Teachers' practices and strategies and the communicative competence of English as a Second Language (ESL) learners

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Abstract

This study attempted to find out the teaching practices and strategies done by ESL teachers to develop the students' communicative competence. Moreover, it also sought to determine the significant relationship between teachers' practices and strategies with the four components of the communicative competence. This employed the descriptive correlation method of research that made use of survey, proficiency test, and the actual instruction of the teachers as the instruments for data gathering. The respondents of the study were 385 Grade 9 students from Quezon National High School. From the findings, it showed that teachers' practices on planning and preparation were practiced by their teachers to a considerable degree; creation of classroom environment as *always practiced*, instruction as *always practiced* and for professional responsibilities, *always practiced*. In terms of teachers' strategies on course structure and pace, the respondents perceived that the indicators were always practiced by their teachers; while, the selection of teaching and learning activities were *practiced to a considerable degree*. During the administration of the test, most respondents were classified as *very highly competent* in grammatical competence, *very highly competent* in sociolinguistic, *highly competent* for strategic and *very highly competent* in discourse competence. The variables on teachers' practices and strategies show significant negative correlation which mean that the students with higher perception on the components are the students who tend to get lower scores in the communicative competence. Thus, it is concluded that the relationship between the teachers' practices and strategies with the communicative competence has negative, significant relationship.

Keywords: communicative competence; teachers' practices; teachers' strategies

1. Main text

Introduction

For two years, Philippine education underwent distance education. As the students went along the distance learning, the teachers faced educational gaps and challenges, especially the students. Thus, the Department of Education Central Office developed a learning recovery plan framework so that schools will address these gaps at the opening of the school year 2022-2023. Therefore, DepEd Order No. 34 s. 2022 (School Calendar and Activities for School Year 2022-2023) was released, which stated that there will be a resumption of five-day classes despite the threats of the pandemic. Moreover, this order will give ample time for transition for schools. This transition includes five-day in-person classes, a blended learning modality, and full-distance learning.

The learning recovery plan aims to create interventions such as expanding the school calendar, expanding learning time, establishing learning support centers in schools, community-based learning spaces, summer learning remediation programs, and hiring support aides in school to address the learning gaps brought by the pandemic effectively. With the development of the learning recovery plan, teachers must shift

their teaching strategies from the traditional approach to the tailored learning strategies fit for the post-COVID-19 educational era.

Elumbaring (2022) mentioned in his lecture that the transitions to be made in the learning recovery plan will create new stressors and challenges for the students, which include the adjustment from home to school learning environment, learning modality, additional safety and health protocols, and the mix of pleasant and difficult feelings while learning.

Due to the present situation in which there are still existing COVID cases, most schools will adopt the Blended Learning Model. DepEd defines the Blended Learning Model as the learning delivery that combines in-person classes with any combination of online distance learning, modular distance learning, and TV/Radio-based instruction.

Elumbaring (2022) cited that the Blended Learning Models should be adapted for the following reasons. First, to create a smooth transition to the five-day in-person classes and help teachers and students to make adjustments. Second, ensure that teachers and students are protected from the virus threat. Lastly, to allow teachers to focus and have more time to identify the individual needs of the learners.

Despite the challenges faced by our education system in the "New Normal," teachers have exploited ways to shift their teaching strategies and practices to adapt to the new system. Due to the resumption of face-to-face classes, teachers have to move again or modify the pedagogical approaches they did in the past.

With the return of in-person classes, Syengo (2022) discussed the roles of the teacher as part of the post-COVID recovery plan, namely: facilitating flexible delivery of learning methods and applying approaches where students must develop self-learning, innovation, problem-solving, critical thinking, and social skills.

In addition, The World Bank Group (2021) mentioned that the roles of teachers in the recovery plan are implementing large-scale remedial learning at all levels of education, facilitating an adaptable and flexible learning assessment, and incorporating digital technologies in teaching.

Heilporn et al. (2021) disclosed that teachers may adapt these practices in developing communicative competence in a blended learning set-up through the following: providing clear instructions on when, where, and how the activities will be accomplished; creating explicit connections on the tasks between synchronous, and asynchronous modes; ensuring the continuity of lessons/activities throughout the semester, and finally, sustain student engagement in learning.

In addition, Northern Illinois University Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning (2012) cited that teachers' practices can be done through careful planning of activities to be given to students; clear communication to students; adaption of learning multi-modal strategies; alignment of the activities with the course goals; ensuring that the activities are accessible; and peer collaboration and discussion.

The Department of Education imposes teacher practices through webinars, conferences, or school-based training in the Philippine education setting. Thus, it will steer a direction for teachers on how they will prepare their lessons. It cannot be denied that teachers are expected to unpack the suggestions from DepEd and tailor-fit them to their classrooms. As a result, teachers developed instructional strategies to fit the learners' learning capabilities.

Stauffer (2022) recommended these teaching strategies for teachers as follows: using multiple types of instructional materials; incorporating technology for learning reinforcement; trying new teaching techniques, keeping some of the traditional methods in teaching, varying assessments for learning, mixing-up group work styles; and trying the digital curriculum.

Thus, these teaching practices and strategies may help the teacher to develop and strengthen students' communicative competence. Ahmed (2018) defines communicative competence as the students' tacit knowledge of the language and the ability to use it for communication.

He added that for many decades, schools have used the Grammar Translation Method for a long time, whereas he believed that communicative competence should be developed for students to use the language effectively, especially in a communicative setting.

Coventry House International (2020) summarized that each competence (i.e., grammatical, sociolinguistic, strategic, and discourse) should be addressed to develop students' communicative competence. Grammatical competence can be acquired through sufficient structure, vocabulary, and clarity mastery. Sociolinguistic competence can be created by modeling acceptable behavior in a target culture or context. On the other hand, strategic competence can be developed by explicit teaching of ways how to overcome communication gaps. Lastly, discourse competence can be developed by initiating conversations, introducing real-world dialogues, and facilitating situational communication.

As time has passed, more reforms in pedagogy, particularly language instruction, have modified the ways of teaching the language in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms. Thus, these instructions modifications paved the way for teaching communicative competence to EFL and ESL learners.

Background of the Study

The DepEd order No. 034 series of 2022 (2022 School Calendar and Activities for School Year 2022-2023) stated the resumption of five-day in-person classes after two years of distance education program in the Philippines. Moreover, this department order mandates that blended and full distance learning be implemented until October 31, 2022. Thus, starting November 2, 2022, all public and private schools shall have transitioned into full five-day in-person classes.

The Department of Education offered schools options for transitioning to five-day in-person classes. The schools have the freedom to choose which is best suited according to the needs and situation of the local school community. These options include five-day in-person classes, blended learning, and full-distance learning.

In the context of Quezon National High School, since it caters to 10,000 students from Grades 7 to 12, they opted for Blended Learning Modality. Elumbaring (2022) proposed a 2x2x2 Approach Blended Learning Model. This model entails that the school will adopt the following blended models:

Blended Model No. 1: Face-to-face Class and Online Distance Learning
Blended Model No. 2: Face-to-face class and Printed Modular Distance Learning

Moreover, two tasks, one written and one performance output, should be given to students weekly to adhere to the call of academic ease; thus, the 2x2x2 Approach was derived.

In catering to a large number of students in a fifty (50) class size per teacher, students are divided into Set A and Set B. Whereas, Set A students will report to school on Tuesday and Thursday and conduct online or modular tasks at home on Wednesday and Friday. On the other hand, Set B students will report to school on Wednesday and Friday and comply with their online or modular tasks at home on Tuesday and Thursday.

To help the students with this transition, students enrolled in the online modality last school year adapted the Blended Model No. 1; students enrolled in the printed modular modality the previous school year will adapt the Blended Model No. 2.

To ease education delivery, the Department of Education released the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) as a guide for instructing students. In particular, the grade level standards for Grade 9 state that "the learner demonstrates communicative competence through his/her understanding of British-American Literature including Philippine Literature and other text types for a deeper appreciation of

Philippine Culture and those of other countries." Thus, this standard from Philippine education emphasizes the development of the student's communicative competence.

The new trend and transition in the Philippine education system, as described in the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) of the Department of Education, particularly for English subjects, is to develop the learners' communicative competence. The researcher decided to study the current situation of the teachers in handling English as a Second Language (ESL) classes by looking into the instructional practices and strategies of the teachers and how they develop the student's communicative competence.

Theoretical Framework

Breeden (2016) cited in his article on Stephen Krashen's Monitor Model consisted of hypotheses on the learners' language acquisition. He believed that language acquisition is subconscious and results from informal and natural communication. Though the learners' parents did not directly teach them the language, the learner acquired the language through listening and imitation of the language. Moreover, language learning is also conscious and driven by more error correction. This happens when a learner starts learning the language in school as guided by the teachers. Thus, language acquisition is taught explicitly and implicitly while the learners interact with their school environment. He also added that grammatical structures are acquired in a predictable order. Thus, as the learners go on with their studies, they learn from their teachers the grammatical patterns and examples of those grammatical patterns. These patterns are taught through imitation, drills, and exercises.

Language acquisition occurs with comprehensible input. The input happens when a learner hears or listens to a language slightly above their level. Exposure to films, stories, talking with people older than them, and conversation with adults may give the learner input on a language. Thus, language acquisition is also "monitored." A monitor in the language is defined as anything that may correct the learners' language performance. This happens when a teacher implicitly or explicitly converts the learners' responses or utterances of the language. Moreover, this "monitor" provides opportunities for learners not just to convey meaning but also to communicate the language correctly.

As Quist (2021) cited, Hymes proposed the Communicative Competence Theory. Hymes proposed a model for analyzing a communicative event in a socio-cultural context. This model indicates the communication parameters on what, when, whom, and how to say the words in a communicative setting. Furthermore, Bagarić and Djigunović (2007) mentioned that Hymes' theory of communicative competence does not limit itself to grammatical competence alone; rather, an ability to use grammatical competence in various communicative situations. In addition, communicative competence develops the capacity among learners to use the language with appropriateness to the context. Hence, Merza (2022) discussed that Hymes' Communicative Competence theory has four components: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. He discussed that grammatical competence focused on the language's sound, words, and sentence structure. Sociolinguistic competence refers to mastering cultural rules and their use within the context.

On the other hand, discourse competence refers to the speakers' ability to use the language in communication, which involves different people and situations thus, being able to express oneself in a given language. (Leverkuhn, 2022). Lastly, strategic competence refers to the speakers' knowledge of communicating language in the intended meaning. (Tarone, 2022). To sum up, these four competencies make up communicative competence.

Conceptual Framework

In her study, Tarone (2022) cited that language instruction should encourage learners to use the language through communicative competence. The four components of communicative competence (e.g., grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic) should provide opportunities for language practice and

actual use of the language. Moreover, a few of the best practices should include using communicative classroom materials and exercises; and providing direct or indirect instruction to encourage students to convey information and use communicative strategies successfully.

The article Communicative Competence – Supporting English Language Learners (2022) discussed that communicative competence among learners is developed not through teaching the language in isolation, repetition, and memorization but through students' interactions with meaningful contexts. Thus, the goal of developing communicative competence is to develop the learner's ability to understand and use the language in an appropriate communicative environment.

It cannot be denied that the development of students' communicative competence is reflected in the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) as developed by the Department of Education. The grade-level standards in English are to build communicative competence through understanding and appreciation of the given particular literature or other text types. (DepEd Commons, 2020)

The researcher conceptualized teaching practices and teaching strategies that may affect the learners' communicative competence as reflected in the Department of Education's Grade Level Standards in English and the MELCs. Thus, this research was meant to describe the relationship between the teachers' instructional practices and strategies and how this help develops the student's communicative competence.

Independent Variables   **Dependent Variables**

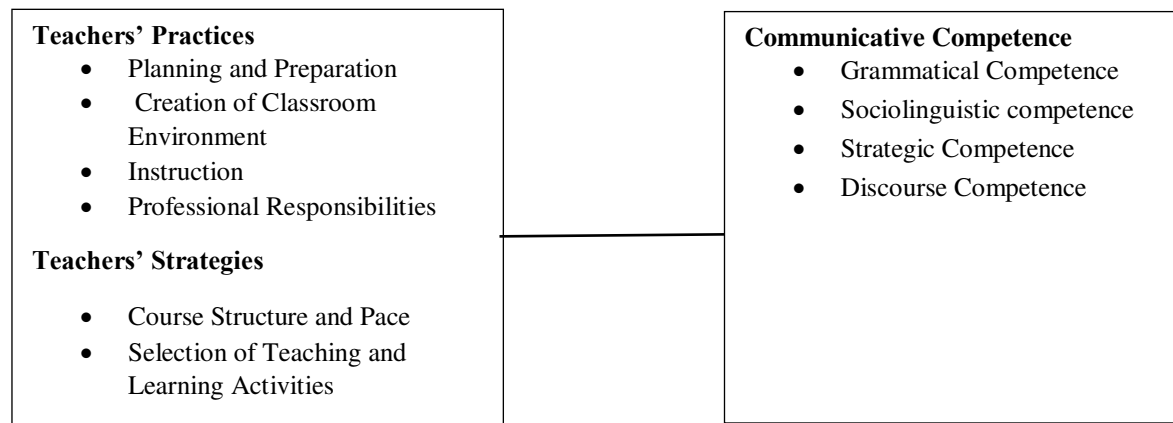|	
Teachers' Practices • Planning and Preparation • Creation of Classroom Environment • Instruction • Professional Responsibilities **Teachers' Strategies** • Course Structure and Pace • Selection of Teaching and Learning Activities	**Communicative Competence** • Grammatical Competence • Sociolinguistic competence • Strategic Competence • Discourse Competence

Figure 1. Research Paradigm

Figure 1 shows the relationship between Teachers' Practices, Strategies, and Communicative Competence. The teachers' practices and strategies may be a factor in developing students' communicative competence, particularly the four components of communicative competence: grammatical, sociolinguistic, strategic, and discourse competence.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to identify the different teaching practices and strategies by the English language teachers from Quezon National High School as they developed the students' communicative competence in English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms.

1.   What is the perception of the respondents on the teachers' practices in terms of:
1.1   . Planning and Preparation;
1.2   . Creation of Classroom Environment;
1.3   . Instruction; and
1.4   . Professional Responsibilities?
2.   What is the perception of the respondents to the teachers' strategies in terms of:
2.1. Course Structure and Pace and
2.2. Selection of Teaching and Learning Activities?
3.   What is the score of the respondents in the communicative competence test in terms of:
3.1   . Grammatical Competence;
3.2   . Sociolinguistic Competence;
3.3   . Strategic Competence; and
3.4   . Discourse Competence?
4.   Is there a significant relationship between the teachers' practices and learners' communicative competence?
5.   Is there a significant relationship between the teachers' strategies and learners' communicative competence?
6.   What enhancement program can be recommended for the improvement of communicative competence?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between the teachers' practices and the learners' communicative competence.
2. There is no significant relationship between the teachers' strategies and the learners' communicative competence.

Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study was limited to the different teaching practices and strategies employed by 12 Grade 9 English language teachers in developing the learners' communicative competence in Quezon National High School, Lucena City, for the school year 2022-2023. The variables covered the parameters such as planning and preparation; creation of classroom environment; instruction; and professional responsibilities for teachers' practices. On the other hand, the variables under the teacher's strategies were course structure, pace, and selection of teaching and learning activities. A correlation was made between teachers' practices and strategies and the respondents' scores in the communicative competence test. The respondents were students from 24 sections who were selected through cluster sampling. The communicative competence test was limited to a pen-and-paper proficiency test to determine the learner's current level in each component of the communicative competence. The topics covered in the proficiency test were gathered from the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) for English Grades 7-9. The Department of Education Central Office issued the MELCs for the current school year. The time frame of this study was from February to May 2023.

Significance of the Study

The researcher conducted this study because it would deem benefit the following:

To the **English language teachers**, it will serve as a benchmark on how they will deliver instruction in English under the continuous Learning Recovery Plan imposed by the Department of Education. The study results will help them plan the topics to be discussed during their Learning Action Cell (LAC) Sessions in

their school. Moreover, this study's results will help them choose and employ different practices and strategies while handling their English language classes.

To other teachers who handle different subject areas, this will serve as a guide in teaching. The teaching practices and strategies can be modified according to the discipline or subject area being handled.

For **future researchers** conducting parallel studies, this will also serve as a reference for future research papers that can help them expand their horizons about the survey.

Definition of Terms

To have a clearer and better understanding of the terms used in the research, the following terms are hereby defined conceptually and operationally:

Creation of Classroom Environment. It is a teaching practice in which the teacher sets the classroom environment appropriate to the learners. This can be done through the teacher's positive disposition in the classroom and teacher-student interaction.

Communicative Competence. This is a theory developed by Dell Hymes in 1966, which is defined as the ability to use language in an appropriate communicative setting. Communicative competence has four components: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence, and discourse competence.

Course Structure and Pace. This refers to the teachers' strategy of presenting a clear, continuous, and unified course structure to achieve the desired outcomes in learning.

Discourse Competence. It is one of the components of communicative competence, which refers to the learners' mastery of understanding, and producing texts using the four macro skills (i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Furthermore, it deals with the learners' skills in using reference, ellipsis, cohesion, and coherence in different written or spoken texts.

Grammatical Competence. The term refers to the speakers' ability to recognize and produce the grammatical structures of the language and to use them effectively in communication. This competence includes the skill in vocabulary, grammar rules, punctuation, spelling, and syntax.

Instruction. It is a teaching practice that refers to the actual instruction and lesson execution made by the teacher inside the classroom.

Planning and Preparation. The phrase refers to the teacher's practice of tactful designing and careful selection and preparation of the learning materials appropriate to the target level of learners.

Professional Responsibilities. These are teaching practices in which the teacher demonstrates professional behavior in keeping their responsibilities in the classroom by reflecting on how their instruction impacted students, creating collaboration with parents or other stakeholders, engaging with colleagues, and staying updated with the school's policy.

Second Language Learners. They refer to primary, secondary, and tertiary learners who speak and practice English as a second language.

Sociolinguistic Competence. This refers to the speakers' knowledge of using the language conforming to sociocultural rules. Moreover, it deals with the speakers' appropriate use of the language for different communicative functions.

Strategic Competence. This refers to the speaker's compensatory strategies in case of communicative difficulty. Speakers may use these strategies, such as using references, paraphrasing, requesting repetition, and using the gap fillers in the language.

Teachers' Practices. They refer to the teachers' ways of designing a course or lesson to achieve students' learning outcomes.

Teachers' Strategies. They are teachers' techniques for delivering learning to their students to achieve the learning objectives for that day.

Literature Review

Teacher's Practices in Developing Communicative Competence

Sabri (2018) defined communicative competence as "competency to communicate." As defined by Canale and Swain, Sabri mentioned that communicative competence has four components: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence, and discourse competence. This competency can be oral, written, or non-verbal. Furthermore, this term refers to the knowledge and skill to use language in real-life situations to fulfill communicative needs. He added that communicative competence requires not only the isolated rules of grammar but also acquiring skills and using the language in appropriate contexts or situations.

In the article *Communicative Competence* from Learn Alberta (2022), they defined the different components of communicative competence. Grammatical competence refers to the speaker's knowledge of vocabulary, grammar rules, spelling, punctuation, and syntax. On the other hand, strategic competence refers to the speaker's skill in overcoming communication gaps, planning and assessing communication effectiveness, achieving conversational fluency, and modifying texts that conform to the audience and purpose. Meanwhile, sociolinguistic competence refers to the speaker's knowledge of the social rules of the language (e.g., formality, politeness, and directness); cultural references (e.g., idioms, expressions, and background knowledge); and non-verbal behaviors. Lastly, discourse competence refers to the speaker's skill in connecting ideas using patterns and cohesive and transitional devices.

Bagarić and Djigunović (n.d.) defined communicative competence as a simple term for "competence to communicate." In their study, they included the different perspectives of linguists on the concept of communicative competence.

Noam Chomsky first defined communicative competence in his book, *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*. Chomsky believed that communicative competence should include the speaker's knowledge of grammar rules. On the other hand, Hymes thought that communicative competence is the speaker's ability to use the language in the social context. Meanwhile, Widdowson believed that communicative competence should use language to create meaning.

Furthermore, Canale and Swain, cited by Bagarić, and Djigunović (n.d.), believed three principles exist in developing communicative competence among learners. One, there should be knowledge of the underlying grammatical principles. Next, using the language in the social context to fulfill the communicative function and combining utterances and communicative tasks according to the discourse principles. Moreover, teachers should aim for the holistic development of the learner's communicative competence. With the different views and notions on communicative competence, it is, to sum up that the goal of developing

learners' communicative competence is to help them use the language in appropriate contexts and social functions.

Teachers' practices in handling language classes may play a factor in developing students' communicative competence. Banks (n.d.) defined teachers' practices as designing a course or lesson to achieve student learning outcomes. These practices aim to have effective instruction leading to student achievement. Moreover, teachers' practices are divided into four domains: planning and preparation, creation of classroom environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities.

De Jaeghere et al. (2021) cited in their study that teaching practices are teachers' ways of preparing their instruction. They involve content knowledge, pedagogical practices, and teacher-student interactions. They reiterated that the way teachers interact with their students and provide feedback influence the students' learning. Moreover, teachers should learn to include the curriculum in their lesson plans, engage students with the activities, create a conducive classroom environment, and teach students using metacognitive strategies. They added the significance of studying the teacher's practices to determine how they affect student's learning and performance. It was found out that from their studies, the common teacher's practices were explicitly teaching the content, building a positive classroom environment, helping students think independently, and engaging teacher-student interactions.

Chaturvedi et al. (2021) emphasized that effective teaching practices mean teaching effectiveness. They suggested a range of teaching practices can be adapted, such as integrating digital technology into teaching, allowing students to communicate with their peers, applying experiential learning (learning by doing), and promoting skills development among the learners. They found out in their study that many efforts, teacher training, and partnerships should be done.

Malilin et al. (2021) supported that teaching practices explore the impact of teaching and improve education measures. Normally, the indicator of teachers' practices can be done by integrating the curriculum into preparing lessons, including thinking skills to be taught to students, adapting flexible means of assessing students, integrating digital technology in lesson preparation, and preparing authentic or real-life assessments.

OECD (2009) added that teachers' practices may influence classroom learning and student outcomes. Teacher's practices may be done through close monitoring, adequate pacing of lessons, effective classroom management, creating well-structured lessons, providing clarity to the classes, and giving informative and encouraging feedback. Thus, teachers' practices can be classified into three dimensions: clear and well-structured classroom management, student orientation (instruction), and cognitive activation (mastery of the content). Teachers can incorporate these as the best practices in school: collaboration with colleagues, building professional learning communities, participating in school development, and evaluating the working conditions. As defined, teachers' practices are ways of designing a course or lesson that aims at the learners' outcomes. Developing the student's communicative competence entails the holistic development of the learner. This holistic development should include the learner's grammatical, sociolinguistic, strategic, and discourse competence. It is important to address these components to develop a communicative competent learner.

Merza (2022) developed a scale to assess students' communicative competence. He classified the learners' competence according to the range of 1 to 10. Scores of 9 to 10 were classified as Very Highly Competent (VHC), scores of 6 to 8 as Highly Competent (HC), scores of 3 to 5 as Moderately Competent (MC), and scores of 0 to 2 as Not Competent (NC).

Teacher's Practices: Planning and Preparation

Banks elaborated that under planning and preparation, teachers need to assess the student's current level of competence in a subject matter being taught. Furthermore, after the assessment, teachers must determine how students will reach the expected competence level during planning, teaching, and assessing. It is expected for teachers that after evaluating the current students' level and progress, teachers have to create the appropriate lesson objectives for students. Moreover, units, lessons, and activities should be designed and

aligned to attain the lesson objectives. Lastly, teachers must plan and develop assessment tools to determine students' progress and mastery.

Moreover, he elaborated that these domains can be tailored to teaching English. He discussed that domain one (planning and preparation) could be done by selecting rich and meaningful texts for reading and writing; incorporating the learning standards as the basis for curricular sequence; developing appropriate scaffolding techniques for students' comprehension of readers; and creating authentic and meaningful learning tasks.

However, Papa-Gusho and Biçaku-Çekrezi (2015) cited in their study that factors may affect the teacher's planning and preparation that may affect the students in the classroom. They cited these factors as effective planning skills and effective implementation of lesson plans. They mentioned that effective planning skills from the teacher should be done through the teachers' clear idea of what they intend to instruct for the rest of the school year. They suggested that teachers should continually explore multiple data and real-world sources that will cater to differentiated instruction to meet the different needs and interests of the students. Thus, teachers need to have a clear and logical plan to make room for content mastery, pacing, transitions, and attainability of learning goals.

Furthermore, effective implementation of lesson plans entails that teachers should know about their intended activities. They must provide opportunities for the learners to reactivate their background knowledge and lead students to practice the acquired knowledge. They asserted that the central theme of planning and preparation is how the lessons are taught smoothly without digressions, diversions, and interruptions. Thus, it is challenging for educators to prevent misbehavior, manage lesson movements, and maintain group focus.

Teacher's Practices: Creation of Classroom Environment

The second domain discussed by Banks (n.d.) disclosed the structuring and creating a conducive classroom environment. Teachers must influence the classroom environment that stimulates the students' physical, emotional, and intellectual risk-taking skills. They have to instill high learning expectations, keep the students engaged, communicate the importance and purpose of the tasks to the students, and maximize the learning time through the effective use of routines, procedures, and behavioral expectations.

On the contrary, Papa-Gusho and Biçaku-Çekrezi (2015) mentioned that factors may affect the creation of a classroom environment. These factors are: organizing the classroom and teaching material; and time management. They noted that the physical classroom layout may affect the students, such as the arrangement and routines needed in the class. Classroom decorations may benefit or affect students' moods in the classroom. They found out that if the physical structure of the students' chairs in the school makes it difficult for a teacher to circulate through the room, the student's behavior will be less likely to be responsible for doing the tasks in the classroom. It is a challenge for the teachers to make their rooms have easy access to all parts of the room, arrange students' desks that allow learning engagement, and minimize disruptions caused by traffic areas near the space. Moreover, they mentioned that the teachers' wise use of time could be more advantageous to sustain learners' interest and retention.

Teacher's Practices: Instruction

The third domain, teachers' practices, as defined by Banks (n.d.), encompasses the teacher's instruction in the classroom. The suggested instructional practices that a teacher would do in the school are: ensuring that the students are engaged while achieving the lesson objectives, clear communication with the students through high-order questions, keeping appropriate adjustments to the lesson to ensure understanding among the students, and keeping students' data (i.e., results, scores, and performance level) for future planning and assessment.

Alber (2015) supported that the best practices a teacher can integrate into their classroom should include clarification of the subject matter to the students, facilitation of the classroom discussion, initiation of feedback to students, facilitation of formative assessments, inclusion of metacognitive strategies, and

collaboration with colleagues.

Furthermore, instruction in the English language can be done through incorporating literacy practices (e.g., language development, phonemic awareness, comprehension, vocabulary, writing, speaking, and listening); providing opportunities for independent reading; strategic ways of building comprehension, engaging students with rich, meaningful, and text-based questions; encouraging self-directed student learning, and allowing students to explore and analyze the texts.

Meanwhile, Padhi (2021) found in their study that the teachers' personality, knowledge, communication skills, and behavior toward the students may be a factor in their instruction. He believed a teacher's personality has good characteristics, such as speech, skills, and physical attributes that contribute to the students' effective learning. In addition, instruction is guaranteed to be effective if a teacher has mastery, knowledge, and good communication skills and treats the students with compassion and cooperation.

Teacher's Practices: Professional Responsibilities

The fourth domain for teachers' practices, as defined by Banks (n.d.), is keeping their professional responsibilities in the classroom. This can be done through personal reflection on how their instruction impacted the students, creating collaboration with the parents or other stakeholders of the school community, engaging cooperation with colleagues, and staying updated with the school's policy, instructional shifts, and research on their subject area.

Kharbach (2021) suggested that the teachers' best practices to integrate in classrooms are, first, co-teaching. Co-teaching involves teachers comparing and sharing their teaching practice. It helps teachers enable their reflective practice to enrich and expand their professional development. This co-teaching will help teachers reach their colleagues with more experience and knowledge. Next, keeping a teaching portfolio will help teachers reflect on their teaching accountability. It enables teachers to look back on their teaching progress over the years. Third, teachers must conduct formative assessments to check their teaching efficacy occasionally. These formative assessments should answer the questions like what part of the lesson was understood or too difficult for the students. Formative assessments serve as feedback from students. Fourth, since it is timely, hybrid education is now encouraged. This hybrid education combines physical or on-campus teaching with virtual forms of instruction. Finally, teachers should empower the student's voices in the classroom. Since the learner is the center of education, students should be provided with a responsible expression of their opinion and take part in the classroom decision-making process.

In addition to the article, 12 Effective Teaching Practices and Their Benefits (2022) from Indeed Editorial Team, they provided a list of teaching practices teachers can do. Accordingly, teachers have to enjoy and have a passion for teaching. Thus, teachers must reflect their passion for teaching to fuel students' motivation. Next, teachers must create a positive learning environment by displaying a friendly and supportive demeanor. Then, teachers have to connect with their students. Students' interests should be the basis of their lessons. Teachers should prepare their lessons ahead of time. Thus, managing their weekly schedule to maximize their time is important. Teachers should use clear language during instruction by simplifying the language or instruction to the class.

Moreover, they have to set reasonable expectations for the students. Furthermore, teachers must find appropriate sources for the content to be taught. More importantly, when classes go wrong, teachers must be flexible and resourceful in finding solutions. They can also offer practical applications or technology to aid students' studies. Finally, teachers must reflect on their teaching practices by listening to feedback from students and stakeholders and checking and monitoring students' progress.

In the Philippine context, these domains of professional responsibilities are further mentioned in the Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS) for teachers. These domains include *Content Knowledge and Pedagogy*, *Learning Environmen*t; *Diversity of Learners Curriculum, Planning & Assessment and Reporting; Community Linkages and Professional Engagement & Personal Growth and Professional Development* and *Plus Factor.*

Gewasari et al. (2017) found the different factors affecting the teacher's professional responsibility in their study. These factors include teachers' job satisfaction, achievement, motivation, competence, and principals' leadership. They mentioned that if a teacher is satisfied in her job, given merits or awards, motivated to do her tasks, competent in the job description, and satisfied with the school principal's leadership, teachers are likely to perform more and achieve more in their teaching profession.

Teacher's Practices on Developing Grammatical Competence

The Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), as mandated by the Department of Education no.42 s.2017, indicates that a teacher's professional practice in using the English language is done through the proficient use and mastery of the Mother Tongue and the English language. In line with this, the articles below suggest how teachers will develop students' grammatical competence.

Kruty et al. (2021) believe that a teacher can develop the grammatical competence of a learner. Teachers should remember that student's interests should be considered while writing the lesson plan for learners. They may start through picture descriptions or role-playing. Then, explicit grammar instruction comes in. This involves the inclusion of subject-verb agreement, punctuation, and verb forms.

Tulio, et al. (n.d.). Believed that English language teachers should view developing students' grammatical competence like those as an architect's work. The language itself is a "building"; words are considered as the "building blocks,"; and grammar will be an "architect's plan." Thus, proper planning and preparation of grammar lessons should be done to develop students' grammatical competence. They added that various text types may help students learn English grammar without skipping the grammar lesson.

Moreover, teachers should make proper corrections on students' language mistakes to correct them and not bring trauma for learners to learn the language. It was evident in their study that good teaching practice is peer correction among students. They found out that instead of teachers directly correcting grammatical mistakes, learners prefer to correct their peers' papers without names. This practice fosters students' cooperation and sense of responsibility.

Thus, Lugoloobi-Nalunga (2017) cited that teachers' practice on developing grammatical competence needs teachers' preparation of learning aids and exercises. Moreover, teachers should provide time and opportunity for students to monitor their grammatical skills and grammatical mistakes through the help of peers with the guidance of teachers.

On the other hand, the article *Teacher's Corner: Teaching Grammar for Communicative Competence* (2016) suggested that the first step in developing the students' grammatical competence is explicitly teaching the grammar. However, explicit rules for teaching grammar should not stop there. To develop the learners' grammatical competence, the teacher has to allow students to practice that target grammar. This time, there will be a shift in developing accuracy during the beginning stage and fluency at the practice stage. Inclusion and preparation of speech activities, role plays, and discussions in the teacher's plan should be made.

This was supported by an article *Best Practices for Teaching Grammar* (2021), that some best practices in developing the grammatical competence of students are teaching and assessing grammatical skills at a time, emphasizing the usage of grammar, scaffolding grammatical learning through practice and application, and teach grammar with authentic writing.

Teaching the language does not stop there, as it should be assessed to prove students' grammatical competence. The article *Teaching Grammar in Context* (2019) suggested a teaching practice that grammar needs to be assessed. This assessment provides feedback on the current grammatical skill of the students. Assessment may include writing. Thus, grammar assessments should not aim to correct but test the skill.

Case (2023) mentioned that giving examples of different structures of sentences creates opportunities for students to clarify meaning to develop students' grammatical competence. However, students are often confused about how to give examples in formal and informal settings. They are also confused about the plurality of nouns and the mixing of ideas in language expression.

Teacher's Practices on Developing Sociolinguistic Competence

Koay (2021) suggested that teachers should include international and local contexts in their instructional materials as they plan the lesson. For example, in speaking activities, the global context that can be included is giving directions on an overseas trip or introducing oneself to a university exchange program. For local context, a good example can be giving directions to a tourist. Another example that can be done in lesson planning is integrating politeness and social rules in speaking activities. Moreover, teachers may play videos or audio lessons and let the learners analyze the politeness and etiquette shown in the video or audio lessons.

Mede and Dikilitaş (2015) suggested that teachers should include the explicit and implicit teaching of culture to students in their lesson planning. This is done by presenting cultural models and discussing them implicitly or explicitly. Another method is the integration of speech acts (i.e., requesting, declaring, inviting, advising, etc.) in teaching.

Coventry House International – OnTESOL (2020) stated that the best teaching practice in developing students' sociolinguistic competence is the teacher modeling the proper behavior. Teachers should model acceptable communication and avoid taboo words. The article believes that doing this will help students to develop their sociolinguistic competence. On the contrary, teachers do not find time to teach the sociolinguistic aspect of the language for the following reasons. First, language teachers often think they do not have time for teaching culture due to the time constraints in the curriculum. Next, teachers do not have the confidence to teach the socio-cultural aspect. Lastly, teachers have to deal with the differences of the learners; thus, it is difficult to guide the learners to appreciate the target culture.

Meanwhile, Putra (2021) believed that the best way to include sociolinguistic competence in a lesson plan is to preserve the teachers' and learners' natural context and culture. Thus, learners' local needs for communication must be taken into consideration. It may also be helpful if teachers show the differences between their own existing culture and the target language's culture, translate polite expressions to the target language, and facilitate a role play in the actual communicative situation. It is noted that with these practices, it is best to base the development of sociolinguistic competence on the existing educational curriculum.

In the Philippine context, the Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS) for teachers with the integration of sociolinguistic competence is teachers being able to manage learners' behavior by applying positive and non-violent discipline. This can be done through counseling or guiding the students toward the proper behavior to be displayed in the classroom. Moreover, teachers must revisit the curriculum requirements in teaching and developing the students' sociolinguistic competence. In this case, the Philippines' Department of Education imposed the use of Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) as a guide of the Philippine education curriculum standard.

Teacher's Practices on Developing Strategic Competence

In teaching the strategic competence of the learners, Kim (2015) cited in her study on strategic competence included the practices in teaching, namely: incorporating students' interest, simulating the real environment through role-playing, identifying the fillers and repetitions used in oral and written texts, and practicing the speech acts.

Koay (2021) added that teachers should expect learners to struggle to express the language. Teachers should use this problem to develop the learners' strategic competence. One practice that can be made in the classroom is preparing students for that situation. Teachers may prepare activities related to their experiences or interests, encourage the learners and teach them how to overcome the communication gap. Thus, teachers must prepare lessons to develop the learner's paraphrasing skills. In addition, students can ask questions to clarify whether they get the speaker's message correctly. Moreover, a teacher may include in their plan the exposure of the students to media such as TV shows, radio broadcasts, and news.

Ne'matillayevna and Bokijonovna (2022) supported the inclusion of teaching how to repair communicative breakdowns. Students must know generalization, paraphrasing, and circumlocution. This can

be done through explicit teaching that generalization can be used if the learners do not know the exact word by saying *things* in case they do not see the *needle*. Paraphrasing can be expressed by declaring the function of *something used to slice fruits and vegetables* if they do not know the word *knife*. Lastly, circumlocution is done by giving the synonyms of the target language. Thus, Selin (2014) found out in his study that the first step in achieving strategic competence is to define the lesson's objectives or goals, followed by the proper lesson design. Teachers should observe the right pace and assist the students in the difficult part of the lesson during instruction. Giving diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments can be done to the learners in this phase. Teachers may design simulated situations in which the students could act and present their skills in strategic competence. Teachers may also use technology to aid their instruction. Hence, the Northwest Augmentative Communication Society (2021) mentioned that to develop strategic competence, the skills to be prepared include giving clues or non-verbal cues in case of the unavailability of words to say and using images or pictures to compensate for communication.

Moreover, Coventry House International (2020) cited that teachers should allow learners to repeat and clarify to develop students' strategic competence. They should be patient in dealing with students who struggle to overcome communication gaps. Moreover, teachers should remember that our learners initially did not understand our intended message. Teachers should tell the learners that repeating some part of the message is okay. Hence, Al-Sheikhly et al. (2020) proposed in their study that providing remediation for students help to improve their communication skill. They emphasized that to make remediation successful, a proper diagnosis of needs, development of the individualized plan, and providing feedback and reassessment should be done.

Teacher's Practices on Developing Discourse Competence

Discourse competence is the skill of connecting ideas in communication. Teachers may include teaching the discourse by introducing them to the lessons in conjunctions and transitional devices. Since they know that junctions and transitional devices connect the words, phrases, clauses, and ideas, learners may work in pairs or groups to join the pictures in the sentences.

Coventry House International (2020) defines discourse competence as the learners' mastery of the language that permits them to communicate in different communicative settings. Students who are discourse competent can go beyond the two-word to cohesive and coherent statements. They mentioned that a teacher's practice in developing the learners' discourse competence is to prepare activities and expose the latter to different dialogues in different communicative situations. Thus, students should be encouraged to ask questions or communicate their words with relevance. Moreover, when students are exposed to these dialogues, they should be given opportunities to express themselves through discussions or other oral activities, such as oral information, to develop discourse competence.

Lașcu (2022) defined discourse competence as the learners' capacity to arrange, structure, and link sentences to produce coherent and cohesive texts. Teachers should prepare, select, and design activities that promote ordering sentences according to topic, cause and effect, and sequencing; structure discourses according to thematic organization; style and register; achieve coherence and cohesion; and achieve rhetorical effectiveness. Moreover, teachers should provide opportunities for students to interpret and establish their connection between the text and the context. Thus, the selection of appropriate literary texts for analysis can be done.

Furthermore, she believed that few of the best teachers' practices should propose tasks focused on the development of skills necessary for effective comprehension and perception; develop strategies to establish coherence and cohesion; use bimodal instructional aid (visual and auditory presentation); encourage learners to prepare a fragmented part of the texts and turn it into something creative; and foster continuity of understanding the texts. Thus, teachers should prepare students to activate their knowledge and skills for textual analysis, which is the core of discourse competence.

Koay (2021) referred to discourse as how language is used in social contexts. The two main aspects

of discourse competence are coherence and cohesion. Cohesion refers to connecting ideas using conjunctions and adverbial phrases. Coherence, conversely, refers to conveying clear and logical ideas such as cause-and-effect, problem-solution, or compare and contrast. Moreover, discourse competence also refers to familiarity with different genres of texts, namely: conversations, reports, and interviews. Thus, a discourse-competent learner can arrange words, phrases, and sentences to create an appropriately structured text on a particular genre. Hence, teachers should design or prepare activities that connect the sentences using conjunctions or cohesive devices.

Konysova (2016) cited teaching practices to develop the learners' discourse competence. The teacher may include the target language skills in oral or written through the preparation, selection, and design of the following: identifying clauses with thesis statements; oral discourse patterns (normal progression of negotiation of meaning within the conversation); written discourse patterns (normal progression of negotiation of meaning within printed texts or formal letters); oral presentations to be made in the classroom; appropriate reading materials as a springboard for writing; and various writing activities in a specific situation.

Moreover, students should know how to accomplish their activities. Teachers must explain the concepts and purpose of the activities clearly. Encouraging students to ask relevant questions is a good way of developing discourse competence.

In relation to Nordal (2016) mentioned in his study that teaching practices in developing the learners' communicative competence should focus on selecting, preparing, and designing activities that teach discourse. When teachers prepare instructional plans, teachers should integrate the use of formal and informal language, creating of drills and exercises for coherence and cohesion, selection of appropriate reading materials such as stories and novels, preparation of materials that target the prosodic features of spoken language, oral presentations for agreeing/disagreeing, interrupting and other speech acts. He added that teachers should prepare listening materials and let students infer the speaker's intentions. Critical thinking or understanding materials can be selected according to students' grade level.

Teacher's Strategies for Developing Communicative Competence

Teachers' strategies are defined as teachers' techniques to deliver learning to their students to achieve the learning objectives for that day. (Health and Life Skills, 2002).

Heilporn et al. (2021) defined that teachers' strategies are divided into course structure and pace; and the selection of teaching and learning materials. They believed that teachers who present a clear, continuous, and unified course structure are key to achieving the desired learning outcomes. This involves the when, what, and where activities should be completed. On the other hand, the proper selection of teaching and learning materials to be utilized during the lesson should also be considered to achieve the target results.

Cowan (2021) also defined teachers' strategies as methods, techniques, procedures, and processes used during instruction. It is multi-dimensional, and its effectivity depends on the context to which they are applied. These strategies' effect is determined by how the teachers use the right strategy for a target group of students. The right strategy will help students to learn the desired course content and achieve the intended learning outcomes. Hence, there is no single strategy that can assure better learning outcomes. A variety of strategies should be applied to the classroom setting.

With a multitude of strategies, Dean (2019) emphasized that many strategies can work in a classroom. There could be no single strategy that will work for the entire students. Hence, teachers may make use of an effective combination of strategies. Various teaching strategies provide learners with opportunities to perform well in class. Furthermore, teachers must consider the preferences and the time limit when using these strategies.

First, it is suggested that teachers have to serve as models as they teach. Teachers must demonstrate the target skills so that students will imitate or obtain ideas for the modeled behavior.

As supported by an article published by The Ohio State University (n.d.), these are the teaching strategies teachers can use. They are the following: constant communication between teachers and students,

uploading instructional content (video, lectures, slides, etc.), feedback on the student's progress, providing opportunities for students to collaborate with peers, providing students access to instructional information, using a variety of assessment tools to assess students' learning, explaining the objectives of the lesson, and providing assistance for students.

Teacher's Strategies: Course Structure and Pace

The article, *Improving Pacing: The Rhythm of the Classroom* (n.d.), cited that the factors that may affect the teacher's strategy on course structure and pace are the following: pace, method of presentation, student's attention span, and structuring of the lessons. The article believes that target students' outcomes will likely be achieved if a teacher has the right lesson pace. If a teacher has interactive and engaging lessons presented, students' interests and retention will be higher. If the teacher is aware of the student's attention span, the teacher will explore many ways to sustain attention and interest in learning. Lastly, if the teacher knows how to structure or "chunk" the lessons, learning objectives and outcomes will be more likely to be achieved.

Mitchell (2020) added more teaching strategies in her article, such as familiarizing concepts to be taught, simplifying the given tasks to students, keeping the instruction flexible, organizing the lessons to be given, and conciseness in providing education. On the other hand, Sadiq and Zamir (2014) cited different strategies that may help teachers, such as: preparing lessons that activate students' schema, providing clear explanations of the concepts to be learned, structuring a balanced students workload, providing a flexible assessment tool, providing engaging learning activities, and preparing appropriate tasks for students' level.

Teacher's Strategies: Selection of Teaching and Learning Activities

Sabri (2018) believed that for teachers to develop the communicative competence of the students, teachers have to employ these strategies: conversation and dialogues in pairs or groups through team or group work activities, creating a learning atmosphere where the teacher promotes interaction, using literature as a springboard for communication; simulation and role-playing; using computer-assisted activities; and exposing learners to English texts like news.

On the other hand, the article *Strategies for Teaching English* (2022) cited the four strategies for teaching the English language. Teachers must remember that in teaching English, they must include in their learning objectives how to increase comprehension, increase student-to-student interaction, improve higher-order thinking skills, and connect to the student's background knowledge.

In increasing the learner's comprehension, the suggested strategies are to make meaning through the presented visuals and demonstrate the lesson's target skills. On the other hand, students must be engaged to accomplish the given tasks and promote collaboration to increase student-to-student interaction. Meanwhile, strategies to improve students' higher-order skills explicitly teach thinking skills and teaching strategies to develop learners into effective and independent learners. Lastly, to increase connections to the student's background knowledge, teachers have to explicitly plan lessons wherein students will draw connections to their experiences. These strategies involve the following: differentiated instruction, active learning, project-based learning, inquiry-based learning, blended learning, flipped classroom, and cooperative learning.

Differentiated instruction refers to a method in which teachers are allowed to adjust the lessons to the different skill levels of students while, at the same time, supporting students' progress. Active learning is a strategy that encourages students to become active participants in the class. Activities that can be done for active learning are think-pair-share and kinesthetic strategies. On the other hand, project-based learning allows students to learn a topic override of time. It can be incorporated by various skills to deepen the understanding of the topic. Students may work independently or collaboratively, such as creating a video, book, or website. Inquiry-based learning emphasizes the importance of effective questioning and thinking skills during the learning process. Students are given a topic and opportunities to collect information, make hypotheses, participate in activities, and look for answers in an open environment.

Meanwhile, blended learning allows students to learn through in-person classes and digital platforms. This strategy is relative to the flipped classroom, a method where students are assigned pre-learning tasks before their classes. Their classroom time is spent on problem-solving, student or peer feedback, and student collaboration. This flipped classroom method provides opportunities for students to make more effective progress, to be prepared for the lesson beforehand, and to receive more focused support and feedback from teachers and peers. Lastly, cooperative learning promotes that classes are structured into groups to foster communication and working together on particular tasks. These teaching strategies enable collaboration, communication, and social skills.

In addition, the article Strategies for Teaching English (2017) suggested appropriate teachers' strategies such as active learning, effective class discussions, effective lecturing, digital learning, collaborative learning, flipped classrooms, and case-based learning. Case-based learning is an approach in which students apply their knowledge to real-world scenarios to promote a high level of cognition. Furthermore, students work in groups on case studies, stories, or scenarios. The content of their tasks presents a variety of problems to which students propose a solution with the guidance of their teachers.

On the contrary, Mbaegbu et al. (2021) mentioned some factors that affect a teacher's selection of teaching and learning activities. These are the following: availability of the learning materials, favorable time allocation, skills in manipulating the non-technology-based materials or technology-based materials, and available facilities. They discussed that the non-availability of the materials affects students' learning. Moreover, time allocation to complete the activities should allow students to accomplish the tasks excellently. In addition, manipulation of non-technology and technology-based materials requires skill from the teachers. Lastly, if the needed facilities are not available, it affects students' performance.

Teacher's Strategies for Developing Grammatical Competence

Souisa and Yanuarius (2020) found out in their study that a few of the best strategies for developing students' grammatical competence is using varied strategies in teaching grammar that can be one or a combination of inductive, deductive, implicit, or explicit. They believe that grammar should be taught focusing on the meaning and how grammar will be applied in different communication contexts. Teachers may provide examples of the sentences and let the students analyze those sentences. Teachers should provide opportunities for students in various grammatical activities. Teaching grammar explicitly is seen as an acceptable method since they believe learners will be fully aware of how to use the language effectively and appropriately in varied situations. Various text types can also connect the tongue and produce grammatically accurate meaning. Hence, games can also be used to develop learners' grammatical competence. Furthermore, various activities which emphasize subject-verb agreement, word order, and tenses of the verbs should also be provided.

The same study cited that the effective teaching strategy in developing grammatical competence is the use of structural context strategy (using the language in informal or formal situations such as inviting), use of conversations such as describing one's experience to integrate verb tenses, use of stories or various text-types and use of role-playing or simulation; and cooperative learning strategy known as the think-pair-share.

In addition, Ferlazzo (2021) developed a strategy for developing the learners' grammatical competence. He introduced the idea of *concept attainment*. This is an inductive learning strategy in which teachers present examples of grammatical patterns. Students will classify from the examples whether they are examples or non-examples. In this way, students construct their understanding. Furthermore, he cited these effective strategies in teaching grammar, such as using literature as a springboard for grammar, use of grammar puzzles, and cloze-test.

On the other hand, Alshahrani (2019) believed that vocabulary is essential in communication. Thus, students with in-depth vocabulary knowledge can benefit from understanding the complex language level and communicate better in the target language. Meanwhile, they believed that spelling is tricky, especially for learners with learning difficulties. In line with this, Alshahrani found out that to effectively develop

vocabulary and spelling skills among the learners, these strategies were suggested as direct teaching, application of reading, use of multimedia, use of stories (print or electronic), use of keywords, use of computer-assisted instruction, self-correction activities, and writing activities.

Riel (2022) mentioned that effective strategies for developing grammatical competence among learners should include games relevant to the grammar lesson, visual aids, initiating conversation, use of pop culture, and role-playing.

Lastly, Mahdi and Ismail (2022) emphasized that writing activities help develop students' grammatical competence. Teachers should explore various strategies, whether inductive, deductive, or interactive. They found out in their study that employing these strategies improves students' recognition and production skills in writing. Moreover, it helped the learners to correct their own and their peers' grammatical structure.

The above-mentioned articles are supported by the Department of Education's Regional Memorandum no. 233 s. 2016 known as the "Implementation of the Pedagogical Approaches Mandated by R.A. 10533. The memorandum suggested different strategies to effectively deliver learning using 2C-2I-1R, known as Constructivist, Collaborative, Inquiry-Based, Integrative, and Reflective. The mentioned strategies in developing grammatical competence include recalling past experiences, modeling or following procedures (in producing the language), analyzing (comparing and contrasting language structure), and applying language in various contexts.

Teacher's Strategies in Developing Sociolinguistic Competence

The video transcript *Promoting Sociolinguistic Competence in English Learners* (2022) suggested that the best techniques in teaching learners on all different levels are the following: promoting confidence among learners, making pragmatic features of the language explicit, promoting oral and written discourse, and raising social and cultural awareness.

Most students are too shy to express themselves in the target language because they fear embarrassment or disapproval from the teacher. Confidence is built by allowing students to commit minor grammar mistakes, make a mental note, then discuss the errors without pointing them out to the specific learner. Hence, it will engage learners to participate more in the activities.

Next, the pragmatic features of the language must be made explicit to the learner. Though it may sound like "spoon-feeding" the learner, it does not go that way. Most learners are confused with what their teachers mean, making it difficult to interpret the message. Teachers should be sensitive to seeing through the learners' difficulties. With the aid of non-verbal cues or explaining the meaning directly, students can confirm whether their interpretation of the language is correct.

Then, teachers should give a variation of oral and written discourse activities. Though developing sociolinguistic competence may sound like more of a speaking activity, teachers should attain a balance between speaking and writing activities. Speaking activities may include role-playing and integration of speech acts and allows learners to have filler gaps like pauses, *uhm*, *well, you know*, and other speech fillers. Meanwhile, written activities must enable learners to analyze the context of the situations by allowing them to read and write their responses.

Lastly, teachers should allow the cultural and regional differences of the learners. Presenting their locale to the class will help students get to know their classmates' cross-cultural differences.

On the other hand, Paulikova (2020) mentioned in her article that to develop students 'sociolinguistic competence, teachers must introduce the learners to the local or international culture. She recommended different teaching strategies such as role plays, games, simulations, discussions, negotiations, explanations, illustrations, and portfolios. Moreover, authentic or localized materials should be used in teaching. Teachers can use the following to develop the learners' sociolinguistic competence. These are the following: comparison method, cultural assimilation, cultural capsule, and prediction. Comparison is done in which students compare their culture with other cultures. Cultural assimilation is a creative manner of letting

students think and find a solution to a cultural misunderstanding. Meanwhile, cultural capsule uses visual aids to describe the cultures made in comparison. Lastly, prediction is made through activities such as finishing the stories, being curious about topics, and evoking questions about cultures.

On the other hand, Malilin et al. (2021) discussed that teachers should explore various strategies in the classroom. These strategies should promote collaboration, feedback, flexible teaching, and student learning. It was found in their study that employing teaching strategies lays the foundation for the why and how of learning. It helps set expectations and create a class culture where students are responsible for their learning. Thus, it is recommended that teaching strategies are anchored on the students' learning and experiences for the students to catch up with the learning loss they have had in the past years.

Steele (2021) recommended that strategies can be done by structuring the units, modules, and assignments, teachers should display a friendly disposition, careful selection of readings or content to be discussed, posting topics to be discussed by students with their peers, incorporating student collaboration, and giving of feedbacks to learners.

Práce and Babická (2018) studied that the best technique for developing the learners' sociolinguistic competence at the start of teaching is that teachers should be polite. Thus, the students will also reflect the politeness in the classroom. Politeness is therefore modeled through verbal and non-verbal communication. At the start of the class, teachers should emphasize the importance of politeness for a conducive and warm learning atmosphere. Thus, positive discipline should be imposed on students who show rudeness in class.

Next, teachers should accept the cultural differences of the learners. In return, students are expected to model that there should be no discrimination or bullying in the class. Socialization among classmates must also be promoted. This can be done through a brief presentation of the students and pair or group work. In relation to explicit teaching of speech, acts (i.e., ordering, requesting, inviting, promising, etc.) should be integrated as a technique in teaching. Students should be aware of who they are talking to and their situation when speaking. Hence, knowledge of registers should be included in the instruction.

Meanwhile, Dilafruz (2020) mentioned that a teacher can use another strategy or technique to include technology while teaching. Video clips, pictures, slideshows, and other multimedia presentations can be done. Activities like puzzles, cloze tests, and checklists regarding culture and politeness can be made to assess the sociolinguistic competence of the learners. Furthermore, Sarimsakova (2021) added that teachers may also explore different classroom activities to develop students' sociolinguistic competence. These activities include case studies, books, essays, stories, magazines, journals, and publications relevant to the student's culture. Sarimsakova noted the principle of immersion wherein documentary videos, films, and advertisements can be used. Hence, teachers may also ask the students to answer the guide questions to check their understanding of the presented materials.

In the Philippines, the Regional Memorandum no. 233 s. 2016 known as the "Implementation of the Pedagogical Approaches Mandated by R.A. 10533, suggested strategies to include sociolinguistic competence in teaching. First, the online collaborative strategy groups the students into small groups, integrating modern technology as a mode of learning and paper and project presentation as the output. The Jigsaw method and think-pair-share are strategies in which students interact with one another and think of the solutions to given situations. Lastly, peer teaching is seen as an effective strategy since the learners can share knowledge by assisting their classmates who are struggling academically.

Teacher's Strategies for Developing Strategic Competence

In developing the learner's strategic competence, Negoescu et al. (2019) found that strategic competence is directly related to language proficiency. The learners must know about the topic to participate in the communication. However, not everyone can continue communication, especially if communication gaps exist. They believed that teachers should see communication barriers negatively; but rather as an opportunity to teach strategic competence. Furthermore, teachers must accept the learners' losses, mistakes, hesitations, and errors and explore strategies to repair communication breakdowns. It is up to the teacher to

encourage and offer the learners strategies to overcome communication gaps.

Furthermore, they shared the strategies for developing the learners' strategic competence in their study. First, they mentioned group skills. The researchers found that developing group skills or collaboration fosters the give-and-take scenario in a conversation. Thus, students learn how to communicate and ask properly with their peers, understand the value of sharing ideas, make decisions, weigh options, and cooperate with peers to achieve communication goals. Next, including speech acts such as declaring, requesting, inviting, asking, and other communicative functions can be a good start for teaching strategic competence. Thus, creating a world of simulation where students solve a problem in communication is a way of developing the learners' strategic competence. The problem-solving activities provide an opportunity of helping students to act, think, and discover independently. Actions must be explained in a comprehensive or step-by-step procedure to guide the students. Lastly, including non-verbal cues in teaching helps the learners cope with the communication gaps. Learners, on the other hand, must know the appropriate non-verbal cues in communication.

Furthermore, Sevillano (2019) mentioned that teachers should teach the skill of getting the main idea. Teachers should also use video clips or other sources that model speakers' turn-taking and compensate for communication gaps. A localized material can be used to deliver learning on strategic competence. Students should be allowed to reflect, monitor, and self-correct the given oral or written speeches. Moreover, teacher mediation may be used as a strategy in teaching. Teacher mediation involves simplifying the texts, reactivating the students' schema, paraphrasing, and using graphic organizers to break down large chunks of text.

Teacher's Strategies for Developing Discourse Competence

Saltanat (2016) shared her ideas on how teachers develop the learners' discourse competence. She mentioned these activities, such as using synonyms, connecting the sentences to construct a paragraph, identifying the thesis statements, and developing the parallel structures of sentences. This was supported by Lașcu (2022), who found effective strategies for developing discourse competence in her study. She mentioned that literary or various texts with guide questions that aim to check students' understanding is a good start. Providing paraphrasing activities, brainstorming, and the use of graphic organizers help learners analyze the content and structure of the language. Moreover, web quest projects (using technology in making a collage and photos) and role-playing develop the creative side of a competent discourse learner. Lastly, essay writing helps the writing skills of the learners.

Kim (2015) added that the strategies used in delivering discourse competence are the use of board work, connecting of ideas to form paragraphs, use of cloze-test like filling in the missing cohesive devices or transitional devices to complete the sentence and allowing the use of fillers, and repetitions in the speaking activity. At the same time, Sepulveda (2017) added that another effective strategy for teaching discourse competence is to allow learners to have a discourse analysis activity. Students' critical thinking can be developed by analyzing the speaker's and listener's intentions in the dialogue. Moreover, students' knowledge, skills, and interpretation of the language structure can be done through cue cards, images, and signages. Setting the atmosphere or background for communication also helps.

In addition to, Sysoyev, Evstigneeva, and Evstigneev (2015) developed a study of using technology or ICT to develop the learners' discourse competence. They found out that the effective strategies for developing discourse competence are the following: writing formal e-mails, discussing issues via web forums, writing and publishing essays into blogs, and recording and publishing podcast. They concluded that using technology such as these electronic platforms significantly improves students' discourse competence. While Konysova (2016) cited that the teacher may include texts that allow the learners to interpret or analyze the genre of the material and activities that practice students' skills of sentence construction and connecting sentences to form a new sentence. Hence, Koay (2021) supported that teachers can include pair or group work as a strategy wherein learners connect ideas. Cloze tests or open-ended questions develop a creative and

discourse-competent learner.

Meanwhile, an article from *University at Albany* (2022) mentioned one part of discourse competence: oral discourse. They discussed these strategies in teaching informal and formal discourse. In teaching informal oral discourse, teachers may choose from the following: group discussion, active listening and response activities, and interviewing. On the other hand, formal oral discourse activities can be done through structured debates, team and individual oral, and research presentations. Oral performances that can be done in the classroom range from rehearsed theatrical presentations, interpretive reading, stand-up monologues, and other activities that involve drama.

Furthermore, they suggested ways how to successfully carry out instruction by requiring research presentations for graduating students, use of video tools, tutorials, or technology to aid teaching, allowing students to watch a research colloquium, and allowing students to lead the "brown-bag series" (informal meetings or training) to help them learn more about the language.

From the presented literature above, different teaching practices must be included in preparing, planning, setting, and maintaining the lessons for communicative competence. Hence, it is challenging for teachers to maintain order and select appropriate lessons. Moreover, despite the different teaching strategies above, there can never be a single strategy to develop ESL learners' communicative competence. It is up to the skill and expertise of the teacher to use these strategies to come up with the expected student outcomes.

Methodology

This chapter presents the methods and procedures used by the researcher in conducting the study. It contains the research locale, research design, population and sampling, instrument used, respondents of the study, data gathering procedures, and statistical treatment.

Research Design

This research employed descriptive correlational research. It was used to gather information about the present existing condition of the study. It also dealt with documenting, identifying, and classifying the different practices and strategies done by the English language teachers who instruct their ESL students to develop the latter's communicative competence.

The study included a demonstration, survey questionnaire, and proficiency test to gather, analyze, and interpret the data.

Respondents of the Study

The study's respondents were 385 Grade 9 English language learners enrolled in Quezon National High School in Lucena City, Quezon, for the school year 2022-2023. The respondents were chosen through cluster sampling since the respondents belong to two among six heterogeneous sections from each grade level handled by 12 English language teachers in the locale. The respondents' profiles and responses were held confidential. All the responses were coded by the researcher for the findings of the study.

Research Instrument

The methods for gathering the data were teacher-demonstration, researcher-made survey questionnaires, and proficiency tests on communicative competence. The survey questionnaire was used as the researcher's guide in collecting data from the respondents' perceptions of their teacher's practices and strategies inside the classroom. A forty-item proficiency test with 10 items for each component of communicative competence was administered to the students after the series of instructions on the learners. The grammatical competence test contains the tenses of the verb, the voice of the verb, punctuation, syntax, and spelling. On the other hand, the sociolinguistic competence test encompasses the appropriateness of communication in different settings. The strategic competence test includes the different ways of compensating for the gaps in different communicative situations. Lastly, the discourse competence test

comprises the use of coordinating and subordinating conjunctions and the use of pronoun antecedents.

Research Procedures

The researcher secured a permit from the school's division superintendent and principal to conduct the study. After seeking approval, the researcher asked for the assistance of five expert English language teachers as external validators to validate the survey questionnaire and test. The external validators were composed of two (2) teachers with Teacher III designation, two (2) as master teachers, and one (1) as the English language head teacher. After the questionnaire and test validation, the researcher asked for the statistician's assistance to test the instruments' reliability through Cronbach Analysis.

As a result, the Cronbach Analysis shows that the level of reliability on the given indicators was deemed acceptable in teachers' practices in terms of *planning and preparation* (.696); and *creation of classroom environment* (.793). Meanwhile, the given indicators for *instruction* (.802); *professional responsibilities* (.864) were deemed good items. Lastly, the teachers' strategies were considered acceptable regarding *course structure and pace* (.790) and *selection of teaching and learning materials* (.766).

After gathering the results of the Cronbach Analysis, the researcher went to ask for the consent of the respondents and their parents to participate in the study. The respondents' and their parents agreed to the consent form distributed by the researcher. The validated survey questionnaire and test were subjected to pilot testing. The respondents of the pilot testing are 35 Grade 10 students from one heterogenous regular section. Results of the pilot testing, such as the test scores and the frequency of answers from the survey questionnaire, were subjected to statistical and item analysis. After seeking approval, evaluation, and validation from the statistician, the researcher went on to the next step, gathering data.

Since there are 12 English language teachers handling Grade 9 English classes, each teacher purposively selected 2 sections out of 6 sections they held as the respondents among their handling classes. The selected respondents came from the heterogenous group of regular sections with the exclusion of the special sections. The total number of student respondents from the selected sections was 385. The 385 respondents were given a consent form to be filled out by them and their parents/guardians as ethical considerations of the study. The consent forms were collected from the respondents with their signatures and their parents'/guardians' signature. The researcher administered the survey questionnaire to the respondents during the data-gathering procedure.

This survey questionnaire determined the respondents' perception of their teacher's practices and strategies inside the classroom. The lessons instructed to the learners aligned with the Department of Education's Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) for Grade 9 English language learners. The series of instructions were done for only one quarter. After a quarter, the researcher administered a 10-item test for each component of communicative competence: grammatical, sociolinguistic, strategic, and discourse, with 40 items. The test was checked, and the respondents' scores were recorded. The respondents' responses to the questionnaire and test were subjected to coding, statistical treatment, analysis, and interpretation.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The data collected were coded, analyzed, and interpreted. Coding was used to determine the similarities and differences among the respondents' responses on the perceived indicators of teachers' practices and strategies. On the other hand, the mean was employed to determine the English language teacher's commonly used teaching practices and procedures in developing the student's communicative competence. The respondents' scores in the proficiency test were subjected to interpretation, item analysis, and interpretation of their current level of communicative competence. Finally, Pearson-r was used to determine the relationship between the teachers' practices and strategies and learners' communicative competence.

Presentation, Analysis, and Interpretation of Data

This chapter presents the collated data from the respondents, properly analyzed by the researcher, and carefully interpreted to obtain meaningful interpretations of findings.

Part I. Respondents' Perception of Teachers' Practices.

This part presents the respondents' perception of the teachers' practices regarding planning and preparation, creation of classroom environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities.

Table 1.

Respondent's Perception of Teachers' Practices in terms of Planning and Preparation

Indicators	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
The teacher…			
1. designs drills and exercises to increase students' grammatical competence.	4.31	0.85	Practiced to a Considerable Degree
2. prepares activities on developing students' vocabulary (i.e., context clues, matching type, images) to create grammatical competence.	4.61	0.71	Always Practiced
3. selects and integrates localized materials to develop students' sociolinguistic competence.	4.18	0.82	Practiced to a Considerable Degree
4. prepares group games to increase students' language and social skills to develop students' sociolinguistic competence.	4.40	0.85	Practiced to a Considerable Degree
5. Select appropriate news, video, and broadcast clips to integrate strategic competence.	4.44	0.79	Practiced to a Considerable Degree
6. indicates the learning goals or objectives in the lesson as a way to link strategic competence.	4.68	0.63	Always Practiced
7. prepares and selects lessons that require students to draw pictures or images to develop students' strategic competence.	4.17	0.88	Practiced to a Considerable Degree
8. prepares contextualized speaking activities to develop discourse competence.	4.36	0.86	Practiced to a Considerable Degree
9. prepares activities that require oral presentation of a group or individual work as a way to develop discourse competence.	4.50	0.76	Always Practiced
10. selects appropriate reading materials for paragraph writing to develop students' discourse competence.	4.56	0.73	Always Practiced
Overall	**4.42**	**0.54**	**Practiced to a Considerable Degree**

Legend: 4.50 – 5.00 Always Practiced, 3.50 – 4.49 – Practiced to a Considerable Degree, 2.50 – 3.49 Occasionally Practiced, 1.50– 2.49 Seldom Practiced, 1-1.49 Never Practiced

Table 1 shows the respondents' perception of their teachers' practices in terms of planning and preparation. In general, the respondents perceived their teachers' planning and preparation with an overall mean of 4.42 and a standard deviation of 0.54 with a verbal interpretation of *practice to a considerable degree*. This implies that ESL teachers have the necessary skills to plan, prepare and select appropriate activities and instructional materials to develop the student's communicative competence.

Indicating the learning goals or objectives in the lesson to develop students' strategic competence ranked the highest with a mean of 4.68 and a standard deviation of 0.63 with a verbal interpretation of *always practiced*. This indicator shows that teachers always clarify their learning objectives at the start of their instruction to students. Selin (2014) found out in his study that the first step in achieving strategic competence is to define the objectives or goals for the lesson.

On the contrary, the least ranked indicator is the preparation and selection of lessons which require students to draw pictures or images to develop strategic competence with a mean of 4.17 and a standard deviation of 0.88 with a verbal interpretation of *practiced to a considerable degree*. Teachers often prepare and select activities for drawing pictures or images only if necessary.

The Northwest Augmentative Communication Society (2021) mentioned that to develop strategic competence, the skills to be prepared are giving clues or non-verbal cues in case of the unavailability of words to say and using images or pictures to compensate for communication. Hence, teachers must design more activities that allow learners to draw pictures to pay for the communication gap.

Table 2.
Respondent's Perception of Teachers' Practices in terms of Creation of Classroom Environment

Table 2 discusses the respondents' perception of their teachers' practices in creating a classroom environment. In general, the respondents perceived their teachers' creation of classroom environment with an overall mean of 4.52 and a standard deviation of 0.48 with a verbal interpretation of *always practiced*. This implies that ESL teachers have excellent skills to provide, integrate and set activities and instructional materials conducive to learning to develop students' communicative competence.

Giving concrete samples of sentences as a way of developing students' grammatical competence ranked the highest with a mean of 4.68 and a standard deviation of 0.60 with a verbal interpretation of *always practiced*. Case (2023) mentioned that giving examples of different structures of sentences creates opportunities for students to clarify meaning to develop students' grammatical competence. This indicator shows that teachers show examples of sentences applying the correct structure or grammar.

On the contrary, the least ranked indicator is integrating the teaching of local and international culture to introduce sociolinguistic competence with a mean of 4.28 with a standard deviation of 0.84 and a verbal interpretation of practice *to a considerable degree*. This implies that most of the time, teachers teach international and local culture to students as part of the lessons. Mede and Dikilitaş (2015) suggested that teachers should include the explicit and implicit teaching of culture to students in their lesson planning. This is done by presenting cultural models and discussing them implicitly or explicitly. This suggestion raises awareness and directs students to know other cultures worldwide.

Indicators	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
The teacher…			
1. presents interactive and engaging grammar lessons (e.g., through games or multimedia) to increase students' grammatical competence.	4.50	0.72	Always Practiced
2. gives concrete examples of sentences to develop grammatical competence.	4.68	0.60	Always Practiced
3. integrates the teaching of local and international culture to introduce sociolinguistic competence.	4.28	0.84	Practiced to a Considerable Degree
4. displays a friendly and supportive nature to the students to develop sociolinguistic competence.	4.63	0.66	Always Practiced
5. infuses the teaching of manners and etiquette in language teaching to foster sociolinguistic competence.	4.62	0.71	Always Practiced
6. allows speech gaps or fillers in day-to-day conversations to develop students' strategic competence.	4.40	0.79	Practiced to a Considerable Degree
7. provides activities related to students' experiences to develop strategic competence.	4.50	0.71	Always Practiced
8. sets the atmosphere (i.e., decorating or introducing the context) for speaking activities to develop discourse competence.	4.40	0.73	Practiced to a Considerable Degree
9. encourages students to ask questions relevant to the lesson during the class discussion to develop discourse competence.	4.63	0.64	Always Practiced
10. provides specific situations for writing activities to introduce discourse competence.	4.55	0.72	Always Practiced
Overall	**4.52**	**0.48**	**Always Practiced**

Legend: 4.50 – 5.00 Always Practiced, 3.50 – 4.49 – Practiced to a Considerable Degree, 2.50 – 3.49 Occasionally Practiced, 1.50– 2.49 Seldom Practiced, 1-1.49 Never Practiced

Table 3.
Respondent's Perception of Teachers' Practices in terms of Instruction

Table 3 reveals the respondents' perception of their teachers' practices in terms of instruction. The respondents generally perceived their teachers' instruction with an overall mean of 4.55, a standard deviation of 0.47, and a verbal interpretation of *always practiced*. This implies that ESL teachers have excellent skills to instruct, explain and teach lessons relevant to developing students' communicative competence.

Explaining the instructions on accomplishing the task or exercises to develop strategic competence ranked the highest with a mean of 4.75 and a standard deviation of 0.56 with a verbal interpretation of *always practiced*. This indicator shows that teachers have higher skills in explaining concise instructions in accomplishing tasks in English. Konysova (2016) mentioned that students should know how to conduct their activities. Teachers must explain the concepts and purpose of the activities clearly.

Meanwhile, the least ranked indicator is using technology (i.e., powerpoint, video clips, or audio clips), while teaching as a way of developing strategic competence has a mean of 4.34, a standard deviation of 0.86, and a verbal description of *practice to a considerable degree*. This implies that teachers mostly integrate

technology to develop students' strategic competence. According to the article 12 Effective Teaching Practices and Their Benefits (2022) by Indeed Editorial Team, one effective practice is that teachers can offer practical applications or technology to aid students with their studies.

Table 4 discusses the respondents' perception of their teachers' practices in terms of professional responsibilities. The respondents generally perceived their teachers' professional duties with a mean of 4.60, a standard deviation of 0.43, and a verbal interpretation of *always practiced*. This implies that ESL teachers have outstanding practices, attitudes, and dispositions regarding their professional responsibilities in developing the student's communicative competence.

Showing great mastery of the English language to integrate grammatical competence ranked the highest with a mean of 4.74 and a standard deviation of 0.55 with a verbal interpretation of *always practiced*. This indicator shows that ESL teachers have excellent English language communication skills, which gave the respondents an outstanding impression.

Indicators	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
The teacher…			
1. provides different grammar exercises to develop grammatical competence.	4.37	0.80	Practiced to a Considerable Degree
2. administers formative and summative assessments on grammar lessons to students to develop grammatical competence.	4.48	0.73	Practiced to a Considerable Degree
3. provides appropriate tasks and activities for individual, pair, and group work to develop sociolinguistic competence.	4.65	0.58	Always Practiced
4. teaches language register (appropriateness of the language to the situation) to promote sociolinguistic competence.	4.48	0.78	Practiced to a Considerable Degree
5. uses pictures, stories, selections, and worksheets to develop sociolinguistic competence.	4.60	0.64	Always Practiced
6. observes the right pace of the lessons to develop strategic competence.	4.60	0.63	Always Practiced
7. Use technology (i.e., powerpoint, video clips, or audio clips) to develop strategic competence while teaching.	4.34	0.86	Practiced to a Considerable Degree
8. explains the instructions for accomplishing the task or exercises to develop strategic competence.	4.75	0.56	Practiced to a Considerable Degree
9. provides topics for writing paragraphs and compositions are used to develop discourse competence.	4.59	0.67	Always Practiced
10. explains clearly the concepts and ideas from the lesson to develop discourse competence.	4.69	0.62	Always Practiced
Overall	**4.55**	**0.47**	**Always Practiced**

Legend: 4.50 – 5.00 Always Practiced, 3.50 – 4.49 – Practiced to a Considerable Degree, 2.50 – 3.49 Occasionally Practiced, 1.50– 2.49 Seldom Practiced, 1-1.49 Never Practiced

Table 4.

Respondent's Perception of Teachers' Practices in terms of Professional Responsibilities

Indicators	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
The teacher…			
1. shows great mastery of the English language to integrate grammatical competence.	4.74	0.55	Always Practiced
2. models proficient use of the English language to integrate grammatical competence.	4.69	0.59	Always Practiced
3. recognizes students' individual differences to introduce sociolinguistic competence.	4.61	0.59	Always Practiced
4. counsels and guides students as a way to foster sociolinguistic competence.	4.66	0.59	Always Practiced
5. models appropriate and professional behavior (i.e., punctuality, preparedness, and classroom management) to introduce sociolinguistic competence.	4.68	0.59	Always Practiced
6. provides activities related to students' experiences, interests and learning needs to integrate strategic competence.	4.53	0.65	Always Practiced
7. assists students on the difficult part of language instruction to integrate strategic competence.	4.64	0.65	Always Practiced
8. provides remediation or enrichment activities to students with learning difficulties to foster strategic competence.	4.37	0.81	Practiced to a Considerable Degree
9. provides activities using reports, interviews, or social issues which allow students to interpret and think independently to develop discourse competence	4.48	0.72	Practiced to a Considerable Degree
10. allows students to express themselves such as conversations and other oral presentations to encourage students' discourse competence	4.56	0.68	Always Practiced
Overall	**4.60**	**0.43**	**Always Practiced**

Legend: 4.50 – 5.00 Always Practiced, 3.50 – 4.49 – Practiced to a Considerable Degree, 2.50 – 3.49 Occasionally Practiced, 1.50– 2.49 Seldom Practiced, 1-1.49 Never Practiced

The Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), as mandated by the Department of Education no.42 s.2017, indicates that a teacher's professional practice in using the English language is done through the proficient use and mastery of the Mother Tongue and the English language.

However, providing remediation or enrichment activities to students with learning difficulties has the least ranked indicator with a mean of 4.37, a standard deviation of 0.81, and a verbal interpretation of *practice to a considerable degree*. This implies that teachers do not always provide remediation or enrichment activities to learners with learning difficulties. They give this intervention only if necessary. Moreover, Al-Sheikhly et al. (2020) found that providing remediation to students help to improve their communication skill. Thus, identifying students who struggle in learning the language can be done to aid assistance and learning.

Part II. Respondents' Perception of Teachers' Strategies

This part discusses the respondents' perception of the teachers' strategies regarding course structure and pace; and the selection of teaching and learning activities.

Table 5.

Respondent's Perception of Teachers' Strategies in terms of Course Structure and Pace

Table 5 discloses the respondents' perception of their teachers' course structure and pace strategies. The respondents generally perceived their teachers' course structure and pace with an overall mean of 4.58, a standard deviation of 0.43, and a verbal interpretation of *always practiced*. This implies that ESL teachers have outstanding strategies for mastery of courses or content to achieve learning outcomes.

Explaining the step-by-step procedure for accomplishing the tasks to integrate strategic competence ranked the highest with a mean of 4.73 and a standard deviation of 0.43 with a verbal interpretation of *always practiced*. This indicator shows that ESL teachers have excellent skills in the execution and mastery of their content to achieve the target learning goals. In their study, Negoescu et al. (2019) shared that activities must be explained in a comprehensive or step-by-step procedure to guide the students toward strategic competence.

Indicators	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
The teacher…			
1. employs writing activities using the basic mechanics for writing to develop students' grammatical competence.	4.52	0.69	Always Practiced
2. provides activities that allow students to correct grammar mistakes to develop grammatical competence.	4.45	0.78	Practiced to a Considerable Degree
3. corrects mistakes in English (oral or written) properly to develop grammatical competence.	4.62	0.62	Always Practiced
4. uses the LARA method (Listen, Affirm, Respond, and Ask Questions) to develop the learners' sociolinguistic competence.	4.52	0.71	Always Practiced
5. encourages collaboration with classmates as a way to introduce sociolinguistic competence.	4.59	0.64	Always Practiced
6. executes activities encouraging students to discover and think independently to develop strategic competence.	4.57	0.63	Always Practiced
7. employs activities that activate prior knowledge to increase strategic competence.	4.58	0.66	Always Practiced
8. explains the step-by-step procedure for accomplishing the tasks to integrate strategic competence.	4.73	0.55	Always Practiced
9. gives the target language skills to introduce discourse competence.	4.58	0.69	Always Practiced
10. provides tasks and activities that allow students to interpret the given material to develop discourse competence.	4.62	0.62	Always Practiced
Overall	**4.58**	**0.43**	**Always Practiced**

Legend: 4.50 – 5.00 Always Practiced, 3.50 – 4.49 – Practiced to a Considerable Degree, 2.50 – 3.49 Occasionally Practiced, 1.50– 2.49 Seldom Practiced, 1-1.49 Never Practiced

On the contrary, providing activities that allow students to correct grammar mistakes to develop grammatical competence has the least ranked indicator with a mean of 4.45, a standard deviation of 0.78, and a verbal interpretation of *practice to a considerable degree*. This implies that teachers do not always allow students to correct their grammar mistakes. Sevillano (2019) mentioned that teachers should be allowed to reflect, monitor, and self-correct the given oral or written speeches. Thus, opportunities for doing these activities are much needed for students' self-correction.

Table 6.

Respondent's Perception of Teachers' Strategies in terms of Selection of Teaching and Learning Activities

Indicators	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
The teacher…			
1. uses various text types as a springboard is done to develop grammatical competence.	4.48	0.71	Practiced to a Considerable Degree
2. uses spelling activities to develop grammatical competence among students.	4.27	0.93	Practiced to a Considerable Degree
3. provides activities on correct grammar usage (i.e., word order, subject-verb agreement, tenses) to develop students' grammatical competence.	4.55	0.71	Always Practiced
4. uses a think-pair-share strategy to develop sociolinguistic competence.	4.26	0.85	Practiced to a Considerable Degree
5. utilizes role-playing or dramatization to develop students' sociolinguistic competence.	4.26	0.84	Practiced to a Considerable Degree
6. uses visual aids (i.e., pictures, charts, graphs, symbols) to develop strategic competence.	4.51	0.73	Always Practiced
7. simulates situations such as problem-solving as a way to integrate strategic competence.	4.24	0.91	Practiced to a Considerable Degree
8. executes activities that require speech acts (i.e., requesting, inviting, advising, declaring) to teach strategic competence.	4.35	0.82	Practiced to a Considerable Degree
9. chooses tasks for students that allow the oral presentation of their work to develop discourse competence.	4.50	0.70	Always Practiced
10. employs cloze-test activities or open-ended responses to develop students' discourse competence.	4.53	0.70	Always Practiced
Overall	**4.40**	**0.52**	Practiced to a Considerable Degree

Legend: 4.50 – 5.00 Always Practiced, 3.50 – 4.49 – Practiced to a Considerable Degree, 2.50 – 3.49 Occasionally Practiced, 1.50– 2.49 Seldom Practiced, 1-1.49 Never Practiced

Table 6 attests to the respondents' perception of their teachers' strategies in selecting teaching and learning activities. In general, the respondents perceived their teachers' selection of teaching and learning

activities with an overall mean of 4.40, a standard deviation of 0.52, and a verbal interpretation of *practice to a considerable degree*. This implies that ESL teachers do not always use these strategies but use them as required in their lessons and designed activities. Providing activities on correct grammar usage (i.e., word order, subject-verb agreement, tenses) to develop students' grammatical competence ranked the highest with a mean of 4.55, a standard deviation of 0.71 with a verbal interpretation of *always practiced*. This implies that the teachers include teaching the correct usage of grammar by providing activities on word order, subject-verb agreement, and tenses to strengthen the students' grammatical competence. In their study, Souisa and Yanuarius (2020) found that one of the best strategies for developing students' grammatical competence is that teachers should provide opportunities for students in different grammatical activities.

Teaching grammar explicitly is seen as an acceptable method since they believe learners will be fully aware of how to use the language effectively and appropriately in varied situations. Furthermore, various activities which emphasize subject-verb agreement, word order, and tenses of the verbs should also be provided.

Nevertheless, simulating situations such as problem-solving as a way to integrate strategic competence has the least ranked indicator with a mean of 4.24, a standard deviation of 0.91, with a verbal interpretation of *practiced to a considerable degree*. This implies that the teachers only provide simulation and problem-solving activities if needed in their lessons. The article Strategies for Teaching English (2017) suggested a case-based learning strategy in which students apply their knowledge to real-world scenarios to promote a high level of cognition. The content of their tasks presents a variety of problems to which students propose a solution with the guidance of their teachers.

Negoescu et al. (2019) shared in their study the strategies for developing the learners' strategic competence, which problem-solving activities provide an opportunity of helping students to act, think, and discover independently. Hence, teachers may give these activities only if required.

Part III. Respondents' Score on Communicative Competence

This part discloses the respondents' scores on the proficiency test for grammatical, sociolinguistic, strategic, and discourse competence.

Table 7.

Respondent's Scores on the Communicative Competence Test on Grammatical, Sociolinguistic, Strategic, and Discourse Competence

RANGE	Grammatical		Sociolinguistic		Strategic		Discourse	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
9 to 10	187	48.57	277	71.95	124	32.21	151	39.22
6 to 8	160	41.56	90	23.38	144	37.40	140	36.36
3 to 5	36	9.35	14	3.64	95	24.68	80	20.78
0 – 2	2	0.52	4	1.04	22	5.71	14	3.64
TOTAL	385	100.00	385	100.00	385	100.00	385	100.00

Legend: 9 – 10 Very Highly Competent, 6 – 8 Highly Competent, 3-5 Moderately Competent, 0-2 Not Competent

Adapted from the study of Merza (2022) on the scale of determining students' scores on communicative competence.

Table 7 interprets the respondents' scores on the four components of communicative competence: grammatical, sociolinguistic, strategic, and discourse competence, with ten items for each component.

One hundred eighty-seven out of 385 respondents, with a percentage of 48.57%, were classified as *very highly competent* regarding grammatical competence. Hence, *very highly competent* learners in grammatical competence have a high level of capability to use correct tenses of the verbs, accurately transform the active voice to the passive voice of the verb and vice-versa, use proper punctuation, use the right syntax of sentences, and write the correct spelling of words. One hundred sixty respondents who composed the 41.56% sample population were classified as *highly competent*. These learners have the competence to use the correct tenses of the verbs, proper punctuation, apply the right syntax of sentences, and write the correct spelling of words. Meanwhile, 36 respondents, with 9.35%, were classified as *moderately competent*. These learners have the skill to use proper punctuation and the correct tenses of the verbs. Lastly, the remaining 2 respondents, with 0.52%, were classified as *not competent*. These learners struggle to use the correct tenses of the verbs, accurately transform the active voice to the passive voice of the verb and vice-versa, apply the right syntax of sentences, and write the correct spelling of words.

On the other hand, 277 out of 385 respondents, with 71.95%, were classified as *very highly competent* regarding sociolinguistic competence. Hence, these learners can respond appropriately to the given situations and different personas of speakers concerning courtesy and the appropriate use the formal and informal language. Ninety respondents, with 23.38%, were classified as *highly competent*. Thus, these learners can employ formal and informal language concerning the speaker's persona. Fourteen respondents, with 3.64%, were classified as *moderately competent*. This implies that the learners are moderately capable of employing formal and informal language concerning the speakers' persona. Lastly, 4 respondents, with 1.04%, were classified as *not competent*. Thus, it implies that these learners struggle to get to know the speakers' persona and the use of formal and informal language in different communicative settings.

Moreover, regarding strategic competence, 124 out of 385 respondents, composed of 32.21% of the sample population, were *highly competent*. Therefore, these learners can identify the use of non-verbal cues, clarification, expressing a lack of clear opinion, repeating the questions, clarifying, and paraphrasing as ways to compensate for the communication gaps. One hundred forty-four respondents, with 37.40%, were classified as *highly competent*. Hence, these learners have the skill to identify the use of non-verbal cues, clarify, repeat the questions, and express a lack of clear opinion to overcome communication gaps. Meanwhile, 95 respondents, with 24.68%, were classified as *moderately competent*. As a result, these learners have skills in using non-verbal cues, clarifying, and repeating the questions to compensate for communication gaps. Finally, 22 respondents, with 5.71%, were classified as *not competent*. It is interpreted that these learners have difficulty identifying the different ways to overcome the gaps in communication-based on the given situation. Lastly, the discourse competence test comprises the use of coordinating and subordinating conjunctions and the use of pronoun antecedents.

Finally, regarding discourse competence, 151 out of 385 respondents in the 39.22% sample population were classified as *highly competent*. These learners have high skills in using the correct coordinating and subordinating conjunctions to connect the sentences and using antecedents to refer to the subjects in each sentence. One hundred forty respondents, with 36.36%, were classified as *highly competent*. Thus, these learners can partially use the correct conjunctions to connect the sentences and sparingly use correct antecedents to refer to the subjects in each sentence. On the other hand, 80 respondents with 20.78 were classified as *moderately competent*. These learners can use the conjunctions correctly but struggle to use the antecedents. However, 14 respondents, with 3.64%, were classified as *not competent*. This implies that the learners at this level find it difficult to use the correct conjunctions to connect the sentences and use antecedents to refer to the subjects in each sentence.

Part IV. Relationship Between Teachers' Practices and Strategies and Learner's Communicative Competence

This part reveals the relationship of teachers' practices and strategies with the four components of communicative competence, namely: grammatical, sociolinguistic, strategic, and discourse.

Table 8 illustrates the relationship of teachers' practices and strategies with the respondents' scores on grammatical, sociolinguistic, strategic, and discourse competence. The values presented show a negative correlation which means that the students who have a higher perception of the components of the perceived variables are the students who have lower scores in communicative competence. Though the survey questionnaire and proficiency test underwent the reliability test, the results show that different intervening factors may affect the study results.

Table 8.

Relationship Between the Teachers' Practices and Strategies and the Respondents' Scores on Grammatical, Sociolinguistic, Strategic, and Discourse Competence

CORRELATION	Communicative Competence			
Teacher's Practices	Grammatical	Sociolinguistic	Strategic	Discourse
Planning and Preparation	-.098	-.066	-.028	-.036
Creation of Classroom Environment	-.110*	-.066	-.079	-.105*
Instruction	-.080	-.058	.002	-.056
Professional Responsibilities	-.112*	-.018	-.059	-.060
Teacher's Strategies				
Course Structure and Pace	-.139**	-.047	-.058	-.082
Selection of Teaching and Learning Activities	-.092	-.023	-.034	-.021

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The relationship of creating a classroom environment with communicative competence gave the following results: *grammatical* (-.110) and *discourse* (-.105) became negatively significant at 0.05 level. This implies that even if the teacher sets or prepares their classroom, there is a decrease in the level of performance on grammatical and discourse competence. This may be influenced due to the following factors: limited time to accomplish the tasks; small classroom area; the congested number of students inside the room; classrooms situated near the roads or highways; uncontrollable heat due to the weather. And other disruptions in the classroom activity.

This was supported by Papa-Gusho and Biçaku-Çekrezi (2015), who mentioned that factors may affect classroom environment creation. These factors are: organizing the classroom and teaching material; and time management. They found out that if the physical arrangement of the students' chairs in the school makes it difficult for a teacher to move around the room, the students will be less likely to be responsible for doing the tasks in the classroom. It is a challenge for the teachers to make their rooms have easy access to all parts of the room, arrange students' desks that allow learning engagement, and minimize disruptions caused by traffic areas near the space.

Lastly, the relationship of professional responsibilities as a teaching practice with *grammatical competence* (-.112) has a negative, significant value of 0.05. This implies that even if the teacher shows professional behavior in the classroom, there is a decrease in the student's performance on grammatical competence. Hence, the factors that may influence the teacher's satisfaction on the job, the teacher's motivation, and the teacher's ancillary tasks in school.

As supported by Gewasari et al. (2017), they found in their study the different factors affecting the teacher's professional responsibility. These factors include teachers' job satisfaction, achievement, motivation, competence, and principals' leadership. They mentioned that if a teacher is satisfied in her job, given merits or awards, motivated to do her tasks, competent in the job description, and satisfied with the school principal's leadership, teachers are likely to perform more and achieve more in their teaching profession.

For the teachers' strategies, the relationship between course structure and pace with grammatical competence results from (-.139), which has a negative, significant value of 0.01. This implies that even though the teachers had structured their lessons and observed the right pace of the lessons, there was a decrease in respondents' level of grammatical competence. Hence, the factors that may affect the teacher's course structure and pace can be a failure to ensure students' mastery before proceeding to another lesson, failure to sustain students' interest, and congested content to be taught to the students.

Nevertheless, the article, *Improving Pacing: The Rhythm of the Classroom* (n.d.), cited that the factors that may affect the teacher's strategy on course structure and pace are the following: pace, method of presentation, student's attention span, and structuring of the lessons. The article believes that target students' outcomes will likely be achieved if a teacher has the right lesson pace. If a teacher has interactive and engaging lessons presented, students' interests and retention will be higher. If the teacher is aware of the student's attention span, the teacher will explore how to sustain attention and interest in learning. Lastly, if the teacher knows how to structure or "chunk" the lessons, learning objectives and outcomes will be more likely to be achieved.

Summary, Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary

The study's primary purpose is to discover the different teaching practices and strategies used by the Grade 9 English language teachers in developing the learners' four components of communicative competence: grammatical, sociolinguistic, strategic, and discourse.

The study used a descriptive correlation because the researcher attempted to find out the present variety of teaching practices and strategies done by the teacher in developing the student's communicative competence. The instruments underwent construction of the initial draft, checking, resubmission, final draft, and validation through the Cronbach Analysis. The researcher conducted a pilot testing of the research instruments.

The researcher personally submitted a letter of permission noted by her research adviser to the office of the Superintendent of the Division of Quezon and the principal's office of Quezon National High School. After the approval, the researcher distributed the consent form to the 35 Grade 10 sample respondents. The results of the pilot testing were tested for reliability. After seeking permission from the statistician, the consent forms were distributed, and the research instruments were administered to the 385 Grade 9 respondents. Upon submission of the instruments, the results were checked, scored, tallied, and presented in tabular form. This study used the mean to describe teachers' practices and strategies for developing the students' communicative competence. The students' total scores for each component of communicative competence were also gathered. To determine the significant relationship between the teachers' practices and strategies with the respondents' scores, the Pearson-r correlation was used.

Summary of Findings

The following are the significant findings of the study:

Regarding teachers' practices on planning and preparation, the respondents perceived that the indicators were practiced by their teachers to a considerable degree. To create a classroom environment, the

respondents perceived that their teachers always practice those indicators. On the other hand, instruction was perceived as always practiced. Lastly, for professional responsibilities, the respondents perceived that their teachers always practiced the indicators.

Regarding teachers' course structure and pace strategies, the respondents perceived that their teachers always practiced the indicators. Meanwhile, on selecting teaching and learning activities, the respondents perceived that their teachers practice the given indicators only to a considerable degree.

The following findings were gathered for grammatical, sociolinguistic, strategic, and discourse competence during administering the proficiency test on communicative competence.

For grammatical competence, 48.57% of the respondents were classified as *highly competent,* 41.56% as *highly competent,* 9.35% as *moderately competent*, and 0.52% as *not competent*.

Regarding sociolinguistic competence, 71.95% of the respondents were classified as highly competent, 23.38% highly competent, 3.64% as *moderately competent*, and 1.04% as *not competent*.

On the other hand, for strategic competence, 32.21% of the respondents were classified as *very highly competent*, 37.40% as *highly competent,* 24.68% as *moderately competent*, and 5.71% as *not competent*.

Lastly, for discourse competence, 39.22% of the respondents were classified as *very highly competent*, 36.36% were classified as *highly competent,* 20.78% as *moderately competent*, and 3.64% as *not competent*.

The related variables on teachers' practices and strategies show negative correlation coefficients, which means that the students with the higher perception of the components under the perceived variables are the students who tend to get lower scores in communicative competence.

Correlation between the teachers' practices creation of classroom environment with *grammatical* (-.110) and *discourse* (-.105) became negatively significant at 0.05 level. While the relationship of professional responsibilities as a teaching practice with *grammatical competence* (-.112) has a negative, significant value at 0.05.

On the other hand, for the teachers' strategies, the relationship of course structure and pace with grammatical competence results from (-.139), which has a negative, significant value at 0.01 level.

Conclusions

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were made:

1. The hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the teachers' practices and the learners' communicative competence skills is not sustained; since there is a negative significant relationship between the creation of classroom environment and grammatical and discourse competence. Moreover, a negative significant relationship exists between professional responsibilities and grammatical competence.

2. The hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the teachers' strategies to the learners' communicative competence skills is not sustained due to the negative significant relationship between the course structure and pace and grammatical competence.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendation were posited:

1. Questionnaires and proficiency tests might be further validated by experts knowledgeable in the language field focusing on communicative competence.

2. Findings may be used as topics for the In-Service Training for Teachers, seminars, training, symposiums, and Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions to further improve the teachers' pedagogical skills in English.

3. Interviews on the teachers handling the English language or any other foreign language subject may be done further to investigate the different teachers' practices and strategies. Moreover, interviews may be conducted to investigate further the possible factors that affected the study's findings.

4. Future researchers may conduct a parallel study to investigate the other different teachers' practices and strategies and the level of students' communicative competence.

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