

From Communication to Competence: A Case Study on How Faculty Communicative Competence Shapes Extension Function in Higher Education

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ABSTRACT:

Extension is mandatory in higher education institutions in the Philippines aimed to contribute to knowledge transfer, community development, and inclusive social transformation. However, faculty participation remains low and inconsistent across institutions. One perceived potential determinant to this phenomenon is communicative competence which basically enables individuals to effectively facilitate collaborative learning and translate academic knowledge into relevant community-based solutions. The study investigated the relationship between communicative competence and extension functions. Specifically, it assessed the grammatical, socio-linguistic, discourse, and strategic competencies of faculty members and correlated them with their extension functions in pre-implementation, during implementation, and post-implementation stages. A descriptive-correlational research design utilizing descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation was employed in the analysis and interpretation of data. Findings revealed moderate to high levels of communicative competence, with strengths in grammatical and socio-linguistic competencies but lower in discourse and strategic competencies. On the other hand, extension function obtained a moderate score; indicating that although faculty members are engaged in community initiatives, broader engagement remains a challenge. Statistically, positive relationship between communicative competence and faculty participation in extension suggest that faculty with stronger communication competencies are more likely to participate actively in community engagement initiatives. Therefore, professional development on communicative competencies is recommended, particularly on participatory communication, community facilitation, and knowledge translation skills to enhance faculty members' ability to deliver sustainable and high-impact extension programs.

Keywords: communicative competence, faculty engagement, university extension programs, higher education, community development

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Introduction

Extension is one mandatory function of higher education institutions in the Philippines aimed

to contribute to knowledge transfer, inclusive community development, and social transformation, especially among members of

marginalized and geographically isolated communities (Republic Act No. 7722). Extension programs often referred to as community engagement are research-based community interventions including outreach activities which are drawn out from the needs of the communities that provide opportunities for universities to offer practical and context-based solutions emanating from research studies and innovations to address real-world challenges. It is in this function that universities offer technical assistance, capacity-building programs, and knowledge dissemination to different sectors in the communities including government entities, civic organizations, and other stakeholders. In the Philippine setting, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the agency that is responsible in planning, implementing, and evaluating education programs in higher education or state universities and colleges (SUCs), directs SUCs to perform extension function and create extension programs that will provide an avenue for academic members to explore practical, evidence and science-based ideas that could provide solutions for context-based, socio-economic, cultural, and environmental issues and problems experienced by partner citizens and communities aimed at promoting inclusive growth and sustainable development (CHED Memo No. 52, s. 2016).

Since extension work requires translating scientific knowledge into practical solutions that benefit communities (Roling, 1988; Leeuwis, C., & Aarts, N., 2011; Briones, R. M., 2017), it is indispensable that extension practitioners are adept in explaining complex and highly technical jargons in clear, relatable and accessible language. In addition, they must also establish rapport with community members for the latter to share their experiences and insights through enhancing participatory discussions and engagements. These interactions require not only technical expertise but also effective communication skills. Thus, effective communication plays a critical role in ensuring that information is accurately understood and meaningfully applied (Schramm, 1954; Devito,

2012) and faculty members are expected to possess the necessary competencies in dialogues, mutual learning, collaborative problem-solving, technical writing, public speaking, among others. In addition, communicative competence is a multidimensional capability that enables individuals to effectively interact with diverse stakeholders, facilitate collaborative learning, and translate academic knowledge into accessible community-based solutions (Hymes, 1972; Canale & Swain, 1980). Moreover, communicative competence capacitates the communicator to convey ideas, information, and perspectives effectively in diverse social contexts. It involves not only linguistic proficiency but also interpersonal sensitivity, cultural awareness, and the ability to adapt communication strategies based on audience needs (Hymes, 1972). Faculty members who possess strong communicative competence are better equipped to facilitate dialogue, encourage participation, and build trust among community stakeholders. All these sub-competencies necessary for faculty members to effectively perform extension functions are grouped into four major communicative competencies - grammatical, sociolinguistics, discourse, and strategic competencies.

A model of communicative competence developed by Canale and Swain (1980) consists of four distinct components: linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic. Respectively, competence in each area requires an individual to be equipped with necessary skills on language and grammar, cultural understanding, turn taking skills, and control over language or communication gaps. However, this does not necessarily mean that a person has to possess high competence in all of the areas; it may be that an individual may just be competent in two or three components (Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei, and Thurrell, 1995). Swain (1984) defines linguistic or grammatical competence as the person's ability to develop written communication, understand grammar, vocabulary, and syntax. Specifically, grammar competence focuses on the individual's competence to know the rules and principles

that govern word formation, tenses, sound interactions, collocations, word phrases, meanings, and sentence structure, syntax, semantics, phonology, and phonetics.

Sociolinguistic competence, on the other hand, sets the rules on controlling appropriate language. Specifically, it includes using appropriate terms of politeness and formality and understanding that one does not communicate in the same manner in all situations. The third competence, discourse competence speaks of the ability of an individual in determining the patterns of organization and cohesive devices, particularly word, phrases and sentences, which can be applied to produce and comprehend conversations, articles, messages, and literature and in interpreting foreign language communication (Munavvar Xaydarovna, 2021). Communicative competence, in other words, is “the ability of a user/learner to arrange sentences in sequence so as to produce coherent stretches of language. It includes knowledge of and ability to control the ordering of sentences in terms of: topic/focus; given/new; ‘natural’ sequencing; ability to structure and manage discourse in terms of thematic organization; coherence and cohesion; logical ordering; style and register; rhetorical effectiveness; the ‘co-operative principle’ knowledge of the design conventions in the community concerning for example, how information is structured in realizing the various macro-functions (description, narrative, exposition, etc.); how stories, anecdotes, jokes, etc. are told; how a case is built up (in law, debate, etc.); how written texts (essays, formal letters, etc.) are laid out, signposted and sequenced”. Thus, discourse competence can be seen as the ability to understand, create and develop forms of the language that are longer than sentences (stories, conversations, letters, ...) with the appropriate cohesion, coherence and rhetorical organization to combine ideas (Trujillo, 2010). Lastly, strategic competence is applied when one has the skills to overcome language gaps, repair, and modify messages to fit to the needs and context of the audience and purpose; ensuring that communication is

sustained and communication channels are open regardless of breakdowns and differences of perceptions. With this competence, one can paraphrase, use gestures, or explain unfamiliar words; ask for clarification, repetition, and slower speech (Gray and Rangelova, 2023) to ensure clear and effective transmission of the message. Moreover, strategic competence is an advanced and high-level competency requiring individuals to effectively gather, process, and act upon critical information that impacts the long-term success of organizations. This high-level competence empowers members in an organization to pro-actively act upon information or data so that cognitive biases and differing inertia can be addressed and enable the organization to adapt to certain changes, when necessary. This is a fundamental communication competence among members in an organization for them to survive and maintain their well-being amidst prevailing contingencies and breakdown. Therefore, members need to be proactive processors of information. On the contrary, a central skill underpinning strategic competence is the ability to proactively shape the thought processes of others through the inter-related processes of sensemaking and sense-giving (Gioia and Chittipendi, 1991; Maitlis, 2005) and a mixture of computational processes and processes of social construction (Sparrow, 2023).

Bringing the broad concept to extension work, communicative competence is viewed as one necessary element that equips faculty members to effectively engage with community members and various stakeholders. Considering the diverse individuals that faculty members have to deal with when they interact to people outside of the academic community who may have different levels of educational background, cultural orientation, socio-economic levels, and other demographic factors that could, in one way or another, affect the understanding and reception of messages, faculty members need to be more adaptive and flexible on the way they communicate with these individuals, more especially, that they are bringing complex academic concepts and technical inputs by

which community members may not be that familiar with. Aside from this basic rudiment, faculty members also need to act in various ways when doing extension- they may be knowledge providers, facilitators, interviewer, researcher, and even mediator or moderator, especially during conflicts and misunderstanding among community members (Lee, 2007; Rogers, E. M., 2003; Gonzales, L. A., & Briones, R. M., 2018; Pascual, C., & Kristia, B., 2022).).

On the other hand, despite the mandatory requirement on extension function alongside instruction, research, and production, participation of faculty members remains low and inconsistent across institutions and academic units. Data and several studies reveal that there is moderate to low levels of participation among faculty members when it comes to extension. In the study of Jaron and Malaga (2025), only 27% of faculty members in Central Philippines took part in community programs while a 2023 study in Bulacan State University external campuses showed that faculty engagement and commitment to extension was uneven and low (Sierto and Navarro, 2023). The same results were obtained from the studies of Ammakiw, J.S. (2013), and Llenares, I.I. & Deocaris, C.C., (2018). While there are many factors and circumstances surrounding the limited participation of faculty on extension like multiple institutional and individual factors, institutional policies, workload distribution, funding availability, professional incentives, training opportunities, and recognition systems, among others (Jaron and Malaga, 2025), there were limited empirical research examining communicative competence as one potential determinant influencing the decision of faculty to engage in extension; much more on studies identifying specific sub-competencies of communicative competence which faculty members fall short vis-à-vis performing extension functions.

Thus, the study aims to address the identified research gap through analyzing the relationship between communication skills and extension functions. Establishing the relationship between the two major variables could offer significant insights for higher education institutions in crafting policy recommendations and faculty development programs that would strengthen extension function and enhance community involvement among faculty members. Specifically, the study investigates the following: 1). determine the level of communicative competence among faculty members; 2). determine the level of faculty participation in extension functions, particularly in three stages- pre-implementation, implementation, and post-implementation; 3). examine the relationship between communicative competence and extension functions and some of the respondents' demographic profiles; and 4); provide recommendations for enhancing faculty engagement in extension.

Method

Research Design. Descriptive-correlational research design was utilized in investigating the relationship between competence of faculty in extension functions and their communicative competence in the context of Northwest Samar State University. Specifically, the assessment of the level of communicative competence and competence on extension function were the descriptive part of the study while correlation was established between the two major variables.

Respondents. The study involved faculty members of Northwest Samar State University who were engaged in extension-related activities or functions. A total of 120 regular faculty members served as respondents of the study who are mandated to perform extension function regardless of their academic ranks and designations.

Table 1. Profile of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	58	48%
	Female	62	52%
Academic Rank	Instructor	40	33%
	Assistant Professor	45	38%
	Associate Professor	25	21%
	Professor	10	8%

Research Instrument. A researcher-made structure questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale as the measuring tool in determining the level of competence both for communicative competence and extension functions was utilized. It consisted of two major parts, the communicative competence scale focusing on the four sub-competencies of grammar, sociolinguistics, discourse, and strategic competence and the extension function competence measured in three specific stages – pre-implementation, implementation, and post implementation.

Data Analysis. In determining the level of communicative competence and extension function competence generated from the

responses of the respondents, mean and standard deviation were used. In analyzing further the data, the researcher resorted to established theories. However, in the absence of established theories, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is applied. Pearson correlation analysis was utilized in establishing relationships between the two major variables.

Results

Level of Communicative Competence.

Results show that faculty members have shown levels 3 and 4 in the four competencies interpreted as proficient and competent. Table 2 presents the specific results for grammatical competence.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Level of Grammatical Competence of Faculty Respondents

Competencies	Mean	Standard Deviation	Description
I have rich vocabulary in English	3.69	0.674	Competent
I know how to use the various parts of speech	3.72	0.826	Competent
I can apply rules on subject-verb agreement in my sentences	3.73	0.857	Competent
I can use correct tenses of the verbs	3.74	0.854	Competent
I know the correct application of noun antecedent-pronoun agreement.	3.62	0.878	Competent
I can compose effective sentences	3.8	0.803	Competent
I can arrange various words and phrases to create meaningful thoughts	3.83	0.833	Competent
I know how to inflect nouns	3.72	0.869	Competent
I know how to use modals and adverbials	3.58	0.892	Competent

I can pronounce the words correctly with proper intonation and juncture when I talk.	3.73	0.877	Competent
Grand Mean	3.73	0.743	Competent

Analyzing further the results on grammatical competence, data reveals that faculty are most adept to arranging words and phrases to create meaningful thoughts but are not that competent in determining and using modals and adverbials. This implies that faculty members are good in producing grammatically accurate and contextually appropriate sentences but still lack the necessary skills in determining whether some

functions of words as either gerund, participles, or infinitives and have the difficulty in determining the appropriate time to use modals, i.e., could, might, would, ought to, etc.

For socio-linguistic competence, faculty members disclosed that they could adjust their language based on age but have the difficulty in interpreting non-verbal clues and their corresponding cultural meanings.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Level of Sociolinguistic Competence of Faculty Respondents

Competencies	Mean	Standard deviation	Desc
I know how to address properly individuals either formally or informally based on a given context.	3.30	0.854	Average
I can use different greetings and farewells in different situations.	3.19	0.839	Average
I know when to appropriately use slang or informal language.	3.74	0.845	Competent
I can capture non-verbal cues and their corresponding cultural meanings.	3.73	0.812	Competent
I can use appropriate expressions of politeness commonly used in a particular area/location.	3.51	0.83	Competent
I can adjust my language/words based on the age of the audience.	3.76	0.813	Competent
I can adjust my expressions based on the ethnic/cultural identity of my audience.	3.27	0.803	Average
I can adapt to the language used by the community based on their geographical location.	3.17	0.831	Average
I can relate to the dominant gender of my audience and adjust my expressions.	3.15	0.811	Average
I can capture the unspoken rules of communication within a particular culture and try to adapt them in my expressions.	3.74	0.798	Competent
Grand Mean	3.46	0.729	Average

Results on sociolinguistic competence imply that faculty members mostly can consider age as factor in adjusting their communication styles when communicating with their stakeholders

and try to relate with the kind of language and tenor that is understood by the latter. However, when it comes to adapting to the language used by the community based on their geographical

location, results indicate that faculty respondents find it difficult to adjust and convey messages

using the language of the community.

Table 4. Mean and Standard Deviation on the Level of Discourse Competence of Faculty Respondents

Statements	Mean	Standard deviation	Desc
I can evaluate the effectiveness of my own communication and adjust accordingly.	2.52	0.744	Average
I can carry out meaningful conversations.	3.15	0.807	Average
I can design or structure information to capture the various macro-functions (description, narrative, exposition, etc.)	2.65	0.798	Average
I can structure and manage discourse in terms of thematic organization	3.11	0.827	Average
I can manage turn-taking and participate in group discussions effectively.	2.68	0.804	Average
I can build effective stories, anecdotes, jokes, etc. for my narratives to be more grounded.	2.58	0.864	Average
I can recognize and manage ambiguity or unclear language.	2.78	0.798	Average
I can analyze implications and hidden meanings.	2.7	0.799	Average
I can negotiate meaning and clarify misunderstandings.	2.65	0.809	Average
I can support my propositions and arguments with valid data and supporting evidence.	2.51	0.761	Average
Grand mean	2.73	0.722	Average

Discourse competence shows that faculty-respondents are more adept in carrying out meaningful conversations. However, they need more exposure on supporting propositions and arguments with valid data and supporting evidence and on evaluating the effectiveness of

their own communication and adjust accordingly since these areas obtained the lowest from among the competencies under discourse competence. Overall, faculty members have the capability on carrying out meaningful conversations, however, still on the average.

Table 5: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Level of Strategic Competence of Faculty Respondents

Competencies	Mean	Standard deviation	Desc
I can build alliances and networks to support communication goals.	2.58	0.803	Average
I can tailor my message to influence key stakeholders.	2.66	0.804	Average
I can leverage technology to enhance communication effectiveness.	2.46	0.823	Average
I can use data analytics to inform communication strategies.	2.14	0.813	Average
I can create contingency plans for crisis communication.	2.31	0.809	Average

I can effectively manage and utilize information for specific communication purposes.	2.69	0.806	Average
I can recall relevant information/data whenever necessary to support my claim or proposition.	2.52	0.821	Average
I can treat information and data as to their relevance ensuring longer-term survival and well-being of the organization.	2.23	0.808	Average
I can detect weak signals proactively, especially those indicative of the need for change during discussions.	2.48	0.832	Average
I can identify and respond to emerging trends and changes in communication landscapes	2.23	0.816	Average
Grand Mean	2.43	0.759	Average

Effectively managing and utilizing information for specific communication purposes is highlighted as having higher competence as compared with other specific competencies under strategic competence among faculty-respondents. In contrast, respondents admit that they find it not highly competent in creating contingency plans for crisis communication, treating information and data as to their relevance ensuring longer-term survival and well-being of the organization, and using data analytics as evidenced by low mean scores. This implies that faculty members are not keen to stakeholder management, risk management, and resource optimization which are key indicators for strategic competence.

Level of Competence on Extension Function.

The level of competence on extension functions, particularly in pre-implementation, implementation, and post-implementation was measured. All three phases came out as "competent" with a general mean score of 3.42. These results can be construed that faculty members may have the basic facets and skills in the performance of extension function, as evidenced by their practical, operational and working knowledge and skills on the rudiments, standards, processes of extension work, however, in general, the results do not warrant high competency level.

Table 6. Mean and Standard Deviation on the Level of Competence on Extension Pre-Implementation Functions of Faculty Respondents

Statements	Mean	Sd	Desc
I can use various research methods to determine the needs of the community/stakeholders as basis for the proposal.	3.3	0.888	Average
I can prepare Training Needs Assessment.	3.35	0.94	Average
I can develop Theory of Change or logical framework as basis of my project proposal.	2.3	0.847	Moderate
I can conduct Focus Group Discussion/Interview	3.45	0.919	Average
I can define project scope and objectives aligned with organizational strategy.	3.38	0.934	Average
I can develop a detailed project plan, including timelines and resources.	3.37	1.03	Average
I can secure necessary resources and approvals for project initiation.	3.42	0.897	Average

I can identify and engage key stakeholders for project buy-in.	3.37	0.946	Average
I can develop Memorandum of Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding.	3.15	0.989	Average
I can present and defend the extension proposal during the In-House Review.	3.4	0.926	Average
Grand Mean	3.25	0.809	Average

Pre-implementation phase shows that faculty members have average competencies in the various aspects of pre-implementation. A notable rating obtained in the pre-implementation phase is the ability of the faculty members to conduct focus group discussions (FGD) with various stakeholders having a mean rating of 3.45. This means that faculty members could engage in and interact with the stakeholders during interviews or meetings considering that the nature of their work is more on oral communication and dealing with students inside the classrooms where oral communication is necessary. However, results indicate that although they could carry out focus

group discussions, their competence is only on the average.

On the other hand, the lowest mean rating during the pre-implementation phase is the development of Theory of Change of logical framework that provides the paradigm on how the project implementation should proceed. This is followed by a low rating on the development or preparation of Memorandum of Agreement or Understanding; a technical document that requires technical and legal jargons of which most faculty members are not familiar with and as a result, they find difficulty in formulating the statements or clauses and other legal-related provisions.

Table 7: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Level of Competence on Extension Implementation Functions of Faculty Respondents

Statements	Mean	Sd	Desc
I can coordinate with the stakeholders/community for the start of the implementation.	3.52	0.898	Average
I can facilitate meetings and consultations with the stakeholders.	3.5	0.945	Average
I can share technical inputs relating to project implementation with stakeholders/community at their level.	3.42	0.927	Average
I can identify relevant activities relating to project implementation.	3.52	0.92	Average
I can prepare the necessary logistical needs and requirements for the project.	3.41	0.927	Average
I can identify and address potential bottlenecks or delays.	3.48	0.916	Average
I can develop various information and dissemination materials relating to my project.	3.51	0.875	Average
I can prepare minutes, resolutions, reports and other technical papers while the project is in progress.	3.45	0.954	Average
I can disseminate the progress/status of the project to stakeholders/community during meetings and/or assemblies	3.47	0.896	Average

especially risks and issues.			
I can resolve concerns, challenges, and address feedback relating to project implementation.	3.44	0.883	Average
Grand Mean	3.47	0.849	Average

Implementation competencies of faculty members show average to competent level obtaining a grand mean of 3.47. It could be construed that faculty members still possess competence in the many facets of project implementation but not deemed to be high, especially on preparing the necessary logistical needs and requirements for the project. Although, faculty members are optimistic in

saying that they have the necessary competencies on coordinating with the stakeholders/community for the start of the implementation and identifying relevant activities relating to project implementation because basically projects are within their respective areas of specialization, yet results do not warrant high competence or proficiency level.

Table 8: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Level of Competence in Extension Post-Implementation Functions of Faculty Respondents

Statements	Mean	Sd	Desc
I can prepare evaluation instruments.	2.35	1.04	Moderate
I can conduct a training evaluation of the project with the stakeholders/community.	3.4	0.96	Average
I can interpret the results of the evaluation.	2.41	0.941	Moderate
I can prepare the Terminal Report.	2.45	0.983	Moderate
I can conduct exit conference with the stakeholders/community.	3.32	1.01	Average
I can document lessons learned and best practices for future projects.	3.21	0.926	Average
I can conduct follow throughs after project implementation.	2.42	0.864	Moderate
I can produce out my extension an innovative technology or a policy.	2.19	0.952	Moderate
I can package my extension project for publication or presentation.	2.15	0.991	Moderate
I can identify opportunities for project scaling or replication.	2.25	0.925	Moderate
Grand Mean	2.61	0.85	Average

The lowest from the three phases is on post implementation phase which only obtained a mean rating of 2.61. This implies that faculty-extensionists admit that they have difficulty of conducting follow throughs and other activities after the conduct of actual implementation like preparing reports and exit conference, and more

importantly, on producing a policy or an innovative technology out of the project. Moreover, during the post implementation, faculty-extensionists need to hurdle the packaging of the extension programs or projects for publication. As results indicate, post implementation phase is not perceived to be

part of extension work and faculty members generally believe that once all activities during implementation phase have been delivered, the project has come to completion already without realizing other post activities relevant and necessary for the project to create impact or outcome.

Significant Relationship Between Profile and Communicative Competence.

The study

also investigated the significant relationship between profile and communicative competence. The first table shows the relationship of selected profile variables as against communicative competence, particularly on years in service, number of relevant trainings, and number of extension projects) and paired with the four areas of communicative competence.

Table 9. Significant Relationship on Selected Profile of Faculty Respondents and Communicative Competence

Profile	Grammatical		Sociolinguistic		Discourse		strategic	
	R	p-value	R	p-value	R	p-value	R	p-value
Years in Service	0.1	0.347	0.05	0.634	0.081	0.441	0.03	0.779
No. of Relevant Trainings	0.054	0.585	0.055	0.571	0.052	0.592	0.096	0.329
No. of Extension Projects	-0.056	0.572	-0.072	0.455	-0.114	0.242	-0.034	0.729

Note: *** - significant at α , $p < 0.001$; ** - significant at α , $p < 0.01$; * -significant at α , $p < 0.05$

Legend:

+1.0, Perfect, Positive (both go up together)

+0.7 to +0.9, Strong

+0.4 to +0.6, Moderate

+0.1 to +0.3, Weak

The correlation coefficients between the profile and communicative competence obtained very low results ranging from -0.114 to 0.10, particularly on years of service, number of relevant trainings, and number of extension projects. This implies then that the said profiles have no influence on the level of competence on communication that faculty-extensionists possess. With p-values greater than 0.05, it implies further that none of the relationships are statistically significant.

Although from among the profile variables, number of relevant trainings reflects a very weak positive correlations with the four communicative competencies (r values between 0.052 and 0.096), however, still this does not warrant significant relationship (0.052 and

0.096). The same results are obtained in other areas of the profile of the faculty-extensionists when paired with the level of communicative competence. Thus, generally the profile of the faculty members does not have a significant relationship with any of the four competence areas. This suggests that these profile variables are not strong predictors of grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, or strategic competencies in this dataset.

Results on grammatical competence when paired with educational attainment using analysis of variance shows that there is a significant difference with a sum of squares of 5.45 and a mean rating of 1.363 with 4 degrees of freedom. This implies that the competence on grammar among faculty-extensionists vary significantly based on their educational attainment. It can be assumed further that with this result, it is safe to say that educational attainment affects the level of competence of faculty; the higher the educational attainment, the higher is the competence.

Significant Relationship Between Level of Communicative Competence and Extension Functions. The table presents the correlation between the different phases of the program (pre-implementation, implementation, and post-

implementation) and the four components of communicative competence: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence.

Table 10: Significant Relationship on the Level of Communication Competence and Extension Functions

Phases	Grammatical		Sociolinguistic		Discourse		Strategic	
	R	p-value	R	p-value	r	p-value	R	p-value
Pre- Implementation	0.625	< .001	0.609	< .001	0.706	< .001	0.711	< .001
Implementation	0.595	< .001	0.635	< .001	0.68	< .001	0.691	< .001
Post-Implementation	0.483	< .001	0.549	< .001	0.61	< .001	0.63	< .001

Note: *** - significant at α , $p < 0.001$; ** - significant at α , $p < 0.01$; * -significant at α , $p < 0.05$

Legend:

+1.0, Perfect, Positive (both go up together)

+0.7 to +0.9, Strong

+0.4 to +0.6, Moderate

+0.1 to +0.3, Weak

Strong positive correlations were established across all competencies in communication when paired with pre-implementation phase as evidenced by correlation coefficients ranging from 0.6089 to 0.711. This data implies that communicative competence comes into play in performing tasks related to pre-implementation like conducting needs assessment or action research, preparing proposals, conducting FGDs, formulating MOAs, and others. These tasks require in-depth knowledge and competence in communication which faculty-extensionists must possess.

Moreover, from among the competencies in communication, discourse competence and strategic competence indicated the strongest significant relationship with $r=0.706$ and 0.711 , respectively. This validates the assumption that faculty-extensionists need to possess high level of communicative competence, particularly on overcoming communication problems, sense-making and sense giving processes, structuring discourses in terms of thematic organization,

carrying out meaningful conversations, and preparing technical reports and documents, among others so that they could perform efficiently and effectively with their extension function. These communicative competencies that have strong relationships are followed by grammatical and sociolinguistic competencies with $r=0.625$ and $r=0.609$, respectively having p-values which are lesser than .001. The results also imply that faculty-extensionists perform their tasks on extension, particularly on pre-implementation if they are equipped with competent skills and knowledge on grammar and sociolinguistic communication.

For implementation phase, similar results are obtained signifying strong positive and significant correlations across all areas of communicative competence having p-values of $p < .001$ and coefficients range from 0.595 to 0.691. This clearly indicates that faculty-extensionists need to be equipped with the necessary communicative competencies, particularly on organizing activities for extension, resolving conflicts, developing information and dissemination materials, and other activities requiring communication during implementation period. Without high competence on communication, faculty-extensionists also face difficulty in performing extension functions.

The same results are also posted in the post-implementation phase although slightly lower in magnitude compared to other phases with coefficients range from 0.483 to 0.63, with strategic $r = 0.63$) and discourse competence ($r = 0.61$) still demonstrating relatively stronger relationships than grammatical ($r = 0.483$) and sociolinguistic competence ($r = 0.549$). It could be implied then that it is indispensable for faculty-extensionists to prepare their communicative competencies, like preparation of evaluation instruments, conduct of training evaluation, interpretation of results, writing of terminal report, conduct of exit conference, packaging of extension project for publication, drafting a policy or policy recommendation, and even conduct of follow-ups or sustainability actions.

Discussion and Conclusions

The overall findings indicate that faculty members possess moderate to high levels of communicative competence, with relatively stronger performance in grammatical and discourse competencies and comparatively weaker performance in strategic dimensions. Such results imply that while faculty members are capable of producing clear and coherent messages, yet their higher-order communication competencies, most particularly strategic adaptation, data-informed communication, and crisis or stakeholder management prove to be weak.

The above findings validate the foundational model of communicative competence proposed by Hymes (1972) and further elaborated by Canale and Swain (1980), which asserts that competence extends beyond grammatical accuracy toward contextual appropriateness and strategic effectiveness. The relatively lower competence of faculty members in strategic competence as verified in this study establishes a gap between linguistic proficiency and functional communicative performance, most especially, in complex, real-world extension settings.

On the other hand, the findings are aligned with the argument of Sanders et al. (2024), who

claimed that grammatical competence ensures clarity and precision in message delivery, an indispensable component in extension work where technical and scientific information need to be translated into accessible and relatable language. However, as extension functions require more of collaborative problem-solving, negotiation, and adaptive communication skills, higher-level competencies such as discourse and strategic competence become more crucial. This justifies why faculty respondents obtained only moderate proficiency when faced with communication tasks that require persuasion, conflict resolution, and evidence-based communication.

Extension functions, on the other hand, were found to be generally competent but not highly proficient among faculty members, with post-implementation phase obtaining the lowest competency. This finding emphasizes the significant and critical gap when it comes to delivering extension work among faculty members, most particularly in evaluation, sustainability, knowledge packaging, and dissemination and creating impact or relevant outcomes. These vital communication skills required of for effective extension work were also advanced in the studies of Gonzales and Briones (2018), who noted that extension efforts in the Philippines often focus heavily on implementation while neglecting long-term impact assessment and knowledge utilization. These results were further reinforced some studies, like those of Jaron & Malaga (2025) and Sierto & Navarro (2023), who posited the moderate level of performance among faculty members in extension activities. As such, it can be concluded that the present study contributed to the body of literature which provide empirical data supporting the claim that communicative competence is a significant determinant and enabling factor influencing the capability and extent of engagement of faculty members in extension (Lillis, 2006), most particularly in state universities and colleges in the Philippines.

Essentially, the highly significant and strong positive relationship between communicative competence and extension function across all

phases prove that in any extension work, discourse and strategic competencies are necessary elements for one to perform with high level competence in all areas of project implementation as evidenced by strongest correlations, more importantly during implementation and post-implementation stages. This result suggests further that before any extension work can be more effectively and efficiently carried out, the ability of the faculty members to structure ideas, facilitate dialogue, negotiate meaning, and adapt communication strategies must be present.

As emphasized by Rölöng, 1988; Leeuwis & Aarts, (2011) in their communication-centered extension theories and Faqih and Aisyah (2019), they posit that extension is fundamentally a social learning and interaction process rather than mere information transfer and asserts that effective communication enhances stakeholder participation and empowerment, the overall findings of the present study validates the notion that communicative competence directly impacts extension outcomes.

Meanwhile, the absence of a significant relationship between faculty profile variables (e.g., years of service, number of trainings, number of extension projects) and communicative competence implies that demographics and experience alone of faculty members are not guarantees of communication proficiency. It is safe to conclude therefore that for one to be communicatively competent, h/she must undergo rigorous and targeted training, exposure and practice so that the competencies are developed and enhanced rather than simply assume to be embedded because of professional exposure. More interestingly, the significant variation in grammatical competence based on educational attainment established a strong conclusion that formal education contributes to foundational

communication skills, affirming the language acquisition theories posed by Swain (1984).

With the above findings, the study advances the following implications and further provide relevant recommendations that policy makers and educational planners should take into consideration, particularly on the four-fold functions of faculty members, and most importantly, extension: 1). Communicative competence should be acknowledged as a core professional requirement for faculty rather than a peripheral or assumed skill; 2). higher education institutions need to prioritize capacity-building programs that go beyond basic communication skills and focus on participatory and community-based communication, strategic communication, stakeholder engagement, and data-driven communication and evaluation. A change of paradigm needs to be embraced among faculty members to regard extension as a cyclical and impact-oriented process, where documentation, evaluation, and knowledge dissemination are integral components rather than optional tasks. This can be achieved through the adoption and enforcement of systematic and competency-based training interventions rather than relying on experience or exposure alone.

In summary, the findings underscore strong empirical evidence that communicative competence significantly influences faculty engagement and effectiveness in extension work. In other words, faculty members with higher levels of competence—particularly in discourse and strategic communication—are more capable of performing extension tasks across all stages, from needs assessment and program design to implementation and evaluation. As such, communicative competence is not merely deemed simply as secondary skill but a core capability that shapes the effectiveness, quality, and sustainability, and societal impact of extension programs.

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