

# Language Program Learning Skills Assessment of Junior Highschool Students

ELOISA C. GABRIEL, MAEd

College of Education, Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology

San Isidro Campus, San Isidro, Nueva Ecija, Philippines

[eloisacastillogabriel@gmail.com](mailto:eloisacastillogabriel@gmail.com)

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**Abstract** -This study aimed to determine the students' English language class program assessment based on developing their skills through their learning experiences. The study's participants were fifty-five junior high school students enrolled at Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology during the SY 2017-2018. A modified survey questionnaire based on Peacock's (2009) evaluation model was utilized in the study, applying the 4-point Likert scale. The data analysis used Frequencies, Percentages, and Weighted Mean. The study's findings revealed that respondents agreed that developing their macro skills and vocabulary is given importance. Also, grammar and fluency development is prioritized, as respondents agreed. Students experience using English in real-life situations. However, when it comes to developing their speaking and writing skills, students disagree that they did not improve in these areas. They also disagreed that they have difficulty learning English, particularly new vocabulary. It was concluded that the English program adheres to K-12 Curriculum Guide in English.

**Key Words:**English Language Class, Student's Assessment, Learning Skills, and Language Program.

## Introduction

English is one of the most commonly spoken languages in the world. It is the one used to interact with people from different countries. Most

countries, including the Philippines, use it as a second language. English was chosen as the primary language of the state, media, and business and a medium of instruction (McFarland, 2008). Effective oral and written communication is required for language competency. It is one of the 21st-century skills that students should learn. In 2006, the Department of Education mandated that English be used as the primary medium of instruction in all public and private secondary schools, including those designated as laboratory or experimental schools and vocational/technical institutions. The percentage of time provided for learning areas taught in English as the fundamental medium of instruction must not be less than 70% of the total time allotted for all learning areas across all year levels ( DepEd Order no. 36, S. 2006). However, because they are not native English speakers, most students fail to learn the language, affecting their performance in other academic fields. Teachers should create effective techniques to inspire students to focus on their learning and apply it in their daily lives, especially when expressing themselves. Teachers are expected to be fluent in English to help their students improve their communication skills. Teachers are encouraged to improve their language skills because they cannot teach what they do not know. Because of the English language's increasing expansion, using English effectively is essential for academic success (Hashemi, 2011).

Furthermore, the language curriculum program established by the curriculum planning team and how they define their aims and objectives determine student performance in language learning. In the same way, effective instruction can be measured by students' performance in using the second language. Teachers serve as the implementer of the established program, applying appropriate techniques and evaluation tools to get the desired outcomes from the students. Curriculum design is a sort of writing activity, and as such, it can be analyzed as a process. Curriculum design can use the standard sub-processes of the writing process (gathering ideas, organizing ideas, thoughts to text, reviewing, and editing). Nonetheless, a separate set of features makes drawing on current curriculum design theory and practice more accessible. The outer circles (principles, environment, and needs) are concerned with practical and theoretical issues that will substantially impact the actual course production process. There are various factors to consider when creating a course. These include the learners' present knowledge and gaps, the available resources, such as time, the teachers' skills, the curriculum designer's strengths, and limitations, and teaching and learning philosophies (Macalister, 2010). The development of students' skills determines the quality of teaching and language programs.

**Objectives of the Study**

This study aims to determine the students' assessment of their English language skills development based on their learning experiences in their English class.

**Methods**

The researcher employed the descriptive method to determine the students' assessment of their English language skills development. A

descriptive method focuses on the present situation ( what is ) and provides essential knowledge about objects and persons' nature ( Calmorin, 2016). Interviews and survey questionnaires were employed to determine the students' assessment of their skills based on their learning experiences in their English class for the SY 2017-2018. A modified survey questionnaire based on Peacock's (2009) evaluation model was utilized in the study, applying the 4-point Likert scale. The participants of this study were fifty-five junior high school students enrolled at Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, San Isidro Campus (NEUST-SIC). The data analysis used Frequencies, Percentages, and Weighted Mean.

**Results and Discussion**

Table 1

*Summary of the Mean Scores of the Respondents' Assessment of their English Language Program in terms of Their Skills Development*

Questions
The development of macro-skills is prioritized.
Grammar and fluency development is prioritized..
There is vocabulary enrichment in every reading activity.
I experience to use English in real life scenario
My speaking skills is not developed
My writing skills did not improved
I have difficulty in learning new words.
The English language is difficulty to learn.

**Legend:**

Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1.00 - 1.75	Strongly Disagree
1.76 - 2.50	Disagree
2.60 - 3.25	Agree
3.26 – 4.00	Strongly Agree

The above table summarizes the mean scores of the respondents' assessment of their

English Language Program in terms of their skills development. The respondents agreed that their macro skills are developed because they are given priority (mean 3.04). They also agreed that grammar and fluency development is prioritized (mean 3.25), as well as vocabulary enrichment (mean 3.11), and experience using language in a real-life situation (mean 3.24). These findings imply that teachers are guided by the well-designed English program and apply a communicative learning approach to develop the English language competence of the students, particularly the macro skills. The English program adheres to the Guiding Principles for English Language Arts and Literacy Programs. Guiding principle 1 states that students should receive explicit instruction in skills, including phonics and decoding. Direct skill instruction is essential in narrowing opportunity gaps. Guiding principle 2 discusses that students need to develop a rich academic vocabulary and broad background knowledge to become successful readers. Guiding Principle 6 states that students should have frequent opportunities to discuss and write about their readings to develop critical thinking skills and demonstrate understanding (English Language Arts and Literacy, 2017).

On the other hand, when students were asked if their speaking and writing skills did not improve, most of them disagreed with a mean of 2.05 and 2.07, respectively. They also disagreed that English is difficult to learn (mean 2.41). These imply that students are being motivated in their English class to learn and develop their communication skills using English both in written and oral. Teachers also provide activities to develop students' vocabulary to make the English language fun and enjoyable. Learners need quality instruction, input, interaction, and opportunities for meaningful output to make progress and maintain motivation for language learning. A good teacher, then, must tap into the sources of intrinsic motivation and find ways to connect them with

external motivational factors that can be brought to a classroom setting. This is especially significant when English is not seen as important to the student's immediate needs, other than to pass exams. Because learners have different purposes for studying a language, it is important for instructors to identify students' goals and needs and develop proper motivational strategies. Students should understand why they need to make an effort, how long they must sustain an activity, how hard they should pursue it, and how motivated they feel toward their pursuits (TESOL, 2008).

## Conclusion

Based on the study's findings, the English language curriculum program adheres to the set goals and standards of Guiding Principles for English Language Arts and Literacy Programs. Further, students' skills are developed through a communicative learning approach and help learners learn English easily.

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