

COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN A GLOBAL HOSPITALITY WORKPLACE: ASSESSMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE COMPETENCY OF BSHM GRADUATING STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This paper aimed to determine the 76 Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management (BSHM) graduating students' self-assessed English language communicative competence, their English language competency level and the factors that have contributed to their English competency using the Descriptive-Correlational Research Design and Thematic Analysis through a survey questionnaire, teacher-made test, and open-ended questionnaire. The result showed that the graduating students have evaluated themselves as competent in their overall competency in the English language, the students demonstrated a high level of communicative competence, and there is no significant association with their self-assessed competency and their actual competence in the English language because there might be factors other than self-perceived competency that were contributing to the level of English proficiency of students. In addition, affective factors such as anxiety, self-confidence, and motivation, cognitive factors such as semantic familiarity, and their growing and learning environment and prior linguistic knowledge and exposure had influenced the students' English competency. It was suggested that a training program in English to develop the self-confidence and motivation and reduce the student's anxiety in using English, promotion of communicative language teaching and creating of enabling environment for the usage of the language in classes should be conducted, and an actual speaking and writing skills test should be administered.

Keywords: English language communicative competence, BSHM graduating students

INTRODUCTION

Good communication skills are necessary for a competitive job market, and due to globalization and language barriers, these abilities are more important for employment. Establishing acceptable interpersonal and professional relationships that allow for the development of trust and result in effective workplace communication requires communicative proficiency in English, a talent that is highly regarded by employers (Jones, 2012; Wiśniewska, 2015). Developing communicative competence that enables global workers to improve the quality of interpersonal workplace relationships requires acquiring verbal, non-verbal and relational competence to a similar degree. Accordingly, English has occupied the position of international language as it dominated

international business, politics, and culture more than any other language in human history. English has become one of the most frequently used international languages for various purposes in the recent years. Proficiency in English language skills determines the eligibility criteria for the job seekers as well as employees of the industries and they are expected to possess excellent communication skills. Seeing this necessity, Employers from various domains seek to employ people who are good at using English to fulfill their requirements. Hence, it becomes essential that the employees of various domains to be communicatively competent to meet those requirements (Whyte, 2019).

Hotel or hospitality sector is the largest in the world and a major contributor to the global economy, generating \$2.3 trillion and 109 million jobs annually (World Travel and Tourism

Council, 2017). Its primary role revolves around catering to individuals, delivering aid, and addressing their requirements during their stay within our premises. This sector holds significant importance, not only for the economy but also for the guests and the global community. Undoubtedly, the hospitality industry has evolved into a fiercely competitive realm. Concurrently, with its ongoing growth, there has been a surge in the enrollment of students pursuing specialized degrees in this domain. Emphasizing the importance of linguistic skills allowing fluent and efficient communication in the international language is not new in the history of business communication. However, with ever-spreading globalization and hunt for talent, it gained a new dimension. There is growing evidence that English is no longer regarded as one of the languages individuals may want to learn, but as a key to a professional career.

Canale and Swain (1980; 1981 in Tuan, 2017) delineated four competencies: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. Upholding these foundational definitions is considered essential for the instructional and evaluative purposes of second language education. If these competencies align with the attributes sought by employers in graduates, then an instructional approach centered on communicative language teaching should be implemented in classrooms. This approach integrates elements from both grammatical and sociolinguistic competencies to foster effective communicative performance. Moreover, proactive oral and written communication skills, along with networking across various tiers, play a pivotal role in this industry. In customer service, adeptness in addressing and fulfilling customer needs is paramount. Proficient written communication skills are essential for industry workers in presenting themselves and promoting the hotel online (Matsouka and Mihail, 2016). Furthermore, teaching methodology and assessment instruments must be designed to address not only communicative competence but also communicative performance because communication is the most important and the most used of all skills in the hospitality and tourism industry. Hence, in order to grasp the concept of English language communicative competence concerning graduates' employability and preparedness for work within a community

of practice, it is essential to explore whether there are additional competencies that push graduates beyond the anticipated standards of communicative competence. Investigating the identified research gaps would yield valuable insights into the realm of communicative competence within a global hospitality workplace. The findings could be instrumental in offering recommendations to enhance the English language proficiency of graduating students in Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management (BSHM) programs.

Thus, this study was conducted to determine the graduating students' preparedness by evaluating their knowledge and skills and self-assessed readiness in Communicative Language that is viable in their field of work, and the factors that had an effect on their readiness in their future careers. This will also serve as a basis for a proposed post-undergraduate development program for university graduating students in the hospitality management field.

Objectives of the Study

This study is aimed at determining the graduating student's English language communicative competence and the factors that have contributed to their English competency, specifically to answer the following questions:

1. What is the self-assessed English language competency level of the BSHM graduating students?
2. What is the English language competency level of the BSHM graduating students through a teacher-made test?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the self-assessed English language competency and their English language competency level?
4. What are the factors that affect the English language competency of the BSHM graduating students?

METHOD

Research Design

The Mixed-Method Research Approach particularly the Descriptive-Correlational Research Design for the quantitative part using a researcher-made survey questionnaire and teacher-made test, and Thematic Analysis using an open-ended questionnaire for the qualitative part were used for the study.

Participants of the Study

The participants of the study were the 76 randomly selected 4th year Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management (BSHM) students who are enrolled and who were candidates for graduation for the Second Semester, School Year 2021–2022. Thirty (30) participants were also randomly chosen to answer an open-ended questionnaire to gather the qualitative data for the study.

Methods of Data Collection

The development of the students' Self-Assessed English Language Competency Survey Questionnaire were conducted in two stages: in Stage 1, in order to check the clarity and consistency of the instrument, ten questionnaires were administered to 10 students; in Stage 2, pilot study were conducted to 30 graduating students to determine the reliability of the questionnaire. The Cronbach Alpha test result shows a very high reliability score of .95.

After securing the permission from the college dean and consulting with the class advisers regarding the most viable schedule for the data gathering, the construct validated survey questionnaires were distributed to the 76 BSHM graduating students. The participants had indicated their level of agreement with 50 evaluative statements about their self-assessed English language grammatical/linguistic and discourse competency. Each item was scored using a five-point scale. Retrieval followed immediately to observe the utmost confidentiality of information among the respondents. In order to test the normality and reliability of the data, Cronbach Alpha was again

used. The Cronbach Alpha result had again indicated a high reliability score of .98.

A 60-item teacher-made multiple-choice test was prepared and administered by the researcher to determine the English language competency level of the BSHM graduating students. Part I is composed of a 40-item proper grammar/usage that includes Sentence Correction and Vocabulary Test, and Part II is a 20-item reading comprehension test. The test was validated by a language and a professional education specialist to technically review the structure and content of the test items.

In identifying the factors that had affected the English language competency of the BSHM graduating students, the researcher-made open-ended questionnaire was used to the 30 randomly selected participants. The questions had undergone face and content validity to ensure the clarity and conciseness of the questions given. The open-ended questionnaire that was distributed via Google Form had provided detailed information concerning the students' viewpoints on the factors that have affected their English language competency.

Methods of Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) was used to determine the self-assessed English language competency level and the English language competency level of the student.

The student's self-assessed competency level, proper grammar/usage and reading comprehension and overall English competency level were described using the following arbitrary scale.

Scale	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
1	1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree/ Very Incompetent
2	1.51-2.50	Disagree/ Incompetent
3	2.51-3.50	Moderately Agree/ Moderately Competent
4	3.51-4.50	Agree/Competent
5	4.51-5.00	Strongly Agree/Very Competent

Pearson Correlation Coefficient was also used to determine the relationship between the

Proper Grammar/ Usage	Reading Comprehension	Overall Score	Descriptive Interpretation
33-40	17- 20	49- 60	Very High
25- 32	13- 16	37- 48	High
17- 24	9- 12	26- 36	Moderately High
9- 16	5- 8	13- 24	Low
0- 8	0-4	1-12	Very Low

student's self-assessed competency level and the English language competency level of the

BSHM graduating students. In analyzing the qualitative data gathered using the open-ended

questionnaire, the answers were coded and thematically analyzed.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Self-assessed English language competency level of the BSHM graduating students

Statements on the Self-Assessed English Language Competency Level of The BSHM Graduating Students	Mean	SD	Descriptive Interpretation
A. Grammatical/ Linguistic Competence			
I can express myself in English fluently.	3.75	0.66	Agree
I never make a grammatical mistake in speaking English.	3.24	1.02	Moderately Agree
I can speak English that is consistent with the standard English language pronunciation, accent, and diction.	3.67	0.68	Agree
I can write a good academic paragraph in English.	3.70	0.63	Agree
I can logically organize my ideas when I write English paragraphs.	3.76	0.63	Agree
I can logically support and develop my main point when I write a paragraph in English.	3.76	0.63	Agree
I can write using proper academic style and tone in English.	3.75	0.73	Agree
I can use appropriate vocabulary and word forms in writing in English.	3.84	0.61	Agree
I can use appropriate spelling, capitalization, and punctuation when writing in English.	3.89	0.66	Agree
I can prepare/draft professional correspondence in English (business letters, reports)	3.86	0.63	Agree
I am able to adjust my English language level usage to suit my audience, whether I am talking to teachers, close friends, or others.	3.92	0.65	Agree
I can defend personal opinions about social and cultural topics using English.	3.78	0.64	Agree
I can express myself in English spontaneously.	3.82	0.63	Agree
I can lead the direction of the discussion in English (friendly, controversial, collaborative).	3.68	0.70	Agree
When writing English compositions, I can edit my writing to improve the wording, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.	3.87	0.70	Agree
I can effectively write compositions/ essay in English under time constraints.	3.82	0.67	Agree
When writing English compositions, I can identify problems in my writing and see what should be improved.	3.89	0.62	Agree
Total Mean	3.76	0.68	Competent
B. Discourse Competence			
I can understand spoken and written English with ease.	4.05	0.88	Agree
I can state details using the English language in a coherent presentation.	3.97	0.65	Agree
I can recognize the underlying meaning of English texts/ statements.	4.00	0.61	Agree
I can explain in clear, and detailed manner on a wide range of topics using the English language.	3.70	0.71	Agree
I can speak my opinions using English on topics which are familiar or of personal interest.	3.95	0.65	Agree
I can describe my own experiences and events using the English language.	3.89	0.60	Agree
I can introduce myself using the English language.	4.26	0.68	Agree
I can introduce others using the English language.	4.03	0.67	Agree
I can ask questions about personal details in English.	4.07	0.68	Agree
I can answer questions about personal details in English.	4.03	0.69	Agree
I can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases in English.	4.03	0.65	Agree

I can give detailed information in English about my family, my house, and my community.	4.07	0.70	Agree
I can describe my immediate plans and hopes in English.	3.97	0.65	Agree
I can take and give simple messages over the telephone or leave a message on voice mail using English.	4.00	0.63	Agree
I can restate the facts of what I have seen recently on English television news or read in an English news article.	3.86	0.65	Agree
I can talk about a trip or some other everyday event that happened in the recent past or that will happen soon in English.	3.82	0.67	Agree
I can understand and comprehend conversations in English.	4.01	0.66	Agree
I can write an accurate summary of information that I have read in English.	3.79	0.68	Agree
I can write an accurate paraphrase of information that I have read in English.	3.76	0.71	Agree
I can find important details in written English materials such as textbook, handouts, technical manuals, and other course materials quickly by skimming and scanning (reading quickly).	3.76	0.67	Agree
I can guess the meaning of unfamiliar English words or idioms (set phrases) in my textbooks or other course materials without using a dictionary.	3.67	0.74	Agree
I can understand the main ideas of lectures, professional presentations and spoken reports in English that are connected to my field of specialization.	3.88	0.61	Agree
I can understand the English in non-subtitled English video tutorials/lessons on topics that are connected to my field of specialization.	3.72	0.70	Agree
I can understand English words and basic phrases concerning myself, my family and my community.	3.97	0.65	Agree
I can understand English words and phrases that consist of everyday or job-related language.	3.95	0.61	Agree
I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities using the English language.	3.89	0.66	Agree
I can use simple English phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know.	4.03	0.59	Agree
I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions using the English language.	3.78	0.72	Agree
I can fill in forms in English with personal details, for example entering my name, nationality and address on a hotel registration form.	4.07	0.66	Agree
I can understand basic notices, instructions, or information in English.	4.11	0.62	Agree
I can understand information within a known area, such as on products and signs and simple textbooks or reports on familiar matters in English.	3.99	0.58	Agree
I can understand documents, correspondence, and reports, including the finer points of complex texts that are written in English.	3.84	0.63	Agree
I can understand lectures in English even when my teacher speaks very fast.	3.75	0.73	Agree
Total Mean	3.93	0.67	Competent
Grand Mean	3.87	0.51	Competent

Based on the table above, it was deemed that the graduating students have agreed that they are competent in expressing themselves fluently, spontaneously, and consistently with the standard English language, can write a good and logical academic paragraph in English, can write

and edit their compositions using proper academic style, tone, appropriate vocabulary and word forms, capitalization, and punctuation when writing in English, can prepare and draft professional correspondence in English, can adjust their English language level usage to suit

their audience, can defend their personal opinions about social and cultural topics using English, can lead the direction of the friendly, controversial, or collaborative discussion in English, and can identify problems when writing English compositions and see what should be improved; however, they moderately agreed ($M = 3.24$, $SD = 1.02$) that they never make a grammatical mistake in speaking English.

The overall result of the student's self-assessment of their grammatical and linguistic competence shows that they perceived themselves as competent ($M = 3.76$, $SD = 0.68$). This result shows that the graduating students have assessed themselves as competent in using the grammatically correct English language in communication, thus the students believed that they have a good command of the language code, encompassing aspects such as the rules of word and sentence formation, meanings, spelling, and pronunciation.

The student's perception of themselves as grammatical/linguistic competent had validated the K to 12 Language Arts Curriculum goal for the students to acquire knowledge of, and ability to use, forms of expression that are grammatically correct and accurate (Tuan, 2017; Sioco and Vera, 2018). Additionally, within the K to 12 Program in the Philippines, one of the language learning competencies pertains to grammar proficiency. Consequently, learners are anticipated to master their grammar competencies in the initial stages, which serves as a foundation for their ability to handle more advanced grammar lessons in the later stages of their education (Estanislao, 2013).

It was also deemed that the graduating students have agreed on the statements that they can understand, recognize, and comprehend the underlying meaning of spoken and written English with ease, can speak their opinions using English on topics which are familiar or of personal interest can describe their own experiences and events using the English language, can introduce themselves and others using the English language, can ask and answer questions about personal details in English, can take and give simple messages over the telephone or leave a message on voice mail using English, can restate the facts of what they have seen recently on English television news or read in an English news article, can write an accurate summary and paraphrase of information that they have read in English, can find important

details in written English materials such as textbook, handouts, technical manuals, and other course materials quickly, can understand documents, correspondence, and reports, including complex texts that are written in English, and are capable of comprehending English lectures even when delivered at a rapid pace by their teacher.

The overall result of the student's self-assessment of their discourse competence shows that they perceived themselves as competent ($M = 3.93$, $SD = 0.67$). The result shows that the students have perceived that they are competent in understanding spoken or written text in English. This suggests that the students are perceived to have high knowledge and ability and skill in interpreting and inferring relevant information in communicating using the English language (Tuan, 2017). Salvador (2020) argued that the introduction of the K to 12 basic education curriculum in the Philippines in 2013 aimed to cultivate graduates capable of utilizing language conventions, principles, strategies, and skills to engage with others, comprehend diverse content areas, and navigate their chosen paths (Department of Education, 2016).

The overall mean of 3.87 ($SD = 0.51$) shows that the graduating students have assessed themselves as competent in the English language. This shows that the students have regarded themselves as competent in the grammatical and discourse aspect of using the English language as the K to 12 Language Arts Curriculum is aimed at enhancing the communicative competence as one of its expected outcomes for 21st century learners, thus the anticipation is that K to 12 graduates possess foundational understanding of grammatical principles, comprehend the application of language in various social contexts to facilitate communication, and can effectively combine knowledge of expressions and communicative functions in accordance with discourse principles (Saleh, 2013). It was deemed that the students are confident that their capability to use the English language to communicate is adequate for them to graduate, nonetheless, Roslaniec (2018) proposed that communication remains a challenging skill for many students to attain, particularly in a second language. Even though the Philippines exhibits competence in English, there is a need for increased efforts in enhancing English language instruction and learning, aiming to elevate it as an indispensable skill within the workforce (Cabigon, 2015).

Table 2. English language competency test scores of the BSHM graduating students

Category	Mean	SD	Descriptive Interpretation
Proper Grammar and Usage	25.60	4.30	High
Reading Comprehension	15.21	2.79	High
Total Mean	40.81	5.82	High

Based on the English Language Competency Test Scores of the graduating students, it was shown that the students have a high competency test score in both proper grammar and usage and vocabulary ($M = 25.60$, $SD = 4.30$), and in the reading comprehension test ($M = 15.21$, $SD = 2.79$).

The total mean for the English language competency test is regarded as high ($M = 40.81$, $SD = 5.82$). This shows that the graduating students have a high English language competency as measured by the teacher-made test. The data from the study showed that the graduating manifested a high communicative competence that is essential in the global workplace. This is in accordance to the Psychological Association of the Philippines (2013) findings that the high communicative

competence of graduates can be attributed to one of the focal points of the K to 12 Program, which is to enhance the effective communication skills of the students in all their academic activities and learning areas (Mamba, et. al., 2020). In addition, the English language has a pivotal role and holds significant utility within students' academic endeavors, specifically during the pandemic wherein lecture guides, modules, reading materials, and video lectures from online sources were mostly presented in English, thus, the use of English language for classroom instruction and fulfilling students' class obligations, including presentations, class reporting, and documenting their on-the-job training work, could potentially contribute to the enhancement of their English language abilities (Glew, et al., 2015; Garone and Van de Craen, 2017).

Table 3. Result of the test of significant relationship between the student's self-assessed competency level and the English language competency level of the BSHM graduating students

Pearson-R Correlation Test Result	r-value	p-value
Self-Assessed Competency Level and the English Language Competency Level of the BSHM Graduating Students	.17	.12 ns

The result shows that the students have assessed themselves as competent in the English language and their competency level was also deemed high based on the teacher-made test. This shows that the students perceived themselves as competent and their test result is high, thus, this means that students who are able to judge their own performance could do well in academic assessments (Honicke and Broadbent, 2016; Yan, et. al., 2021). However, the result of the test of relationship indicates that there is no significant connection between the students self-assessed or perceived competency and their actual competence based on the teacher-made test ($r = 0.17$, $p = 0.12$). This implies that students' self-assessed English competency has no significant association with their actual competence which they have acquired and learned in school. This result is supported by Richardson, et. al., (2012) and Honicke and Broadbent, (2016) that in a learning environment, grade goals, goal orientation, and effort regulation have the strongest influences, other than self-perceived competency on

learning outcomes and academic performance (Mamolo and Sugano, 2020). Other factors such as language anxiety, students' attitude and also peers, parental and teacher influences were also contributing to the level of English proficiency among undergraduate students (Arwemi, 2014)

Factors that Affect the English Language Competency of the BSHM Graduating Students

Based on the qualitative data gathered through the open-ended questionnaire, the respondents have stated that various factors have affected their English language competency.

1. Affective Factors

Anxiety

Majority of the participants stated that they are anxious in using the English language because of fear of negative evaluation and fear of negative feedback during class recitations. Their lack of confidence is also considered a reason behind

their nervousness during English classes because they thought that if they make mistakes when speaking the language, they will be laughed at by their classmates.

Participant 1 had stated that the main factor that had affected their English language competency is that they are afraid of being judged when speaking English language, while Participant 2 have mentioned that being laughed at while using the English language had affected his English competency. Participants 5, 6, 9, and 16 have state that it is hard for them to express their ideas and thoughts in English because they are afraid to commit mistakes in front of their teachers and classmates.

Participant 20 stated that *“I can understand and speak English but sometimes I choose not to, because I am afraid that my classmates may judge and laughed me if I make grammatical mistakes when speaking in class”*. Participant 18 had echoed Participant 20’s statements that they felt nervous and afraid during English language learning specifically when there are group discussions in class. They mentioned that if they could not understand certain vocabulary that other students used, they would feel frustrated. Thus, being anxious and nervous interfere with the processes encoding, storage, and retrieval of language. Previous studies have shown that anxiety has been identified as a common emotional reaction in foreign language classrooms. Zheng and Cheng (2018), have stated that most students do not perceive themselves to be anxious in their university settings, either in classrooms or in testing situations. However, they did express their anxiety toward English speaking skills in the classroom specifically toward oral English, thus affecting their speaking skills in the classroom. Anxiety significantly affects English language learning and can be a hindrance to speaking proficiency for certain students. Therefore, it is crucial for teachers to be attentive to this concern during classroom interactions and offer assistance to mitigate second language anxiety (Amini et al., 2014).

Self-Confidence

Another factor that had affected the students’ English competency is their lack of self confidence in using the language. Participants 1, 4, 6, 9, 13 have stated that they tend to shy away from classroom interactions when English language is use. Again, it was mentioned that

they fear that they will hear negative feedback if they commit errors in speaking or using the language.

Participant 25 have also said that *“I can conceptualize the things that I wanted to say in English, but when it’s time for me to speak in front of people, I can’t express what I want to say”*. Participant 22 and 26 have mentioned that their lack of self-confidence in English had been a challenge when it comes to English language learning. This revealed that non-English speaking students lack the confidence and preparation to be verbally and actively engaged in the classroom, furthermore, students may frequently display hesitation in learning to speak English (Tercan and Dikilitas, 2016). Thus, the incorporation of additional speaking activities in classrooms may result to an increased learners’ confidence (Cadiz-Gabejan, 2021), additionally, encouraging learners to collaborate with their classmates in English language tasks and activities will also improve their confidence.

Lack of Motivation

The student’s lack of motivation in learning the language had also impact Participants 7 and 15’s English competency. As Participant 7 have stated that their lack of motivation in learning the language have also affected their ability to be competent in the language, while Participant 15 had said that their lack of passion in reading books and understanding complex reading materials had sometimes hinder their language competency, although they are trying their best to read to improve their proficiency. Nguyen (2019) stated that motivation is considered as one of the fundamental factors in successfully learning a language and has a key role in the development of language skills. Multiple studies have indicated a positive correlation between motivation and success in learning English or any second language. Typically, motivation and a favorable attitude toward language learning complement each other, contributing to learners’ successful acquisition of the English language (Khou & Huynh, 2016).

2. Cognitive Factor

Semantic Familiarity

The students have stated that their difficulty in understanding deep English vocabulary, limited knowledge of English vocabulary, and difficulty in understanding complex English words or

vocabulary had affected their English language competency because semantic familiarity is a key in order for students to understand a language.

Participant 3 have stated that their difficulty in understanding deep and complex English vocabulary had affected their English competency. Participant 4 and 10 have also mentioned that it is hard for them to understand questions in English because they perceived that they lack the comprehension skills needed to understand complex terms. Participant 14, 29, and 30 have also stated that their lack of comprehension of English reading materials had affected their competency because they had difficulties in comprehending the language thus it was a challenge for them to understand learning materials in English. This revealed that it was a challenge for the students to express their thoughts and ideas because of their difficulty in choosing the proper words to be used when speaking and writing in English. Participant 24 and 25 have stated that it is difficult for them to write and to express their ideas in English because of their limited knowledge of the English vocabulary. Hence, it is evident that vocabulary proficiency is pivotal in English language acquisition. In the absence of an adequate vocabulary, students encounter difficulties in understanding others or express their thoughts (González-Fernández & Schmitt, 2017). Studies had also revealed that English language competency depends on the knowledge the students of its vocabulary, thus difficulty in comprehending the language often arises from semantic issues occurring during the encoding or decoding process, where messages are converted into words and ideas (Afzal, 2019). They are one of the main barriers that limit effective communication and English language competency. In a study by Rohmatillah (2014), at the university level, students with limited vocabulary knowledge often exhibit poor academic performance across various language-related courses such as language skills, linguistics, literature, and translation.

3. Growing and Learning Environment

Peers, Parental, and Teacher's Influence

The students have also stated that their peers, parents, and teachers had influenced them in learning the English language. The motivation of students to become proficient in the language was influenced not only by their classmates and friends but also by the significant role played by

teachers, with peer influence ranking as the least motivational factor. Parental encouragement was identified as a primary driver behind the students' efforts in learning English.

As participant 15 had stated, their effort towards learning the English language is a result of their parental influence and encouragement even though teacher is perceived to play the most significant role in motivating students to learn English. Parents exert a strong influence on their children's English learning journey by setting high expectations, fostering belief in their capability to learn, exposing them to new learning experiences, and providing moral support throughout the process (Salameh, 2012; Nair, et. al., 2014). It was also revealed by Ansari (2012) that if parents fail to understand the importance of learning English, this will limit the learning capabilities of the children to a certain degree.

Prior Linguistic Knowledge and Exposure

Another factor that had affected the English language competency of the graduating students is the lack of prior knowledge of the English language and limited language exposure.

Participant 1 and 30 had said that their English language competency is affected by not being familiar with the language, as Filipino is their native language, while Participant 2 stated that *"The factor that had affected my English language competency is my lack of exposure to the language"*. Participant 4, 8, 10, and 12 have mentioned that they don't have much exposure in using the English language to communicate, instead they are more exposed to their native language, thus they are not confident in speaking the language. Participant 29 had also stated that the limited exposure and insufficient time in learning the language have hindered their English competency. Participant 28 had stated that *"It was challenging to learn English because I have limited learning exposure to the language"*. They also pointed out that they don't always use the language that is why it is hard for them to use the language in speaking. Thus, communicative activities in English should be given to these students for them to practice their English skills, specifically in speaking. Rabab'ah (2014) stated that the lack of the natural environment in which students can interact with each other in English can impact the learners' fluency in English (Morali and Murat, 2021).

In addition, the roles of teachers extend beyond imparting implicit knowledge of language structures; they also involve instructing learners in ways that empower them to effectively apply language in real-life situations (Remache, 2016). Studies have also suggested that in order to maximize the students' exposure in the English language, independent reading, storytelling, roleplaying, information gap activities, peer tutoring, and task-based learning approach (Gómez-Palacio, 2010 in Vallejo and Rincon, 2016; Campo, 2016) are effective strategies to be used to improve students' communicative competence (Al Alami, 2014). To enhance students' English language learning, teacher must allocate time beyond regular instruction. Calopez (2019) additionally recommended that teachers should consistently update themselves on new teaching strategies, methods, and approaches. Moreover, they should actively advocate for the English language to foster the development of students' communication skills.

CONCLUSION

This study is aimed at determining the Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management (BSHM) graduating students' preparedness by evaluating their self-assessed English language communicative competence through a survey questionnaire, the English language competency level of the graduating students through a teacher-made test and the factors that affect their readiness in their future careers through an open-ended questionnaire using the Descriptive-Correlational Research Design and Thematic Analysis. The result showed that the graduating students have evaluated themselves as competent in their overall competency in the English language, therefore, it was determined that the students are certain that their ability in the grammatical and discourse aspect in using the English language is sufficient for them to enter the global workforce. The overall scores of the students are also regarded as high. This shows that the graduating students demonstrated a high level of communicative competence, which is crucial in today's global workplace. The result also revealed that although the students perceived themselves as competent and their test result is high, the result of the test of relationship between the self-assessed competency and the English language competency level of the students indicated that there is no significant

association with their self-assessed competency and their actual competence in the English language because there might be factors other than self-perceived competency such as grade goals, goal orientation, effort regulation, language learning anxiety, students' attitude and peers, parental and teacher influences were contributing to the level of English proficiency among students.

Based on the qualitative data gathered through the open-ended questionnaire, the respondents have stated that the factors that have affected their English language competency are affective factors such as anxiety, self-confidence, and motivation. It was also evident that the students showed shyness when communicating with other people, which discouraged them from learning English effectively; cognitive factors such as the comprehensibility of the English language or semantic familiarity wherein it was pointed that lacking of vocabulary knowledge and limited mastery of grammar means that they did not have enough English vocabulary to express their ideas in both written and oral; their growing and learning environment and prior linguistic knowledge and exposure had also become a barrier in their English competency because they failed to practice their English skills regularly. They believed that having a strong foundation in English, acknowledging its significance, and consistently practicing the language would enhance their confidence in their English abilities.

The researcher proposes advocating for communicative language teaching and creating a supportive language environment within and beyond classrooms to address the factors impacting the students' language competency. It is crucial to note that the study relies on a multiple-choice English Competency Test, and the researcher suggests conducting actual speaking and writing skills tests for a more comprehensive assessment.

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