EPRA International Journal of Environmental Economics, Commerce and Educational Management
Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra0414 |ISI I.F Value: 0.815|SJIF Impact Factor (2024): 8.481 ISSN: 2348 – 814X
Volume: 11 | Issue:6 |June 2024

LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE OF GRADE SIX STUDENTS:BASIS FOR LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR INTERMEDIATE LEARNERS

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Article DOI: https://doi.org/10.36713/epra17463
DOI No: 10.36713/epra17463

ABSTRACT

This study seeks answer to the level of linguistic competence of the intermediate students. Eventually, from the findings drawn out of the study a Language Development Program will be designed and proposed. This study employed the non-experimental descriptive survey research design in investigating the research problem. It is descriptive because the data are presented in quantitative descriptions on the "Linguistic Competence of Grade Six Students: Basis for Language Development Program for Intermediate Learners. According to Good (2005), this method of research shows merely description of tasks presenting the conditions regarding the nature of the group of persons or class of events that involved procedure of analysis, classification, and measurement. It involves varied information regarding the current or present condition (Deauna, 2005). This study will be conducted in Sulop Central Elementary School. The respondents in this study are the 185 intermediate students of the research locale. The respondents will answer a researcher made assessment test on their oral and written communication skills. This study makes use of the universal sampling procedure considering the manageable number of respondents in the research locale. This study revealed that the intermediate students are struggling in their linguistic competence. This means that a development program should be developed to address their linguistic competence in order for them to be performing in English and other subject areas where English is the medium of instruction.

KEYWORDS: *linguistic competence, grade six students, basis for language development program, intermediate learners*

INTRODUCTION

Linguistic competence is a term used by speech experts and anthropologists to describe how language is defined within a community of speakers. This term applies to mastering the combination of sounds, syntax and semantics known as the grammar of a language. People with such competence have learned to utilize the grammar of their spoken language to generate an unlimited number of statements. This term is distinct from the concept of communicative competence, which determines what socially appropriate speech is.

Linguistic performance and communicative competence are concepts related to linguistic competence of learners but are applied to language as it is actually used rather than as an ideal construct. Linguistic performance is the practical application of speech with the grammatical flaws and mistakes that exist among real-world speakers. This allows speakers to understand each other despite grammatical flaws and differences in dialect. Communicative competence refers to the rules that govern the kinds of speech allowed within the cultural context. In school, these skills are not fully acquired by our learners as they manifest low performance in linguistic competence (Flevaris, 2019).

Linguistic competence is treated as a more comprehensive term for lexicalist, within the generative school of thought. They assume a modular lexicon, a set of lexical entries containing semantic, syntactic and phonological
Information deemed necessary to parse a sentence. In the generative lexicalist view this information is intimately tied up with linguistic competence. Nevertheless, their models are still in line with the mainstream generative research in

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adhering to strong innateness, modularity and autonomy of syntax. Students in the higher grades need to develop further their linguistic competence to deliver topics particularly during classroom recitation (Poll, 2020).

The core areas of knowledge and skill that children acquire in learning to understand and produce language have been usefully divided by the field of linguistics into four domains: phonology, the lexicon, morphology, and syntax. Phonology is the sound system: each language makes use of a repertoire of speech sounds, with regularities in which differences between sounds signal differences in meaning and regularities in how speech sounds can be combined to form words (Roediger III, 2019).

The lexicon is the mental repository of word forms and their associated meanings. Morphology is word structure and the regularities in forming words by combining word stems with small, meaningful word pieces such as the sounds that mark a noun as a plural or a verb as past tense. Syntax comprises the system for combining words into meaningful and well-formed sentences. Grammar is typically considered the combination of morphology and syntax, although strictly speaking the regularities in phonological systems are part of grammar as well. When children have mastered these four components (phonology, lexicon, morphology, and syntax), they are considered linguistically competent, but they must also learn to be communicatively competent, which means communicating in socially appropriate ways (Thompson-Schill, 2019).

Communicative competence includes pragmatic and sociolinguistic competence. Pragmatics is the knowledge of how to communicate effectively in order to do things with words such as to make requests, to comment, or to recount narratives. Sociolinguistics concerns the social rules of language use (Ramscar and Gitcho, 2021).

Linguistic competence constitutes knowledge of language, but that knowledge is tacit, implicit. This means that students whichever is their home language do not have conscious access to the principles and rules that govern the combination of sounds, words, and sentences; however, they do recognize when those rules and principles have been violated. This hampers their comprehension to concepts, topics and issues they encounter inside and outside the classroom (Scharff and Petri, 2019).

The linguistic competence of a human being should accordingly be identified with that individual's internalized 'program' for production and recognition. While many linguists would identify the study of this program with the study of performance rather than competence, it should be clear that this identification is mistaken since we have deliberately abstracted away from any consideration of what happens when a language user actually attempts to put the program to use. A major goal of the psychology of language is to construct a viable hypothesis as to the structure of this program (Santrock, 2022).

In the Division of Davao Del Sur particularly in Sulop Central Elementary School, Grade six students manifest low performance in linguistic competence which lead them to low performance in their oral communication skills. The researcher, being a language teacher in Sulop Central Elementary School would like to determine the linguistic skills of the respondents and eventually proposed an oral development program that would address any grey areas along this line.

This study seeks answer to the level of linguistic competence of intermediate learners. Eventually, it will come up an Oral language development program to address those who have difficulty oral and written language. Specifically, it seeks answers to the following sub-problems:

1. What is the level of linguistic competence of the intermediate learners in terms of:
1.1 Oral language communication,
1.2. Reading Skills
1.3 Written language communication?
2. From the findings drawn from this study, what language development program can be developed and proposed?

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METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed the non-experimental descriptive survey research design in investigating the research problem. It is descriptive because the data are presented in quantitative descriptions on the "Linguistic Competence of Grade Six Students: Basis for Language Development Program for Intermediate Learners. According to Good (2005), this method of research shows merely description of tasks presenting the conditions regarding the nature of the group of persons or class of events that involved procedure of analysis, classification, and measurement. It involves varied information regarding the current or present condition (Deauna, 2005).

Respondents and Sampling

This study was conducted in Sulop Central Elementary School. The respondents in this study are the 185 intermediate students of the research locale. The respondents will answer a researcher made assessment test on their oral and written communication skills. This study makes use of the universal sampling procedure considering the manageable number of respondents in the research locale.

Distribution of Respondents

Sulop Central Elementary School	No of Respondent
Aquarius	37
Aries	44
Capricorn	35
Gemini	37
Libra	32
TOTAL	185

Research Instruments

This study was utilizing the researcher developed assessment test which items and indicators are focused on the language competencies of the intermediate students. The respondents will give their responses on the items in the assessment test. To measure its validity and reliability of the test, a pilot testing was conducted in a school that is not a part of the research locale using Cron Bach alpha.

To determine the level of linguistic competence of the intermediate learners, the following continuum was used.

Interval	Scale	Level	Criteria
96 and above	5	Advanced	The student at this level exceeds the core requirements in terms of knowledge, skills and understandings and, and can transfer them automatically and flexibly through authentic performance tasks.
89 - 95	4	Proficient	The student at this level has developed the fundamental knowledge and skills and core understandings and, and can transfer them independently through authentic performance tasks
82 - 88	3	Approaching Proficiency	The student at this level has developed the fundamental knowledge and skills and core understandings and, with little guidance from the teacher and/or with some assistance from peers, can transfer these understandings through authentic performance tasks.
75 - 81	2	Developing	The student at this level possesses the minimum knowledge and skills and core understandings, but needs help throughout the performance of authentic tasks
Below 75	1	Beginning	The student at this level struggles with his/her understanding; prerequisite and fundamental knowledge and/or skills have not been acquired or developed adequately to aid understanding

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Data Gathering Procedure

At the outset of data gathering procedure, the researcher will draft a letter signed by the Dean of the Graduate School, Dr. Pablo F Busquit seeking for permission that this research study be conducted and will be sent to Dr. Lorenzo Mendoza, CESO V, the Schools Division Superintendent in the division of Davao Del Sur.

While letters seeking for permission were delivered to the DepED Schools Division Superintendent and principal concerned, the researcher constructed a questionnaire and have it validated by the experts preferably the experts of the study.

After permission has been granted that this study be conducted in Sulop Central Elementary School and after the research questionnaire has been thoroughly examined by the expert validators, the researcher was launch the questionnaire to the respondent. Responses of the respondents were submitted to the statistician for statistical computation after which the researcher was make analysis and interpretation on the data gathered.

Data Analysis

The following statistical tools was used in the analysis and interpretation the responses in this study.
Mean was used to describe the level of linguistic competence of the intermediate learners.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter displays the summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations drawn out by the researcher after the analysis and interpretation of the findings had been made.

This study seeks answer to the level of linguistic competence of the intermediate students. Eventually, from the findings drawn out of the study a Language Development Program will be designed and proposed.
This study employed the non-experimental descriptive survey research design in investigating the research problem. It is descriptive because the data are presented in quantitative descriptions on the "Linguistic Competence of Grade Six Students: Basis for Language Development Program for Intermediate Learners. According to Good (2005), this method of research shows merely description of tasks presenting the conditions regarding the nature of the group of persons or class of events that involved procedure of analysis, classification, and measurement. It involves varied information regarding the current or present condition (Deauna, 2005).

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This study revealed that the intermediate students are struggling in their linguistic competence. This means that a development program should be developed to address their linguistic competence in order for them to be performing in English and other subject areas where English is the medium of instruction.

Conclusions

Based on the collective findings on this study, the following conclusions are drawn:
The level of linguistic competence in terms of speaking skills is at Approaching Proficiency level or it indicates a strong level of proficiency. It suggests a mighty foundation of communication and the ability to express oneself effectively. It indicates a natural aptitude for language, a rich linguistic environment, of effective language instruction.

The Level of linguistic competence in terms of reading skills is the Developing level or it suggests developing reading skills, indicating a good level of comprehension and the ability to extract information from text. However further development in areas like critical analysis, inferential comprehension and nuanced understanding of complex texts could be beneficial.

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The level of linguistic competence in terms of Writing Skills is at the Developing level. It suggests a strong grasp of basic grammar and sentence structure, but the further development in areas like organization, clarity, argumentation, and effective expression could be pursued.

Individuals might learn and develop skills at different paces. Speaking might come naturally, mastering reading and writing may require more focused attention and practice. Understanding these differences is the key to personalized learning and development. By focusing on students' needs and areas of improvement, individuals can strive for greater proficiency in all language skills.

Recommendations

In the light of the findings drawn out by the researcher in this study, the following recommendations are offered:
The Department of Education should have encouraged each school to come up with a school-based initiated program that would address the linguistic competence of the learners. English is used as medium of instruction to the majority of the subject areas. Once learners are good in the language he/she is expected to perform well in the classroom.

The School Heads as an instructional leader should look into persisting academic problem and conduct action research so that data that can be generated are research-based meaning they reliable and valid. From the research finding, recommendations and policy directions can be developed to give resolution to the emerging problem.

Teachers should have the baseline data that will serve as evidences in the development of an intervention program for those who are not performing well in language subjects. They should develop materials and monitoring mechanisms in order that the intervention program will be implemented smoothly.

Barangay Officials should organize workshops and seminars focusing on language development strategies for grade six students.

Parents should play a crucial role in supporting theirs children's language development. Encourage parents to engage in activities that promote language learning at home such as reading together, having conversations, and exploring new vocabulary.

Students should have access to a variety of resources. Students who are struggling with language must find ways to attend and join some enrichment programs to cater their needs.

Future research is strongly encouraged to conduct similar study on the linguistic competence of the learners in different setting and different time.

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