

Grade 9 Students' Performance in English of the University of San Carlos-North Campus

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ABSTRACT

Many teachers have conveyed discontentment with the literacy achievement shown by many students. The English area teachers of the university decided to address this deficiency with the on-going implementation of the remedial program in the elementary. In senior high school and tertiary levels, the risks are high. Teachers then expect learners to use diverse texts in order to answer; to form an analysis, to make experiments and to do research. It is not shocking that there are multiple communicative shortcomings at the secondary and tertiary levels. Difficulties which were minor, controllable or partially disregarded now become major concerns. This study was conducted to find out the English performance of the Grade 9 students of the University of San Carlos North Campus in terms of the three components: written works, quarterly assessments, and performance tasks. It also sought to determine the factors that affect the English performance of students. As an output of this study, a curriculum map was designed for English classroom use. This study used qualitative and quantitative methods. The teacher-made test, as an instrument, was adapted from the study of Murcia, Belando, Silveira (2015) and Magno & Bunagan (2009). Fifty students and two teachers in Grade 9 answered the survey questionnaires. The results revealed that the English performance of the Grade 9 students was above average and the top factors that impacted their performance were teacher's personality, teacher's communication skill, assessment, and teaching strategies. Through analysis, students' English performance was significantly influenced by how the teachers treat them and how they deliver the lessons. Teachers need to reflect on the factors which assist and deter the academic performance of the child. To better prepare classroom activities, a well-prepared curriculum map was found to enrich instruction delivery among teachers and augment learning potentials among students. Since this research has discovered the gaps on giving the assessments, and most influential factors that affect their academic English performance, this curriculum map was designed to address all these findings.

Keywords: English, factors, performance tasks, quarterly assessments students' performance, written works

INTRODUCTION

Many significant changes have been made to the way teachers teach in classrooms. It is due to the new skills challenge for the 21st century. Learning in the 21st century refers to the abilities and innovations that will allow learners to excel in an environment that continuously requires teamwork, strategic thought, imagination, and communication. According to Escobar (2019), how and why to learn is essential and far more significant than what or who to learn from. At this time, learners ought to approach lifelong learning with a versatile mind. As reported by Cabigon (2015), the community, academics, private and non-governmental sectors urged that the Philippines needs to enhance English learning and teaching and develops critical skill necessary for the industry. He added that this was an ingenuity that could probably reinforce the decisive advantage of the Philippines in some parts of the world, especially with ASEAN economic integration.

Language proficiency in English is strongly linked to academic success, according to Racca and Lasaten (2016). It was noted that language functions play a substantial role in logical and analytical thought. They added that the more exposed students are to using the language, the more effective their reasoning can be. As

a result, the better students know and apply it, the more they can do well in their academic subjects.

Past study indicates that students who fall behind in the development of reading and writing in the early years face significant problems in pursuing schooling in the later years as texts become more complex (Myrberg, 2007). It is not shocking that there are multiple communicative shortcomings at the secondary and tertiary levels. Difficulties that were minor, controllable, or partially disregarded now become significant concerns.

According to Strauss (2017), many scholars have observed that several students are unable to compose complete sentences with good grammar and clarity, to structure their writing efficiently, and to defend their views with pieces of evidence. He also clarifies that in their writing, students sometimes do not know how to study or how to paraphrase the language of others. Unable of mastering the foundations' skills in four or six years, they are now entering the job market with insufficient English

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skills. In the Philippines, the English language is highly valued because it offers social mobility especially jobs within and outside the country.

Today, a great challenge for teachers is adapting students' learning needs to an ever-changing environment. According to Ghavifekr, Afshari, Siraj, and Bin Abdul Razak (2013), "As a result of the complexity and dynamic features of educational change, the fundamental concern for the effective application of the transition, is "in what way" they can manage change in a productive and deliberate manner" (p. 333). To best serve the changing and evolving demands of their students, teachers need to review school learning, educational strategies, and evaluation. Curriculum design should center on the ultimate aim of enhancing English teaching and learning for all students.

This endeavor aimed to design a curriculum map to provide authentic practice, appropriate learning experiences for the students, and give more opportunities to use the English language. By refocusing efforts on the teacher as a curriculum designer, learners will be equipped to effectively express themselves with ease and confidence in both oral and written ways. This study is intended to enhance the English programs and curriculum of the University of San Carlos-North Campus. Varied and stimulating classroom activities can transform students' passivity and boredom into active involvement and genuine interest. This study is an effective means of getting first-hand tacit knowledge on which this English language endeavor works best.

Statement of the Problem

This study assessed the English performance of Grade 9 students of the University of San Carlos-North Campus to design a curriculum map for the first and second quarters of the next academic years.

1. What is the students' performance in terms of:
 - 1.1 written work
 - 1.2 quarterly assessment
 - 1.3 performance task
2. What factors have contributed to the student's performance in the identified areas?
 - 2.1 assessment
 - 2.2 content or flow of the lessons
 - 2.3 ICT utilization
 - 2.4 language exposure
 - 2.5 strategies
 - 2.6 teacher's communication skill
 - 2.7 teacher's personality
 - 2.8 teacher's preparation

LITERATURE REVIEW

English as a medium of thought and means of communication never stays static. It has to be dynamic, constantly changing to meet current times and demands. Much of the momentum of language teaching today can be seen as a reaction to a need which teachers have long been aware of Newmark (1966) articulated that it is a dilemma of the students who may be structurally competent but cannot effectively communicate. In a preliminary phase, it

is vital that language teachers study the language learners carefully and develop language plans and language teaching materials that meet their needs.

According to Medalle (2003), in deciding what is best for language teaching, the question WHO? (Who are the students?) precedes WHAT? (What kind of learning resources do they need?), then these two determine HOW? (How can I provide optimal learning?) To cover these queries, the fundamental roles of a teacher according to the Private Education Assistance Committee (PEAC) are very critical: As a designer, the teacher must put together the different elements of the learning plan according to standards; as an assessor, he/she must provide feedback regarding student progress and achievement; and as a facilitator, he/she must guide students in their inquiry and transfer.

Nevertheless, successful and efficient teaching does not just take place instantly; it is created by diligent planning of the methods of learning. The collection of bits and pieces of data is not what there is to education. The acquisition of information is at the bottom part of the learning style continuum. For higher levels of thought and for learning that is relevant and long-lasting, the outcomes of the research recommend using a program in which the four macro skills can be learned in an integrated manner (Depdiknas, 2006).

Recently, the curriculum has altered as it still does. Thus, the development of the language curriculum has evolved. The curriculum is critical in education. It serves as a road map for educators to recognize students' knowledge and skills. It is a framework of scaffolded principles, content, and practices structured to improve the awareness, skills and competencies of learners. The program is a collection of plans, content, instructional resources, and learning experiences aimed at a particular purpose (Depdiknas, 2006). Designing a curriculum is a "how-to-do-it" practice, which is said to be a writing activity that can be used as a method of collecting, ordering, texting, reviewing and editing ideas (Nation, 2010:1).

Students' Performance

Written Work. It attempts to evaluate the interpretation of ideas and the implementation of skills by learners. It means that students are able in written form to communicate acquired abilities and concepts. It is highly advised that items be distributed around the dimensions of the cognitive function in lengthy quizzes / assessments. According to Catapano (2009), written work is a powerful assessment tool to let students write down their own responses to questions and compose their own unique answers to show understanding.

Quarterly Assessment. It measures the skills, principles and beliefs that have been learned in the quarter. This is given through objective tests, performance based assessment or their combination. Similarly, it is given once at the end of the quarter. According to Faustos (2019) quarterly test lets students provide themselves a pat on their shoulder, and a score guide to do better, and tweak things which need adjustments. In the same way, it gives

students, teachers and parents an opportunity to identify the changes they need to make in order to get through the subject.

Performance Task (PT). This section gives students opportunities to exhibit their learned competencies and skills. It allows learners the ability to communicate their learning in suitable and varied means. In multiple ways, it promotes student inquiry, information integration, comprehension, and skills. In this respect, learners may develop or produce products or do performance-based tasks. It is also possible to view written output in this kind. Also, it needs to be given several times during the quarter. Loyola (2016) said that performance tasks is given much weight compared to other components because it gives an idea on the abilities and skills that learners manifest with reference to the content standards. Furthermore, PT guarantees application of knowledge, skills and attitudes which are depicted through creating, innovating or collaborating with others.

Factors Contributing to Students' Performance

Several research were undertaken to analyze the influences that can affect the academic success of students. While the position of all factors that contribute effectively to academic performance is not commonly defined, the researcher concentrates on internal factors in classrooms. According to Harb and Shaarawi (2006), the capability of the learners in English has a significant effect on students' academic performance. Good English communicators are more capable of completing their studies.

Several influences affect the quality of students' achievement (Waters & Marzano, 2006). Many variables should be weighed to assess the factors influencing the quality of student performance. Identifying the factors that contribute directly to the consistency of academic success is a rigorous task because learners belong to various backgrounds. This complexity is as dynamic as it has been in the Philippine's culture. In the light of these studies, the researcher conducted this to analyze the impacts of various influences on the English performance among Grade 9 students of the University of San Carlos North Campus.

Second Language Acquisition

An SLA expert, Stephen Krashen, has rendered significant works to the language learning method, the concepts of which have become "a research source of second language acquisition ideas" (Lightbown & Spada, 2006, p.38). "The widespread use of conscious grammatical rules and tedious grammatical practice does not guarantee a strong getting hold of the language" (Krashen, 1987). Moreover, he emphasized that "Acquisition requires meaningful interaction using the target language not necessarily with how texts are delivered but with the messages they are expressing." (Krashen, 1987).

Krashen (2005) found that, on standardized examinations, students whose parents were educated score better than those whose parents were unschooled. Learned parents can interact more with their sons or daughters about assignments, concepts or events that are

learned in an institution. To put it another way, parents can take a big part in the education of their children (Fantuzzo & Tighe, 2000).

Ultimately, Krashen suggests that acquiring language is far more effective than learning language to obtain practical skills in a foreign language. According to Schutz (2018), good language teaching is not related to a packed course of standardized lessons focused on grammar ordering, translation or oral drilling, nor is it based on technical tools. Effective teaching is customized and is centered on the learners' needs.

Vyotsky's Zone of Proximal Development

Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934) developed the zone of proximal development. He focused on social interaction in the creation of cognition (Vygotsky, 1978), and "making meaning" process.

He asserted that having sufficient assistance would provide the student enough "help" to achieve the task while still in the proximal development zone. According to him (unlike Piaget), social learning tends to come before creation. It is not possible to grasp human growth without regard to the social and cultural framework within which it is situated. This serves as the center of the assessment process for the K-12. This substantiates adequate evaluation, defined from controlled to autonomous presentation of information that will allow learners to use their learning in future situations.

In determining the success of children, Vygotsky found the adults around children's lives to be very important as those people will most likely be the ones to help the children learn (Silalahi, 2019).

Constructivist Theory

Jerome Bruner's constructivist theory notes that learning is an ongoing mechanism in which learners, based on their present or previous experience, construct new ideas or concepts from interactions.

According to Ferlazzo and Sypniewski (2018), through past undertakings, students can build new concepts which can improve English language learning. Encouragement, assisting and allowing students to discover the main principles on their own are focused in this concept. Students are given opportunities, depending on their interests, to represent, assess their practice and identify intermediate skills to learn.

Kristinsdottir (2001) states that the main principle is communication between the learner and the instructor. In this theoretical sense, Socratic learning is proposed as the strongest mode of communication, as it helps the tutor to consciously note any research abilities displayed by the learner, their development, their frustrations, and form a rubric of their present learning state based on the exchange of ideas. Seeing that this idea takes and illustrates established facts, any teacher lesson plans, teacher worksheets, or tools can simply continuously develop the understanding of the learner for progression.

Under this philosophy of learning growth, Bruner is serious about vocabulary and how this effects reasoning. Identifying the variations in adult vocabulary and the language used by children is important to every child's development. They need time to improve not only their intellectual learning, but their vocabulary as well, with the child being younger. Teachers and parents alike are also urged to adopt the "scaffolding" engagement approach, which is a technique aimed at simplifying learning processes by taking smaller steps, all leading to the final result. In order to characterize the tutorial relationship between a teacher and a pupil "scaffolding" should be given. This helps maintain some dissatisfaction when keeping in mind what is important throughout the learning process.

Bruner's hypothesis indicates that teachers are very specific about the organization when assessing the research ability of the pupil, allowing the learner to reflect on the greater challenge at hand as well as the objectives, instead of being wrapped up in small information or grievances. They are urged to commend the efforts made by the learners when informing them, allowing them to concentrate on the related topics, and encouraging them to practice and rehearse what they have learned.

Social Learning Theory

Albert Bandura posited the theory and emphasized that learning takes place by evaluation, imitation, and demonstration. The theory links behavioral and cognitive learning theories because of the concentration, memory, and motivation it incorporates. People learn by perceiving and mimicking. He indicated...

Interaction is important to language development. This is supported by Piaget's language concept which says that interaction enhances intellectual development is crucial to language learning. Language is inherently a social factor, according to Piaget (1969).

The purpose of classroom instruction is to develop the ability of learners to communicate through interaction using target language. The researcher now acknowledges, as quoted by Larcen-Freeman (2006), that instruction in grammar must be integrated into a communicative structure. The communicative challenge was suggested to provide learners with correct use of grammar. In addition, Celce-Murcia (2006) suggested to use strictly communicative tasks that nonetheless involve the understanding and development of grammar. It is then crucial to have a broad variety of tools and exposure in the classroom.

Not so long ago, pupils were seen as empty vessels in which the teacher spilled the day's lesson contents (Borich, 2000). Today's instruction is seen not simply as knowledge transfer, but rather as teacher interacting with learners. Students are given opportunities for multiple and creative ways to express themselves. Teachers take on the role of facilitator who leads training without being the primary source or transmitter of knowledge.

This study is also based on the Whole Language approach. In every learner there is still a need for more

training in using the language for practical purposes. Practice of language should be as close as possible to real communication. Reif and Heimburge (1996, cited in Medalle 2003) agreed that Whole Language is an interconnected approach that incorporates reading, writing, speaking, listening and allowing students to see links and derive meaning from good literature. His advocates (Goodman, 1980, Crafton, 1991 and Watson, 1987 among others) consider meaning to be paramount, and that students should be taught language from "whole to part" using authentic texts and activities through communication interaction.

Regardless of the diversity of immersive learning experiences, their goal remains to train students to use English in the world beyond the classroom. This is the world which, when lessons are over, focuses on preserving and improving their communicative skills. In the absence of native English speakers, the Internet now offers opportunities to interact with English-speaking peers on a variety of topics. Apart from prearranging exchanges, learners can also check for a wide range of information on World Wide Web sites. New electronics were bought across the world, making it easier for students to access the Internet. As England (1998, quoted in Medalla, 2003) hypothesized, schools are already dealing with the real world communication problems of the 21st century ... global concerns and complex problems will be addressed more effectively by people who can speak and write clearly to one another. English teachers will become more critical and accountable than ever before in their role in providing the skills needed to address these challenges.

In this period of disagreement and uneasiness regarding literacy, let teachers not lose sight that the pupil is the language learner and Chomsky (1965) diverted their attention to this perspective in no uncertain terms, thereby affecting teaching the language dramatically in the past. In the 1980s, the pattern has gained strength and has persisted today. In the language learning drama, learners are the key players, not the teachers. As Rivers (1987) acknowledged that children used literacy to make their mark in the world, from cave walls to computer screens, and create new opportunities for their lives. Teachers will certainly exercise great wisdom when they think as educators about what really matters to them. Learners and learning, not the newest principles, should be the subject of what they do in the classroom. Rivers stressed that it is the teacher's job to explore the springs of inspiration in individual students and channel it through course content, events in and out of the classroom, and learner-generated or at least learner-managed projects in the direction of further language acquisition.

METHODOLOGY

Design

This study utilized qualitative and quantitative methods that examined the students' academic performance for the first and second quarter of the Academic Year 2019-2020 and the factors that contributed to students' performance. In this work, the participants' grades of the three components such as written works, quarterly

assessments, and performance tasks were described. The assessed topics were identified and categorized based on the learning skills reflected in the curriculum map. On the other hand, the elements that shaped students' academic performance such as assessment, content or flow of the lessons, ICT utilization, language exposure, strategies and techniques, teacher's communication skill, teacher's personality, and teacher's preparation were recognized.

Environment

The locale of this study is the University of San Carlos – North Campus at General Maxilom Avenue, Cebu City, Philippines. The institution is an associate of the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (PAASCU) with Level II certification.

Participants

The participants of the study were the two Grade 9 teachers and fifty Grade 9 students of the University of San Carlos North Campus of Academic Year 2019-2020. There were two English teachers handling the six sections of Grade 9 English classes. Only five sections were part of the study since one section comprised the homogeneous pilot group. To avoid bias, the pilot section was not asked to participate in this study. Voluntary response sampling was used. This technique was preferred because the students could not answer anymore the survey questionnaire physically, hence, the target random sampling did not happen. The questionnaire was given through online and only for those who volunteered to participate answered the survey. A sample size of ten students or 25% of the class population was involved with a total number of 50 participants all in all.

Instruments

The participants' levels of academic performance were obtained through the students' scores for written works, quarterly assessments and performance tasks from the first and second grading periods. All the scores of the respondents were obtained from the class records of the English teachers.

This study utilized three main tools namely, the Evaluation of Teaching Performance Questionnaire by Murcia, Belando, Silveira (2015), Checklist for English Language Exposure by Magno and Bunagon (2009), and the interview guide for teachers.

The Teaching Performance Evaluation questionnaire consisted of 28 items grouped into seven factors: teacher's personality with two items (e.g. "My English teacher maintains an objective and respectful position with us."), teacher's communication skill with three items (e.g. "My English teacher has a good command of the contents of the course."), assessment with four items (e.g. "My English teacher applies the assessment criteria of the activities as established in the subject's curriculum"), strategies with eight items (e.g. "My English teacher organizes activities for us to actively participate in course assignments."), content organization and flow of the lesson with 3 items (e.g. "My English teacher presents the contents following

a clear and logical framework, highlighting the important aspects."), teacher preparation with five items ("My English teacher informs or orients us of the competencies we are expected to acquire.") and ICT utilization with two items (e.g. "My English teacher efficiently incorporates and employs ICTs."). The items were assessed using a 4-point Likert scale which varied from "Completely Agree (CA)" to "Completely Disagree (CD)." This questionnaire was quantified according to the following numerical values and descriptions: completely agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2); strongly disagree (1), beginning with the sentence "The English teacher ... for the student participants and I ... for the teacher participants."

The Checklist for English Language Exposure comprised 23 items grouped into four factors: home, friends, school & media (e.g. "I engage in activities where English is used.") The items were evaluated using a 4-point Likert Scale which ranged from the following numerical values and descriptions: completely agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2); strongly disagree (1). The four factors were computed and their mean scores were obtained.

The interview guide for teachers comprised eight questions all leading to answer their roles as teachers and the conducts they had undertaken to stimulate maximum learning. Similarly, the answers to the questionnaires were validated by the teacher respondent as proof of their actual experiences in the classroom. After the questionnaires had been answered, the researcher then forwarded them to two expert raters, one of whom holds a Masteral degree and is currently a Senior High School English coordinator and the other one is a doctoral student and teacher in one of Cebu's finest universities.

Research Procedures

The researcher made prior arrangements with the Basic Education Principal to conduct the study in the department. A formal communication of request or transmittal letter was personally submitted to the principal. After which, the researcher made an arrangement with the Psychometrician for the schedule of the administration of the test through the help of one English teacher of the university. The choice of respondents was facilitated through volunteer response sampling.

The Grade 9 students were invited to participate in the research study. Parents of these respondents were informed and a letter was sent for their consent. The researcher explained the purpose of the study as well as its relevance to their child's academic performance. Similarly, the researcher explained the relevance of this study to students' academic endeavor. With the use of Genyo e-learning, a learning management system, the respondents answered the survey questionnaire. For the interview, the researcher asked the teacher participant for an appointment with him. During the meeting via online, the significance of the study was explained and the respondents were made to understand further that the study was not about criticizing his teaching performance; rather, on evaluating the skills and competencies learned by the students.

To answer the first research question on students' English academic performance according to written work, quarterly assessment, and performance task, the t-test for single sample was employed. Furthermore, to answer the second research question on the factors that contributed to students' performance based on teachers' teaching performance as well as the students' language exposure, the adapted questionnaires for both students and teachers were used. A corresponding weight value was given to the score of each item. To analyze the result, descriptive counterparts or verbal explanations were also provided.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section discusses, analyzes, and interprets the data obtained from selected Grade 9 students by assessing the English academic performance of the students and the factors affecting their performance.

Students' English Academic Performance. Academic performance is essential across all levels of education. This is an essential requirement to determine students' progress from one grade level to another. At the minimum, English academic performance is crucial in the K-12 program. How the performance is assessed is as vital as what has been set. DepEd's policy on assessment and grading (DepEd, 2015) states that classroom assessment is intended to help students perform well academically.

Table 1 conveys the students' performance in the written work of the Grade 9 students in English for the first and second quarters of the academic year 2019-2020.

As depicted in Table 1, the students' performance in written works, is above average. Looking at the Standard Deviation (SD), the result is above ten, and it is considered as above- average performance. Since written exams were given as summative assessments, students may have grasped what had been taught by the teachers. However, the result does not equate with that of the diagnostic test of the Center for Educational Management (CEM) examination, which was given to these students in general. The test performance of the test takers was average primarily, few were above average, and a little was moving towards average. With teachers' efforts and students' cooperation and engagement, their performance may have improved. Besides, teachers gave reteaching, provided consultations, and would not proceed to the next lesson unless learning goals were met.

In relation to the result of the respondents' English academic performance, it may be noted that learners were able to learn the lessons covered. In the study of Astodello

(2007), she showed that his English classes for the third-year have issues with their written English where some cannot express themselves even in basic sentences. Most of the third year students of Tabuk City National High School have to build and master their non-verbal English skills in meaningful clues, proper usage and grammar, word construction, and correct use of punctuations (Adora, 2013).

Also, in the study conducted by Cheng & Qi (2006), the overall performance of a group of Chinese test-takers was average or above average compared with the whole population of 2004 MELAB (Michigan English Language Achievement Battery) test-takers. This result may be partly due to the fact that the English curriculum, textbooks, and testing systems in China attach importance to grammatical knowledge rather than to communicative competence (Cheng & Qi, 2006; Li, 1990). They reveal that many national and regional exams in China are lacking continuous and systematic research regarding test qualities. This feature has impacted on the Chinese test takers who have a great deal of experience with multiple choice items and have received much input in linguistic knowledge but less in pragmatic knowledge (Cheng & Qi, 2006).

With this result, there is an impression that the Grade 9 learners may have been infused more with knowledge type of test or items which measure lower-order thinking skills. In addition, there is also a tendency that the competencies tested during the training do not correlate with the expected skills to be acquired for the particular grade level.

Written Works

These are summative assessments that require a measure of written accomplishment once the instruction has ended. Primarily, responses consist of resources that are printed. Conversely, it may also be an item, a happening, or an experience. The learning assessment is carried out in writing (pencil & paper test) and incorporates various types of questions such as open-ended (construction), closed (choice), and semi-closed questions.

Table 2 presents the topics, learning competencies and English skills evaluated in written works of the Grade 9 English classes for the first and second quarters of the academic year 2019-2020.

As gleaned from Table 2, it shows that most of the topics evaluated for the first two quarters mainly were on literature. This is not surprising, considering that literature has brought numerous benefits to students. Literature is

Table 1. Students' Performance in English
N = 50

Group	H.M. ^a	A.M.	S.D.	Test Statistics		Qualitative Description
				Computed t-value	Computed p-value at $\alpha=0.05$	
Written Works	93.00	127.76	16.48	14.92*	< 0.00001	Above Average

Table 2. Topics, Competencies, and Skills Assessed in Written Works

Topics	Competencies	Language Arts Domains
Anglo-American Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share prior knowledge about a topic • Examine literature as a form of self-discovery. • Create a link between the present text and the text read previously. • Draw generalizations of the viewed/ presented content and assumptions • Make a stand on the text that was heard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Comprehension • Literature • Listening Comprehension • Viewing Comprehension • Writing
Identifying Character Traits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify how a character trait helps shape a person. • Provide vocabulary or phrases suitable for a particular situation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature • Vocabulary Development
Tone, Mood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infer feelings and intentions in the viewed content. • Identify the tone, mood, and purpose of the author. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viewing Comprehension • Literature
Normal & Inverted Word Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the standard and reversed word order in creative writing • Write normal and inverted sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar Awareness • Writing
Punctuations and Capitalizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use good punctuation marks and capitalization to express importance. • Write an application letter observing correct punctuations and capitalizations • Infer concepts, emotions, and intentions in the viewed content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar Awareness • Writing and Composition • Viewing Comprehension
Interjections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use interjections to convey meaning 	Grammar Awareness
Poetry and Figures of Speech	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinguish the features present in poetry and prose • Identify the distinguishing features of notable Anglo-American sonnets, dramatic poetry, and vignettes. • Compose forms of literary writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature • Literature • Writing and Composition
If Conditionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree or disagree with the ideas presented in the material viewed • Use conditionals in expressing arguments • Formulate sentences using If Conditionals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viewing Comprehension • Grammar Awareness • Writing and Composition
Elements of Narrative: Theme & Conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze literature to value other persons and their particular situations in life. • Explain how the genre-wide aspects relate to a specific literary collection theme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature • Writing
Literary Images	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make inferences and conclude from what was said 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature

considered a good lens to view the world. Also, it provides a window into various aspects of life, gives a mirror to examine people's views, offers a reflecting pool of ideas, and enables to connect to different generations. Studying literature academically, also lets students develop their writing skills, expand their vocabulary and enhance other English skills (Importance of Studying Literature, 2012). While vocabulary development is less assessed in this component, oral language fluency is never gauged. It could be noted, however, that it is written work that is measured here, not oral presentations. Meanwhile, writing was used to assess almost all topics. Even then, composition writing

was limited as it required sufficient input time from the teacher to deliver feedback.

Concerning the type of test used, primarily multiple-choice items, identification, and fill-in-the-blanks were employed. These types of tests were commonly using short-term questions that require short responses and small cognitive demands; thus, requiring students to generate basic information or evidence. It is therefore suggested that open-ended tests must be used more than short response test to evaluate more on sound reasoning, such as critical thinking, interpretation, or analysis.

Table 1. Students' Performance Tasks Level in English
N = 50

Group	H.M. ^a	A.M.	S.D.	Test Statistics		
				Computed t-value	Computed p-value at $\alpha=0.05$	Qualitative Description
Performance Tasks	88.00	137.98	16.52	21.40*	< 0.00001	Above Average

As depicted in Table 3, the standard deviation is above 10. This means that the English performance of the students is above average. When English teachers were asked what, and how they gave performance tasks to students, they said they gave varied, engaging and meaningful activities. These activities had tapped into real-life circumstances and could equip them for future use. Vis-à-vis the test types used, they were authentic and fit for their age.

Performance Tasks. These are realistic exercises requiring learners to show their capabilities to execute the learned skills. This type of learning is aimed at helping the learners gain and apply understanding, exercise skills, and improve individual and group working conditions (Kelly, 2019). As evaluations become open and responses to the students become intricate, scoring becomes harder. Several techniques have been made to measure challenging student works, using holistic and analytic approaches. In some instances, students are evaluated on their performance; in some cases, they are assessed based on a finished product or oral presentation.

Table 4 presents the topic coverage, learning competencies, and English skills evaluated as the performance tasks of the Grade 9 English classes for the first and second quarters of academic year 2019-2020.

The data indicate that most of the topics assessed were focusing the skill on oral language and fluency. The main reason is not to overlap the evaluation of the competencies among the three components. Also, a performance matrix was provided to lay down scaffolding activities before the major performance tasks.

The skills required to demonstrate in performance tasks varied. Specific tasks asked students to demonstrate their capabilities directly (e.g., extemporaneous speaking). Other tasks presented situations requiring students to consider how to employ their learning in an unknown context (e.g., deciphering out why the author wrote such a poem).

Most of the tasks assigned were performed by the group. When activities are carried out by the group, various drawbacks could be identified. This is one of the dilemmas of scoring. That is why both individual and group scoring have to be well-formulated through rubrics.

As shown in Table 5, the standard deviation is above ten which indicates that students' English academic performance is above average. In this type of summative

assessment, recall, comprehension, and reasoning were emphasized. The English teachers confirmed that the highest percentage of the total number of items were under recall. They realized that giving so much knowledge type of test determines only the low-level cognitive development. Giving more reasoning type of test is much more beneficial to students as it evaluates a higher-order thinking process.

Quarterly Assessment. DepEd Order No. 8 s 2015 laid down a policy for the curriculum on classroom assessment. It is clear that the classroom evaluation has to be based on the curriculum structure and the curriculum guide for every discipline as such, language dimensions should be expressed in both teaching and assessment. The quarterly assessment determines the learner's progress at the end of each unit by comparing it to a specific standard. Multiple-choice and reasoning were the types of tests used. For multiple choice, learners assimilated the correct response, which ensured an 'objective' scoring. In the course of planning and writing, students answer the given question through analyzing, comprehending and explaining in reference to facts (Andersson & Beveridge, 2007). Scoring is challenging for this type of test. Therefore, rubrics were carefully designed to rate essays.

Table 6 shows the topic coverage, learning competencies, and English skills assessed in the quarterly assessments of the Grade 9 English classes for the first and second quarters of the academic year 2019-2020.

Comparing the topics and competencies assessed with the competencies reflected in the curriculum map, all the competencies for the first and second quarters were covered from the English 9 curriculum map. In addition, other skills like listening, viewing, and oral language were not included in the skills being measured in the periodical test. Since the other language arts domains were assessed already in the other components, only three were taken into consideration, namely, literature, grammar awareness, and writing and composition.

To comprehend the level of understanding in the quarterly assessment, cognitive process dimensions were utilized, which included low and high order thinking skills. Some test items designed were, however, under lower order thinking abilities, such as the items under recall. Other items were developed under high-order reasoning. According to North (2014), a language-based test should develop the higher-level thinking skills of the test takers. In addition, Sullivan (2011) suggested that to avoid considering the item test, which measures the specific

Table 4. Topics, Competencies, and Skills Assessed in Performance Tasks

Topics	Competencies	Language Arts Domains
Dialogue about USC School Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exhibit appropriate verbal and nonverbal behavior in a given speech context Use proper English sound production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral Language and Fluency
Speech Choir about the History of English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the correct pitch, juncture, stress, intonation, rate of speech, volume, and projection when writing and delivering poetry and prose like in speech choirs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral Language and Fluency Writing and Composition
Documentary about Environmental Issues and Effects on Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use normal and inverted word order Observe proper stopping and pausing according to the punctuations used. Use the necessary prosodic voice characteristics in the documentary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grammar Awareness Oral Language and Fluency Writing and Composition
Extemporaneous Speaking/ Daily Routine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use principles of effective speech delivery focusing on voice, delivery, stage presence, facial expressions, body movements & gestures and rapport with the audience Give suitable communicative styles for different circumstances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral Language and Fluency Oral Language and Fluency
Sonnet Critique Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use principles of effective speech writing focused on logical organization & grammatical correctness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing and Composition Grammar Awareness

Table 5. Students' Quarterly Assessments Level of Performance in English
N = 50

Group	H.M. ^a	A.M.	S.D.	Test Statistics		
				Computed t-value	Computed p-value at $\alpha=0.05$	Qualitative Description
Quarterly Assessments	70.00	83.20	14.74	6.33*	< 0.00001	Above Average

level of understanding as a receptive form of test, teachers should create an item under higher order thinking skills.

Factors Contributing to Students' English Academic Performance

Teachers are powerful agents. Without them, school is considered a body without spirit, a skeleton without flesh, and a shadow without substance. In the lives of learners, teachers play significant roles. They

are significant factors in their educational formation. In addition to their responsibility to teach students, teachers help shape values and form character. Indeed, effective teachers can contribute to students' success far beyond classroom walls. Besides, instructional methods have a direct effect on the success of students as teachers are the individuals they trust, and they obey much of the inputs they get from their teachers. Canto-Herrera, & Salazar-Carballo (2010) explained the substantial correlation identified between the "delegator" model of teaching and

Table 6. Topics, Competencies, and Skills Assessed in Quarterly Assessment

Topics	Competencies	Language Arts Domains
History of English	Identify Concepts on the history of English	Literature
Literary Selections	Give the central theme, lessons, main idea, and concepts about Beowulf, King Arthur, and the Pardoner's Tale	Literature
Tone & Mood	Determine the tone and mood of the selections	Literature
Punctuations and Capitalizations	Recognize sentences that show correct punctuation marks and capitalization Write a paragraph observing proper punctuations, and capitalizations.	Grammar Awareness Writing and composition
Normal and Inverted Sentences	Identify and invert Natural to Inverted Sentences	Grammar Awareness
If Conditionals	Identify and use conditionals correctly in sentences	Grammar Awareness
Figures of Speech	Distinguish the features present in prose and poetry	Literature
Literary Concepts	Decide the subject matter, pictures, feelings, mood, sound, methodology, and intent of the author	Literature
Literary Argumentation	Restate, share opinion, find pieces of evidence, formulate claims and warrants, and synthesize	Writing and Composition

the students' academic achievement.

Figure 1 summarizes the factors that contribute to the English performance of the Grade 9 students in the first and second quarters of Academic Year 2019-2020.

The illustrative graph above shows the summary of mean values for the factors contributing to students' English academic performance. The teachers' communication and personality are the top factors that mark the English performance of students. Their mean value is 3.73. This is not surprising because students love to imitate the behavior and mannerism of the teachers.

Teacher's Communication Skill. Communication skills are a crucial requirement in the learning phase and teaching. The teacher communicates more instructions orally both inside and outside the classroom. If there is poor communication skill, it may disable the learning process and their career mobility. Teachers' communication skill is very crucial to students. To be able to communicate effectively is a crucial life skill and should not be underestimated, especially among teachers. The saying "One cannot give what one does not have" applies to this principle. An English teacher must be an excellent communicator to motivate students to be effective communicators themselves. Literature explicitly suggests that educators are the ones who set the stage for learning practices (Allen & Valette, 1997; Quist, 2000). English teachers must have the best communicative skills because teaching is communication.

Teacher's Personality. Students tend to learn more when they are comfortable with the teacher. Studies suggest that self-esteem rises when students felt secure

and valued. Moreover, learners would be driven to take part in the learning when learners are motivated to learn, there is a higher chance that they will succeed in their goals. In the same way, Gardner (2006) recorded those motivated students can do and know better. Correspondingly, of all school services, the most critical determinant of student success is good teachers.

Good academic performance is closely linked to teachers' personality, communication skills, assessment, and instructional techniques, as well as their readiness for dealing with different learners. These top factors are further confirmed by the Grade 9 teachers. They say that these influences have always been primary weapons of teachers in teaching. Therefore, retaining effective teachers should be one of the most critical agenda for school administrators.

Assessment. The second factor that impacts their English academic performance is an assessment, with the mean value of 3.61. Classroom assessment received a great deal of attention due on its effect to learning relative to national tests (Guskey, 2003). Students believed that if the assessment is prepared well, educators will have guidance in assisting them to meet the learning objectives.

Methods, Strategies and Techniques. The third top factor that contributes to student's English performance are methods, strategies, and techniques, with 3.6 as the mean value. The teaching approach is a comprehensive plan that includes structure, educational goals, and techniques needed to be implemented (Issac, 2010). Learning approaches should be developed consistently so that learners will advance various techniques by the

Students' Rating on the Factors Affecting Their English Academic Performance

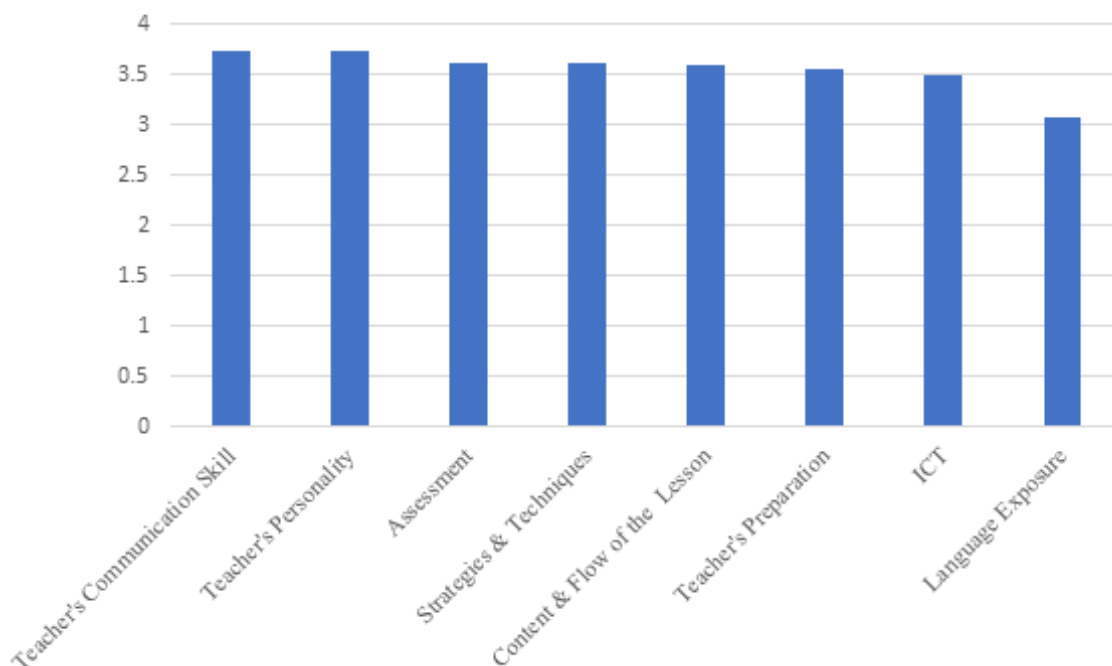


Figure 1. Factors Affecting the Students' Academic Performance

time they leave school (Friedrich & Mandl, 2006). Giving meaningful tasks is imperative, mainly when they are engaged in practical, valuable, and significant activities. Content and Flow of the Lesson. Teachers need different skills and attitudes to help their students obtain high outcomes. Teaching involves a range of talents and abilities so that teachers can deliberately blend to deliver the most meaningful experience possible.

Teacher Preparation. As per the stated findings, teachers' careful planning of the lesson and design of the curriculum need to be given much importance, especially during in-service training or before the academic year starts. This is to ensure that the curriculum is well-developed. As emphasized by Resch and Schrittmesser (2021) "Service-Learning stands out as a teaching approach that connects theory and practice." Therefore, the school should strictly implement on this.

ICT Utilization. The research by Aduwa-Ogiegbaen and Iyamu (2006) looked at causes in Nigeria's six geopolitical zones that are responsible for the low level of second-language English teaching in public secondary schools. To answer a questionnaire, three thousand senior high school students were questioned. Results have shown that English language teachers frequently neglect modern teaching tools and various teaching methods in their English lessons. Furthermore, results exposed that students' academic performance was tremendously affected by the inability of the teacher to adapt to the changing time.

Language Exposure. The lowest among the factors that influence students' English academic achievement is language exposure, which has a mean value of 3.08. From the results, an improvement is needed on the English exposure of the students which can help

develop their academic performance indirectly. According to Moshia (2014), students are intensely learning English in response to potential aspirations, career progress, and job opportunities. The occasional use of English among students at school and at home, poor teaching and learning circumstances, and poverty were factors leading to the low performance in English, as revealed in the study. One important factor which is influencing the students' English academic performance is presented in Table 7.

Applying the assessment criteria of the activities and providing clear goals and assessment method in the curriculum were the top in rank with a mean value of 3.66 and the accessibility of the teacher in terms of monitoring students' progress with 3.55 mean value was the last in rank.

Assessment is a crucial part of studying as it helps students to see how they are progressing in class, and to assess whether or not they grasp content from the course. Assessment can be an effective tool in inspiring them. Aware of doing poorly, they could start working harder. In standardized content assessments, Stevens et al. (2000) concluded that language proficiency tests is much needed to measure students' academic language abilities.

Table 8 presents the factors of the teachers' mastery of the content and flow of the lesson that affect the Grade 9 students' English academic performance.

The table provides a general picture of the participants' experience in the way the lessons are taught. Presenting the content systematically ranks first with mean value of 3.71. While presenting the minimum content of the subject matter has the mean value of 3.42.

Table 7. Factors of Assessment Affecting Students' English Performance

Items	Mean	Rank
My English teacher applies the assessment criteria of the activities as established in the subject's curriculum.	3.66	1
My English teacher provides clear information about objectives, bibliography, consultations, contents, and assessment methods in the subject's curriculum.	3.66	1
My English teacher adequately attends to the consultations requested	3.58	2
My English teacher is easily accessible (consultations, e-mails, etc.).	3.55	3

Table 8. Factors of Teachers' Content and Flow of the Lesson Affecting Students' English Performance

Items	Mean	Rank
My English teacher presents the contents following a clear and logical framework, highlighting the important aspects.	3.71	1
My English teacher allows us to organize and distribute part of the assignments to be performed in the course.	3.65	2
My English teacher presents the minimum content of his/her subject matter, tailored to the students' knowledge.	3.42	3

Table 9 reveals the result of the Information and Communications Technology utilization in the teaching-learning process in English 9 classes.

Table 9 presents the mean values of 3.51 and 3.41 for the utilization of ICT in the lesson. Comparatively, the respondents rate using e-learning resources to facilitate learning is higher than effectively incorporating and employing ICT in the lesson. Such result proves that although the English teachers use ICT in their discussions and activities, they still need to efficiently and appropriately integrate technology in teaching. Powerpoint presentation in this time and age is not anymore similar with the transfer of texts from manila paper to powerpoint slides. It has to

be more than that as students nowadays are digital natives. Teachers must be adept with ICT utilization so as not to be left behind by the challenge of the present time.

Table 10 features the factors that are affecting the Grade 9 students' language exposure in their English academic performance.

As reflected in the table, the top factor that influences students' language exposure is media (Mean=3.38). Media provides ample language opportunities through the use of any reading materials, film, internet, etc., and activities that improve English skills. Media entertains pupils and helps them to learn English both inside and outside the school (Tafari, 2009:1). In order to be competent and

Table 9, Factors of ICT Utilization Affecting Students' English Performance

Items	Mean	Rank
My English teacher uses e-learning resources that facilitate learning.	3.51	1
My English teacher efficiently incorporates and employs ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies)	3.47	2

Table 10. Factors of Language Exposure Affecting Students English Performance

Items	Mean	Rank
Media	3.38	1
School	3.30	2
Friends	2.89	3
Home	2.78	4

Table 11. Factors of Teaching Methods and Strategies Affecting Students' English Performance

Items	Mean	Rank
My English teacher allows and encourages our participation.	3.80	1
My English teacher encourages our interest and our motivation to learn.	3.63	2
My English teacher organizes activities for us to actively participate in course assignments.	3.63	2
My English teacher facilitates student-student and student-professor interaction.	3.61	3
My English teacher promotes teamwork.	3.59	4
My English teacher provides us with scientific information that allows us to gain a better and deeper understanding of the subject matter.	3.54	5
My English teacher relates the teachings to the professional environment.	3.49	6
My English teacher promotes individual work	3.47	7

Table 12. Factors of Teachers' Communication Skill Affecting Students' English Performance

Items	Mean	Rank
My English teacher attends and responds clearly to questions asked in class.	3.76	1
My English teacher interacts satisfactorily with us.	3.73	2
My English teacher has a good command of the contents of the course.	3.69	3

become effective communicator, teacher's goal must be to help expose students practice the language in both academics and concrete life experiences (Ellis, 2006). A research undertaken by Ortega (2011), he revealed that media exposure of Icelanders to English is significantly greater than their Spanish counterparts. Fjällström (2010) reflected connotatively on this finding when she concluded: 'Public broadcasting plays a significant role in information sharing; hence, they are obviously more open to English while listening to radio. The least influencer on the English language exposure among the Grade 9 students in English is Home (Mean=2.78).

Lamb et al. (2006) offered a summary of the key elements and strategies that influence the academic performance or outcomes of migrant students. Jurkovic (2010) exposed that general linguistic capacity had a substantial positive impact on the achievement of test scores. Nevertheless, metacognitive strategies were the only one of the models of language learner strategies that had a statistically important effect on the scores of the assessments.

Table 11 presents the specific factors under teaching methods, strategies, and techniques contributing to the English academic performance of the Grade 9 students during the first and second quarter of academic year 2019-2020.

Concerning methods, strategies and techniques, table 11 shows that engaging activities that promote participation was ranked as the first factor relating to teacher's use of strategies (Mean=3.80). On the other hand, promoting individual work was ranked the last (Mean=3.47). The findings indicate that teachers need to continue utilizing teaching strategies that cater students'

needs, that make content relevant to them, that relate lessons to real world situations, that give opportunity to integrate values and strategies to create meaningful learning experience.

The teaching - learning process mandates two engaged and dedicated classroom participants, the teacher and the learner. Vuzo (2010) conveyed, "In order to create conceptual and realistic experiences that shape the substance and type of the target subject, teachers and students collaborate together through interactions." Conversely, this condition is not commonly true in all subjects in junior or senior high schools, because the lecture method governs the process resulting to idle learning "(p.18). Once Cummings (2002) said, "Hearing is forgetting, seeing is remembering, and doing is learning."

Table 12 depicts the factors on the teachers' communication skill that affect the Grade 9 students' English academic performance.

The table shows the factors with reference to the communication skills of the teachers. Responding clearly to questions is ranked first with 3.76 as its mean value and using good command of the content ranks the last with 3.69 mean value. In order to teach students how to become critical and logical in contact through the use of English, teachers need to be competent enough to use the language efficiently.

Table 13 presents the factors of the teachers' personality or attitude which affect the Grade 9 students' English academic performance.

Table 13 shows the ranking factors of the personality or attitude of teachers which impact the English

Table 13. Factors of Teachers' Personality Affecting Students' English Performance

Items	Mean	Rank
My English teacher maintains an objective and respectful position with us.	3.76	1
Home My English teacher fosters research and a critical spirit in us	3.70	2

Table 14. Factors of Teacher's Preparation Affecting Students English Performance

Items	Mean	Rank
My English teacher informs or orients us of the competencies we are expected to acquire.	3.60	1
My English teacher provides initial and final overviews of the session and/or subject in class.	3.60	1
My English teacher establishes the curriculum with a certain amount of flexibility for a better class dynamic.	3.60	1
My English teacher designs the content and develops the course to promote the acquisition of professional competencies.	3.57	2
My English teacher designs and relates the classroom content to real world situation.	3.50	3
My English teacher interweaves the content of the subject matter with other courses.	3.42	4

academic performance of the students. Maintaining a good rapport and respectful position with students (Mean=3.76) is higher than fostering research and critical spirit with students (Mean=3.70).

The entire personality of a teacher is a reflection of students' thinking. As Palm Leo said "You can't train children to act better by making them feel bad. When students feel better, they act better." The example reflects the belief that students would learn more if teachers inspired them to learn. When students love their teacher, chances are they learn more from them. Their teaching style motivates students to learn. Research shows clearly that qualities of teachers are among the factors which lead to poor performance among students (Harmer, 2003; Mosh, 2004). In particular, longitudinal tests have demonstrated that if early childhood years do not have the proper basis for learning, then no new intervention at a later stage would be necessary to attain the maximum potential of the child (Quist, 2000).

Table 14 reveals the factors concerning teacher preparation affecting the English academic performance of Grade 9 students during the first and second quarter of Academic Year 2019-2020.

Table 14 presents the outcome for the factors relating to teacher preparation. As per the ranking of all factors, orientation on the competencies, giving overviews of the meetings and establishing the curriculum (Mean=3.60) were on the top while interweaving the content of the subject comes last in the ranking (Mean=3.42).

Cummings observed that learning in which learners are engaged gives rise to far more productive participation. In other words, English success banks on

teachers' instructional repertoire. Quist (2000) emphasized that effective language training and quality of learning are directly linked to educators' expertise, content understanding and appropriate use of strategies fit to students' needs and abilities.

Proceedings in the English Classroom

To identify the proceedings of the teaching-learning process inside the classroom, an interview was conducted to the Grade 9 English teacher. Boyce and Neale (2006) described interview as a method that includes performing detailed discussions with few participants in order to examine their views on a given concept, program or circumstance. It includes posing open-ended questions in order to converse with respondents.

The method aimed to seek the opinions and the experiences of the teacher in his teaching of the subject. In this research, the semi-structured interview was utilized and was conducted via google meet. The interviewer asked six questions about the conduct of teaching in the classroom. During the interview, supplementary questions were also asked to explain and/or broaden the points further. The questions were about the interviewee's role as a teacher, the challenges experienced as an English teacher, ways on maximizing student learning and assessment, ways on improving the quality of assessment for written works, performance tasks and quarterly assessments, the factors that impact students' English performance and goals for good student outcomes.

Teacher's Role

When the teacher was interviewed about his position as a teacher, the following comments were made.

"...I am a teacher who facilitates the learning of the students in preparing whatever fundamental subjects or courses that they are going through English 9 that's being a facilitator, to implement all the strategies. Also, I am a curriculum designer, I design a specific and contextual curriculum based on the data that is presented to me by the psychometrician and of course with the experiences that we have had the previous years. We are going to incorporate the curriculum that we are making. As a designer, we have to really be adept with the things that our students would want to learn and of course, the objectives that are set by the Department of Education. The last is the role being an assessor. This is giving feedback such as in summative and formative assessments to the Grade 9 students especially in literature and English."

The teacher emphasized that in the classroom, instructors have a crucial duty to play in students' lives. The three major roles mentioned were as a facilitator, as a curriculum designer and as an assessor. As a facilitator, effective teaching strategies were recommended to cater the different student learning styles and intelligences. As a designer, data from the psychometrician and the standards set by the Department of Education were needed to be considered. This would also be completed with the university's Vision and Mission. Acting as an assessor, the teacher provides suggestions, corrects and grades the level of difficulty within a task. This is necessary as students expect strong signals of their degree of progress from teachers and whether they are doing it right or not. Thereupon, learners should have a good understanding of the requirements for progress at each point of the task.

Challenges Encountered as an English Teacher

At this point, the teacher was asked about the major challenges he encountered in teaching English to Grade 9 students. The following was his answer.

"...One challenge that I had encountered over the years is the fact that we cannot relate sometimes to the book and the culture that we are reading because it's American in a way. For the standard American English, there are things or symbols in there that may not be parallel with the things we have here in the Philippines but I that is one challenge that we teachers in English 9 would focus on especially that in designing our own strategies because that's one way to compare and contrast...The schema theory of learning, we cannot give students the things that they do not know about. As teachers, we are not really immersed to the cultural concept of the Americans and the English people."

The challenge cited by the teacher was more on understanding other cultures that are related to understanding the literary history of the places. According to the teacher, it was challenging to hone cultural literacy because teachers were not immersed with the cultural operations of the Americans and the English people as the Grade 9 English curriculum highlights the Anglo-American Literature. Nevertheless, with books and internet, teachers

were still able to cope with it. The teacher suggested that in order to keep up with the educational challenge of the time, teachers needed to re-educate, re-calibrate, re-tool and refine ways of teaching.

Maximizing English Learning in the Classroom

To identify the proceedings and the actual experiences in the classroom, the teacher was asked about the ways on how he maximized the learning of English in his classes. The answer to the question was the following.

"You have to let them do cooperative learning... It is a very complex form of academic content that the students have to experience in every class especially English. Because the discussion in there is authentic, I mean it's real and you can inject something that may lead to values integration and to real life situation or current events in your discussion in cooperative learning strategy."

The instructor stressed the importance of cooperative learning because it offers opportunities for the use of language in contexts of life. By being not only a provider of instructional materials, but also a master curator of learning materials, teachers should design efficient and productive learning experiences for the continuous engagement of students. The teaching methods that teachers use will have a huge influence on students' success in English. Instructional methods should be selected carefully to meet the learners' needs.

Learning and Assessment in the New Normal

Each teacher knows the value of preparing appropriate learning and assessment tools. In this section, the teacher was asked about what he considered in designing learning and assessment in the new normal. The following was his answer.

"We consider the learning cycle, wherein we are going to design our contextualized curriculum, we are going to strategize the way that the students would be learning digitally. And we are going to assess this with reasoning skills. For what we reason? We would be managing our own, we would be relearning as well as a teacher..."

The faculty believed that having a program that is contextualized to the learners' interests and the ways they might learn better is very essential. The teacher highlighted the importance of evaluating the reasoning capability of the students.

Educators need to design assessments and learn about their goals and expectations. Teachers need to think that in times of remote study, constant feedbacking on student's learning will help them focus on their strengths. Also by leveraging online learning tools on subjects and making learning playlists or menus, students will be primed for an enjoyable learning process.

V. Ways to Improve Written Works, Quarterly Assessments and Performance Tasks

Assessment is a very important part in student's learning. It is used to educate and strengthen classroom activities and promote learning outcomes. In this part, the teacher was asked about the ways on how the summative assessment components could be improved. The following was his reply.

"... In the periodical exams, I can say that we have to do away with so much knowledge questions and comprehension questions because we can do that in our scaffolded assessment all throughout the quarter. In the periodical exams, we have to focus on the reasoning skills, say, one essay test could be a summative test for all the quarters in English if that's possible.

I think our written work factor in school is already fine. It's good already. With the percentage, with the kind of activities that we give especially the formal themes and formative quizzes, it's for me the most appropriate written work combination.

For performance tasks...we have to strengthen the use of rubrics especially the analytic rubric because that's one way to assess, and gauge the students' competencies all throughout the unit or quarter. With the way, how we present the Performance Task in the school especially for English, I am very glad that we are doing very good with that. The activities are varied, the assessment types are authentic and the scenarios really tapped with the real life situations and it can be very useful for the students when the time comes that they would be using them."

The teacher emphasized that higher order thinking questions must be formulated more instead of knowledge and comprehension questions. This is due to the fact that HOTS provides sound reasoning and promotes long term learning. On the other hand, if test items are mainly forms of information and comprehension, only short-term learning might be measured. According to the teacher, the written work component was assessed correctly since writing activities and formative assessments were also utilized as practice or drill towards learning the English language. For performance tasks, the use of rubrics was stressed out to assess the student's performance effectively. When it comes to how performance tasks were assessed, the Grade 9 teachers gave varied, authentic and meaningful activities.

VI. Factors that Impact Students' English Performance

Learning English entails several factors that can pose impact on the method of learning. The factors were believed to have a close relationship with the English performance of students. To determine these elements, the teacher was asked about the most influential factors that affect students' English academic performance. This was his reaction.

"First, the curriculum that we plan in the first part of the year or during Inset. The core of it all is coming from the teacher, coming from the power competencies or whatever curriculum guide that we follow...We are going to merge them together in order to create a power competency... Second is teacher's expertise. After the curriculum, you will have to do

all things or our roles in order for the curriculum to be realized. Third is assessments and feedback. That's very important. I've learned from my lessons in my master's class, about the second language acquisition negative feedback where we are going to create the feedback in a manner that the students would try to redefine his /her response in a very immediate manner..."

A well-crafted program acts as a guide to make sure academic offerings are on the right track. In the interview, the teacher pointed out that the curriculum is the primary factor that contributes to the learning of the students. Second is the teacher's expertise. Expertise in teaching involves having a repertoire of ways at one's disposal to manage teaching, and then learning how to select and apply what is suitable from the repertoire. Teaching expertise may refer to instructional, management, planning and motivational skills which are very crucial to teaching. Third most influential factor is assessment and feedback. These are integral aspects of the evaluation process for they have huge influence on student learning and have been one of the most effective moderators to promote achievement.

CONCLUSIONS

The English academic performance of Grade 9 students in USC-NC is described as Above Average in the three summative assessment components namely; written work, performance task, and quarterly assessment. Through analysis, students' English performance was greatly influenced on the ways how the teachers treat them and deliver the lessons.

This study concluded that good English communication ability and commendable personality among teachers were the greatest indicators affecting the quality of students' performances. Assessment was the next significant predictor for students' performance. Learners valued what were evaluated and how these assessments were conducted. Teachers need to carefully review the assessment process to allow both students and parents learn how standards are being realized. The result of this study suggests that it is important to understand how summative assessment components are to be measured and recorded in the light of the benchmarks and standards of the school. The third feature that inclined students' academic success is teaching strategies and techniques. The constant challenge that language teachers face is how to actively involve their learners in a variety of activities in the classroom. There is no best strategy to be used in class. In the same way, teachers' creativity and resourcefulness to apply the approaches which fit to the students' learning styles are much needed.

The key aspect for the teachers to determine the top factors is to consider them in designing a curriculum and eventually teach their students effectively so that they can display high quality results in their academics. To accomplish this goal, educators must recognize the value of quality teaching so as to produce quality learning. Teachers need to better reflect on the factors which assist and deter the educational development of the child. Comprehensive

understanding of the elements is important. However, it takes ample means and long periods for instructors to first define all these variables and then schedule the teaching activities and techniques in the classroom. It is for this purpose that the curriculum map is developed so that teachers can create an instructional plan to ensure that learners have the opportunity to achieve their full learning and performance potential.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Students are expected to involve in the activities offered by the teachers. These planned activities were found to optimize their learning ability. When engaged in relevant, exciting, and meaningful activities, students let down their psychological defenses, thus lowering the anxiety level in the classroom.

English teachers are highly encouraged to review, implement, evaluate and design the curriculum map. A well-prepared curriculum map was found to enrich instruction delivery among teachers and augment learning potentials among students. When planned and designed carefully, it becomes more student-centered rather than teacher-centered and the emphasis is more on learning from an activity rather than on the activity itself. Nonetheless, the needs of the students must always be at the forefront of their thinking. This way, teachers are empowered to improve or modify their work.

School administrators must constantly look to review, improve, and refine ways for quality supervision on teaching and learning. Now is the time to develop and use judiciously the curriculum map available to educators. Administrators should constantly supervise the teaching-learning process and the teachers implement, modify, or design the curriculum map appropriate in their teaching context. In doing so, they will be able to reach and teach diverse learners and provide for their holistic performance with meaningful, complex tasks in response to the increasingly challenging environments.

It is suggested that future research on the alignment and implementation of curriculum maps across the subjects and within the grade level be made to help establish educational equity and improve overall student achievement. A study on teacher-made evaluation activities and instruments is also recommended.

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