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FACTORS AFFECTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF PRODUCTIVE MACRO SKILLS IN ENGLISH AMONG JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract

This study used descriptive research design to identify the factors affecting the development of the productive macro skills in English of randomly selected junior high school students in a private school in the Pagsanjan, Laguna, Philippines. Both the speaking and writing skill level of the students are good. Listening to English songs was given the highest rating as to perceived effectiveness. Moderately effective also are watching English movies, reading English books, using social networking sites, reading magazines, and playing video games. Result of multiple regression analysis revealed watching English movies contributes most to level of writing skills. Whereas, reading English books contributes most to the level of the speaking skills of the students' other factors such as using social networking sites and listening to English songs also have significant influence to speaking skills. Thus, the use of English movies on lectures in writing is recommended. It may be used as springboard or as evaluation activities. English teachers may also incorporate the use of social media, and different books during class discussion and activities. Speaking and writing skills are an important part of communication. Thus, activities that will gear towards developing these productive macro skills in English are encouraged.

Keywords: productive macro skills, speaking, writing, English as Second Language

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

English language is the most spoken language in the world and one of the most popular languages to learn (Wilson, 2016). It is even considered the 'universal language'. People use the English language in different aspects of life. It is used in science, mathematics, philosophy, history, and a wide range of subjects. It is used in general directions, entertainment, business, and trade. Many choose to learn the language to secure better positions at work, others to sound smart or powerful.

English as a second language is used frequently in the Philippines on important goods and in formal settings including job interviews, client interactions, and other programs. Speaking and writing the language fluently definitely opens a world of possibilities.

As many as its speakers and behind its popularity, few were able to master the language. For it was not as simple as everyone thinks. The English language is composed of four macro-skills listening, reading, writing, and speaking. And with the innovation in technology, viewing was identified as the fifth macro skill (Guieb, and Ortega-Dela Cruz, 2017). There are even challenges faced both by English and non-English background in learning the language such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and spelling also called the micro-skills according to

Aydoğan, and Akbarov (2014). When faced with these complexities, especially on speaking and writing, learners often retreat and neglect further studies. And this is where the academe steps in. Ensuring the development of the students of the English language is a challenge but can be made possible with the help of several media and taking advantage of the technological advancements.

There is no particular tool or even practice as to how one can be efficient in using the English language. As the technological age takes into the limelight online communication has been a great tool for communicating. This made everything fast and convenient. It was even added to the wide range of educational tools used by educators to teach the English language more effectively. This causes uncertainty in the classroom as to what will be the best and fitting to use especially there is a very limited amount of time given and very much to learn.

Writing and language abilities have gotten worse as technology has advanced (Swanson, 2008). According to a 2012 Common Sense Media survey (Bronowicki, 2014), 58 per cent of teachers believe that some media and technological advancements have a detrimental impact on students' writing. Twenty-first century learners have been the recipient of all that the past generations have acquired for the ages. And seldom that they were given real opportunities to create their own craft. As technology advances, this generation have included the use of their gadgets for studying, shopping, and a lot of communicating in their everyday lives. Excessive use has encouraged language innovation. They have LOL for laughing out loud, BRB for be right back, ATM for at the moment, and many other new words. Students want to cut everything short and is idle in waiting. In a private school in Pagsanjan, Laguna, Philippines, the teachers especially the English language teachers have been struggling to keep up with these manners because students are bringing this kind of style even in their academics. During presentations, students are having a hard time using the formal language and are really shy when speaking in front of the class. But when it comes to their participation in social media these students appear confident and smart. When tasked to do reaction papers, research papers, or term papers students are usually caught plagiarizing, saying it is easier to copy than write an original. When there are essay parts in the examinations, more than half of the class cannot comply with writing standards. Many times, teachers return written works because of incorrect spelling or shorthanded words. Undoubtedly, students' productive macro skills appear problematic.

In this study, productive macro skills refer to the speaking and writing skills of the junior high school students. Speaking and writing are as important as reading and listening for they are the manifestation of what the students have learned in the latter. These productive skills lead the way to a more effective application of the language in social, intellectual, and philosophical realm. The researcher believes that the daily activities of the students directly and indirectly affect the development of their productive macro skills in English language. These activities include their use of different social networking sites, playing video games, watching movies, reading books, listening, and singing English songs, reading newspapers, magazines, and others, which in return might affect their speaking and writing skills. Therefore, this study aimed to examine the influence of the said factors and to what extent each factor affects the productive macro skills of the students.

Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the mean level of the students' productive macro skills in English terms of:

- Speaking skills?
- Writing skills?

2. What are the factors that affect the development of productive macro skills in English among selected junior high school students?

It specifically (i) determined the mean level of the students' productive macro skills in English in terms of: speaking and writing skills; (ii) identified the factors that determine the development of productive macro skills in English of selected junior high school students; (iii) analysed the factors affecting the development of productive macro skills in English among selected junior high school students.

2 MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

This study used descriptive research design. Descriptive research answers the questions who, what, where when and how the condition is of the situation under study.

Participants of the Study

The subjects of the study were randomly selected 119 junior high school students in a private school in Pagsanjan, Laguna, Philippines. These junior high school students were composed of Grade 7 (35 or 29 per cent),

Grade 8 (27 or 23 per cent), Grade 9 (24 or 20 per cent), Grade 10 (33 or 28 per cent) students. The respondents represented 70 per cent of the total research population of junior high school students in a private school which is 169.

Instrumentation

The first objective of the study is to determine the mean level of the students' productive macro skills in English in terms of speaking skills and writing skills. These were measured through tasks given by the researcher.

Interview questions were used to assess the students' speaking skills. These involve personal queries that allow the students to describe themselves specifically their personality characteristics, talents, favorite subject, their friends, ambitions in life, and how they see themselves in the future. They were also asked to expound their answers to each question. This one-on-one interview encouraged the students to speak spontaneously in English. This was graded through a rubric adapted from Descalzota (2010). The rubric is composed of seven indicators that assess both verbal and non-verbal communication skills such as *eye contact, fluency, organization, content, language, voice, body language*. This was measured using five-point rating scale ranging from 0-7, Very Poor (VP); 8-14, Poor (P); 15- 21, Average (A); 22- 28, Good (G); to 29- 35, Very Good (VG).

Another questionnaire was used to assess students' writing skills which contains writing tasks and was graded through Robitaille and Connelly (2002) rubric for grading students' writing composition. This was also adapted from Descalzota (2010). The task for writing skills was grouped into two parts. Task 1 is an essay writing activity wherein the respondents may choose on topics already given. Task 2 is also an essay writing activity. It is just that the topic is already given, and that is "*Who Should Stop Cyber Bullying?*" Both paragraphs were composed of at least 100 words written for 45 minutes each. Scores for the two tasks were averaged. It was graded using a rubric that evaluates *content, organization, vocabulary, language used, and mechanics*. The writing skill was measured using five-point rating scale from 0-5, Very Poor (VP); 6-10, Poor (P); 11- 15, Average (A); 16- 20, Good (G); 21- 25, Very Good (VG).

Lastly, is a researcher-made survey questionnaire was used to determine the perceived effect of the factors on student's productive macro skills. The questionnaire is composed of seven major factors with 16 sub-items for a total of 23 items in all. It was measured using four-point rating scale ranging from 1 -not effective, 2-less effective, 3- moderately effective, to 4-highly effective. The questionnaire was pilot tested to 20 junior high school students who were not part of the study. It resulted to slight modification.

Data Analysis

The average level of the factors influencing the development of productive macro skills in English among a select group of junior high school students was ascertained using descriptive statistics like mean, standard deviation, and proportion/frequency.

In addition to descriptive statistics, the study also employed inferential statistics such as the multiple linear regression to analyse the effect of independent to dependent variables. In other words, this inferential statistical test helps in determining the effect of movies, social networking sites, books, songs, video games, texting, magazine, and newspaper on the productive macro skills including speaking and writing. Furthermore, it helps in analysing which among these factors have significant influence on the speaking and writing skills of the students.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher requested permission to conduct the study in writing in an official letter before beginning to recruit subjects. The researcher asked the institution for permission to access the official list of enrolled students, which was used just for the sample technique.

In order to get permission for the students' involvement, the researcher forwarded the survey questionnaire to the respondents with the consent letter.

The Data Privacy Act of 2012, also known as the Philippine Republic Act 10173, and the letter of consent were both referenced in the first section of the questionnaire about confidentiality. This was done to let the respondents know that the study would only use the information they gave. This study made sure that ethical considerations were applied for the welfare of the subjects of the study.

3 RESULTS

Students' Productive Macro Skills

Table 1 shows the mean level of the students score in speaking and writing skills. In terms of their speaking skills, none of the students got to the Very Poor level. Forty-one (41) of them got to the Average level, 34 to the

Good level, and thirty-one (31) to the Very Good level. The mean score is 22.7 out of 35 which falls to the Good level with standard deviation of 6.13.

While, in terms of their writing skills, none of the students got to the Very Poor level. However, six students were on the Poor level, twenty-six (26) were on the Average level, fifty-four (54) on the Good level, and thirty-three (33) on the Very Good level. The mean score is eighteen and twenty hundredths (18.20) out of twenty-five (25) which falls on the Good level with a standard deviation of 4.12.

Table 1. Level of the students' productive macro skills

Score Level	f	%
Speaking skills		
Very Poor	0	0
Poor	13	11%
Average	41	34%
Good	34	29%
Very Good	31	26%
n	119	
Overall Mean	22.7	GOOD
SD	6.13	
Writing skills		
Very Poor	0	0
Poor	6	5%
Average	26	22%
Good	54	45%
Very Good	33	28%
n	119	
Overall Mean	18.2	GOOD
SD	4.12	

Perceived Factors Affecting the Development of Productive Macro Skills

The perceived factors affecting the development of the productive macro skills (Table 2) got the following general weighted mean based on the student assessment: movie 3.18 which is moderately effective, social networking sites 3.05, also moderately effective, books 3.12, moderately effective, songs 3.24, moderately effective, video games 2.82, moderately effective, instant messaging 2.41, less effective, magazines 2.59, moderately effective and newspapers 2.14 which is less effective. This implies that students tend to listen more to songs than any other factors and those rated lowest are used very seldom, just like newspapers and magazines as these are already available online.

Table 2. Perceived factors affecting the development of productive macro skills

Factors	Students' Assessment				General Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
	1	2	3	4		
Movie	0.02	0.30	1.39	1.48	3.18	<i>Moderately effective</i>
Social Networking Sites	0.02	0.52	1.13	1.38	3.05	<i>Moderately effective</i>
Books	0.01	0.37	1.46	1.28	3.12	<i>Moderately effective</i>
Songs	0.00	0.34	1.29	1.61	3.24	<i>Moderately effective</i>
Video Games	0.09	0.59	0.96	1.18	2.82	<i>Moderately effective</i>
Instant Messaging	0.08	1.11	0.76	0.47	2.41	<i>Less effective</i>
Magazines	0.18	0.47	1.16	0.77	2.59	<i>Moderately effective</i>
Newspapers	0.24	0.96	0.58	0.37	2.14	<i>Less effective</i>

Legend: 1.00-1.50, not effective, 1.51-2.50, less effective, 2.51-3.50 moderately effective, 3.51- 4.00 highly effective

Students were asked to list down other factors that can affect the development of their productive macro skills aside from the ones listed in the instrument. Based on the result, the students cited the following as highly effective in developing their productive macro skills in English: watching English television shows, television series, mall shows, watching anime, and reading signage and literally everything they encountered in life such as communicating with foreigners using English language.

Analysis of Factors Affecting the Development of Productive Macro Skills

Table 3 presents the multiple regression analyses between the dependent variables and independent variables. The values of the intercept indicate the level of the productive macro skills, speaking and writing, that a student will get if the factors affecting the productive macro skills are zero or not available while the value of the coefficient determines the change in the value of the productive macro skills for every change in the value of the factors affecting it such as movies, social networking sites, books, songs, video games, texting, magazine, and newspaper.

Results reveal that although listening to English songs was rated the highest among the factors, it is watching English movies that contributes most to the level of writing skills of the students ($b = 1.07$). The results, however, show that none of the factors has a significant influence on the level of the writing skills of the students. This implies that students are more inspired to write after watching English movies. What they learn from watching, they practice more effectively in writing. The result, however, is not statistically significant at $p = 0.119$.

Table 3. Factors affecting the development of productive macro skills and level of speaking skills

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		T	Sig.
	b	Std. Error		
(Constant)	13.3	1.65	8.09	.00
Movies	1.07		1.40	0.16
Social Networking Sites	-0.31	0.76	-0.42	0.67
Books	0.74	0.74	1.00	0.32
Songs	0.71	0.74	1.14	0.26
Video Games	-0.02	0.63	-0.04	0.97
Texting	-0.02	0.54	-0.04	0.97
Magazine	0.43	0.51	1.04	0.30
Newspapers	-0.08	0.41	-0.16	0.87

0.47

The International Language Academy of Canada (2015) claims that viewing movies is one of the finest ways to learn English because they provide a variety of amusement. Many new vocabulary words, emotions, accents, and even nonverbal communication that is present in regular speech can all be learned.

The next summary output shown in Table 4 is the multiple regression analyses between the speaking skills as the dependent variable and the factors including movies social networking sites, books, songs, video games, texting, magazines, and newspapers as the independent variables.

Results show that reading English books has the highest contribution to the level of the speaking skills of the students ($b = 3.78$) while the use of social networking sites has the least contribution ($b = -2.37$). Reading English books also has a significant relationship to the speaking skills of the junior high school students ($p = 0.00$). Other factors such as using social networking sites ($p = 0.02$) and listening to English songs ($p = 0.02$) also have significant relationship to speaking skills. The regression model is statistically significant at $p = 0.00$. This implies that students tend to express themselves more when they feel freer to do so which is given by using SNS. When students continuously practice expressing themselves, they gradually develop their speaking skills.

Table 4. Factors affecting the development of productive macro skills and level of speaking skills

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error		
(Constant)	2.95	3.52	0.84	0.40
Movies	1.45	1.02	1.42	0.16
Social Networking Sites	-2.37	1.00	-2.38	0.02
Books	3.78	0.99	3.80	0.00
Songs	1.99	0.84	2.37	0.02
Video Games	1.02	0.72	1.42	0.16
Texting	-0.27	0.68	-0.40	0.69
Magazine	0.21	0.55	0.38	0.70
Newspapers	0.79	0.63	1.26	0.21

4 DISCUSSIONS

The results of the students' speaking abilities are consistent with Urrutia and Vega's (2010) and Bunyamin (2020) study, which found that speaking is the hardest skill to master. Students frequently display a lack of vocabulary, shyness, and a fear of embarrassment. In addition, the authors claimed that students demonstrate the value of incorporating games into the classroom in order to enhance speaking abilities (Карменова, and Ташенова, 2016).

Students' speaking abilities have been impacted by a variety of elements due to their exposure to a variety of media. According to Gleik (2011), the English language, which is now spoken by more than a billion people, has entered a period of ferments. The perspective available at the historic Oxford offices, where the Oxford Dictionary is written, is both close-knit and broad reaching. The language that lexicographers listen in on has devolved into a wild and amorphous mass of messaging and speech that includes newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, business memos, internet news group and chat room conversations, broadcast radio and television, and phonograph records (Isaacs, 2016).

On the other hand, the result in the students' writing skills relates to what Cahyono, Mukminatien, and Amrina (2016), and Kahveci and Şentürk (2021) believe, that writing proficiency is extremely important. People are becoming too familiar these days with e-mail and text message communication. Graduates need to appreciate that students are still looking for well-developed formal written communication skill. Also, for Fisher, Myhill, and Twist (2011), writing is a complex task. It involves coordination between the muscular and cognitive skills, and its language complexity reflects the social and cultural norms of the writer's time.

The result in the perceived factors shows that as for the students, it is *listening to English songs* that they find most effective in developing their productive macro skills. Examples of English songs include slow and up-beat songs. This is comparable to Songsiri's (2012) argument that it's critical for pupils to understand proper word

pronunciation. In this way, they must hear a lot of English before they can become familiar with or develop an ear for its sounds. He says that one way to engage in this activity is to watch or listen to English-language movies or songs. Students who participate in these events will obtain benefits such as a good pronunciation model from English native speakers (Atmowardoyo, and Sakkir, 2021). It is worthwhile to use instructional aids and materials, such as tape recorders, photographs of the mouth and articulations, to facilitate the aforementioned methods of teaching pronunciation.

Watching *English Movies*, examples include but not limited to:

- romantic, romantic-comedy, comedy, horror movies
- classical, artistic type of movies

The International Language Academy of Canada (2015) also asserts that viewing movies is one of the finest ways to learn English because they are the king of entertainment. According to the study of Hasan (2022), watching movies has aided the tertiary students in enhancing their speaking abilities, listening abilities, vocabulary, enthusiasm, and motivation, as well as reducing anxiety and stress in learning English as second language. Many new vocabulary words, emotions, accents, and even nonverbal communication that is present in regular speech can all be learned. As stated by Donaghy (2015) the visuality of films makes it an indispensable language teaching tool, that makes learners have a deeper understanding of the language while enjoying. It also provides a source of authentic and interactive language (Rao, 2019).

Reading *English Books* examples, include but not limited to:

- Self-help books
- Textbooks (books in English, Math, Science, T.L.E., and Computer)
- Books in Ebook format (such as wattpad books, or other romantic novels)
- Fiction Novels
- Non-Fiction Novels
- Spiritual books

According to Richards (2001) despite the impact of the new technology, textbooks will continue to have an essential role in teaching language and provide useful resource for both the learner and the teacher.

Stated also by Boobyer (2013) e-books has special added features like audio, interactive tasks, and built-in dictionaries. This transforms a class or series of lessons that primarily involve receptivity into ones in which students can make their own works.

Engaging in *Social Networking Sites*, examples include but not limited to:

- Chatting with friends, posting, and sharing on Facebook using English language
- Sending and Receiving email on Gmail or yahoo in English

This was according to Liu et al. (2013) who stated that social networking sites play an increasingly important role today, educators are exploring how they can be used as a teaching and learning tool. According to Ahmed, Abbas, and Qureshi (2021), the usage of social networking sites in English language instruction has wonderful potential because it allows students to learn more easily.

By providing simultaneous and non-simultaneous engagement, as well as speaking, writing, reading, and listening exercises at a time and location of the learners' choosing, SNS have the potential to revolutionize language learning (Zainuddin, and Yunus, 2022). Despite the fact that SNS contact is not face-to-face, it nonetheless allows users to communicate authentically with native speakers, which was previously challenging to achieve in a language school (Lamy and Zourou, 2013).

Reading materials written in English such as *magazines*. Magazines offer a real natural source of language including words characterized by several connotational components that pertains to wide variety of language styles, enriching the students' passive and active vocabulary (Valva, 2009). Finding real materials that are clear and interesting is crucial for educators, say Sari, Hafifah, and Mayasari (2020). One of those real-world resources that works well for teaching English is magazines. In the study of Chang, and Lin (2014), using reflective e-journals improved the academic performance of learners in English in terms of reading comprehension.

Playing *Video Games* using English as medium of communication, examples include but not limited to:

- online video games with friends
- offline video games alone

According to Muhanna (2012), a lot of academics claim that playing online games can assist kids learn vocabulary. As a result, vocabulary games—whether used alone or as a part of a larger program—effectively support students' lexical development and retention (Liao and Chen, 2012). The study by Jasso (2012) offers some empirical evidence in favour of using non-academic computer video games in the classroom as a technique for teaching EFL vocabulary. Findings indicated that vocabulary acquisition is possible with the use of a non-academic computer video game, though, it does not necessarily lead to more acquired vocabulary than using traditional

materials (Jasso, 2012). Winaldo and Oktaviani (2022) discovered that playing video games is a highly gratifying hobby that fosters an enjoyable and exciting atmosphere ideal for language acquisition.

Using English language in *Instant Messaging* (Texting). Tirotta (2015) asserts that effective writing needs a solid structure. It must be clear and requires development and several examples. While proper writing skills is intricate and requires a long process, instant messaging promotes briefness and speed. The findings of the study by Ali, Hasnain, and Beg (2019), in contrast, indicated that this new way of using the language had a detrimental influence on students' literacy and broke the laws of the English language. They claim that the use of the English language is being negatively impacted by instant messaging and texting (Ali, Hasnain, and Beg, 2019).

On the other hand, in their study from 2023, Chung and Choi looked at the utilization of mobile instant messaging (MIM) and how well it works for teaching English. Their research revealed that many language learners viewed MIM as a useful digital teaching tool that may enhance the fun and engagement of learning the English language by fostering meaningful and cooperative interactions between students and teachers.

5 Concluding remarks

The study uncovered the factors affecting the development of productive macro skills in English among junior high school students. These factors include movies, songs, books, social networking sites, video games, instant messaging, magazines, and newspapers. The level of the productive macro skills of the junior high school students is good. Listening to English songs affects the productive macro skills of the junior high school students best compared to other factors as per the perceptions of the students.

Among the factors affecting the development of the productive macro skills in English of the junior high school students it is watching English movies that adds more to the level of their writing skills while for the speaking skills it is reading English books that contributes more. Factors such as using social networking sites, reading English books, and listening to English songs also have significant influence to speaking skills. While none of the factors have a significant influence to writing skills.

The perception of the students regarding the factors affecting their productive macro skills is in favour of listening to English songs, therefore, it is recommended that teachers integrate different English songs on their class discussions whenever applicable, especially on topics of writing and speaking. The use also of English movies on lectures in writing is recommended. It may be used as springboard or as evaluation activities. Encourage students to write screenplays or scripts for movies, alternate ending for the stories, and movie reviews. These include acting, directing, cinematography and writing. As per the results of the regression, teachers may also incorporate the use of social media, and different books during class discussion and activities.

Speaking and writing skills as productive macro skills are an important part of communication. Thus, activities that will gear towards developing them cannot be taken for granted. As there are other factors that can affect the development of productive macro skills aside from the ones covered by the study and listed by the students, future studies may explore on other factors not included in the study. Specifically: watching television shows, watching anime, and reading signage to see how these factors might contribute to the development of students' productive macro skills in English.

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