International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Growth Evaluation.

Study Habits, Learning Ability, and Communicative Competence of Senior High TVL Learners

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Article Info

Abstract

This study assessed the readiness of Grade 11 Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) students in Filipino by examining their learning ability, study habits, and Junior High School (JHS) Filipino learning experiences. Using a descriptive-correlational design, the research measured students' preparedness and communicative competence through weighted mean analysis. Results revealed that students demonstrated a Very Satisfactory level of readiness in terms of learning ability (WM = 3.59) and JHS Filipino learning experiences (WM = 3.76). They showed strong reflective learning skills, adaptability, and benefited from effective teacher feedback, which enhanced their linguistic development. However, their study habits were rated only Satisfactory (WM = 3.27), indicating inconsistent self-directed learning and weak initiative in independent reading. These findings suggest that while students possess solid learning foundations and positive prior language experiences, their readiness is hindered by moderate study routines. The study concludes that Grade 11 TVL learners are generally well-prepared for Filipino instruction but require targeted interventions to strengthen independent study habits and sustain proactive learning behaviors. Recommendations include integrating activities that promote self-regulation, articulation, and cross-curricular application of Filipino skills to further enhance communicative competence.

Keywords: Communicative Competence, Learning Ability, Study Habits

1. Introduction

Effective communication is a cornerstone of academic achievement and professional competence. The ability to articulate ideas clearly and coherently, both orally and in writing, is vital not only for success in school but also for meaningful participation in society and the workforce. In the Philippine context, where bilingualism in Filipino and English is actively promoted through educational policy, proficiency in both languages is essential for meeting the demands of modern academic and occupational environments (Bautista & Del Valle, 2023) [5].

The national education landscape underscores the importance of language proficiency in Senior High School (SHS), particularly in the Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) track. While the Department of Education (DepEd) has introduced reforms to strengthen Filipino instruction, many SHS students continue to struggle with coherence, fluency, and grammar, affecting their readiness for higher education and employment (Mabasa & Protacio, 2025) [14]. Although the K to 12 curriculum and standardized assessments aim to enhance communicative competence, research suggests that TVL learners often receive less emphasis on language development due to the technical orientation of their program (Lansang & Zamora, 2025) [12].

The legal foundation for Filipino language instruction, reinforced by Republic Act No. 10533 or the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 and DepEd Order No. 43, s. 2013, ensures that Filipino remains a core subject to strengthen linguistic and cultural identity. However, despite these policies, gaps in communicative competence persist. Studies reveal that many learners struggle to express themselves effectively in Filipino, which undermines both academic performance and confidence (Aranas, 2023) [2].

These challenges are particularly evident among TVL students, who often prioritize technical skills over language development.

These issues are factors such as limited exposure to Filipino at home, anxiety in peer interaction, and inconsistent assessment practices (Agum *et al*., 2021) [1]. Such barriers highlight the need to examine not only communicative competence but also the underlying study habits and learning abilities that shape students' language performance. Study habits influence how learners manage their time, prepare for lessons, and engage with academic tasks, while learning ability reflects their capacity to process, retain, and apply knowledge. Together, these dimensions directly affect how TVL students develop communicative competence in Filipino.

Given the crucial role of Filipino proficiency in academic success and workforce readiness, this study investigates the study habits, learning ability, and communicative competence of Senior High TVL learners. By exploring the interplay of these factors, the research provides insights into the challenges faced by TVL students and offers evidence-based recommendations for educators and policymakers. Ultimately, the study contributes to improving individual learning outcomes while advancing national goals of strengthening Filipino identity and ensuring equitable language development across all educational tracks.

Learning aids are no longer mere supplements; they are essential tools that enhance comprehension, sustain engagement, and improve academic performance (Ma'rifatullah *et al*., 2023) [13]. With the rise of 21st-century education, there has been a global shift toward integrating technology into classrooms, resulting in the development of adaptive, interactive, and learner-centered resources. Among these, digital learning aids stand out for their ability to accommodate diverse learning styles, foster autonomy, and make abstract concepts more accessible and engaging (Reyes *et al*., 2020) [17].

2. Theoretical Framework
This study anchored itself on Dell Hymes' Communicative Competence Theory (1972), which asserted that effective communication required more than grammatical accuracy. Learners also needed to know how to use language appropriately in diverse contexts. Hymes identified four essential components of communicative competence: grammatical competence (knowledge of language rules), sociolinguistic competence (appropriate use of language in social settings), discourse competence (coherence and cohesion in extended communication), and strategic competence (the ability to overcome communication breakdowns).

The theory emphasized the role of context in communication. Learners mastered linguistic rules and applied them meaningfully in real-life situations. This holistic view of language learning shaped modern approaches such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which prioritized authentic interaction as both the process and the goal of language education.

In this study, the theory provided a comprehensive framework for examining Filipino language proficiency among Grade 11 TVL students. It guided the analysis of their ability to construct grammatically correct sentences, adapt language use to sociocultural contexts, maintain coherence in discourse, and employ effective communication strategies.

By situating communicative competence within the realities of TVL learners, the study acknowledged that language use in the Philippines was deeply tied to identity, social integration, and workforce readiness.

The framework is also connected directly to study habits and learning ability. Study habits influenced how students practiced and internalized language skills, while learning ability determined how they processed, retained, and applied communicative strategies. Weak study habits or limited learning ability hindered the development of communicative competence, while strong habits and abilities enhanced fluency, coherence, and confidence. Thus, the theory supported the investigation of how these academic factors shaped TVL learners' communicative performance in Filipino.

Guided by Communicative Competence Theory, this study highlighted the importance of equipping TVL students with the skills to use Filipino effectively across academic, social, and professional contexts. By identifying gaps in grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence, the research aimed to propose an action plan that strengthened students' communicative skills. Enhancing these skills improved academic achievement and prepared learners to navigate real-world interactions, empowering them to succeed in both higher education and technical-vocational careers

3. Problem Formulation
This study examined the level of readiness of Grade 11 TVL students in Filipino in terms of learning ability, study habits, and learning experiences in JHS Filipino, and explored how these factors related to their communicative competence.

4. Significance of the Study
This study is significant because it provides valuable insights into the readiness of Grade 11 TVL students in Filipino, particularly in terms of their learning ability, study habits, and prior learning experiences in Junior High School. By examining these factors, the research highlights the challenges that students face in developing communicative competence, which is essential for academic success and workplace integration. The findings benefit students by helping them become more aware of their strengths and weaknesses, thereby encouraging them to adopt effective strategies for improving their language skills. Teachers gain evidence-based information that guides them in designing instructional approaches responsive to the needs of TVL learners, while school administrators use the results to develop programs and interventions that strengthen language readiness. Policymakers and curriculum developers also benefit from the study by gaining a clearer understanding of the importance of balancing technical training with language development in the K to 12 curricula. Finally, future researchers can use this study as a reference for further investigations on the relationship between study habits, learning ability, and communicative competence, opening opportunities for comparative studies across different SHS tracks. Overall, the study contributes not only to improving individual learning outcomes but also to advancing national goals of strengthening Filipino identity and ensuring equitable language development across all educational tracks.

5. Scope and Limitations
This study focused on assessing the readiness of Grade 11

Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) students in Filipino by examining their learning ability, study habits, and prior learning experiences in Junior High School (JHS) Filipino. It specifically investigated how these factors influenced their communicative competence, which was essential for academic success and workplace integration. The scope of the study was limited to Grade 11 TVL learners enrolled in selected Senior High Schools within Butuan City during the school year 2025–2026.

The study covered three major variables: (1) learning ability, which referred to the students' capacity to process, retain, and apply knowledge in Filipino; (2) study habits, which included their approaches to reviewing lessons, managing time, and preparing for academic tasks; and (3) learning experiences in JHS Filipino, which encompassed the instructional strategies, classroom activities, and exposure to communicative tasks that shaped their readiness for SHS. Communicative competence was examined in terms of grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic dimensions, guided by Dell Hymes' Communicative Competence Theory.

The delimitations of the study included its focus only on TVL track students, excluding those in the Academic, Arts and Design, and Sports tracks. The research also limited itself to Filipino language readiness and did not extend to English or other subjects. Data were gathered only from the identified schools in Butuan City, which might not have fully represented the experiences of TVL learners in other regions. Furthermore, the study relied on self-reported surveys and assessments, which might have been influenced by students' honesty and self-awareness.

By defining these boundaries, the study ensured a manageable scope while providing meaningful insights into the readiness of TVL learners in Filipino and the factors that shaped their communicative competence.

6. Methodology

This study employed a descriptive research design to assess the communicative competence of Grade 11 TVL students in Filipino and to explore its relationship with their learning ability, study habits, and prior learning experiences in Junior High School. The research was conducted at Agay National High School in Remedios T. Romualdez, Agusan del Norte, focusing on Grade 11 TVL students. From a population of 190 learners, 128 respondents were selected using Slovin's formula and a systematic sampling design, ensuring fair representation across sections.

Data were gathered through a researcher-made survey questionnaire divided into two parts: (1) readiness indicators (learning ability, study habits, and JHS Filipino experiences) and (2) communicative competence indicators (grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence). Responses were rated on a five-point Likert scale. The instrument was validated by language experts and tested for reliability with 30 non-respondent students, confirming clarity and consistency.

The data collection process involved securing permission from school authorities, coordinating with advisers, and administering the questionnaire under the ethical guidelines of voluntary participation and confidentiality. Completed surveys were checked, encoded, and prepared for analysis.

For scoring, readiness and competence levels were interpreted using mean ranges, from "Outstanding" to "Very Poor" for readiness, and from "Very Competent" to "Not Competent" for communicative skills. Statistical tools such as frequency and percentage, weighted mean, and standard deviation were applied to describe respondent profiles, measure readiness and competence levels, and analyze variability in scores.

7. Results and Discussion

Level of the student's readiness in Grade 11 Filipino in terms of learning ability, study habits, and learning experience in JHS Filipino.

Table 1 displays the "Level of Students' Readiness in Grade 11 Filipino in terms of Learning Ability." The data show that students generally have a very satisfactory level of readiness.

Table 1: Level of Students' Readiness in Grade 11 Filipino in terms of Learning Ability

Indicators	Wtd. Mean	SD	Verbal Description	Interpretation
1. I can easily understand / apply new concepts learned in class.	3.59	0.634	Often	Very Satisfactory
2. I adapt well to different learning methods, such as lectures, discussions, and hands-on activities.	3.40	0.632	Sometimes	Satisfactory
3. I effectively retain/recall information when needed.	3.54	0.651	Often	Very Satisfactory
4. I can solve problems and make decisions based on what I have learned.	3.57	0.672	Often	Very Satisfactory
5. I actively seek ways to improve my learning process and academic performance.	3.78	0.813	Often	Very Satisfactory
6. I can easily keep up with the pace of class discussions.	3.36	0.673	Sometimes	Satisfactory
7. I am confident in my ability to learn independently.	3.80	0.833	Often	Very Satisfactory
8. I can explain the concepts I've learned to others.	3.34	0.713	Sometimes	Satisfactory
9. I learn from my mistakes and use them to improve my learning process.	3.97	0.763	Often	Very Satisfactory
Overall Weighted Mean	3.59	0.409	Often	Very Satisfactory

Legend: 1.00-1.49-Never/Very Poor; 1.50-2.49-Rarely/Poor; 2.50-3.49-Sometimes/Satisfactory; 3.50-4.49-Often/Very Satisfactory; 4.50-5.00-Always/Excellent

Discussion

The item with the highest weighted mean is "I learn from my mistakes and use them to improve my learning process" with a value of 3.97. This suggests that students in this group are highly reflective and see errors not as failures, but as valuable learning opportunities. This mindset is crucial for growth and self-improvement. Students who are taught to embrace mistakes tend to be more resilient and proactive in their learning, leading to a deeper understanding of the material. This item's high score reflects a positive and healthy approach to academic challenges.

The lowest weighted mean belongs to "I can explain the concepts I've learned to others," with a value of 3.34. This indicates that while students feel confident in their own

ability to understand concepts, they struggle with the higher-order thinking skill of articulating and exploring those concepts to others. Based on experience, this is a common challenge. Many students can recall information but haven't fully internalized it to the point where they can simplify and communicate it effectively.

The overall weighted mean is 3.59, which corresponds to a "Very Satisfactory" interpretation. This general picture suggests that the Grade 11 students in Filipino, as a whole, have a strong foundation in their learning abilities. They are confident, adaptive, and reflective learners. This indicates that they are well-prepared for the academic demands of the subject and are likely to succeed. The data paints a positive portrait of students who are not just passive recipients of information but are actively engaged in their learning process.

The finding that students have a "Very Satisfactory" level of readiness in terms of learning ability, with the highest weighted mean on "I learn from my mistakes," supports Brandt (2020) [6] and McMaster et al. (2020) [15], who stated that self-regulated and consistent study routines improve cognitive skills and analytical thinking, which are the cornerstones of effective learning. This high self-perception of learning ability aligns with the idea that students who are aware of their learning process and can adapt and improve are more ready for academic challenges.

Table 2 presents the "Level of Students' Readiness in Grade 11 Filipino in terms of Study Habits." The data indicate that students' study habits are generally satisfactory.

Table 2: Level of Students' Readiness in Grade 11 Filipino in terms of Study Habits

Indicators	Wtd Mean	SD	Verbal Description	Interpretation
1. I set a regular study schedule.	3.31	0.954	Sometimes	Satisfactory
2. I review my lessons in advance.	3.30	0.757	Sometimes	Satisfactory
3. I take notes and summarize what I study.	3.35	0.800	Sometimes	Satisfactory
4. I always do my assignments on time.	3.47	0.822	Sometimes	Satisfactory
5. I read my books even if there is no exam.	2.89	0.796	Sometimes	Satisfactory
6. I have group discussions with my classmates.	3.32	0.742	Sometimes	Satisfactory
Overall Weighted Mean	3.27	0.533	Sometimes	Satisfactory

Legend: 1.00-1.49-Never/Very Poor; 1.50-2.49-Rarely/Poor; 2.50-3.49-Sometimes/Satisfactory; 3.50-4.49-Often/Very Satisfactory; 4.50-5.00-Always/Excellent

The item with the highest weighted mean is "I always do my assignments on time" at 3.47. This shows that students are responsible and conscientious when it comes to completing their assigned work. This typifies that the timely submission of assignments is a foundational element of academic success. It suggests that students understand the importance of meeting deadlines, a key skill for both their current studies and future endeavors.

The lowest weighted mean is for "I read my books even if there is no exam," with a value of 2.89. This suggests that students' reading habits are primarily driven by the immediate need to prepare for an exam, rather than a general interest in the subject or a desire for continuous learning. This is a common pattern among students, where the pressure of an upcoming test is the main motivator for studying.

The overall weighted mean is 3.27, which falls into the "Satisfactory" range. This suggests that while students have decent study habits. The general picture is one of students who engage in study habits, when necessary, but who may not consistently practice these habits in a way that would lead

to a "Very Satisfactory" or "Excellent" rating.

The study's finding that students have a "Satisfactory" level of readiness in study habits, but with the lowest weighted mean on reading outside of exams, supports Salva et al. (2022) [18]. Their research on secondary students in Cavite, Philippines, found that while students may have some structured routines, those who struggle with self-regulation and time management face challenges in comprehension. This explains why students might consistently submit assignments on time (high weighted mean) but lack the self-directed habit of reading for continuous learning (low weighted mean). The findings align with Cerna and Pavliushchenko (2020) [7], who noted that inconsistent study habits, like a lack of self-initiated reading, are characteristic of lower-performing students.

Table 3 shows the "Level of Students' Readiness in Grade 11 Filipino in terms of Study Habits" (The table's title appears to be a duplicate of Table 2, but the indicators are different and focus on classroom interaction and language use). The data indicate a very satisfactory level of readiness.

Table 3: Level of Students' Readiness in Grade 11 Filipino in terms of learning experience in JHS Filipino

Indicators	Wtd Mean	SD	Verbal Description	Interpretation
1. I was able to speak Filipino well in class.	3.67	0.689	Often	Very Satisfactory
2. I understood the lessons discussed in Filipino.	3.74	0.679	Often	Very Satisfactory
3. My teacher corrected my incorrect use of language.	4.13	0.864	Often	Very Satisfactory
4. We were given chances to practice speaking in class.	4.09	0.788	Often	Very Satisfactory
5. We used Filipino during class discussions.	4.10	0.840	Often	Very Satisfactory
6. I was able to express my opinion using Filipino.	3.52	0.687	Often	Very Satisfactory
7. I was able to relate the lessons to real-life situations.	3.50	0.687	Often	Very Satisfactory
8. I used what I learned in Filipino in other subjects.	3.49	0.640	Sometimes	Satisfactory
9. I became more confident in speaking Filipino.	3.57	0.684	Often	Very Satisfactory
Overall Weighted Mean	3.76	0.401	Often	Very Satisfactory

Legend: 1.00-1.49-Never/Very Poor; 1.50-2.49-Rarely/Poor; 2.50-3.49-Sometimes/Satisfactory; 3.50-4.49-Often/Very Satisfactory; 4.50-5.00-Always/Excellent

The item with the highest weighted mean is "My teacher corrected my incorrect use of language" at 4.13. This reflects a strong perception among students that their teacher provides valuable feedback on their language skills. This is a crucial element of language learning, as correction is essential for improving grammar, vocabulary, and overall fluency. The high score suggests that students value and benefit from a classroom environment where constructive feedback is a regular practice.

The lowest weighted mean is "I used what I learned in Filipino in other subjects," with a value of 3.49. This falls on the "Very Satisfactory" category, suggesting that students sometimes struggle to transfer their learning from Filipino to other subjects. This is a common challenge in education, as students often compartmentalize knowledge.

The overall weighted mean is 3.76, which corresponds to a "Very Satisfactory" interpretation. This general picture suggests that students feel they are in a highly supportive and effective learning environment for Filipino. They are actively engaged in class discussions, confident in their speaking abilities, and receive regular, helpful feedback from their teacher. This indicates that the teaching methods are effective in building not just knowledge, but also practical language skills and self-assurance in using Filipino.

The finding that students have a "Very Satisfactory" readiness based on their learning experiences in JHS Filipino is strongly supports Aranda (2022) [3]. Aranda's research emphasizes that instructional strategies like collaborative learning and feedback are crucial for enhancing a student's ability to use Filipino effectively. The high weighted mean on the teacher correcting incorrect language use directly supports this, as it demonstrates a perceived high quality of instruction that fosters linguistic development. The data counters the general observation by Bautista & Del Valle (2023) [5] and Barrera (2022) [4] that many students still struggle with language proficiency due to inconsistencies in teaching approaches; instead, the findings suggest that for this particular group, the teaching quality in JHS was perceived as effective.

8. Conclusion
The study concludes that Grade 11 TVL students generally demonstrated readiness in Filipino, particularly in terms of learning ability and their Junior High School Filipino learning experiences, both of which were rated Very Satisfactory. Students showed strong reflective learning skills, adaptability, and benefited from effective teacher feedback during their JHS years, which contributed to their preparedness for Senior High School. However, their study habits were only rated Satisfactory, indicating that while they were responsible in completing assignments, they lacked consistency in self-directed learning, especially in reading beyond examinations. This weakness in study routines limited their potential to sustain independent learning and fully develop communicative competence. Overall, the findings portray TVL learners as well-prepared but in need of improvement in proactive study behaviors to maximize their language proficiency.

In light of these conclusions, the study recommends that students may strengthen their independent study habits by engaging in self-directed reading and practicing Filipino beyond classroom requirements. Teachers are encouraged to integrate activities that promote articulation and knowledge transfer, such as peer teaching, debates, and collaborative projects, while also embedding Filipino language skills across other subjects to foster cross-curricular application. School administrators should support initiatives that enhance study skills and communicative competence, including reading campaigns and study workshops, while policymakers and curriculum developers should ensure that the K to 12 curriculum balances technical training with language development. Finally, future researchers are advised to conduct comparative studies across different SHS tracks and explore interventions that specifically target study habit improvement and its impact on communicative competence.

9. Thank-You Note
Thank you for taking part in this study-on-Study Habits, Learning Ability, and Communicative Competence of Senior High TVL Learners. Your time, effort, and honest responses were invaluable in completing this research. Your contribution will help improve Filipino instruction and support the academic growth of TVL students.

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