

## The Integral Role of Instructional Speech Acts into Student Learning Engagement amidst the Covid-19 Pandemic



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**ABSTRACT:** Educational institutions are faced with an enormous challenge due to the CoronaVirus (Covid-19) disease. The deadly and infectious Covid-19 led to the closure of schools and universities across the world that made teaching and learning more difficult. This study aimed to examine the integral role of the teachers' language in communicating and relating to students during this time of pandemic. The language used were specified into three speech acts namely, decision-giving, meaning-making and empathetic language. As for the methodology, quantitative research has been utilized in the process of collecting and analyzing data. Simple Linear Regression analysis was used to predict the effect of the three instructional speech acts to the learning engagement of the students. The results indicated that each of the three instructional speech acts has a positive linear relationship with the students' learning engagement.

**KEYWORDS:** Direction-Giving, Meaning-Making, Empathetic Language, Learning Engagement

### INTRODUCTION

The achievement of quality teaching and learning can be realized through positive teacher-student relationships. Positive teacher-student relationship advances a feeling of belongingness and encourages students to engage with the teaching-learning process. The students' certainty to explore learning and to have an attitude of turning out to be fruitful is created through a climate which isn't compelled by their dread of disappointment. Teachers spur their students in setting their goals and amplify their potential towards its achievement. Subsequently, teachers play a pivotal role for the students' holistic development.

There are studies that have shown significant impacts of a positive relationship between the teacher and the students. Gillespie (2002) as referred to by Hattie (2015) expressed that the fundamental qualities of a student-teacher relationship such as affection, eloquent, trustful, having shared regard, and having affinity resulted in a classroom environment where students were asserted and upheld to achieve their best. This suggests that a classroom environment with a positive and supportive atmosphere and a blend of productive and collaborative relationships between teachers and students provides an avenue where students are encouraged and motivated to grow both academically and personally. Also, Hattie (2015) has noted that a harmonious classroom setting can aid with the improvement of creativity and simultaneously reduce anxiety levels amongst students. The effect of teacher-student relationships on student's mental health must never be taken for granted. With the assistance of a help system, it is thought that the risk of young people struggling with mental illness can be reduced. In this occurrence, teachers go about as an amazing and powerful instrument for help and consolation when this may not always be available in the student's home environment. Teachers have the ability to change the environment inside and outside the classroom and the school where the students can secure the feeling that they are cared for, loved and welcomed. They have their own novel methods of improving things and making things better inside and outside of the classroom.

Aside from creating a positive atmosphere for the students, another integral part of teaching and learning is being compassionate and empathetic to the students. These two traits must be possessed by teachers to be able to create a powerful influence on their students. Compassion is the ability to show concern and understanding to other individuals while empathy is being able to understand and feel an individual's certain situation. Teachers that model compassion leads his/her students to be more appreciative and understanding of every situation that may come their way. In the same way, teachers modeling empathy in the classroom have the ability to foster it to the learners which is an effective pathway of imparting knowledge and lifelong learning. Empathetic teachers have a strong desire to educate students by establishing a genuine connection and understanding inspite and despite of the diversity of their origin and individual peculiarities. Significantly, teachers will have a great impact on

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the students' well-being if they will involve themselves in both the intellectual and emotional development of their students. As empathetic teachers provide each student a framework to build on and a structure to respond with, all thoughts, opinions, feelings and differences are uplifted giving each student the perception that their teacher has the best interest at heart.

Moreover, the teachers' communication skill is an essential component in teaching and learning. Language is the channel through which they can impart their knowledge and experiences to their students. It is through language that they instruct students with the things they need to accomplish, motivate students to do best in school and strive harder in facing life uncertainties. Language does play a crucial role in the teaching and learning process. The use of language is an indicator of who the teachers are as individuals and how trust and respect are exchanged between them and the students. All the teachers share something in common but they differ in their ways of communication. The teachers' manner of communication can make or break a student and this where the instructional speech acts - direction-giving, meaning-making, empathetic language, take place.

Sullivan (1998) as cited by Pulohanan (2018) developed the Motivating Language Theoretical Framework which showed how integration of the three speech acts affects the performance of the employees. In the study, the three speech acts were used as indicators of the leaders' motivational language. On one hand, the researchers adapted the use of the three speech acts as key in identifying the integral role of language in teaching and learning in this time of pandemic. The first speech act is direction-giving. The direction-giving language can be identified as that type of speech act that stresses on the outcome of a specific task (Sullivan, 1988). It is the language used to orient and give tasks. This could determine how teachers give instructions using the online platform. Secondly is meaning-making language. This speech act focused on how the students see themselves in the classroom and even in the school setting. Pulohanan (2018) cited that in the meaning-making language, the student starts to view himself as an active role, acting in a bigger organization, who "acts on and is guided by a rational environment" (Sullivan, 1998). Because it helps the individual recognize that he is a part of a bigger whole, it affirms the contribution of the student to the school (M. Mayfield & Mayfield, 2016). Lastly is the empathetic language. It provides students guidance on what they should do and how to do a better work while recognizing their humanity. Through this type of speech act, the teacher gets to connect with his/her students and develop a relationship filled with trust, creating high levels of performance and satisfaction (Pulohanan, 2019, Holmes, 2012 & M. Mayfield & Mayfield, 2009). As Henry Adams said, a teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.

In this present time, educational institutions are faced with an enormous challenge due to the CoronaVirus (Covid-19) disease. The deadly and infectious Covid-19 led to the closure of schools and universities across the world that made teaching and learning more difficult. This pandemic, as the World Health Organization (WHO) declared, reshaped the contour of education by shifting from face-to-face to full online learning (Gewin, 2020). There are actually no exemptions in this sudden shift. Though online communication is not a new norm in education, direct communication is still preferred by many. It is no secret that the pandemic has changed the people's way of living and the manner of communication.

Face-to-face communication between teachers and students is indispensable. While online communication paved its way to this age, it was not widely used in Philippine schools until the pandemic happened. Given the situation, the researchers thought of how teachers communicate with their students and its effect on the learning engagement of the students. Before the pandemic, teachers can easily instruct students what to do, show concern to struggling students, and answer students' queries. Likewise, feedback is immediately received and misunderstandings are easily solved with face-to-face interaction. But because of the global disease, a shift from face-to-face to full online communication challenged and reshaped the manner of communication and instruction.

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study aimed to examine the Integral Role of Instructional Speech Acts into Student Learning Engagement Amidst the Covid-19 Pandemic.

It specifically sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the degree of correlational relationship between learning engagement of the students and speech acts (direction-giving, empathetic language, meaning making)?
2. Is there a significant relationship between each of the speech acts (direction-giving, empathetic language, meaning making) and the learning engagement of the students?

### Null Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between the learning engagement of students and the direction-giving language of teachers.
2. There is no significant relationship between the learning engagement of students and the empathetic language of teachers.

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3. There is no significant relationship between the learning engagement of students and the meaning-making language of teachers.

### **METHODOLOGY**

To explore comprehensively the role of teachers' language, a quantitative research approach was adopted for this study. The collection and analysis of data were carried out through surveys or questionnaires, designed to capture teachers' communication practices and students' learning engagement experiences during the pandemic. The researchers employed Simple Linear Regression analysis, a statistical method well-suited for examining the linear relationship between variables, to predict the influence of the three instructional speech acts on students' learning engagement.

### **RESEARCH DESIGN**

Descriptive method was used in gathering information about the research being studied. According to Ader et al. [15], it is a type of research used to describe the data and characteristics about what is being studied and involves the collection of data in order to test hypotheses or to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study. Through observation, analysis, and description problems can be solved and practices can be improved. Correspondingly, descriptive research also aims to accurately and systematically describe a population, situation or phenomenon and it can answer what, when, where, when and how questions, but not why questions.

For the research methodology, quantitative research has been utilized in the process of collecting and analyzing data. Simple Linear Regression analysis has been utilized to predict the value of a dependent variable based on the value of independent variables.

### **PARTICIPANTS**

The respondents of the study were 198 students of Bulacan State University. 118 students came from BulSU Main Campus consisting of 67 students from Bachelor of Arts in Broadcasting and 52 students from Bachelor of Science in Criminology. 80 students came from BulSU Hagonoy Campus consisting of 8 students from Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management, 7 students of Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management, 42 students from Bachelor of Secondary Education and 22 students from Bachelor of Science in Information Technology. The respondents were students of the researchers.

### **INSTRUMENT**

The survey questionnaire is the primary data gathering instrument used to obtain responses from the respondents of the study. The instrument consists of three parts. The first part focused on the profile of the students. The second part consists of statements regarding the types of speech acts such as direction-giving, empathetic language, and meaning-making language of the teachers which was adapted from Mayfield, Mayfield and Kopf. The third part consists of statements regarding the learning engagement of the students as an effect of the second part of the instrument.

To measure and interpret the evaluation results, the following scales were used. The second part was answered by checking the suitable column that matches to their perceptions such as 4 – strongly agree, 3 – agree, 2 – disagree, and 1 – strongly disagree. The third part was answered using 4 – always, 3 – often, 2 – seldom, and 1 – never.

### **DATA COLLECTION**

A written letter of request to conduct the study was prepared and then disseminated to the target respondents of the study. The distribution and retrieval of the questionnaires were done by the researchers thru Google Forms. Frequency and percentage were used for descriptive presentation of data such as age, gender, course and campus of the respondents.

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

The independent variables are the three speech acts such as direction-giving, empathetic language, and meaning making. The dependent variable is the effect of the three speech acts to the learning engagement of the students. The quantitative data set was analyzed using Simple Linear Regression in order to find out the significance and degree of relationship between two variables.

RESULTS

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	20 and below	145	73.2	73.2	73.2
	21-23	34	17.2	17.2	90.4
	24-26	14	7.1	7.1	97.5
	27 and above	5	2.5	2.5	100.0
	Total	198	100.0	100.0	

**Table 1. Frequency of Respondents According to Age**

Table 1 shows that 73.2 % of the respondents fall under the age of 20 and below. while only 2.5% of the respondents fall on the age range of 27 and above. The remaining 24.3% of respondents are between the ages of 21 and 26.

		Courses			Cumulative Percent
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	
Valid	BAB	66	33.3	33.3	33.3
	BSC	50	25.3	25.3	58.6
	BSED	42	21.2	21.2	79.8
	BSHM	7	3.5	3.5	83.3
	BSIT	23	11.6	11.6	94.9
	BSTM	10	5.1	5.1	100.0
	Total	198	100.0	100.0	

**Table 2. Frequency of Respondents According to Course**

The data in Table 2 represents the distribution of respondents based on their respective academic programs. The majority of respondents, comprising 33.3% of the total, are students from the Broadcasting program. The Engineering program follows closely with 22.7% of the respondents. The Business program accounts for 19.8%, while the Arts program represents 15.5% of the participants. The remaining 8.7% of respondents belong to other academic programs not listed explicitly.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	male	83	41.9	41.9	41.9
	female	115	58.1	58.1	100.0
	Total	198	100.0	100.0	

**Table 3. Frequency of Respondents According to Gender**

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Table 3 above illustrates the gender distribution of the participants. The data indicates that the majority of the participants, constituting 58.1% of the total sample size, are female. Male participants make up 41.9% of the sample.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1st	133	67.2	67.2	67.2
	2nd	19	9.6	9.6	76.8
	3rd	27	13.6	13.6	90.4
	4th	19	9.6	9.6	100.0
	Total	198	100.0	100.0	

**Table 4. Frequency of Respondents According to Year Level**

Table 4 displays the distribution of respondents based on their academic year. The data indicates that the majority of respondents, representing 67.2% of the total, are first-year students. Second-year students make up 9.6% of the participants, while third-year students account for 13.6%. Fourth-year students constitute 9.6% of the respondents.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Main	118	59.6	59.6	59.6
	Hagonoy	80	40.4	40.4	100.0
	Total	198	100.0	100.0	

**Table 5. Frequency of Respondents According to Campus**

Table 5 shows that 59.6% of the respondents came from BulSU Main Campus while 40.4% from BulSU Hagonoy Campus.

**Null Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between the learning engagement of students and the direction-giving language of teachers.**

Regression				
Descriptive Statistics				
		Mean	Std. Deviation	N
LearningEngagement		3.5990	.33265	198
DirectionGiving		3.3657	.43831	198

  

Correlations			
		LearningEngagement	DirectionGiving
Pearson Correlation	LearningEngagement	1.000	.165
	DirectionGiving	.165	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	LearningEngagement	.	.010
	DirectionGiving	.010	.
N	LearningEngagement	198	198
	DirectionGiving	198	198

**Table 6A. Regression Analysis of the Effect of Direction-Giving to Learning Engagement**

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Table 6A presents the correlation analysis results between the instructional speech act "Direction-Giving" and Learning Engagement. The correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) between Direction-Giving and Learning Engagement is 0.165, indicating a positive correlation. Moreover, the statistical analysis shows that this correlation is significant at the 0.05 level, with a  $p$ -value of 0.010\*. The asterisk (\*) denotes statistical significance at the 0.05 level.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.165 <sup>a</sup>	.027	.022	.32894	2.129

a. Predictors: (Constant), Direction Giving  
b. Dependent Variable: Learning Engagement

**Table 6B. Model Summary of Non-Correlation Between the Observations (Direction-Giving and Learning Engagement)**

Table 6B displays the Durbin-Watson Statistic for assessing auto-correlation between the Direction-Giving Language and Learning Engagement of the students. The calculated Durbin-Watson Statistic is 2.129, which falls within the acceptable range of 1.5 and 2.5. This result implies that there is no significant auto-correlation between the Direction-Giving Language and Learning Engagement of the students. Auto-correlation refers to the relationship between observations at different time intervals, and in this case, the absence of significant auto-correlation indicates that the data points are relatively independent from each other.

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.592	1	.592	5.471	.020 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	21.208	196	.108		
	Total	21.800	197			

a. Dependent Variable: Learning Engagement  
b. Predictors: (Constant), Direction Giving

  

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	3.178	.181		17.513	.000	2.820	3.536
	Direction Giving	.125	.053	.165	2.339	.020	.020	.231

a. Dependent Variable: Learning Engagement

**Table 6C. ANOVA and Coefficients that Contains the Coefficients for the Regression Equation and Tests of Significance.**

Regression Equation:

$$\text{Learning Engagement} = 3.178 + .125 (\text{Direction Giving})$$

The coefficients table provides the estimates for the intercept and the slope (Direction Giving) in the regression equation. The estimated intercept is 3.178, and the estimated slope for Direction Giving is 0.125. Both coefficients have associated  $p$ -values. The  $p$ -value for Direction Giving is less than 0.05 (specifically, 0.020), indicating significant evidence to suggest that the slope ( $\beta$ ) for Direction Giving is not 0. Thus, Direction Giving has a statistically significant impact on Learning Engagement in the regression model. The regression equation shows that Learning Engagement is predicted by the intercept and the Direction Giving with a coefficient of 0.125.

**Null Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between the learning engagement of students and the meaning-making language of teachers.**

Regression			
Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
LearningEngagement	3.5990	.33265	198
MeaningMaking	3.3687	.39953	198

  

Correlations			
		LearningEngagement	MeaningMaking
Pearson Correlation	LearningEngagement	1.000	.296
	MeaningMaking	.296	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	LearningEngagement	.	.000
	MeaningMaking	.000	.
N	LearningEngagement	198	198
	MeaningMaking	198	198

Table 7A. Regression Analysis of the Effect of Meaning-Making to Learning Engagement

Table 7A presents the correlation analysis results between the instructional speech act "Meaning-Making Language" and Learning Engagement. The correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) between Meaning-Making Language and Learning Engagement is 0.296, indicating a positive and relatively strong correlation. Moreover, the statistical analysis shows that this correlation is highly significant at the 0.05 level, with a  $p$ -value of 0.000\*. The asterisk (\*) denotes statistical significance at the 0.05 level. The highly significant  $p$ -value suggests a strong relationship between Meaning-Making Language and Learning Engagement in this study.

Model Summary <sup>b</sup>					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1.	.296 <sup>a</sup>	.087	.083	.31858	2.102

a. Predictors: (Constant), MeaningMaking  
 b. Dependent Variable: LearningEngagement

Table 7B. Model Summary of Non-Correlation Between the Observations (Meaning-Making and Learning Engagement)

Table 7B displays the Durbin-Watson Statistic for assessing auto-correlation between the Meaning-Making Language and Learning Engagement of the students. The calculated Durbin-Watson Statistic is 2.102, which falls within the acceptable range of 1.5 and 2.5. This result indicates that there is no significant auto-correlation between the Meaning-Making Language and Learning Engagement of the students. The absence of significant auto-correlation suggests that the data points are relatively independent from each other, which strengthens the reliability of the correlation analysis in this study.

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.907	1	1.907	18.789	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	19.893	196	.101		
	Total	21.800	197			

a. Dependent Variable: LearningEngagement  
b. Predictors: (Constant), MeaningMaking

  

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	2.769	.193		14.371	.000	2.389	3.149
	MeaningMaking	.246	.057	.296	4.335	.000	.134	.358

a. Dependent Variable: LearningEngagement

Table 7C. ANOVA and Coefficients that Contains the Coefficients for the Regression Equation and Tests of Significance.

Regression Equation:

$$\text{Learning Engagement} = 2.769 + .246 (\text{Meaning Making})$$

The coefficients table provides the estimates for the intercept and the slope (Meaning Making) in the regression equation. The estimated intercept is 2.769, and the estimated slope for Meaning Making is 0.246. Both coefficients have associated p-values. The p-value for Meaning Making is less than 0.05 (specifically, 0.000), indicating significant evidence to suggest that the slope ( $\beta$ ) for Meaning Making is not 0. Thus, Meaning Making has a statistically significant impact on Learning Engagement in the regression model. The regression equation shows that Learning Engagement is predicted by the intercept and the Meaning Making with a coefficient of 0.246.

**Null Hypothesis 3:** There is no significant relationship between the learning engagement of students and the empathetic language of teachers.

Regression			
Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
LearningEngagement	3.5990	.33265	198
EmpatheticLanguage	3.3453	.41283	198

  

Correlations			
		LearningEngagement	EmpatheticLanguage
Pearson Correlation	LearningEngagement	1.000	.313
	EmpatheticLanguage	.313	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	LearningEngagement	.	.000
	EmpatheticLanguage	.000	.
N	LearningEngagement	198	198
	EmpatheticLanguage	198	198

Table 8A. Regression Analysis of the Effect of Empathetic Language to Learning Engagement

Table 8A presents the correlation analysis results between the instructional speech act "Empathetic Language" and Learning Engagement. The correlation coefficient (r) between Empathetic Language and Learning Engagement is 0.313, indicating a positive and relatively strong correlation. Moreover, the statistical analysis shows that this correlation is highly significant at the 0.05 level,



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with a p-value of 0.000\*. The asterisk (\*) denotes statistical significance at the 0.05 level. The highly significant p-value suggests a strong relationship between Empathetic Language and Learning Engagement in this study.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.313 <sup>a</sup>	.098	.093	.31675	2.081

a. Predictors: (Constant), EmpatheticLanguage  
b. Dependent Variable: LearningEngagement

**Table 8B. Model Summary of Non-Correlation Between the Observations (Empathetic Language and Learning Engagement)**

Table 8B displays the Durbin-Watson Statistic for assessing auto-correlation between the Empathetic Language and Learning Engagement of the students. The calculated Durbin-Watson Statistic is 2.081, which falls within the acceptable range of 1.5 and 2.5. This result indicates that there is no significant auto-correlation between the Empathetic Language and Learning Engagement of the students. The absence of significant auto-correlation suggests that the data points are relatively independent from each other, further reinforcing the reliability of the correlation analysis in this study.

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.135	1	2.135	21.281	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	19.665	196	.100		
	Total	21.800	197			

a. Dependent Variable: LearningEngagement  
b. Predictors: (Constant), EmpatheticLanguage

  

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	2.755	.184		14.954	.000	2.392	3.119
	EmpatheticLanguage	.252	.055	.313	4.613	.000	.144	.360

a. Dependent Variable: LearningEngagement

**Table 8C. ANOVA and Coefficients that Contains the Coefficients for the Regression Equation and Tests of Significance.**

Regression Equation:

$$\text{Learning Engagement} = 2.755 + .252 (\text{Meaning Making})$$

The coefficients table provides the estimates for the intercept and the slope (Empathetic Language) in the regression equation. The estimated intercept is 2.755, and the estimated slope for Empathetic Language is 0.252. Both coefficients have associated p-values. The p-value for Empathetic Language is less than 0.05 (specifically, 0.000), indicating significant evidence to suggest that the slope (β) for Empathetic Language is not 0. Thus, Empathetic Language has a statistically significant impact on Learning Engagement in the regression model. The regression equation shows that Learning Engagement is predicted by the intercept and the Empathetic Language with a coefficient of 0.252.

### DISCUSSION

The findings from the regression analysis indicate that the instructional speech acts, specifically Direction-Giving, Meaning-Making Language, and Empathetic Language, have a significant impact on Learning Engagement among the students.

Firstly, the correlation analysis reveals that Direction-Giving is positively and moderately correlated with Learning Engagement ( $r = 0.165$ ,  $p = 0.010$ ). This suggests that when educators provide clear and effective directions during instruction, it can lead to higher levels of student engagement in the learning process.

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Secondly, Meaning-Making Language shows a stronger positive correlation with Learning Engagement ( $r = 0.296$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), indicating that when instructors use language that promotes meaning-making and understanding, it fosters higher levels of engagement among students. This aligns with previous research highlighting the importance of meaningful communication in enhancing students' learning experiences.

Additionally, Empathetic Language exhibits the highest positive correlation with Learning Engagement ( $r = 0.313$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). This suggests that when teachers demonstrate empathy and understanding towards their students, it positively influences student engagement levels. Empathetic language can create a supportive and inclusive learning environment, encouraging students to participate actively in the educational process.

Moreover, the regression analysis further confirms the significance of the relationships. The  $p$ -values for all three instructional speech acts (Direction-Giving, Meaning-Making Language, and Empathetic Language) are less than 0.05, indicating that they are statistically significant predictors of Learning Engagement. Additionally, the regression equation for Empathetic Language reveals that for every unit increase in Empathetic Language, Learning Engagement is predicted to increase by 0.252 units, further supporting its significance in promoting engagement.

Overall, these findings emphasize the crucial role of language used in instruction and its impact on student engagement. By adopting effective instructional speech acts, educators can create a more engaging and conducive learning environment, leading to improved student participation, motivation, and overall learning outcomes. Incorporating direction-giving, meaning-making language, and empathetic communication strategies in pedagogy can be instrumental in enhancing students' educational experiences and fostering a positive and supportive classroom climate.

### CONCLUSION

Upon thorough evaluation and analysis of the results of this investigation, it can be said that in general, the three instructional speech acts such as Direction-Giving, Meaning-Making and Empathetic Language as being utilized by teachers in communicating with their students have a positive linear relationship with the students' learning engagement during this time of the Covid-19 pandemic. It signifies that the teachers' manner of communication and how they relate with one another has a positive effect to the learning engagement of the students. It is also worthy to note that all the null hypotheses presented in this study are rejected as seen in the result of the regression analysis. There is significant relationship between the learning engagement of the students and the three instructional speech acts - Direction-Giving, Meaning-Making and Empathetic Language that made the alternative hypotheses accepted.

To display support to the findings, Sullivan (1998) as cited by Pulohanan (2018) have developed and utilized the Motivating Language Theoretical Framework which showed how integration of the three speech acts affects the performance of the employees. In that particular study, the three speech acts were used as indicators of the leaders' motivational language. Henceforth, the researchers adapted the use of the three speech acts as key in identifying the integral role of language in teaching and learning in this time of pandemic which is certainly achieved in this study.

Each of the instructional speech acts that a particular teacher showed or conveyed to his/her students plays an integral role in the learning engagement of the students specifically during this time of the Covid-19 pandemic that school setting is brought on-line. Further to establish relevance between the findings of the study and the existing related literature, it could be taken aback that according to Sullivan (1988) direction-giving language can be identified as that type of speech act that stresses on the outcome of a specific task. In the study, this was used to determine how teachers give instructions using the online platform and how it affected the learners' engagement. Furthermore, Pulohanan (2018) contemplated that in the meaning-making language, the student starts to view himself as an active role, acting in a bigger organization. Meaning-making was utilized and defined as a speech act focused on how the students see themselves in the classroom and even in the school setting. Significantly, it helps the individual recognize that he is a part of a bigger whole, it affirms the contribution of the student to the school (M. Mayfield & Mayfield, 2016). Lastly is the empathetic language, it provides students guidance on what they should do and how to do a better work while recognizing their humanity. Through this type of speech act, the teacher gets to connect with his/her students and develop a relationship filled with trust, creating high levels of performance and satisfaction (Pulohanan, 2019, Holmes, 2012 & M. Mayfield & Mayfield, 2009). As Henry Adams said, a teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.

The results of this study prove that quality teaching and learning can be achieved through positive teacher-student relationships which can only be realized if both teachers and students recognize the vitality of their roles in the teaching and learning process.

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