Instructional Practices and Metacognitive Ability on the Language Competence of Junior High School Students

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Abstract

The focal point of this study was to investigate the significant relationship between instructional practices and metacognitive ability on language competence of junior high school students in Kidapawan City, Cotabato, Philippines. The research also aimed to find out the domain of instructional practices and metacognitive ability that influence the language competence of junior high school students. Furthermore, this study utilized the non-experimental quantitative research design applying the correlational technique. The data were collected from 106 junior high school students through surveys, revealing the very high-level instructional practices of Filipino teachers and high-level metacognitive ability and language competence of students. This study further disclosed that instructional practices does not have significant relationship with language competence, however, significant association was found between metacognitive ability and language competence. The findings indicated that even when teachers carry out instructional practices in their teaching and instruction, it doesn't guarantee that students will improve their competence in language. On the other hand, practicing metacognitive ability can lead to better performance in language assessment given that students who are aware of their learning and employed effective strategies tend to achieve better performance. Evaluating strategy used and learning output of metacognitive ability were found to be the best predictor of language competence of junior high school students.

Keywords: instructional practices, metacognitive ability, language competence

1. Introduction

Language competence is an important area of study focused on how well people understand and use language in different situations. It includes different parts like knowing the language itself, understanding social context, being able to hold conversations, and having strategies for communication. Together, these parts make up a person's overall ability to communicate which is necessary for doing well in school and social settings. Recent studies emphasize how important language competence is in education, especially for students learning Filipino and English as second languages, as it affects their performance in school as well as their ability to connect with others.

However, significant challenges continue in enhancing language competence among learners. Many students demonstrate deficiencies in grammatical and linguistic skills, which can hinder their overall communicative ability. In a study conducted, result revealed that while they showed strengths in certain areas like discourse and strategic competence, their overall

communicative competence was alarmingly low (Patron & Barrera, 2016). Furthermore, the correlation between students' attitudes towards their language learning and their actual performance underscores the need for targeted interventions that not only improve linguistic skills but also foster a positive attitude towards language learning (Peric, & Radic, 2021). Addressing these issues through research-based solutions is vital for developing effective educational strategies that can enhance language proficiency across diverse student populations.

Today, educational psychologists believe that metacognition has an essential role in successful learning. In other words, metacognitive learning strategies help the students to correct and control their behaviors, solve problem, act more strategically in learning, and consequently have high-quality learning and enhance their academic achievement (Hayat and Shateri, 2019).

On the other hand, studies have shown that fostering metacognitive skills can lead to improved academic performance, particularly in language learning, as it enables students to monitor their understanding and adapt their strategies accordingly (Zarobe & Smala, 2021). Thus, effective instructional practices that incorporate metacognitive strategies not only enhance academic performance but also promote independent learning skills, resilience, and critical thinking (Celik, 2022).

However, despite the recognized benefits of metacognition, many junior high school students struggle to engage effectively in these processes. Common challenges include a lack of awareness regarding their cognitive strengths and weaknesses, difficulties in applying appropriate learning strategies, and insufficient opportunities for self-reflection during learning (Pradhan & Das, 2021). Traditional instructional methods often neglect to explicitly teach metacognitive strategies alongside content knowledge, resulting in missed opportunities for students to develop these essential skills (Diaz, 2015). This gap underscores the need for research-based solutions focusing on explicit instruction that integrates metacognitive training within language instruction, assessment techniques for evaluating students' metacognitive abilities and their impact on language competence, and teacher training to equip educators with effective strategies for fostering a metacognitive culture in classrooms. Addressing these issues through targeted research can lead to improved instructional practices that enhance both metacognitive ability and language competence among junior high school students.

The existing literature on metacognition in language learning reveals several significant gaps that warrant further investigation. While numerous studies emphasize the importance of metacognitive strategies in enhancing language competence, many focus primarily on general instructional practices without a specific emphasis on the integration of these strategies within language curricula. In a study by Zarobe and Smala (2021), they found out that students in bilingual Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) programs demonstrated significantly higher metacognitive skills compared to their peers in traditional settings. The study highlighted the importance of strategy instruction, suggesting that teaching students how to set goals and reflect on their learning can enhance their awareness and confidence in language use. This research underscores the positive impact of CLIL methodologies on developing effective learning strategies among students.

Additionally, a qualitative study by Diaz (2015) explored how metacognitive strategy instruction can enhance vocabulary acquisition among young learners. Participants underwent training that focused on planning, monitoring, and evaluating their learning processes. The

results showed that students who received this instruction were more aware of effective learning strategies and demonstrated improved vocabulary skills. This study highlights the importance of teaching metacognitive strategies to help students take control of their learning and achieve better outcomes in language acquisition.

Additionally, while some studies have examined the role of metacognitive strategy training in vocabulary acquisition, there is still a lack of comprehensive frameworks that connect metacognitive knowledge and strategies specifically to language learning contexts. This disconnect suggests that while educators recognize the value of metacognitive strategies, there is insufficient guidance on how to effectively implement these strategies across diverse language learning environments (Anderson, 2003).

Conversely, a study conducted by Villaruz and Palma (2024) focused on metacognitive awareness of writing strategies among Grade 12 students in private schools. The research utilized Structural Equation Modeling to analyze how metacognitive strategies, oral proficiency, and writing instruction influence academic writing skills in the Filipino language. The findings indicated that students who frequently employed metacognitive strategies in planning and evaluating their writing showed improved academic performance. Furthermore, effective writing instruction and high oral proficiency were found to significantly enhance students' writing skills, underscoring the importance of metacognitive awareness in educational settings.

It is on the above context that the researcher took interest to examine if instructional practices and metacognitive ability have significant influence on language competence of the junior high school students; hence, making this study a generation of new knowledge that can give specific contribution to the field of language and education.

2. Statement of the Problem

The main objective of this study was to find out the domain of instructional practices and metacognitive ability significantly influence language competence of the Junior High School students in Kidapawan City.

Specifically, this study aimed to attain the following specific objectives:

1. What is the level of instructional practices of Filipino teachers in terms of:

   1.1. Planning Practices;
   1.2. Teaching Practices; and
   1.3. Assessment Practices?
2. What is the level of metacognitive ability of students in terms of:

   2.1. Preparing & Planning for Learning;
   2.2. Selecting and Using Learning Strategies;
   2.3. Monitoring Strategy Used; and
   2.4. Evaluating Strategy Used and Learning Output?
3. What is the level of language competence of the junior high school students?
4. To determine the significance of relationship between:

   4.1. Instructional practices and language competence; and
   4.2. Metacognitive and language competence?

5. Is there a domain of instructional practices and metacognitive ability significantly that influence language competence of the Junior High School students in Kidapawan City?

3. Research Design

This study utilized the non-experimental quantitative research design applying the correlational technique. This design is most used when seeking to find out statistical relationships between two variables without manipulating the data themselves (Alexander, 2012; Creswell, 2008; Kim, 2013). In this study, the variables, instructional practices and metacognitive ability on language competence, were not in any way manipulated. The data has been observed, and from the data, relationships of independent and dependent variables were checked and interpreted to see the emerging trends and patterns.

The researcher utilized this non-experimental quantitative research design since the study determined the relationship between instructional practices and metacognitive ability on language competence of the junior high school students and this was an appropriate design for this study.

4. Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in Kidapawan City, Cotabato Province, Philippines. This city lies in the southeastern part of the Cotabato region and is surrounded by significant urban centers such as General Santos, Davao City, and Cagayan de Oro. While Kidapawan has a notable Muslim population, it is predominantly Christian. In accordance with the cityhood of Kidapawan came the introduction of DepEd Kidapawan City Division. It was conceived as an interim city division on February 16, 1999, with Dr Gloria M. Mudanza as the Schools Division Superintendent and Ma. Rosa C. Gutierrez, Assistant Schools Division Superintendent.

Kidapawan City has forty (40) barangays under its geopolitical jurisdiction composed of fifty-three (53) elementary schools under five districts, sixteen (16) public secondary schools and eight (8) integrated schools under three zones. There are twenty-two (22) private kindergarten schools, thirteen (13) private elementary schools and eight (8) private secondary schools strategically located in the city.

5. Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were the 106 junior high school students of Kidapawan City National High School, Kidapawan City. They were chosen because they were more capable of answering the survey questionnaire, and they knew their teachers for a longer time.

6. Research Instrument

There were three sets of questionnaires used in this study. Two sets for the independent variable and another set for dependent variable. The questionnaire for Instructional Practices is patterned after the work Valentine (2000) who identifies its indicators such as planning practices; teaching practices; and assessment practices, while the questionnaire for metacognitive ability is patterned after the work Schraw and Dennison (1994) who identify its indicators such as preparing & planning for learning; selecting and using learning strategies; monitoring strategy used; and evaluating strategy used and learning output. On the other hand, the questionnaire of language competence is based on the study of Misiran, Mahmuddin, Yusof, and Jaafar (2018).

The researcher has modified the questionnaire to suit the study and submitted it to the panel of experts for validation. After the validation, the questionnaires also underwent a reliability test to ensure its consistency and stability in measuring intended variables using Cronbach's alpha. For instructional practices the following were the p-value of its indicators, 0.757 for planning practices, 0.766 for teaching practices, and 0.799 for assessment practices.

7. Data Gathering Procedure

In this study, the researcher has undergone several steps in gathering data for the study. First, permission was sought from the principal of the school where he conducted his pilot test. The researcher also asked permission from the school where he conducted his study. Next, with the approval of the school principals, the researcher personally administered the questionnaire to the respondents of the study. The respondents were given sufficient time to respond with the questions. The researcher also assured the respondents of the utmost confidentiality of their responses and identities. The data gathered were collected and encoded in the Microsoft Excel and run in the SPSS for data analysis. After the data was analyzed, the researcher interpreted the data.

8. Statistical Treatment

The data collected were analyzed and interpreted using the following statistical tools: Mean, it measures the central tendency. This tool will be used to provide the levels of instructional practices, metacognitive ability, and language competence of junior high school students; Pearson r, it is the linear correlation between two variables. This statistical tool was used to determine the significant relationship between the instructional practices and language competence, and metacognitive ability and language competence; and Multiple Regression, it is the process of estimating the relationship among variables. This tool was used to determine which domain of instructional practices and metacognitive ability best influences language competence.

9. Result and Discussion

Table 1. Summary of instructional practices of Filipino teachers

INDICATORS	MEAN	DESCRIPTIVE RATING	QUALITATIVE INTERPRETATION
Planning Practices	4.50	Very High	Practiced at all times
Teaching Practices	4.55	Very High	Practiced at all times
Assessment Practices	4.46	High	Often practice but continuously
OVERALL MEAN	4.50	Very High	Practiced at all times

Legend

Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
1.00 – 1.49	Very Low	Not practice
1.50 – 2.49	Low	Practice Rarely
2.50 – 3.49	Moderate	Practice sometimes
3.50 – 4.49	High	Often practice but continuously.
4.50 – 5.00	Very High	Practiced at all times

Shown in Table 1 is the summary of instructional practices of Filipino which registered an overall mean score of 4.50 or very high and interpreted qualitatively as practiced at all times. This implies that most of the items regarding instructional practices were always practiced by the Filipino teachers. As reflected in the table, among the three indicators, teaching practices garnered the highest mean score of 4.55 or very high and interpreted qualitatively as practice at all times; planning practices registered a mean score of 4.50 or very high, while the assessment practices acquired the lowest mean score of 4.46 or high. The result signifies that the Filipino teachers are utilizing different teaching-learning strategies in their classes to cater the different learning styles of learners. This also suggests that the teachers are employing teaching methods based on the dynamics of the classroom to promote students' active involvement in learning. It is in congruence with the study of Moore (2014) who affirmed that teaching practices are used by effective teachers in order to achieve strong verbal and written communication skills and should also promote students' active involvement in learning. Moreover, this study affirms the study of Suurtamm and Neubrand (2015) who asserted that assessment practices should have the central purpose of enhancing student learning. Various ways, such as formative assessment and learning-oriented assessment, can be made to achieve this. In this case, assessment practices must be consistent with instructional activities. Furthermore, sound assessment provides important feedback about students' thinking that prompts student and teacher actions to improve student learning.

Table 2. Summary of metacognitive ability of students

INDICATORS	MEAN	DESCRIPTIVE RATING	QUALITATIVE INTERPRETATION
Preparing and Planning for Learning	4.37	High	Often practice but continuously
Selecting and Using Learning Strategies	4.36	High	Often practice but continuously
Monitoring Strategy Used	4.39	High	Often practice but continuously
Evaluating Strategy Used and Learning Output	4.41	High	Often practice but continuously
OVERALL MEAN	4.38	High	Often practice but continuously

Legend

Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
1.00 – 1.49	Very Low	Not practice
1.50 – 2.49	Low	Practice Rarely
2.50 – 3.49	Moderate	Practice sometimes
3.50 – 4.49	High	Often practice but continuously.
4.50 – 5.00	Very High	Practiced at all times

Table 2 presents the summary of metacognitive ability of students in terms of preparing and planning for learning, selecting and using learning strategies, monitoring strategy used, and evaluating strategy used and learning output with an overall mean score of 4.38 with a qualitative interpretation of often practice but continuously, which means that the majority of

the items regarding metacognitive ability were practiced oftentimes. Among the four indicators, Evaluating Strategy Used and Learning Output garnered the highest mean score of 4.41, interpreted qualitatively as often practice but continuously, while the indicator Selecting and Using Learning Strategies acquired the lowest mean score of 4.36 with a qualitative interpretation of often practice but continuously. It indicates further that the students are thinking about what they need or what to accomplish and how they intend to go about accomplishing it. Thus, learners should be taught how to choose the best and most appropriate strategy in a given situation especially in using organizational pattern of the text to help them develop their cognitive skills. The result also indicates that the students keep track of what works and what does not work for them by monitoring their own learning to help them increase their performance. This affirms the proposition of Hayat and Shateri (2019) that metacognitive learning strategies help the students to correct and control their behaviors, solve problem, act more strategically in learning, and consequently have high-quality learning and enhance their academic achievement.

Table 3. Level of language competence of junior high school students

INDICATORS	MEAN	DESCRIPTIVE RATING	QUALITATIVE INTERPRETATION
1. I can effectively communicate in Filipino across different contexts (e.g., academic, social, professional).	4.28	High	Often practice but continuously
2. I understand and can use various Filipino dialects or regional variations in conversation.	4.09	High	Often practice but continuously
3. I feel confident in my ability to read and comprehend complex texts in Filipino.	4.24	High	Often practice but continuously
4. My education has significantly enhanced my proficiency in the Filipino language.	4.59	Very High	Practiced at all times
5. I regularly engage in activities (e.g., reading, writing) that improve my language skills in Filipino.	4.37	High	Often practice but continuously
6. I believe that my teachers provide adequate support for developing my language competence in Filipino.	4.73	Very High	Practiced at all times
7. I actively participate in cultural activities that promote the use of the Filipino language (e.g., festivals, community events).	4.11	High	Often practice but continuously
8. My understanding of Filipino culture enhances my ability to communicate effectively in the language.	4.42	High	Often practice but continuously

9. I feel motivated to learn and use the Filipino language due to its cultural significance to my identity.	4.48	High	Often practice but continuously
10. I believe that improving my Filipino language skills will positively impact my academic and professional opportunities.	4.78	Very High	Practiced at all times
OVERALL MEAN	4.41	High	Often practice but continuously

Legend

Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
1.00 – 1.49	Very Low	Not practice
1.50 – 2.49	Low	Practice Rarely
2.50 – 3.49	Moderate	Practice sometimes
3.50 – 4.49	High	Often practice but continuously.
4.50 – 5.00	Very High	Practiced at all times

Shown in table 3 is the level of language competence of junior high school students which obtained an overall mean score of 4.41 or high and with a qualitative interpretation of often practice but continuously. This implies that the junior high school students claimed that overall, they have a high level of language competence in Filipino. In terms of its indicators, the level of language competence is as follows: I believe that improving my Filipino language skills will positively impact my academic and professional opportunities garnered the highest mean score of 4.78 or very high; I believe that my teachers provide adequate support for developing my language competence in Filipino with a mean score of 4.73 or very high; My education has significantly enhanced my proficiency in the Filipino language with a mean score of 4.59 or very high; I feel motivated to learn and use the Filipino language due to its cultural significance to my identity with a mean score of 4.48 or high; My understanding of Filipino culture enhances my ability to communicate effectively in the language with a mean score of 4.42 or high; I regularly engage in activities (e.g., reading, writing) that improve my language skills in Filipino 4.37 or high; I can effectively communicate in Filipino across different contexts (e.g., academic, social, professional) with a mean score of 4.28 or high; I feel confident in my ability to read and comprehend complex texts in Filipino with a mean score of 4.24 or high; I actively participate in cultural activities that promote the use of the Filipino language (e.g., festivals, community events) with a mean score of 4.11 or high; and I understand and can use various Filipino dialects or regional variations in conversation which registered the lowest mean score of 4.09 or high. This finding is supported by the idea put forth by Rebato (2024) that the attitudes of the students toward the Filipino language were determined by how proficiently they could communicate in the said language. In addition, Salvador (2020) asserted that is through language that students can deepen their understanding of the world in which they live and expand their individual perspectives on the global community. Students who are proficient in a language are better equipped to interact with larger groups, access and absorb information, and learn about the importance of language in both their own and other cultures. According to Choeda, Daker, Gyeltshen, Wangmo & Letho (2020) a person has attained linguistic or grammatical competence, in particular, and possibly communicative competence, when they

have a solid understanding of spelling, pronunciation, word formation, grammatical structure, and sentence structure.

Table 4. Correlation of Instructional Practices and Language Competence

Independent Variables	Pearson Coefficient (r-value)	Probability (P-Value)
Instructional Practices	.184	.059
Planning Practices	.171	.079
Teaching Practices	.155	.112
Assessment Practices	.142	.146

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

Presented in Table 4 is the significance of relationship between instructional practices and language competence which is analyzed using Pearson-Product moment correlation. Instructional practices registered a Pearson coefficient of 0.184 and a probability value of 0.059, which is higher than the alpha significance level of 0.05. Thus, it signifies that instructional practices were not positively correlated with language competence. The result of the study negates the findings of Peng (2024) that emphasizes the importance of instructional practices like selecting appropriate teaching methods in language education. Regularly evaluating teaching strategies and adapting them to cater to students' needs, educators can ensure that every learner's language competence will be developed. It also contradicts the ideas of Kosar and Dolapçıoğlu (2021), who believe that using interactive activities and having students work in pairs or groups as part of instructional practices can enhance their language learning. This suggests that even when teachers use effective teaching methods, it doesn't necessarily mean that students will improve their competence in language.

Table 5. Correlation of Metacognitive Ability and Language Competence

Independent Variables	Pearson Coefficient (r-value)	Probability (P-Value)
Metacognitive Ability	.560	.000**
Preparing & Planning for Learning	.458	.000**
Selecting and Using Learning Strategies	.467	.000**
Monitoring Strategy Used	.508	.000**
Evaluating Strategy Used & Learning Output	.557	.000**

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

Table 5 presented the relationship between metacognitive ability and language competence, revealing significant correlations through Pearson correlation coefficients at a significance level of .000. Correspondingly, it is observed that preparing & planning for learning shows significant relationship to language competence with r-value of 0.458 and p-value of 0.000, indicating that students who prepare and plan their learning are more likely to develop their language competence in Filipino. It also shows positive relationship with selecting and using learning strategies with a computed r-value of 0.467 and p-value of 0.000, meaning that

students who select and use learning strategies were more likely to enhance their language skills and competence. Positive correlation was only found in monitoring strategy used with a computed r-value of 0.508 and p-value of 0.000, implying that students' language competence can be more developed when they monitor the strategy they prepared and used. Moreover, evaluating strategy used and learning output has also showed significant relationship with language competence, signifying that students who evaluate their metacognition strategy used and learning output are less likely to struggle to learn and develop their language competence. This is supported by Eliezer & Marantika (2021) who claimed that higher metacognitive skills can lead to better performance in language assessments, as students who are aware of their learning strategies tend to achieve higher scores.

Moreover, it is also in congruence with study of Thawarom, Wilang & Singhasiri (2022) conducted on Thai university students which found out that both high- and low-proficient students used various types of metacognitive knowledge during speaking tasks. However, high-proficient students demonstrated a better understanding of task requirements and employed more effective strategies, which positively influenced their performance.

Table 6. Regression Analysis on the influence of instructional practices and metacognitive ability on the language competence of the Junior High School students in Kidapawan City

Predictor Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.665	.417		3.996	.000
Metacognitive Ability					
Evaluating Strategy Used and Learning Output	.353	.141	.362	2.499	.014

R= 0.186, R 2 = 0.034, F= 1.212, p-value<.05

Shown in Table 6 is the regression analysis of instructional practices and metacognitive ability on the language competence of Junior High School students. The result of regression analysis clarified that only one predictor was found to be the variable that best predict language competence. As revealed in the table, evaluating strategy used and learning output of metacognitive ability has the highest degree of influence considering its 0.362 beta weight which can be inferred that metacognitive ability in terms of evaluating strategy used and learning output was the best predictor of language competence of junior high school students.

The F- value of 1.212 is significant having a p- value of <0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis stating that there is no best predictor of language competence of junior high school students was rejected. In addition, the R square of .034 signifies that 3.40 percent of the variation in language competence of junior high school students was explained by the metacognitive ability. This means that 96.60 percent of variation on language competence is attributed to other variables not covered in this study. This is supported by (Van & Habok, 2023) who mentioned that metacognitive awareness is crucial for improving language skills such as vocabulary acquisition, reading comprehension, and overall proficiency. Therefore, it should be fostered among language learners. It is further supported by (Anderson, 2003) who stated that

metacognitive strategies such as planning, monitoring, and evaluating are crucial for effective language learning. These strategies help learners regulate their own learning processes, leading to improved language acquisition rates. The ability to reflect on one's learning methods allows students to adapt their approaches for better outcomes.

10. Conclusion

With the considerations of the findings of the study, conclusions are drawn in this section. First, the instructional practices of Filipino teachers revealed a very high level in terms of planning practices and teaching practices, indicating that they always practiced instructional practices in teaching students. The metacognitive ability of students revealed a high level in terms of preparing and planning for learning, selecting and using learning strategies, monitoring strategy used, and evaluating strategy used and learning output, implying that metacognitive ability were often practiced. Moreover, the language competence of junior high school students disclosed a high level, indicating that they are practicing their ability to communicate effectively in the language. On the other hand, the test of relationship between variables reveals that metacognitive ability and language competence showed a significant relationship, however, there was no relationship found between instructional practices and language competence of the junior high school students. Lastly, the regression analysis of the present study reveals that metacognitive ability was found to be a significant predictor of language competence. Among the four (4) indicators of metacognitive ability, evaluating strategy used and learning output was found to have degree of influence considering its beta weight. This implies that evaluating strategy used and learning output is specifically the best predictor of language competence of junior high school students

11. Recommendations

In the context of the above findings and conclusions, it was found out that in instructional practices, assessment practices was the lowest mean among the indicators. Based on the result, the study suggests that the Filipino teachers may revisit and evaluate their assessment practices. Teachers should view assessment practices as a fundamental aspect of improving students' learning abilities, similar to different evaluation methods like learning-oriented and formative assessments. While educators can utilize a range of evaluation techniques, the focus should be integrated into the instructional process. These assessments should create opportunities for meaningful feedback between teachers and students. Therefore, it is essential that assessment practices align with the instructional activities. In response to the high-level metacognitive ability, it is recommended that the students shall sustain their metacognitive ability or even increase it to a higher level so as to improve academic performance and language competence. It is also recommended that an action plan should be made operational for the students and shall be implemented by the teachers to improve metacognitive ability and students' academic performance and language competence in Filipino. Based also on the findings of this study, schools and teachers should formulate programs, activities, and performance tasks that enable learners to develop their skills and competence in Filipino language. Lastly, this study recommends that future researchers must include other variables aside from instructional practices, metacognitive ability, and language competence and may replicate this study to another school, division or local.

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