Competence Level of Filipino Secondary Sophomore Students on Elements of UbD Teaching-Learning Approach

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ABSTRACT

This study identified the competence level of Filipino sophomore students on the elements of UbD teaching-learning approach. Specifically, this study sought to find out if there are significant differences in their competence level along the four macro skills, namely: listening, speaking, reading and writing. It also delved on the assumption that there is a significant difference in the competence level of the secondary sophomore students when grouped according to age and gender.

Based on the findings along the three elements of UbD teaching-learning approach; namely, acquisition, making-meaning and transfer, the students’ competence level does not significantly differ in listening, reading and writing but in speaking, acquisition significantly differs from making-meaning and transfer. Further when grouped according to age, the students’ competence level in listening and speaking does not significantly differ along the three elements of UbD teaching-learning approach but their competence level in line with reading and writing significantly differ. Moreover, their competence level along listening, speaking and reading does not significantly differ along the three elements of UbD teaching-learning approach when grouped according to gender but in writing, however, there is a significant difference.

These findings are seen to have pedagogical significance for students, teachers, school administrators and curriculum developers to ensure quality of education and administrative services.

Keywords-- Competence level, Filipino secondary sophomore students, UbD teaching-learning approach, Acquisition, Making-meaning, Transfer

I. INTRODUCTION

Teaching and learning are interrelated processes that include many variables. These variables interact as learners work toward their goals and incorporate new knowledge, behaviors, and skills that add to their range of learning experiences (Swanson, 2007).

Over the past century, various perspectives on learning have emerged, among them — behaviorist (response to external stimuli); cognitivist (learning as a mental operation); and constructivist (knowledge as a constructed element resulting from the learning process). Rather than considering these theories separately, it is best to think of them together as a range of possibilities that can be integrated into the learning experience. During the integration process, it is also important to consider a number of other factors — cognitive style, learning style, the multiple nature of intelligences, and learning as it relates to those who have special needs and are from diverse cultural backgrounds (Gardner, 2007).

Learning - the acquisition of new skills, knowledge, and capabilities - always occurs within the context of human performance improvement (Ausubel, 2000). That is, it begins with a process of understanding the client’s needs, expectations, situation, and problems. It is not assumed that learning is the answer to every performance issue. Many performance issues that organizations and individuals face, however, require the acquisition of new skills, knowledge, and capabilities.

While it is true that all learning, at its root, is individual, organizations also have memory that can either support or hinder new performance. Thus, in designing learning programs, the role of the organization’s culture and processes in the application of learning; for example, creating a “critical mass” to support the use of new skills, or focusing on how to overcome cultural predispositions that will hinder the use of new behaviors are all considered (Bloom et al., 1956).

As a matter of practice, the curriculum in the Philippines is revised every ten years, but the rapid rate of change in education and the fast obsolescence of knowledge necessitate a continual revisiting and updating of the curriculum to make it responsive to emerging changes in the needs of the learners in society.
Thus, the refinement of the curriculum remains to be a work in progress (Bureau of Secondary Education of the Department of Education, 2010).

According to Franklin (1918), curriculum is the course of deeds and experiences through which children become the adults that they should be for success in adult society. Furthermore, the curriculum encompasses the entire scope of formative deed and experience occurring in and out of school, and not only experiences that are unplanned and undirected, and experiences intentionally directed for the purposeful formation of adult members of society.

The Philippines was named the world’s best country in business proficiency, even beating the United States, according to Global English Corporation (April, 2012). Results of the study showed that from 76 represented countries worldwide, only the Philippines attained the score of 7.11, a Business English Index (BEI) level within range of a high proficiency that indicates an ability to take an active role in business discussions and perform relatively complex tasks. The study further revealed that the Philippines, a country with one-tenth of the population of India, overtook India as a hub for call centers because over 400,000 Filipinos are now employed in call centers, roughly 50,000 more than in India.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is based on the concept that learning must be guided by generalized principles embedded in the curriculum being used. In addition, the teaching-learning approach must direct the students towards the attainment of the desired competencies contained in the curriculum. Moreover, Understanding by Design is not used as a curriculum in this study but it is used as a teaching-learning approach instead.

Teaching-Learning

Ryan (2010) stressed the value of UbD as an approach used in the education field by teachers and administrators to teach for understanding. It helps teachers create more engaging and effective learning methods for curriculum, assessments and instruction. If properly understood and implemented, the new framework will certainly go a long way because it is aimed at developing independent, autonomous decision makers and deep critical thinkers among the learners.

Understanding by Design is a backward design as a problem-solving strategy can even be traced back from the ancient Greeks. In his book “How to Solve It”, the Hungarian mathematician Polya (1945) noted that the Greeks used the strategy of “thinking backward” by knowing what is wanted as a solution in order to solve a problem.

In addition, backward design is geared to eliminate two common flaws in the traditional method: coverage-focused teaching and activity-focused teaching. In coverage-focused teaching, educators try to cover all topics as specified by a textbook or teaching manual for the whole school year, but ends up with students who do not understand why they are being taught all this information. In activity-focused teaching, educators come up with all sorts of activities that students participate in and enjoy, but again, students do not completely understand why. This is what backward design aims to resolve: to make students understand and gain a deeper insight into why they are being taught these information or made to participate in these kinds of activities (Wiggins and McTighe, 2006).

Figure 1. Backward design model (Wiggins & McTighe 2010)
Backward design entails three elements. Identifying desired results means defining the objectives of the course or class. Desired results cannot be just limited to traditional parameters such as a good performance in stage assessment tests, but rather include specific goals that contribute to deeper understanding of a topic.

The second phase, defining acceptable evidence, refers to the process by which the educator will teach and gauge the level of understanding of a student. Also, the educator should now choose which assessment methods are suited to track the progress of a student. These assessment methods are classified by Wiggins and McTighe (1998) into three types: performance tasks, the highest test of understanding in which students are given a real world challenge that they must display a critical and effective use of the knowledge and skills learned in class; criteria referenced assessment such as quizzes, tests and prompts, which provide both instructor and students feedback on how well the facts or concepts are being understood; and unprompted assessment or self-assessment primarily for students, such as observations and dialogues.

The last phase, planning learning experiences and instruction, details students’ activities throughout the class. A learning plan is instructional strategies and learning experiences needed by the students to achieve the desired results in stage one as reflected in the assessment evidence gathered in stage two. An engaging design stimulates students to actively participate in the learning process, whereas an effective design includes appropriate evidences that show the attainment of desired results (Rom, 2011).

Wiggins and McTighe (2004) suggested the acronym WHERETO that summarizes key elements to consider in designing an effective and engaging learning plan. Engaging means a design, which the teachers find truly through provoking, fascinating and energizing activities that pull students into the nature of the demands, mystery and challenge of the learning process. Effective means the learning design helps learners become more competent, productive and worthy at work. Similarly, Wiggins and McTighe (2005) identified seven core design principles for teaching in an understanding-based classroom in a template they call WHERETO. Each of the letters in this acronym corresponds to key instructional design questions that educators should always consider when planning learning activities.

The W indicates that teachers are helping learners to know where the lesson is heading to and why students are learning the content. According to Wiggins and McTighe (2010), designers should be clear about their goals and the evidence needed to show the extent that students have achieved. A research showed that students are more likely to focus and put forth when teachers have clarity on the goals and expectations and see a purpose and value for the intended learning (Brown, 2010).

On the other hand, H stands for the need to hook the learners and hold their interest. Hooking and holding the students engaged in digging into the big ideas through inquiry, research, problem solving and experimentation. Effective teachers recognize the importance of hooking students at the beginning of a new learning experience and holding their interest throughout. It directs designers to consider ways of engaging students in the topic and pointing toward big ideas, essential questions and performance tasks by design (Cummins, 2009). Kochhar (1985) further explained that the best way to create interest in a subject is to hook the students. Hooks might take the form of provocative essential questions, counter-intuitive phenomena, controversial issues, authentic problems and challenges, emotional encounters and humor.

The E is equippers learners to succeed, enabling students to experience key ideas and explore issues. Teachers think of ways to help students explore the big ideas and essential questions, and equip students for their final performances. In order for students to come to an understanding of important ideas, the teachers must engage in some inductive learning experiences that facilitate the construction of meaning (Bruner, 1996). In addition, direct instruction and out of class activities can play a role in equipping students with the knowledge and skills needed to perform well in the learning process.

In addition, the R pertains to providing opportunities for learners to re-think and revise their work and understanding of a certain topic. Teachers, in planning learning experiences and instruction, should cause students to rethink and reflect to dig deeper into the big ideas, and to refine and revise students’ work for feedback (Wiggins and McTighe, 2010).

Moreover, E allows students to evaluate their work and set future goals. It provides regular opportunities for students to develop metacognitive skill of self-evaluation, self-regulation and reflection (Wiggins and McTighe, 1998).

Also, T stands for tailoring to accommodate the diverse needs, interests, and abilities of learners. It provides options for assignments with levels of difficulty associated with learners’ knowledge levels, interests and abilities (Wiggins and McTighe, 2010).

The O relates to organization to sustain engagement in the learning process. Teachers are encouraged to consider the learning activities to be organized to enable students achieve the desired results, the sequence that offers the most engaging and effective learning and the activities that are appropriate and not arbitrary or meaningless to the students (Wiggins & McTighe, 2004).

Inclusion of WHERETO in the formulation of learning activities does not mean that backward design ignores the traditional methods of teaching. It only suggests the traditional and alternative methods to be used hand-in-hand in appropriate contexts to achieve desired results.

Wiggins and McTighe’s (1998) six facets of understanding view that students can be said to have understanding when they can do the following skills: can
explain by providing thorough and justifiable accounts of phenomena, facts and data; can interpret by offering an individual insight to ideas and events; can apply and use that knowledge to diverse contexts; have perspective by seeing things in the context of the big picture and viewing these critically; can empathize by finding value in what others may find as implausible, basing a sensitive perception on prior direct experience; and, have a self-awareness that enables them to see what shapes and impedes their own understanding.

In addition, students can be said to have understanding if they can apply the competencies embodied in each of the four macro skills. In UbD teaching-learning approach, the four macro skills involve the following competencies to further equip the students with deeper understanding of concepts and applying them.

Listening Competencies

Listening requires the listener to understand, interpret and evaluate what he or she hears. Furthermore, listening effectively improves personal relationships through the reduction of conflict and strengthens cooperation through a collective understanding.

Students can be said to have acquired listening skills if they have knowledge on the following competencies: using prosodic as well as lexical clues to distinguish important points in a lecture, taking down notes from lectures or oral reports, determine what further explanation is needed in a report or a lecture, supplying items not heard in reports or lectures, and getting different viewpoints on global issues in talk shows.

In addition, students are said to have understood the meaning of the listening input if they have knowledge on the following competencies: distinguishing those ideas that support the main ideas and those that do not, identifying the roles of discourse markers in signaling the functions of statements made, identifying verbal and non-verbal signals used by a speaker to highlight important points, determining the content and functions of statement in a lecture, and discriminating between statement of facts and statement of opinion.

At the end of the lesson, students can be said to have the ability to apply what they learned if they have knowledge on the following listening competencies: understanding global television newscasts, appreciating varied types of oral presentations and songs by giving the theme or message being shared, using varied approaches to process listening tasks, analyzing and evaluating listening texts in point of accuracy, and employing analytical listening in problem solving (Wiggins and McTighe, 2002).

Speaking Competencies

Speaking is the vocalization of human communication. Being able to convey what a person is thinking in effective, concise and direct manner allows him to communicate effectively with others in a variety of situations. In this way, he can help provide an element of control to any given situation by self management and avoid confusion on what words to say in a conversation.

Students can be said to have acquired speaking skills if they have knowledge on the following competencies: selecting words that are appropriate to the topic, audience, purpose, context and speaker; possessing pronunciation accepted by many speakers; following correct structure or grammar in expressing ideas; speaking the language at the appropriate level of abstraction or generality; and identifying the different and various purposes of discourse.

Further, students are said to have understood the lesson if they have knowledge on the following speaking competencies: demonstrating understanding of the types and functions of transitions, indicating connectedness of ideas, movement from one idea to another and clarity of relationships among ideas, demonstrating knowledge of the sounds of the American English language, demonstrating the use of technical vocabulary, slang, idiomatic language and collocations to communicate with others who share meanings for those terms, analyzing and reacting critically to ideas presented in speeches, news reports, discussions, and others; and employing vocal variety in rate, pitch and intensity.

At the end of the lesson, students can be said to have the ability to apply what they learned if they have knowledge on the following speaking competencies: demonstrating appropriate interpersonal skills for various contexts, displaying self-awareness as a communicator, demonstrating non-verbal behavior that supports the verbal message being conveyed or shared, using conversational mode through self-presentation and response to feedback and selecting from a repertoire of interpersonal skills those strategies that enhance relationships (Wiggins and McTighe, 2002).

Reading Competencies

Reading mainly involves decoding symbols with the intention of getting meaning from the text. It is then done for further processes such as sharing knowledge, self development or simply relaxation and escapism into the realms of fiction. It can also significantly improve other micro skills such as spelling, evaluative processes and the imagination.

Students can be said to have acquired reading skills if they have knowledge on the following competencies: using reading strategies such as previewing, annotating, note taking and outlining, reading a variety of texts such as periodicals, speech manuals, novels, poems, plays and the like, getting information from websites through the internet, identifying the author’s pattern of organization such as cause and effect, comparison and contrast, definition, and others, and identifying the literary elements such as character, setting, symbolism, structure, point of view, style, diction, tone, and others.

Moreover, students are said to have understood the lesson if they have knowledge on the following speaking competencies: differentiating between main ideas or themes and supporting details, noting the used
transition signals, interpreting illustrations such as tables and figures, understanding the writer’s message to the reader, identifying the ethics, assumptions and cultural and historical context, and differentiating between fact and opinion.

At the end of the lesson, students can be said to have the ability to apply what they learned if they have knowledge on the following reading competencies: demonstrating the ability to use previous experiences as a scaffold for processing information in a given text, utilizing reading as a means of improving one’s language skills, relating texts to life situations, interpreting, evaluating, drawing inferences and support conclusions with evidence from a text, and recognizing the presence of ambiguity and multiple interpretations (Wiggins and McTighe, 2002).

Writing Competencies

Writing is basically viewed as a representation of language in text form. It is important in the effective transfer of information and in the keeping of records of information and experiences. Thus, it is the creation of meaning, where the information can then be passed on.

Students can be said to have acquired writing skills if they have knowledge on the following competencies: engaging in a variety of pre-writing activities as a group member, working through the stages of writing process both in groups and individually to develop ideas, selecting appropriate supporting details, organizing those details, writing drafts, editing and completing a final write-up, writing essays demonstrating command of specific organizational strategies, sharing writing samples through both oral and written presentations, demonstrating the importance of grammar in written discourse.

Also, students understood the lesson if they have knowledge on the following writing competencies: completing research tasks that require critical thinking, discussing issues concerning writer’s voice, point of view, tone and audience, paraphrasing texts into simpler and more understandable patterns, using variety of words and expressions in expressing thoughts through a written document, and comparing and contrasting the different attitudes and values encountered through readings.

At the end of the lesson, students can be said to have the ability to apply what they learned if they have knowledge on the following writing competencies: analyzing, choosing, and synthesizing information from varied sources, showing respect for intellectual property rights by acknowledging citations made in reports and research, filling out application forms and writing project proposals, using computer applications to write and format documents and to create and integrate visual materials to support text, and using the interactional and transactional functions of language in letters of appeal, inquiry, permission and the like (Wiggins and McTighe, 2002).

Because of its success in the United States, UbD slowly made its way into the Philippine educational system. Earlier implemented by private schools, the integration of the UbD framework in the public school system began as early as 2007. This move was backed up by Senate Resolution 1295, filed by Senator Manuel Villar, Jr. in August, 2009, which supports the implementation of the UbD framework in the Basic Education Curriculum (BEC).

III. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The input of the study included the theories on teaching-learning, UbD teaching-learning approach, curriculum design, understanding by design, acquisition, meaning-making and transfer. Also, it included the survey-questionnaire to gather data as part of the independent variables.

Process was through the analysis of the results of the survey-questionnaire on the perceived competence level of the students, otherwise shown as intervening variables, particularly on profile of the students according to age and gender.

Finally, the output identified the perceived competence level of the secondary sophomore students, and the differences in the perceived competence level of the secondary sophomore students along the four macro skills, age and gender, with their corresponding five-point Likert Scale numerical and descriptive equivalents. This part likewise was the dependent variables of the study.
Statement of the Problem

The study dealt with the competence level of sophomore students on the elements of UbD teaching-learning approach. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following:

1. Are there significant differences in the perceived competence level of the secondary sophomore students along the four macro skills:
   a. listening
   b. speaking
   c. reading
   d. writing?

2. Is there a significant difference in the perceived competence level of the secondary sophomore students when grouped according to:
   a. age
   b. gender?

IV. METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive study which used survey-questionnaire as the data for investigation. Data was gathered through a survey-questionnaire to derive the perceived competence level of the secondary sophomore students on the elements of UbD teaching-learning approach.

Population and Locale of the Study

The study was conducted to 70 Filipino secondary sophomore students of a public high school during the millennial academic year.

Data Collection Instruments

A survey-questionnaire checklist was conducted by the researcher to gather the necessary data. The questionnaire had four parts and required the profile of the students as to their age and gender. Moreover, the four parts called for the students’ assessment on their English learning in listening, speaking, reading and writing respectively by checking the necessary number that corresponded to their perceived competence on the given learning outcomes of each macro skill. Furthermore, the formulation of competencies for each macro skill was based on “Indicators of Teaching for Understanding” by McTighe and Eliot Seif (2002) and insights from the Revised Basic Education Curriculum (RBEC) 2002.
Data Collection Procedure

Through a letter of permission, the researcher asked for the approval of the Head Teacher of the school for the gathering of data needed in the study. Given the permission to conduct the study, the researcher started gathering the data needed by personally administering the survey-questionnaire to the students. The data from the respondents were collected, tallied, tabulated and interpreted using statistical measurements. To ensure the validity and reliability of the collected data and their corresponding treatment, the study was referred to a statistician for statistical analysis.

Treatment of Data

The data and information gathered from the students were treated statistically. Their responses were tallied and tabulated, thus were subjected to computations such as frequency counts, ranking and weighted mean. To test the first hypothesis and to determine whether there were differences in the competence level of the students along listening, speaking, reading and writing, the following criteria for assessment was utilized:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistical Limit</th>
<th>Descriptive Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.50 - 5.00</td>
<td>Extremely Competent (EC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.50 – 4.49</td>
<td>Very Competent (VC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.50 – 3.49</td>
<td>Moderately Competent (MC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.50 – 2.49</td>
<td>Less Competent (LC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.00 – 1.49</td>
<td>Incompetent (I)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the scores from the students’ assessment on their competence level had been tallied and tabulated, computation for weighted mean or the F-test for analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to find out if there were significant differences in the competence level of the sophomore students along the learning competencies of the four macro skills.

Table 1. ANOVA Table (Walpole and Myers, 2003)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE OF VARIATION</th>
<th>DEGREES OF FREEDOM</th>
<th>SUM OF SQUARES</th>
<th>MEAN SQUARE</th>
<th>COMPUTED F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Treatment (between columns)</td>
<td>k – 1</td>
<td>SSA</td>
<td>MSA = SSA/(k-1)</td>
<td>Fc = MSA/MSE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance (within columns)</td>
<td>k(n – 1)</td>
<td>SSE</td>
<td>MSA = SSE/(k(n-1))</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>nk – 1</td>
<td>SST</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To test the second hypothesis and to determine whether there is a difference in the competence level of the students when grouped according to age and gender, testing the difference between mean or the T-test was used below:

\[
t = \frac{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2}{\sqrt{\frac{(n_1 - 1)s_1^2 + (n_2 - 1)s_2^2}{n_1 + n_2 - 2} \left[ \frac{n_1 + n_2}{n_1n_2} \right]}}
\]

Where \( \bar{X}_1 \) = mean in the first group
\( \bar{X}_2 \) = mean in the second group
\( n_1 \) = number of people in the first group
\( n_2 \) = number of people in the first group
\( s_1^2 \) = variance for the first group
\( s_2^2 \) = variance for the second group

V. RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents the results, conclusions and recommendations.

Competence Level of Sophomore Students Along the Four Macro Skills

Table 2 shows the competence level of the sophomore students along listening, speaking, reading and writing.
In listening, students are very competent with transfer with a mean of 3.71 followed by acquisition (3.68) and making-meaning (3.61). In speaking, students are very competent with acquisition with a mean of 3.67; however, they are moderately competent with making meaning (3.49) and transfer (3.45), respectively. Similar to listening, the students are very competent in reading with a mean of 3.63 for acquisition, 3.61 for making-meaning and 3.55 for transfer. In writing, the students are very competent along meaning-making and transfer with the same mean of 3.49, but they are moderately competent along acquisition with a mean of 3.49, respectively.

Since the computed value (Fc) for listening (1.05), reading (0.83) and writing (1.24) are not equal or greater than the tabular value F=3.00, the first hypothesis that there are significant differences in the competence level of the sophomore students along listening, reading and writing is rejected at 5% level of significance. On the other hand, since the computed value (Fc) for speaking (3.20) is greater than the tabular value F=3.00, the first hypothesis that there are significant differences in the competence level of the sophomore students along speaking is accepted at 5% level of significance.

In line with the findings, Akia (2009) exposed that the students were highly competent in discriminating between phonemes, responding appropriately to simple questions, and identifying the topic and supporting details and are very competent in recognizing words as they are linked in speech stream, recognizing contraction and reduced forms, making inferences with emotional reactions and implications. Also, dialect spoken and use of multi-media were not shown to affect the listening comprehension of the students.

Moreover, Janusik (2004) created a listening instrument called Conversational Listening Span (CLS), grounded in working memory that validly measured cognitive listening capacity. She discovered that the students comprehend more when they are involved in the cognitive listening capacity. She discovered that the significant differences in the perceived competence level of secondary sophomore students along listening is accepted at 5% level of significance.

Table 2. Competence level of the secondary sophomore students along listening, speaking, reading and writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELEMENTS OF UBD LEARNING-TEACHING APPROACH</th>
<th>LISTENING COMPETENCE</th>
<th>SPEAKING COMPETENCE</th>
<th>READING COMPETENCE</th>
<th>WRITING COMPETENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acquisition</td>
<td>Mean: 3.68*</td>
<td>DE: VC</td>
<td>Mean: 3.63*</td>
<td>DE: VC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making-Meaning</td>
<td>Mean: 3.61*</td>
<td>VC: 3.49</td>
<td>VC: 3.56</td>
<td>VC: 3.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer</td>
<td>Mean: 3.71*</td>
<td>VC: 3.45</td>
<td>MC: 3.55</td>
<td>VC: 3.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>Mean: 3.67</td>
<td>VC: 3.54</td>
<td>MC: 3.60</td>
<td>VC: 3.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fc</td>
<td>1.05**</td>
<td>3.20*</td>
<td>0.83**</td>
<td>1.24**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fc:05</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean with the same letters are not significantly different at 5% level of significance by Least Significant Difference (LSD)

* – significant
ns – not significant
VC – Very Competent
MC – Moderately Competent

**Listening Competence**

With a mean of 3.71 in transfer, the students are very competent in understanding global television newscasts, appreciating varied types of oral presentations and songs by giving the theme or message being shared, using varied approaches to process listening tasks, analyzing and evaluating listening texts in point of accuracy, and employing analytical listening in problem solving.

Similarly, the students are very competent with acquisition (3.68), which includes using prosodic as well as lexical clues to distinguish important points in a lecture, taking down notes from lectures or oral reports, determining what further explanation is needed in a report or a lecture, supplying items not heard in reports or lectures, and getting different viewpoints on global issues in talk shows.

In making-meaning, the students are very competent with a mean of 3.61 in terms of distinguishing those ideas that support the main ideas and those that do not, identifying the roles of discourse markers in signaling the functions of statements made, identifying verbal and non-verbal signals used by a speaker to highlight important points, determining the content and functions of statement in a lecture, and discriminating between statement of facts and statement of opinion.

Since the computed mean for transfer (3.71) does not significantly differ from acquisition (3.68) and making-meaning (3.61), the hypothesis that there are significant differences in the perceived competence level of secondary sophomore students along listening is rejected at 5% level of significance.

Moreover, Janusik (2004) created a listening instrument called Conversational Listening Span (CLS), grounded in working memory that validly measured cognitive listening capacity. She discovered that the students comprehend more when they are involved in the
conversational knowledge) and top-down processes (prior knowledge) to comprehend. Knowing the context of a listening text and the purpose for listening greatly reduces the burden of comprehension. Teachers can help students develop sound strategies for comprehension through a process approach to teaching second language listening. This will help students learn how to listen and develop the metacognitive knowledge and strategies crucial to success in listening comprehension.

**Speaking Competence**

With a mean of 3.49, the students are very competent on the acquisition of speaking competencies which included selecting words that are appropriate to the topic, audience, purpose, context and speaker; possessing pronunciation accepted by many speakers; following correct structure or grammar in expressing ideas; speaking the language at the appropriate level of abstraction or generality and identify the different and various purposes of discourse.

In making-meaning with a mean of 3.49, the students are moderately competent in demonstrating understanding of the types and functions of transitions, indicating connectedness of ideas, movement from one idea to another and clarity of relationships among ideas, demonstrating knowledge of the sounds of the American English language, demonstrating the use of technical vocabulary, slang, idiomatic language and collocations to communicate with others who share meanings for those terms, analyzing and reacting critically to ideas presented in speeches, news reports, discussions, and others; and employing vocal variety in rate, pitch and intensity.

Since the computed mean for acquisition (3.67) significantly differs from making-meaning (3.49) and transfer (3.45), the hypothesis that there are significant differences in the perceived competence level of secondary sophomore students along speaking is accepted at 5% level of significance.

In the same way, for transfer (3.45), the students are moderately competent in demonstrating appropriate interpersonal skills for various contexts, displaying self-awareness as a communicator, demonstrating non-verbal behavior that supports the verbal message being conveyed or shared, using conversational mode through self-presentation and response to feedback and selecting from a repertoire of interpersonal skills those strategies that enhance relationships.

**Reading Competence**

The students are very competent regarding the acquisition (3.63) of reading skills which include using reading strategies such as pre-viewing, annotating, note taking and outlining, reading a variety of texts such as periodicals, speech manuals, novels, poems, plays and the like, getting information from websites through the internet, identifying the author’s pattern of organization such as cause and effect, comparison and contrast, definition, and others, and identifying the literary elements such as character, setting, symbolism, structure, point of view, style, diction, tone, and others.

In addition, they are very competent along making-meaning (3.61), which included the following competencies: differentiating between main ideas or themes and supporting details, noting the used transition signals, interpreting illustrations such as tables and figures, understanding the writer’s message to the reader, identifying the ethics, assumptions and cultural and historical context, and differentiating between fact and opinion.

Likewise, for transfer (3.55), the students are very competent in demonstrating the ability to use previous experiences as a scaffold for processing information in a given text, utilizing reading as a means of improving one’s language skills, relating texts to life situations, interpreting, evaluating, drawing inferences and support conclusions with evidence from a text, and recognizing the presence of ambiguity and multiple interpretations.

Since the computed mean for acquisition (3.63) does not significantly differ from making-meaning (3.61) and transfer (3.55), the hypothesis that there are significant differences in the perceived competence level of secondary sophomore students along reading is rejected at 5% level of significance.

**Writing Competence**

In making-meaning (3.59), the secondary sophomore students are very competent in completing research tasks that require critical thinking, discussing issues concerning writer’s voice, point of view, tone and audience, paraphrasing texts into simpler and more understandable patterns, using variety of words and expressions in expressing thoughts through a written document, and comparing and contrasting the different attitudes and values encountered through readings.

Also, for transfer (3.59), the students are very competent in analyzing, choosing, and synthesizing information from varied sources, showing respect for intellectual property rights by acknowledging citations made in reports and research, filling out application forms and writing project proposals, using computer applications to write and format documents and to create and integrate visual materials to support text, and using the interactional and transactional functions of language in letters of appeal, inquiry, permission and the like.

The students are moderately competent with regard to the acquisition (3.49) of writing skills which
included engaging in a variety of pre-writing activities as a group member, working through the stages of writing process both in groups and individually to develop ideas, selecting appropriate supporting details, organizing those details, writing drafts, editing and completing a final write-up, writing essays demonstrating command of specific organizational strategies, sharing writing samples through both oral and written presentations and demonstrating the importance of grammar in written discourse.

Since the computed mean for transfer (3.59) and making-meaning (3.59) do not significantly differ from acquisition (3.49), the hypothesis that there are significant differences in the perceived competence level of secondary sophomore students along writing is rejected at 5% level of significance.

Along with the three elements of UbD teaching-learning approach, the students are very competent in listening (3.67), speaking (3.60) and writing (3.56), respectively. The finding further shows that there are no significant differences in the competence level of the students in listening, reading and writing along the three elements of UbD teaching-learning approach. As far as speaking competencies are concerned, the competence level of the students along acquisition (3.67) significantly differs from making-meaning (3.49) and transfer (3.45). On the other hand, the competence level of sophomore students along with making-meaning (3.49) and transfer (3.45), respectively does not differ significantly.

**Competence Level of Sophomore Students According to Age**

Table 3 shows the competence level of sophomore students when grouped according to their age. The students who are 12-13 years old are very competent in listening with a mean of 3.61, and moderately competent in speaking (3.45) and writing (3.44), respectively. In contrast, the students who are 14-15 years old are very competent in listening (3.74), speaking (3.60), reading (3.74) and writing (3.70), respectively. Moreover, it reveals that there is no significant difference in the competence level of the sophomore students along listening (3.68) and speaking (3.55), respectively. In contrast, there is a significant difference in the competence level of the sophomore students along reading (3.61) and writing (3.57), respectively.

Table 3. Competence level of the sophomore students according to age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>LISTENING COMPETENCE</th>
<th>SPEAKING COMPETENCE</th>
<th>READING COMPETENCE</th>
<th>WRITING COMPETENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>DE</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>DE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-13</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>VC</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>MC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-15</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>VC</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>VC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>VC</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>VC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tc</td>
<td>-1.04*</td>
<td>-0.79*</td>
<td>-1.96*</td>
<td>-2.09*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tc,0.05,68</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* – significant  
ns – not significant  
VC – Very Competent  
MC – Moderately Competent

Therefore, since the computed value (Tc) for listening (-1.04) and speaking (-0.79) are not equal or greater than the tabular value Tc,0.05,68 = 1.67, the second hypothesis that there is a significant difference in the perceived competence level of the secondary sophomore students when grouped according to age is rejected at 5% level of significance. Contrarily, since the computed value for reading (-1.96) and writing (-2.09) are greater than the tabular value Tc,0.05,68 = 1.67, the hypothesis is accepted at 5% level of significance.

**Competence Level of Sophomore Students According to Gender**

Table 4 shows the competence level of the sophomore students when grouped according to gender. Males are very competent in listening (3.70), speaking (3.56), reading (3.64) and writing (3.67), respectively. Females, on the other hand, are very competent in listening (3.63), speaking (3.51) and reading (3.55), respectively but moderately competent in writing (3.44). Moreover, there is no significant difference in the competence level of the sophomore students along listening (3.67), speaking (3.54) and reading (3.60). In contrast, there is a significant difference in the competence level of the sophomore students along writing (3.56).

Table 4. Competence level of the sophomore students according to gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>LISTENING COMPETENCE</th>
<th>SPEAKING COMPETENCE</th>
<th>READING COMPETENCE</th>
<th>WRITING COMPETENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>DE</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>DE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>VC</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>VC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hence, since the computed value (Tc) for listening (0.54), speaking (0.40) and reading (0.68) are not equal or greater than the tabular value $T_{0.05,68} = 1.67$, the hypothesis that there is a significant difference in the perceived competence level of the secondary sophomore students when grouped according to gender is rejected at 5% level of significance. However, since the computed value (Tc) for writing (1.90) is greater than the tabular value $T_{0.05,68} = 1.67$, the hypothesis is accepted.

**VI. CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were put together. The competence level of Filipino secondary sophomore students along the three element of UbD teaching-learning approach generally does not differ significantly, but it varies when students are grouped according to age and gender.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the conclusions, the following are suggested:

1. Students should give equal attention and importance to the four macro skills in order to cope with the demands of varied teaching-learning approaches used in the classroom.
2. Teachers should help their students develop their macro skills by providing authentic practices that prepare them for real-life situations.
3. The school administrators should provide more facilities like audio-visual materials to further students’ competence in listening, speaking, reading and writing.
4. Curriculum planners should consider the different teaching-learning approaches and theories in designing curriculum to address the needs of the students and to meet the demands of the present educational system.
5. Similar studies on the competence level of students on the four macro skills by using test should be undertaken so that through the test result, the effectivity of teaching-learning approaches will also be assessed.

**LITERATURE CITED / REFERENCES**