammatical competence and poor (slight) to satisfactory (somewhat) grammatical knowledge. Grammatical competence and grammatical knowledge are strongly correlated, the two interlinked areas that deal with grammar. A grammar learning application and activity sheets will be crafted as interventions to enhance grammatical competence and grammatical competence in word classes, relative clauses, and subject-verb agreement. Localization and contextualization, as well as authenticity in learning activities and language situations, shall be fostered.

Grammatical competence of word classes has been influenced by gender, means of second language acquisition, printed materials (ICT), availability at home, and monthly family income. Meanwhile, grammatical knowledge of subject-verb agreement has been related to means of second language acquisition, printed materials, and monthly family income; word classes have been associated with gender and monthly income, and relative clauses have been linked to monthly family income. This manifests that although individuals have been built with language acquisition devices, which allow grammar learning despite different origins, it cannot be denied that at some point, learners' levels of grammar have been influenced by surrounding factors. The government shall consider giving benefits to deserving but underprivileged

learners. With the emergence of coronavirus, Senior High School students have been academically challenged and stressed. This signifies an obstruction in the processes of learning grammar at a period as motivation provided by educators and other individuals around the learners is hardly received and inculcated. As a result, these psychological emotions, the student's age, the means of second language acquisition, and printed materials significantly affect their grammatical competence and knowledge.

CONCLUSION

As mentioned above, grammatical competence and grammatical knowledge are strongly interrelated. Senior high school students' low grammatical performance, heavily influenced by their poor economic background and limited reading resources, can be a wake-up call to the academic community and the government. Learners should practice reading habits as early as possible. Reading printed books led to better improvements in grammatical understanding and inferential reading comprehension. More exposure to reading materials can be made possible if learners earn the habit of reading from the grassroots. That is, from their homes. This can be done through a nurturing home environment, wherein they do not primarily think of what to serve at their dining tables and do not temporarily compromise reading time. While the government reinforces family income, schools also advocate reading as a life skill. The interplay of support and motivation from the concerned sectors with intensive reading efforts can build grammar-proficient individuals and a progressive knowledge-based economy.

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Annexes

Table 1. *Respondents of the Study by Section*

School	Grade Level	Tracks and Specializations	Learners’ Population		%	Sample (n)
			Male	Female		
Candaping National High School	Grade 11	Academic Track (GAS)	30	37	12%	28
		TVL (BPP NCII, FBS NCII)	6	7	2%	5
	Grade 12	Academic Track (GAS)	42	36	14%	33
		TVL (Cookery NCII)	9	11	4%	9
DepEd-Lazi National Agricultural School	Grade 11	Academic Track (GAS)	41	40	14%	33
		TVL (BPP NCII, FBS NCII)	2	11	2%	5
	Grade 12	Academic Track (GAS)	40	32	13%	30
		TVL (Cookery NCII)	9	11	4%	9
Catulayan National High School	Grade 11	TVL (BPP NCII, FBS NCII)	6	4	2%	5
	Grade 12	Academic Track (GAS)	18	23	7%	16
		TVL (Cookery NCII)	2	5	1%	2
Cang-alwang National High School	Grade 11	Academic Track (GAS)	2	12	2%	5
		TVL (BPP NCII, FBS NCII)	3	12	3%	7
	Grade 12	Academic Track (GAS)	11	14	4%	9
		TVL (Cookery NCII)	3	8	2%	5
Banban National High School	Grade 11	Academic Track (GAS)	9	10	3%	7
		TVL (Cookery NCII)	6	4	2%	5
	Grade 12	Academic Track (GAS)	12	15	5%	12
		TVL (BPP NCII, FBS NCII)	11	12	4%	9
TOTAL			566		100%	234

Table 2
Age Profile of the Respondents

		F	Percentage
Age	16 and below	68	29.06
	17	102	43.59
	18	44	18.80
	19 and above	20	8.55
Total		234	100

Table 3
Sex Profile of the Respondents

		F	Percentage
Sex	Male	104	44.44
	Female	130	55.56
	Total	234	100

Table 4
Second Language Acquisition Background Profile of the Respondents

		F	Percentage
Second Language Acquisition Background	at school	81	34.6
	online course	1	0.4
	self-study	12	5.1
	watching movies	11	4.7

	at school and watching movies	43	18.4
	at school, language institutes and self-study	1	0.4
	at school, self-study and watching movies	52	22.2
	at school and self-study	18	7.7
	at school, language institutes, self-study and watching movies	2	0.9
	self-study and watching movies	3	1.3
	at school and online course	1	0.4
	at school, online course and self-study	2	0.9
	at school, online course and watching movies	1	0.4
	at school and language institutes	1	0.4
	at school, online course, self-study and watching movies	1	0.4
	at school, language institutes and watching movies	2	0.9
	at school, language institutes, online course, self-study and watching movies	1	0.4
	language institutes, self-study and watching movies	1	0.4
	Total	234	100

Table 5

Availability of Printed Materials at Home Profile of the Respondents

	<i>F</i>	Percentage
Printed Materials Available at Home	None	1.7
	Bible	2.1
	Book	12.4
	Dictionary	2.6
	Book and magazine	0.4
	Bible and book	9.8
	Dictionary and newspaper	0.4
	Bible, book, newspaper and novel	0.4
	Bible, book, brochure, dictionary, magazine	1.3
	Bible, book and novel	0.9
	Bible, book, dictionary, magazine	3.0
	Bible, book, brochure, magazine and novel	0.4
	Book and dictionary	5.1
	Book, dictionary and newspaper	0.9

Bible, book, brochure, dictionary and novel	6	2.6
Book, brochure, dictionary and magazine	2	0.9
Bible and novel	3	1.3
Bible, book, brochure, dictionary, magazine and newspaper	2	0.9
Book, dictionary and novel	2	0.9
Bible, book and magazine	1	0.4
Bible, book and dictionary	21	9.0
Bible, book, dictionary, magazine and novel	3	1.3
Bible, book, dictionary and novel	21	9.0
Bible, book and dictionary	5	2.1
Book, brochure, dictionary, magazine and novel	1	0.4
Bible, book, dictionary and newspaper	7	3.0
Book, magazine and newspaper	4	1.7
Book and newspaper	1	0.4
Bible, book, brochure and novel	1	0.4
Bible, book and brochure	2	0.9
Book, dictionary, newspaper and novel	1	0.4
Bible, book, brochure, dictionary, magazine, newspaper and novel	5	2.1
Bible, book, dictionary, magazine and newspaper	3	1.3
Book, brochure, dictionary, newspaper and novel	2	0.9
Bible, book, brochure and dictionary	6	2.6
Bible, book, brochure, dictionary, magazine and novel	4	1.7
Bible, book and novel	3	1.3
Book and novel	3	1.3
Brochure and dictionary	1	0.4
Bible and newspaper	1	0.4
Book, dictionary and newspaper	1	0.4
Bible and dictionary	6	2.6
Book, dictionary, magazine, newspaper and novel	1	0.4
Bible, book and newspaper	3	1.3
Bible, book, brochure and newspaper	1	0.4
Bible, book, magazine and novel	2	0.9
Bible, book, brochure, dictionary, newspaper and novel	1	0.4
bible, dictionary and magazine	1	0.4
bible, dictionary and novel	3	1.3
dictionary and novel	1	0.4

bible, book, newspaper, magazine and novel	1	0.4
bible and brochure	1	0.4
book and brochure	1	0.4
book, brochure and novel	1	0.4
book, brochure, dictionary, magazine and newspaper	1	0.4
Total	234	100

Table 6

Availability of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) at Home Profile of the Respondents

	<i>F</i>	Percentage
Cellular phone	42	17.9
Computer	1	0.4
Radio	1	0.4
Television	4	1.7
Cellular phone, radio, tablet and television	4	1.7
Cellular phone, tablet and television	5	2.1
Cellular phone and television	55	23.5
Cellular phone and computer	1	0.4
Cellular phone, laptop, radio, tablet and television	2	0.9
Laptop, radio, tablet and television	1	0.4
Cellular phone, radio and television	42	17.9
Cellular phone, computer and television	3	1.3
Cellular phone, laptop and television	15	6.4
Cellular phone, laptop, radio and television	10	4.3
Cellular phone, computer and tablet	1	0.4
Cellular phone and tablet	3	1.3
Cellular phone, radio, laptop and television	1	0.4
Cellular phone, computer, laptop and television	3	1.3
Cellular phone and radio	12	5.1
Cellular phone, laptop, tablet and television	9	3.8
Cellular phone, computer and laptop	3	1.3
Cellular phone, computer, laptop, radio, tablet and television	3	1.3
Cellular phone, computer, laptop and radio	1	0.4
Cellular phone, laptop and tablet	1	0.4
Computer, tablet and television	1	0.4
Cellular phone, computer, laptop and tablet	4	1.7
Computer, laptop, radio, tablet and television	1	0.4

Cellular phone, computer, laptop, tablet and television	1	0.4
Cellular phone, laptop, tablet and television	2	0.9
Radio and television	1	0.4
Cellular phone and laptop	1	0.4
Total	234	100

Table 7

Monthly Family Income Profile of the Respondents

		<i>F</i>	Percentage
Monthly Family Income	PHP 219,140 and above	16	6.84
	PHP 131,484-PHP 219,140	3	1.28
	PHP 76,669- PHP 131,484	4	1.71
	PHP 43,828-PHP 76,669	4	1.71
	PHP 21,194-PHP 43,828	14	5.98
	PHP 10,957-PHP 21,194	31	13.25
	BELOW 10,957	162	69.23
	Total	234	100

Table 8

Level of Grammatical Competence

	Mean	Interpretation
Grammatical Competence in Word Clauses	0.61	Moderately Competent
Grammatical Competence in Relative Clauses	0.46	Somewhat Competent
Grammatical Competence in Subject-Verb Agreement	0.69	Moderately Competent

Legend: 0.00 – 0.20 Not Competent at all; 0.21 – 0.40 Slightly Competent; 0.41 – 0.60 Somewhat Competent; 0.61 – 0.80 Moderately Competent; 0.81 – 1.00 Extremely Competent

Table 9

Level of Grammatical Knowledge

	Mean	Interpretation
Grammatical Knowledge in Word Clauses	0.44	Somewhat Mastered
Grammatical Knowledge in Relative Clauses	0.41	Somewhat Mastered
Grammatical Knowledge in Subject-Verb Agreement	0.36	Slightly Mastered

Legend: 0.00 – 0.20 Not Mastered at all; 0.21 – 0.40 Slightly Mastered; 0.41 – 0.60 Somewhat Mastered; 0.61 – 0.80 Moderately Mastered; 0.81 – 1.00 Extremely Mastered

Table 10

Relationship between Grammatical Competence and Grammatical Knowledge

Grammatical Competence	Grammatical Knowledge	p value	Interpretation	Decision
Word Classes	Word Classes	0.000	Significant	Reject the Null Hypothesis
	Relative Clauses	0.000	Significant	Reject the Null Hypothesis
	Subject – Verb Agreement	0.000	Significant	Reject the Null Hypothesis
Relative Clauses	Word Classes	0.000	Significant	Reject the Null Hypothesis
	Relative Clauses	0.000	Significant	Reject the Null Hypothesis
	Subject – Verb Agreement	0.002	Significant	Reject the Null Hypothesis
Subject – Verb Agreement	Word Classes	0.000	Significant	Reject the Null Hypothesis

Relative Clauses	0.023	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis
Subject – Verb Agreement	0.000	Significant	Reject the Null Hypothesis

Table 11

Relationship between Learners' Identified Profile and Grammatical Competence

Demographic Profile	Grammatical Competence	P value	Interpretation	Decision
Age	Word Classes	0.275	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis
	Relative Clauses	0.646	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis
	Subject – Verb Agreement	0.511	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis
Sex	Word Classes	0.001	Significant	Reject the Null Hypothesis
	Relative Clauses	0.290	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis
	Subject – Verb Agreement	0.391	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis
Second Language Acquisition	Word Classes	0.001	Significant	Reject the Null Hypothesis
	Relative Clauses	0.180	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis
	Subject – Verb Agreement	0.187	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis
Printed Materials Availability	Word Classes	0.002	Significant	Reject the Null Hypothesis
	Relative Clauses	0.276	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis
	Subject – Verb Agreement	0.049	Significant	Reject the Null Hypothesis
ICT Availability	Word Classes	0.791	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis
	Relative Clauses	0.096	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis
	Subject – Verb Agreement	0.008	Significant	Reject the Null Hypothesis
Monthly Income	Word Classes	0.030	Significant	Reject the Null Hypothesis
	Relative Clauses	0.992	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis
	Subject – Verb Agreement	0.556	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis

Table 12

Relationship between Learners' Identified Profile and Grammatical Knowledge

Demographic Profile	Grammatical Knowledge	P value	Interpretation	Decision
Age	Word Classes	0.729	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis
	Relative Clauses	0.061	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis
	Subject – Verb Agreement	0.854	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis
Gender	Word Classes	0.001	Significant	Reject the Null Hypothesis
	Relative Clauses	0.198	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis
	Subject – Verb Agreement	0.065	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis
Monthly Income	Word Classes	0.001	Significant	Reject the Null Hypothesis
	Relative Clauses	0.000	Significant	Reject the Null Hypothesis
	Subject – Verb Agreement	0.005	Significant	Reject the Null Hypothesis
Second Language Acquisition	Word Classes	0.143	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis
	Relative Clauses	0.583	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis

Printed Materials	Subject – Verb Agreement	0.037	Significant	Reject the Null Hypothesis
	Word Classes	0.001	Significant	Reject the Null Hypothesis
	Relative Clauses	0.595	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis
ICT Availability	Subject – Verb Agreement	0.029	Significant	Reject the Null Hypothesis
	Word Classes	0.871	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis
	Relative Clauses	0.554	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis
	Subject – Verb Agreement	0.869	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis

Table 13

Relationship among Learners' Identified Profile, Grammatical Competence, Grammatical Knowledge and Psychological Impacts of Pandemic

Demographic Profile, Grammatical Competence and Grammatical Knowledge		Psychological Impacts		
	<i>p</i> value	Interpretation	Decision	
Age	0.018	Significant	Reject the Null Hypothesis	
Gender	0.351	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis	
Monthly Income	0.165	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis	
Second Language Acquisition	0.002	Significant	Reject the Null Hypothesis	
Printed Materials Availability	0.009	Significant	Reject the Null Hypothesis	
ICT Availability	0.794	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis	
Grammatical Competence – Word classes	0.230	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis	
Grammatical Competence – relative clauses	0.249	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis	
Grammatical Competence – Subject – verb Agreement	0.432	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis	
Grammatical Knowledge – Word classes	0.346	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis	
Grammatical Knowledge – relative clauses	0.176	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis	
Grammatical Knowledge – Subject – verb Agreement	0.413	Not Significant	Accept the Null Hypothesis	