



The Learners' View on Interdisciplinary Approach in Teaching Purposive Communication

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Abstract: In pursuant to the curriculum revamp in the higher education brought about by the K to 12 Curriculum, the course, Purposive Communication, was created. Moreover, in the adamant desire to maximize the goal of this course, which is to allow the students to become effective communicators in the different aspects of communication, the Interdisciplinary Approach has been utilized by some Higher Education institutions since it lends itself well with the terminal objectives of Purposive Communication. In line with this, the current study explores the students' views on how the Interdisciplinary Approach is utilized in the Purposive Communication course. Hence, this study attempts to answer the following questions: 1) Do the students find the Purposive Communication course useful in terms of the inclusion of the Interdisciplinary Approach? 2) Which part of the Interdisciplinary Approach in the Purposive Communication activities do they find meaningful? and 2a) Which activities do the students find the most important and least important? This study is guided by the Social Constructivist Theory, and it is a quantitative study that employed Exploratory Factor Analysis and was further confirmed by Kaiser Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to check the validity of the results. Results showed that the use of the Interdisciplinary Approach in Purposive Communication is deemed effective by the students, especially in the area of honing their writing skills where they feel the Interdisciplinary Approach was best observed.

Key Words: Interdisciplinary Approach; language teaching, education

1. INTRODUCTION

With the many attempts to improve the quality of instructions in the English subject, one current approach is the use of an interdisciplinary approach. It is an approach that connects two (or more) disciplines in the discussion or the accomplishment of

the given task (Brand & Triplett, 2012). Furthermore, this allows the integration of knowledge and modes of thinking to produce a cognitive advancement; thus, synthesis or integration takes place (Golding, 2009).

It is interesting to note, however, that the interdisciplinary approach is deemed as a complex idea. According to Carr, Loucks, and Blöschl (2018),



the interaction or integration of the disciplines may vary from "simple communication of ideas to the mutual integration of organizing concepts, methodology, procedures, epistemology, terminology, data, and organization of research and education in a fairly large field" (p. 35).

1.1 Interdisciplinary in the Higher Education

Given the nature of the interdisciplinary approach, it is widely used in higher education, especially on scholarly outputs such as essays, reports, critique, or position paper is the standard academic requirements that are written and submitted by the students in their different courses (Tang & Werner, 2017). Also, it is common for research-related outputs to stem from any real-world issue where students attempt to provide probable solutions or analyze the existing solutions to the problems (Carr, Loucks, & Blöschl, 2018). The rhetorical structure of these outputs requires the integration of the students' knowledge and understanding from different disciplines in order to address the challenges that any society faces (Carayol & Ngyuen Thi, 2005 as cited in Carr, Loucks, & Blöschl, 2018).

Aside from the various disciplines involved in the output, collaboration is another essential nature of the interdisciplinary approach. The term, collaboration, may pertain to different research fields (Blöschl et al., 2012 as cited in Carr, Loucks, & Blöschl, 2018) or a tie in between the academe and society. Moreover, collaboration is not only enclosed in the realms of discussion but also the aspect of concept organization, methodology crafting, data gathering, and others. (Carr, Loucks, & Blöschl, 2018). Thus, merging the content knowledge and linguistic knowledge that result in a research-based critical discussion, whether in oral or written form.

The Research Gap

While the literature presents the strengths of Interdisciplinary Approach from both the teachers'

and students' perspectives and the challenges that both are confronted within using the said approach, it seems that no known study attempts to explore the students' Interdisciplinary Approach experience using a quantitative instrument that is attempting to measure the interdisciplinary experience of students together with their communicative competence. Likewise, no known study explores the interdisciplinary approach of Filipino college students in the new college course, Purposive Communication.

1.2 Research Questions

The purpose of this investigation is to explore the Purposive Communication Students' view on the use of an Interdisciplinary Approach in their classes. Below are the questions that this study intends to address:

1. Do the students find the Purposive Communication course effective in terms of the inclusion of the Interdisciplinary Approach?
2. Which part of the Interdisciplinary Approach in Purposive Communication activities do they find meaningful?
 - a. Which activities do the students find the most important and least important?

3. SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS

The Interdisciplinary Approach has slowly gained popularity among curriculum developers and educators. It is the merging of various disciplines during the discussion and the completion of the learning assessments in a course. One of the institutions that espouse this approach is De La Salle University. The current study aimed at understanding the students' views on the inclusion of the interdisciplinary approach. To be more specific, the study sought to answer the following questions: (1) Do the students find the Purposive Communication course useful in terms of the inclusion of the Interdisciplinary Approach? (2) Which part of the Interdisciplinary Approach in the Purposive Communication activities do they find meaningful? and (2a) Which activities do the students find the most important and least important? Further, this study is



informed by the Social Constructivist Theory, employed Exploratory Factor Analysis, and was further confirmed by Kaiser Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity in order to check the validity of the results. Seventy-four (74) students of the Purposive Communication course answered the researcher-made survey questionnaire, which was adopted from the descriptions of a curriculum that uses an Interdisciplinary Approach.

The survey showed that the EFA resulted in creating two factors, which summed up the entire experience of the learners about the Interdisciplinary Approach and their writing experience. Hence, it implies that the course concerning its Interdisciplinary Approach is effective from the students in the areas of the Interdisciplinary Approach and writing. In line with the next research question, all tasks that are related to the writing of the problem-solution essay, panel discussion, and infographic were all deemed as meaningful among students. For the students' the most important tasks were related to the creation of the major course requirements, whereas the least important tasks for them were those that did not help in making the major course requirements. All in all, the students find the Purposive Communication course effective in terms of its inclusion of the Interdisciplinary Approach.

of Sampling Adequacy.	0.796
Test of Square	935.942
Sphericity	

Fig. 1. KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity

4. CONCLUSIONS

This quantitative study, which delved into the perspective of the students about the inclusion of the Interdisciplinary Approach in a Purposive Communication course, revealed that Interdisciplinary Approach could be appreciated by students when carefully crafting, designing, and implementing the curriculum is observed. Albeit the adamant desire to target competence and, at the same time, the utilization of the various disciplines in the students' oral and written output, it is a reality that sometimes the students' appreciation as regards the course is still affected by their past learning experiences whether positive or otherwise.

Likewise, the findings of the study affirm the postulation of the Social Constructivist Theory that knowledge is being created by the experiences and active interaction between people and the world where they live in (Blagoeva, Karppinen, & Kairavuori, 2018). Thus, this allows the Interdisciplinary Approach to form new knowledge from the learners' data-gathering experience through bargaining, discussion, inquiry, and synthesis of the information around them that are served by the information from their selected disciplines suitable for their paper or oral discussion.

5. REFERENCES (use APA style for citations)

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