# ORAL LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY, COMPENSATORY STRATEGIES, MOTHER TONGUE, AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEARNERS IN NORTHERN PHILIPPINES

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationships between oral language proficiency level and oral compensatory strategies of the Grade 8 learners. It also described the possible association of compensatory strategies to academic performance in English, and their mother tongue. A total of 50 learners who were enrolled during the School Year 2021-2022 served as the participants in this study. The researcher used two (2) assessment tools to gather the needed data. The first was a questionnaire validated through an oral interview that consisted of 8-10 "Wh" questions related to their background. The second was the picture-cued narration. The researcher personally administered both the interview and the picture cued narration. The data gathered were computer processed using the software on Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The results denote a considerably high level of Oral Language Proficiency with a grand mean of 3.70 in terms of accuracy and 3.63 on fluency which means that the participants belong to the group of advanced intermediate speakers. However, there was no significant relationship between oral language proficiency and compensatory strategies of the participants as well as on their academic performance in English and their mother tongue.

**Contribution/ Originality:** The results of this study contribute immensely to encouraging the language teachers maximize communicative competence of learners in terms of accuracy and fluency through oral interviews and picture-cued narration. The teachers may likewise provide the learners exposure with people who speak the target language to establish better communication.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Developing the learners' communicative competence is one of the primordial concerns of language teaching. Language teachers are always in a quandary whenever language proficiency is being diagnosed as a problem in the classroom because learners can hardly express themselves in English. This scenario is always happening in English classes especially during recitations, discussions, groupwork activities, and questions and answers activities. Students usually stop speaking when they can no longer find the right word and resort to switching to their mother tongue. In short, learners' manifest hardships are in oral communication. This happens because second language (L2) learners exert efforts to utilize a language that is not their own. Their experience is different from those who think and speak in the same language. It is also commonly observed that Filipinos experienced deterioration in using English in school and day-to-day conversation. This contradicts the popularity of Filipinos in their

proficiency and competence in English. High school graduates of yesteryears are more competent in speaking the English language than today's college graduates. These observations are noticeably seen in various ways like incorrect grammar, lack of interest in reading, poor or disorganized writing and the inability to use the language.

Communication is vital in schooling and the engagement of people in everyday living, which poses challenges to learners. It is a skill that one must possess to maintain effective human relations. In addition, the main reason why communication has attracted attention across disciplines is that communication permeates virtually all human interaction activities. This goes to show that people become unique because human communication is cognitively, emotionally, and socially complex (Tyng, Amin, Saad, & Malik, 2017).

The essential function of language in the development of human cannot be overestimated in the world of educational arena. Research enthusiasts have conducted much research in language studies and linguistics. The researcher, educator, and academic manager, consider language essential in the educative process. This is a consensus of authorities in the fields of linguistics, sociology, psychology, and anthropology, who "collectively advance insight in language use" (McCarthy, 1991). After all, as mentioned by Crandall (1998) "in the real world, people learn language and content simultaneously, and teachers need to be able to address both within their classrooms".

It is impossible to deny the observations made concerning oral and written language communication whenever the English language is discussed in the classroom. The researcher became interested in the issues surrounding oral communication, particularly those relating to the development of English proficiency, its evaluation, and compensatory techniques.

### 1.1. Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to investigate the oral language proficiency level and the oral compensatory strategies of the Grade 8 learners. Moreover, it investigated the possible relationships between proficiency and the utilized compensatory strategies and their relation to other variables.

Specifically, it sought to:

1. Identify the oral language proficiency levels of the Grade 8 learners of a provincial secondary school;

2. Determine the compensatory strategies frequently used by Grade 8 learners at a provincial secondary school using English as a second language;

3. Determine the relationship between and among the Grade 8 learners' oral language proficiency, compensatory strategies, academic performance in English, and mother language.

### 1.2. Conceptual Framework of the Study

The conceptual framework presented in Figure 1 shows interrelationship among different variables which includes Compensatory Strategies, Oral Language Proficiency (OLP) which is defined as the ability to communicate verbally in a functional and accurate way in the target language, Mother tongue and Academic performance. The variables are used to determine if they are significantly associated with the respondents' Oral Language Proficiency.
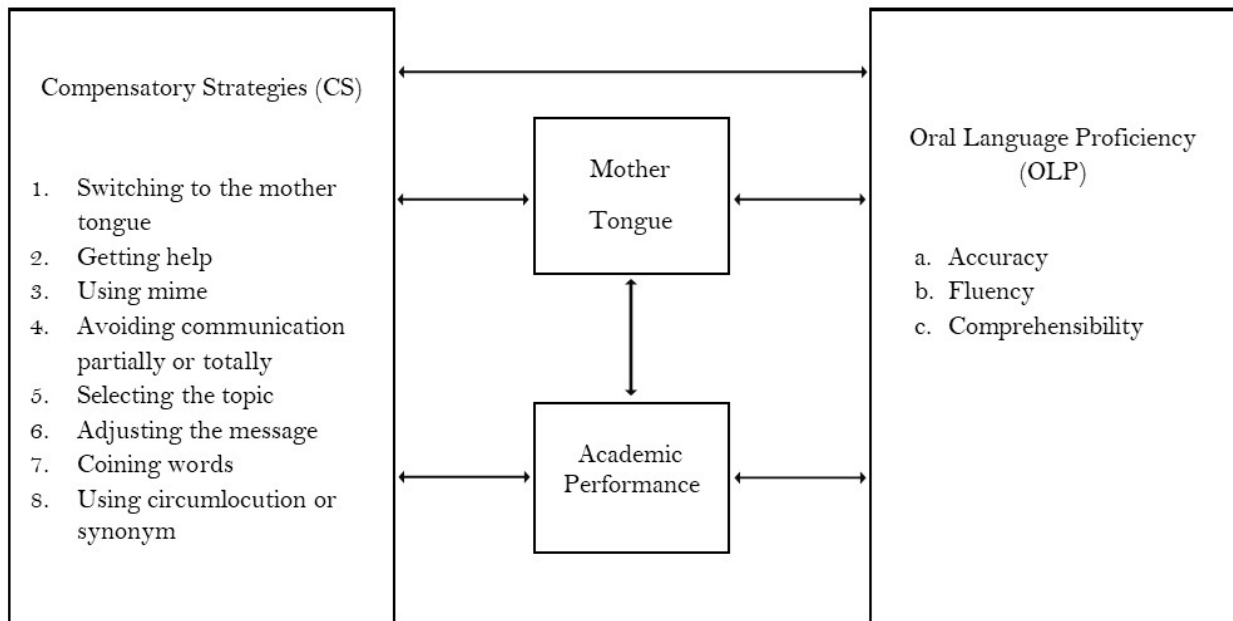
**Figure 1.** Conceptual framework of the study.

*1.3. Hypotheses of the Study*

There is no significant relationship between and among the Grade 8 learners' oral language proficiency, compensatory strategies, academic performance in English, and their mother tongue.

H1. The Oral Language Proficiency of the Grade 8 learners is not significantly related to the following:
   a.   Compensatory Strategies;
   b.   Mother Tongue; and
   c.   Academic Performance

H2. The Compensatory Strategies used by the Grade 8 learners is not significantly related to their:
   a.   Mother tongue; and
   b.   Academic performance

H3. The Mother Tongue of the Grade 8 learners is not significantly related to their Academic Performance.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The study involved the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data; the descriptive-correlational research method was applied on compensatory strategies, mother tongue, academic performance, and oral language proficiency of the respondents by using the Kendall's Tau b statistics technique. The validation strategies employed an oral interview guided by the Six Reference English level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages in classifying the data of accuracy, fluency, and comprehensibility of oral language proficiency. Whereas the validation of compensatory strategies was done with picture-cued narration in the actual task and the video were carefully recounted and compared for verification of frequency of using a particular strategy.

The study adopted direct observation, analysis of transcripts with the presence of another evaluator to obtain more valid and reliable scores, and conference to validate and clarify some notable features manifested by the respondents during the oral language proficiency assessment. To capture the transactions, a handy video camera was used. As the oral activities were conducted, the researcher and the language teacher who assisted, counted every compensatory strategy that was employed by each participant

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the data gathered for the attainment of the objectives set in this study.

**Table 1.** Profile of the participants (n = 50).

| Profile | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Academic Performance in English | | |
| 90 – 100 (Outstanding) | 10 | 20.00 |
| 85 - 89 Very Satisfactory) | 23 | 46.00 |
| 80 - 84 (Satisfactory) | 16 | 32.00 |
| 75 - 79 (Fairly Satisfactory) | 1 | 2.00 |
| Mean = 86.28 (Very Satisfactory) | | |
| Mother Tongue | | |
| Ilocano | 29 | 58.00 |
| Tagalog | 12 | 24.00 |
| Bisaya | 1 | 2.00 |
| Ilocano and Tagalog | 8 | 16.00 |

### 3.1. Profile of the Participants

Table 1 shows the profile of the 50 participants of this study as to their academic performance in English and their mother tongue. As gleaned from the table, in terms of their, academic performance in English, it was noted that they were very satisfactory as indicated by their mean grade of 86.28. Specifically, majority with 23 or 46.00 percent were under the grade scales of 85 to 89 or "Very satisfactory", followed by 16 or 32.00 percent under the range of 80 to 84 or Satisfactory". There was 10 or 20.00 percent who obtained grades from 90 to 100 or "Outstanding" and only one or 2.00 percent was under that range of 75 to 79 or "Fairly satisfactory".

Regarding their mother tongue, "Ilocano" was spoken by the majority with 29 or 58.00 percent out of the 50 participants. There were 12 or 24.00 percent whose mother tongue was "Tagalog" while 8 or 16.00 percent had both "Ilocano and Tagalog". Only one or 2.00 percent whose mother tongue was "Bisaya".

The incidence of more Ilocano speaking respondents was expected because most families in the research locale and nearby towns trace their family roots from those people who migrated from Ilocos.

**Table 2.** Summary of participants' oral language proficiency in terms of accuracy, fluency and comprehensibility.

| Indicators | Interview | Picture cued narration | Grand Mean | Level of Language Proficiency |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mean | Mean | | |
| Accuracy | 4.08 | 3.33 | 3.70 | Advanced Intermediate Speaker |
| Fluency | 4.01 | 3.26 | 3.63 | Advanced Intermediate Speaker |
| Comprehensibility | 4.46 | 0.06 | 2.26 | Low Intermediate Speaker |

Table 2 presents the participants' oral language proficiency in terms of accuracy, fluency, and comprehensibility as determined through interview and picture cued narration. The levels of accuracy and fluency of the participants are described as advanced intermediate speaker with a grand mean of 3.70 and 3.63, respectively. While their comprehensibility level in the two process of observation was low intermediate speaker with a grand mean of 2.26. This clearly indicated that only short sentences and phrases were understood as observed by the researcher who used to listen to the participants and as confirmed in the recorded video of the process of language assessment. These results negate the study conducted by Ancheta (2011) on the English proficiency of Senior High School students of San Mariano, Isabela that revealed a critically low English language proficiency level of the respondents.

### 3.2. Compensatory Strategies Frequently Used by the Participants

As shown in Table 3, from the interview, among the compensatory strategies, Rank no. 1 was "Switching to the mother tongue, the participant on the picture said "*kasi mas mataas ang sweldo doon*" (because they offer higher salary there) answering the question "Why do you want to work abroad?" rank no. 2 is "Avoiding communication partially

or totally" some of the participants tend not to answer the interview questions. Moreover, "Selecting the topic" was ranked no. 3. Rank no. 45 was "Adjusting the message" and "Coining words", Rank no. 6 was "Getting help" and the last, which were both ranked no, 7.5 were "Using mime" and "Using circumlocution or synonym".

**Table 3.** Compensatory strategies frequently used by the participants (n= 50).

| Category | Total Frequency Count | | Mean | Rank |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Evaluator # 1 | Evaluator # 2 | | |
| **A. Interview** | | | | |
| 1.     Switching to the mother tongue. | 44 | 45 | 44.50 | 1 |
| 2.     Getting help. | 2 | 2 | 2.00 | 6 |
| 3.     Using mime | 1 | 1 | 1.00 | 7.5 |
| 4.     Avoiding communication partially or totally. | 36 | 36 | 36.00 | 2 |
| 5.     Selecting the topic. | 11 | 11 | 11.00 | 3 |
| 6.     Adjusting the message | 3 | 3 | 3.00 | 4.5 |
| 7.     Coining words. | 3 | 3 | 3.00 | 4.5 |
| 8.     Using circumlocution or synonym. | 1 | 1 | 1.00 | 7.5 |
| **B. Picture Cued Narration** | | | | |
| 1.     Switching to the mother tongue. | 72 | 73 | 72.50 | 1 |
| 2.     Getting help. | 5 | 4 | 4.50 | 3 |
| 3.     Using mime | 1 | 1 | 1.00 | 7.5 |
| 4.     Avoiding communication partially or totally. | 8 | 8 | 8.00 | 2 |
| 5.     Selecting the topic. | 1 | 1 | 1.00 | 7.5 |
| 6.     Adjusting the message | 3 | 3 | 3.00 | 5 |
| 7.     Coining words. | 2 | 2 | 2.00 | 6 |
| 8.     Using circumlocution or synonym. | 4 | 3 | 3.50 | 4 |

From the picture cued narration, "Switching to the mother tongue" was again Rank no. 1, Participant in the picture described the first picture as "Ma'am Naiyangin" (Ma'am it was blown away by the wind). Rank. no. 2 was "Avoiding communication partially or totally" some of the participants tended not to say anything about the picture shown. Rank no 3 was "Getting help". "Using circumlocution or synonym" was ranked no. 4 and Rank no, 5 was "Adjusting the message". Rank no 6 was "Coining words" and finally, "Using mime" and "Selecting the topic" were both ranked 7.5.

The participants used compensatory strategies to express their ideas in the pictures provided to them. Language learners try to counterbalance their restricted linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge in the target language by employing CSs which might enhance their communicative competence. A concise definition has been suggested by G. A. Rabab'ah (2004) indicating that "[l]anguage learners attempt to solve their communication problems when they lack adequate resources in the target language by resorting to CSs. Most researchers agree that CSs are used to bridge the gap that exists between the non-native speakers' linguistic competence in the target language and their communicative needs" (p.148).

It is observed that "Switching to the mother tongue" is the most frequently used strategy, as it was ranked 1 both in the Interview and Picture cued narration. Switching to mother tongue is somewhat related to Code switching. Code switching is defined as the "switching back and forth of language or varieties of the same language, sometimes within the same utterance" (Mesthrie, Swann, Deumert, & Leap, 2000).

The results revealed that switching to mother tongue helped the learners expressed themselves orally during the Interview and Picture cued narration. However, it does conform with the findings of Fernando and Cinco (1998). In his study, most of the respondents speak Ilocano and Tagalog (Filipino); thus, when the target language (English) is used, organization is affected. Fernando also cited Menphill's explanation on comparing the native language (Ilocano, Filipino) with the target language (English) in terms of phonology, morphology, and structure which are bases for the relationship between the dialect spoken and organization.

Their findings suggest that there are specific sounds in Filipino which do not occur in English and vice versa. Thus, some Filipino words or phrases do not have a direct translation in English. On the other hand, the study of Jambunathan and Burts (2003) that ethnicity and the majority culture might be influential factors in socialization and competence (including communicative competence) contradicts with the result of this study.

**Table 4.** Relationship between compensatory strategies frequently used by the participants and their overall oral language proficiency.

| Compensatory Strategy Used | Oral Proficiency | | | | | |
| | Accuracy | | Fluency | | Comprehensibility | |
| | Corr. | Sig. | Corr. | Sig. | Corr. | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **A. Interview** | | | | | | |
| 1. Switching to the mother tongue. | -0.38 * | 0.00 | -0.31 * | 0.00 | -0.37 * | 0.00 |
| 2. Getting help. | -0.14 ns | 0.22 | -0.13 ns | 0.28 | -0.17 ns | 0.16 |
| 3. Using mime | 0.14 ns | 0.25 | 0.14 ns | 0.24 | 0.10 ns | 0.39 |
| 4. Avoiding communication partially or totally. | -0.29 * | 0.01 | -0.36 * | 0.00 | -0.39 * | 0.00 |
| 5. Selecting the topic. | -0.34 * | 0.00 | -0.39 * | 0.00 | -0.40 * | 0.00 |
| 6. Adjusting the message | -0.05 ns | 0.67 | -0.07 ns | 0.55 | -0.01 ns | 0.92 |
| 7. Coining words. | 0.08 ns | 0.49 | 0.02 ns | 0.89 | 0.09 ns | 0.43 |
| 8. Using circumlocution or synonym. | 0.15 ns | 0.20 | 0.18 ns | 0.14 | 0.13 ns | 0.28 |
| **b. Picture Cued Narration** | | | | | | |
| 1. Switching to the mother tongue. | -0.37 * | 0.00 | -0.33 * | 0.00 | -0.34 * | 0.00 |
| 2. Getting help. | -0.07 ns | 0.56 | -0.09 ns | 0.43 | -0.07 ns | 0.55 |
| 3. Using mime | 0.57 * | 0.00 | 0.60 * | 0.00 | 0.58 * | 0.00 |
| 4. Avoiding communication partially or totally. | 0.52 * | 0.00 | 0.55 * | 0.00 | 0.56 * | 0.00 |
| 5. Selecting the topic. | 0.43 * | 0.00 | 0.42 * | 0.00 | 0.51 * | 0.00 |
| 6. Adjusting the message | 0.52 * | 0.00 | 0.54 * | 0.00 | 0.60 * | 0.00 |
| 7. Coining words. | 0.55 * | 0.00 | 0.59 * | 0.00 | 0.68 * | 0.00 |
| 8. Using circumlocution or synonym. | 0.66 * | 0.00 | 0.64 * | 0.00 | 0.59 * | 0.00 |

**Note:** *Significant ns Not significant.

### 3.3. Relationship between Compensatory Strategies Frequently used by the Participants and their Overall Oral Language Proficiency

As gleaned from Table 4, there are more compensatory strategies used by the participants in achieving oral proficiency in picture cued narration and the consistent strategies. Moreover, these are associated significantly to oral proficiency in terms of accuracy, fluency, and comprehensibility in terms like "switching to mother tongue," "avoiding communication partially or totally," and "selecting the topic" with probability of error less than 0.05. This further implied that there is a higher possibility that participant who are very accurate, fluent, and comprehensible in their speaking the English language will likely have lesser tendency to switch to the mother tongue.

Likewise, "Avoiding communication partially or totally" and "" Selecting the topic" were two compensatory strategies found to have a significant association with the oral English proficiency of the participants. This implied that the higher is the oral English proficiency of the participants in terms of accuracy, fluency, and comprehensibility, the lesser is their tendency of using the compensatory strategies like avoiding communication partially or totally and selecting the topic.

From the picture cued narration, there was a significant association between most of the compensatory strategies and the oral proficiency level of the participants.

One of the key issues on second language acquisition known as communication/compensatory strategies, started three decades ago. To achieve successful communication in situations where L2 learners are confronted with lexical problems resulting from inadequate command of the language, they resort to communication strategies (CSs). Rababah (2005) points out: Language learners attempt to solve their communication problems when they lack adequate resources in the target language by resorting to CSs. Most researchers agree that CSs are used to

bridge the gap that exists between the non-native speakers' linguistic competence in the target language and their communicative needs.

In can be noted from Table 4 that "Switching to the mother tongue" is significantly but indirectly associated with the accuracy fluency and comprehensibility of the participants as revealed by their respective correlation values of -0.37, -0.33 and -0.34, all having 0.00 levels of significance. This result further implied that the higher the oral language proficiency in terms of accuracy, fluency, and comprehensibility, the greater the tendency of the participants to avoid switching to the mother tongue when they speak.

However, in the study of Liskin-Gasparro (1996) the use of CSs was analyzed, and found out that advanced speakers or the orally proficient speakers rely more on a range of language learning strategies when compared to upper intermediate speakers of that target language. The current study, findings are not consistent with the result of Liskin-Gasparro (1996) which stated that the higher the oral language proficiency in terms of accuracy, fluency, and comprehensibility, the greater the tendency of the participants to use compensatory strategies.

On the other hand, the correlation values from 0.42 to 0.60 with significant levels less than 0.05 revealed a significant and direct association. This affirms that there is a tendency the more participants to use the compensatory strategies such as using mime. avoiding communication partially or totally, selecting the topic, adjusting the message, coining words and using circumlocution or synonym, the higher they will become orally proficient, that is, the more they can become accurate, fluent, and accessible in speaking. This agrees with the findings of Nakatani (2006) suggesting that using specific Compensatory strategies for interaction could improve the learner's oral proficiency.

### 3.4. Relationship between Compensatory Strategies Frequently Used by the Participants and their Academic Performance in English

Table 5 reveals correlation values from -0.35 to -0.27 with significance levels less than 0.05 indicating a significant and inverse association between the use of compensatory strategies by the participants during the interview and their academic performance in English. As a result, the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the participants' compensatory strategies and their academic performance is accepted. The result further showed a greater tendency for the participants' performance level in English the less they use compensatory strategies of switching to the mother tongue, avoiding communication partially or totally, and selecting the topic when speaking.

**Table 5.** Relationship between compensatory strategies frequently used by the participants and their academic performance in English.

| Compensatory Strategy Used | Academic Performance in English | |
|---|---|---|
| | Corr. | Sig. |
| **A. Interview** | | |
| 1.   Switching to the mother tongue. | -0.35 * | 0.00 |
| 2.   Getting help. | -0.20 ns | 0.11 |
| 3.   Using mime | 0.15 ns | 0.22 |
| 4.   Avoiding communication partially or totally. | -0.30 * | 0.01 |
| 5.   Selecting the topic. | -0.27 * | 0.03 |
| 6.   Adjusting the message | 0.02 ns | 0.87 |
| 7.   Coining words. | 0.11 ns | 0.38 |
| 8.   Using circumlocution or synonym. | 0.08 ns | 0.51 |
| **b.   Picture Cued Narration** | | |
| 1.   Switching to the mother tongue. | -0.32 * | 0.01 |
| 2.   Getting help. | -0.03 ns | 0.82 |
| 3.   Using mime | 0.50 * | 0.00 |
| 4.   Avoiding communication partially or totally. | 0.44 * | 0.00 |
| 5.   Selecting the topic. | 0.34 * | 0.00 |
| 6.   Adjusting the message | 0.37 * | 0.00 |
| 7.   Coining words. | 0.60 * | 0.00 |
| 8.   Using circumlocution or synonym. | 0.49 * | 0.00 |

**Note:** *Significant   ns Not significant.

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Through a picture cued narration, all the identified compensatory strategies, except, "Getting help", were significantly associated with the academic performance in English. More specifically, the correlation value of -0.32 with significance level of 0.01 revealed that "Switching to the mother tongue" is significantly but indirectly associated with the academic performance in English. Thus, there is a higher possibility that the participants who frequently use mime, avoid communication partially or totally, select the topic, adjust the message, coin words, and use circumlocution or synonym to obtain higher grades in English. Rabab'ah and Bulut (2007) probed into Compensatory strategies used in the oral discourse and found that students used a wide range of CSs in oral production.

**Table 6.** Relationship between compensatory strategies frequently used by the participants and their mother tongue.

| Compensatory Strategy Used | Mother Tongue | |
|---|---|---|
| | Corr. | Sig. |
| **A. Interview** | | |
| 1. Switching to the mother tongue. | 0.05 [ns] | 0.71 |
| 2. Getting help. | -0.16 [ns] | 0.24 |
| 3. Using mime | 0.11 [ns] | 0.43 |
| 4. Avoiding communication partially or totally. | 0.01 [ns] | 0.94 |
| 5. Selecting the topic. | -0.14 [ns] | 0.31 |
| 6. Adjusting the message | -0.07 [ns] | 0.61 |
| 7. Coining words. | -0.07 [ns] | 0.61 |
| 8. Using circumlocution or synonym. | 0.22 [ns] | 0.10 |
| **b. Picture Cued Narration** | | |
| 1. Switching to the mother tongue. | -0.08 [ns] | 0.54 |
| 2. Getting help. | 0.00 [ns] | 0.99 |
| 3. Using mime | 0.12 [ns] | 0.34 |
| 4. Avoiding communication partially or totally. | 0.13 [ns] | 0.29 |
| 5. Selecting the topic. | -0.09 [ns] | 0.43 |
| 6. Adjusting the message | 0.10 [ns] | 0.42 |
| 7. Coining words. | 0.11 [ns] | 0.37 |
| 8. Using circumlocution or synonym. | 0.18 [ns] | 0.13 |

**Note:** [ns] Not significant.

**Table 7.** Relationship between participants' oral language proficiency and their academic performance in English and mother tongue.

| Oral Language Proficiency | Academic Performance in English | | Mother Tongue | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Corr. | Sig. | Corr. | Sig. |
| **A. Interview** | | | | |
| Accuracy | 0.52 * | 0.00 | 0.20 [ns] | 0.07 |
| Fluency | 0.52 * | 0.00 | 0.18 [ns] | 0.11 |
| Comprehensibility | 0.53 * | 0.00 | 0.13 [ns] | 0.26 |
| **B. Picture Cued Narration** | | | | |
| Accuracy | 0.48 * | 0.00 | 0.07 [ns] | 0.55 |
| Fluency | 0.53 * | 0.00 | 0.13 [ns] | 0.25 |
| Comprehensibility | -0.18 [ns] | 0.14 | -0.01 [ns] | 0.95 |

**Note:** *Significant   [ns] Not significant.

*3.5. Relationship between Compensatory Strategies Frequently Used by the Participants and their Mother Tongue*

Table 6 shows that the mother tongue of the participants be it Ilocano, Tagalog or Bisaya have no bearing whatsoever on their use of the compensatory strategies. This was revealed by the correlation values from -0.15 to 0.22 with significance levels greater than 0.05. As a result, the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the participants' compensatory strategies and their mother tongue is accepted.

*3.6. Relationship between Participants' Oral Language Proficiency and their Academic Performance in English and Mother Tongue*

As gleaned from Table 7, the academic performance in English had a significant and direct association with the accuracy, fluency, and comprehensibility of the participants in the interview as revealed by the correlation values of 0.52, 0.52 and 0.53 with significance levels of 0.00, respectively. Hence, the more accurate, fluent, and comprehensible they are in speaking, the greater their tendency to perform academically in English. On the other hand, the correlation values of 0.48 and 0.53 with significance levels of 0.00 clearly indicated that through a picture cued narration, the academic performance of participants is significantly associated with their accuracy and fluency in speaking. Thus, this implied further that the higher the academic performance of the participants in English, the greater their tendency to be very accurate and fluent in expressing themselves. Therefore, the hypothesis that there is no connection between participants' oral language proficiency, academic performance in English and mother tongue is rejected.

Table 8 further showed the correlation values from -0.01 to 0.20 with significance levels greater than 0.05 indicating a no significant bearing of the participants' mother tongue on their accuracy, fluency, and their comprehensibility in speaking. Hence, the participants' mother tongue cannot be a basis for determining their oral proficiency level (Pangket, 2019). In this study, majority of the respondents speak Ilocano and Tagalog (Filipino), thus, the organization is affected when the target language (English) is used.

**Table 8.** Relationship between participants' academic performance in English and their mother tongue.

| Variables | Mother Tongue | |
|---|---|---|
| | Corr. | Sig. |
| Academic Performance in English | 0.08 $^{ns}$ | 0.51 |

**Note:** $^{ns}$ Not significant.

*3.7. Relationship between Participants' Academic Performance in English and their Mother Tongue*

Table 8 shows a correlation value of 0.08 with 0.51 significance level. This proved that there was no significant association between participants' academic performance in English and their mother tongue.

## 4. CONCLUSION

In this study, the Grade 8 learner participants exhibited considerable levels of oral language proficiency in terms of fluency, accuracy, and comprehensibility. There is a significant and inverse association between the participants' compensatory strategies frequently used by them and their academic performance in English There is a significant and direct association between the participants' Oral Language Proficiency and their Academic Performance in English and Mother tongue. However, there is no significant association between compensatory strategies frequently used by the participants and their mother tongue. There is no significant relationship between the participants' mother tongue and their accuracy, fluency, and comprehensibility in speaking. Moreover, there is no significant association between the participants' academic performance in English and their mother tongue.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

From the above findings and conclusions, here are some recommendations that would help increase the oral language proficiency of the students:

1. Language teachers need more activities to engage students to use the language to express themselves. Students will develop their oral language proficiency by building vocabulary through this.

2. More English Language exposure is encouraged among the students, such as having talk shows and interview during discussions and organizing activities like Impromptu Speaking, Extemporaneous Speaking, Declamation. and Oration.

3. Language teachers are recommended to provide learning aids such as giving supportive feedback so that students can see themselves speaking the language as a less daunting and more pleasant experience in the classroom.

4. The use of Compensatory Strategies (CSs) improves language learning. Hence, students should be encouraged to use these strategies to further their language learning.

5. Similar studies are recommended to be conducted with other variables such as Family Income and Reading Resources at home.

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