



# Identifying Gaps between DepEd's Assessment Reform and CHED's Teacher Preparation Program

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**Abstract:** Classroom assessment literacy of teachers is very important in Philippine education because only teachers assess and grade their students as there are no national or division or regional assessment that will have an impact on students' grades. In this study assessment literacy is defined as the ability to implement the national classroom assessment reforms of the Department of Education. This paper intends to present the gap analysis between the expected assessment literacy of teachers by DepEd and the assessment education of of pre-service English teachers based on CHED's proposed BS English Language Education Curriculum. This study analyzed DepEd Order 8, s. 2015, DepEd Order 6, s. 2016, Grade 7-12 English Curriculum, and CHED's BS English Language Education Curriculum for 2018. It also analyzed sample syllabi of subjects on assessment. The results showed some gaps in the expected assessment literacy of English teachers based on DepEd's policy and the program outcomes in CHED's teacher preparation as well as the learning outcomes in assessment subjects. Recommendations for additional program outcomes and learning outcomes for BS English Language Education for 2018 are presented.

**Key Words:** assessment literacy; DepEd; CHED; K to 12; OBE.

## 1. BACKGROUND

### *1.1 Introduction*

There is an increasing interest in evaluating teacher preparation programs because of several reasons. First, there are major curricular and assessment reforms in their country, and these future teachers need training to implement them. Second, there is an increasing responsibility given to classroom teachers to assess and to grade their students. Their judgement will affect student learning, their future, and their motivation to learn. Third, in

the Philippine context, education has an economic value as it aims to contribute to the ASEAN Economic Community as well to the country's growth as a developing nation. Lastly, English teachers will play a critical role because English is the medium of instruction of key subjects such as Science and Math in basic education and in most subjects in higher education. English proficiency is a ticket to many Filipinos who work abroad (Marcelo, 2010) and who work in call centers (Friginal, 2007). English proficiency is also the competitive advantage of Filipinos (Hernandez, 2017)



who will compete with other ASEANs. There were several studies evaluating teacher preparation programs and assessment literacy (Levy-Vered & Nasser-Abu Alhija, 2015; McGee & Colby, 2014; DeLuca & Klinger, 2010; Volante & Fazio, 2007); however, most of these were conducted in their own contexts. The present study aims to contribute to the growing body of literature on teacher preparation by minding the gaps between expected assessment literacy of classroom teachers and the assessment education of future English teachers. Specifically, it intends to answer the following questions:

1. How does the proposed BS ELE curriculum intend to develop pre-service English teachers' assessment literacy as shown in the
  - a. nature of the field of study?
  - b. program outcomes?
  - c. curriculum map?
  - d. assessmentcourse descriptions?
2. How do sample assessment syllabi support DepEd's assessment literacy expectations?

### *1.2 Reforms in Philippine Education*

The Philippine education system has been implementing curriculum and assessment reforms in basic and in higher education in order to develop citizens who are globally competitive and because of the ASEAN 2015. In basic education, major curriculum and assessment reforms started in 2012 with DepEd Order 31 entitled, "Policy Guidelines on the Implementation of Grades 1 to 10 of the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) Effective School Year 2012-2013 and with DedEd Order 73 entitled "Guidelines on the Assessment and Rating of Learning Outcomes under the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum." These were followed by a more comprehensive classroom assessment reform policy entitled "DO 8, s. 2015 - Policy Guidelines on Classroom Assessment for the K to 12 Basic Education Program."

In higher education, a major reform was implemented by CHED (Commission on higher Education) in 2012 entitled "Policy Standard to Enhance Quality Assurance in Philippine Higher Education Through an Outcomes-based and Typology-based Quality Assurance (QA)." In addition, it published the "Handbook on Typology, Outcomes-Based Education, and Institutional Sustainability Assessment" to clarify key terms and to help higher education institutions to anchor their programs on OBE (Outcomes-based Education). The most recent reform is CHED's revision of the Bachelor of Science in Education major in English Curriculum (2004) to Bachelor of Secondary English Language Education (BS ELE draft 2016).

### *1.3 Assessment Literacy in Basic Education*

In this study, assessment literacy in basic education is based on DepEd Order 8 s. 2015 entitled "Policy Guidelines on Classroom Assessment for the K to12 Basic Education Program" and DepEd Order 60 s.2015 "Provision of the DepEd Electronic Class Record Template." The first policy document explains the theoretical underpinnings of classroom assessment, defines classroom assessment and what to assess , and explains the grading system. On the other hand, the second document provides the guidelines in using the Excel template in encoding summative assessment scores and computing the final grade. In a nutshell, this paper defines assessment literacy of teachers as the ability to implement the national classroom assessment policy by 1) anchoring their assessment on the theoretical foundations classroom assessment of DepEd; 2) preparing assessment tasks aligned with the content standards, performance standards of the national English



curriculum: 3) conducting balanced assessment (assessment for, of, and as learning); and 4) grading and reporting summative assessment based on the three categories in the DepEd policy documents using the DepEd e-grading template: written works, performance tasks, and quarterly assessment.

#### 1.4 Identifying gaps through alignment analysis

In this study, the term “gap” refers to the misalignment between the expected classroom assessment literacy of teachers and the program outcomes of the proposed BS ELE as well as the learning outcomes of assessment courses in the curriculum. Alignment is critical because it spells quality (CHED, 2014).

## 2. METHODOLOGY

This qualitative study analyzed DepEd Order 2, 2015 and DepEd Order 60 s. 2015 in order to define classroom assessment literacy. In addition, in order to identify the gaps between DepEd’s expectations and teacher preparation, the proposed BS ELE Curriculum was analyzed beginning with the program outcomes, the curriculum map, and the course description of each assessment course. In addition, three syllabi from three assessment courses from a private institution were analyzed to identify gaps between DepEd’s classroom assessment literacy expectations and the learning outcomes in the syllabi.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section is divided into two parts based on the research questions. The first part answers the first research question:

1. How does the proposed BS ELE curriculum intend to develop pre-service

English teachers’ assessment literacy as shown in the

- a. nature of the field of study?
- b. program outcomes?
- c. curriculum map?
- d. assessment course descriptions?

The analysis showed that the proposed BS ELE Curriculum does not specify the development of assessment literacy in the nature of the field of study. The text is shown below:

The BS ELE program is an undergraduate teacher education program that equips learners with adequate and relevant competencies in the areas of linguistics, language education, and literature that are necessary in managing the learning and teaching of English as a second language in a multilingual context (CHED, 2016, p. 3).

It can be assumed that assessment is embedded in teaching; however, assessment literacy research (DeLuca & Klinger, 2010; Fulcher, 2012) emphasizes the need to articulate this in pre-service programs. A further analysis of the program outcomes showed that there were eight outcomes that focused on “knowledge of language learning, linguistics, and literary theories,” teaching innovation, use of technology, a background on extensive reading, effective communication, among others. However, assessment seems to be in the backseat at it is not even mentioned in this list. In addition, a closer look at the performance indicators also showed the absence of assessment literacy evidence as shown in the examples below:

\*Prepares a comprehensive classroom interaction analysis report



- \*Designs learning plans following expectations of the curricula for Grades 7-12

- \*Facilitates one independent and one supervised teaching demonstration (CHED, 2016).

If assessment literacy is not included in the program outcomes and in the list of performance indicators, then teacher education institutions will not expect their graduates to demonstrate this ability as part of their exit requirements.

On the other hand, compared to the latest curriculum of BSE English where there are three assessment courses, the BSE ELE has five. Two PCK (Professional Content Knowledge) such as Assessment of Learning 1 and 2 and three major courses that embed assessment in teaching:

- \*Teaching and Assessment of Literature
- \*Teaching and Assessment of the Macro skills
- \*Teaching and Assessment of Grammar (CHED, 2016).

This seems to be a positive development; however, a close reading of the course description of these assessment subjects showed some gaps in the development of assessment literacy of future English teachers who will implement the national assessment reform policy. First, both the PCK courses did not include Grade 7 to 12 curriculum nor the assessment of the content standards in the curriculum. Assessment of Learning is course description is shown below:

This is a 3-unit course that focuses on the principles, development and utilization of conventional assessment tools to improve the teaching- learning process. It emphasizes on the use of testing for measuring knowledge, comprehension and other thinking skills. It allows students to go through the standard steps in test constitution for quality assessment (CHED, 2016).

Second, the course description of the Teaching and

Assessment of the Macro skills focuses solely on reading as shown below:

Explores the nature of reading and the theoretical bases, principles, and methods and strategies in teaching and assessing reading. It aims to familiarize students with various strategies for pre-reading, during reading, and post reading (CHED, 2016).

Lastly, the course descriptions of these assessment courses do not include the DepEd grading system.

The second part of this section analyzed sample syllabi for Assessment of Learning 1, Assessment of Learning 2, and Language and Literature Assessment. The analysis showed that all of these courses did not include in the course description, learning outcomes, and even in references the national classroom assessment reform policy. In addition, the first two subjects were taught by teachers who did not belong to the English Department. Assessment literacy is discipline-specific, so pre-service teachers need to be trained in how to assess the content standards as well as the different learning outcomes in the seven to eight domains in the Grade 7-10 English curriculum. Taylor (2009) points out that "training for assessment literacy entails an appropriate balance of technical know-how, practical skills, theoretical knowledge, and understanding of principles, but all firmly contextualized within a sound understanding of the role and function of assessment within education and society" (p. 27).

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

This study examined the gaps between DepEd's expected classroom assessment literacy of English teachers and the proposed BS ELE curriculum. The results showed some gaps such as the absence of





assessment literacy in the nature of the field, in the program outcomes, and in performance indicators. In addition, the course descriptions of the two PCK assessment courses and of the three assessment-embedded courses seem to exclude the key principles in the DepEd assessment reform policy. This analysis is an exploratory study that can be extended by analyzing assessment syllabi from other teacher education institutions and by interviewing assessment teachers to find out their awareness of DepEd's assessment reform policies. It is said that students can escape poor teaching, but they cannot escape poor assessment (Boud, 1995). Classroom assessment can deepen student learning and can improve student motivation (Black & Wiliam, 2010; Guskey, 2003), so it is imperative that pre-service teachers should be trained on how to use assessment to drive learning and to increase student achievement.

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