

**EFFECTS OF STUDENTS' LEARNING STYLE AND TEACHERS' TEACHING
STYLE ON LINGUISTIC ABILITY OF STUDENTS IN AN
ETHNO-DIVERSED ENVIRONMENT**

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to describe the effects of the students' learning style and teachers' teaching style on the linguistic ability of students in an ethno-diversed environment. The participants were the fourth year students of Apayao State College, Conner Central National High School, Conner National High School, Benjamin Leguiab Memorial National High School in the academic year 2013- 2014 who took the National Career Assessment Examination. The third year teachers of the fourth year students who took the NCAE were also part of the participants. Data were gathered through a questionnaire. The study also made use of the 2013-2014 NCAE result to determine the students' linguistic ability in terms of verbal ability and reading comprehension. Results proved that Conner is indeed a home of diverse groups of people and most of them speak Ilocano. The result also illustrated that most of them are visual learners. The result also showed that matching of teaching style with the students' learning style is not significant. Teachers had no exact teaching style that matches various students' learning styles in an ethno-diverse environment.

Keywords: *Learning style, teachers' teaching styles, linguistic ability, ethno-diverse environment*

INTRODUCTION

Diversity is an issue being faced today in communities. People from different places migrate, settle and find a living in a common place. This could be because of affinities, job opportunities, education, economy and others.

In schools, diversity is very evident. Students bring their own ethnic backgrounds and dialects inside the classroom which teachers need to consider in planning their teaching process in order to cater the individual need of these students. Furthermore, these students also have their own learning style which creates more challenge to teachers on how to lead them to successful learning.

The municipality where the researcher is currently teaching is an example of a diverse community because its residents came from different ethnic background. The NCIP survey as of 2014 has identified fourteen ethno-linguistic groups and five non-ethno-linguistic groups in the place. Hence, students in this municipality came from different linguistic backgrounds. As they interact with one another, their linguistic diversity affects their learning of the English language, an accepted medium of instruction in the Philippines. The acquisition of the English language is then a struggle for both the students and the researcher. To teach and lead these students to learn English as their second language is difficult because of conflicting factors.

Dealing with ethnic and linguistic diversity is a challenge for teachers and the different learning styles of students could be one of the reasons why their linguistic ability is affected. Another factor could also be that teachers are employing different teaching styles.

In the study of Felder and Brent (2005), they assert that there is greater learning when teaching styles match with learning styles than when they are mismatched. Sim and Sim (1995); Melad (2007) and Bawiga (2012) on their studies on learning styles and academic performance affirmed that students' learning styles affect academic performance and also confirms that learning style is a predictor of success in different academic discipline.

Thus, this study describes the effects of the students' learning style and teachers' teaching style on the linguistic ability of students in an ethno-diverse environment.

Conceptual Framework

The structure reflected the process undertaken by the researcher in the conduct of the study.

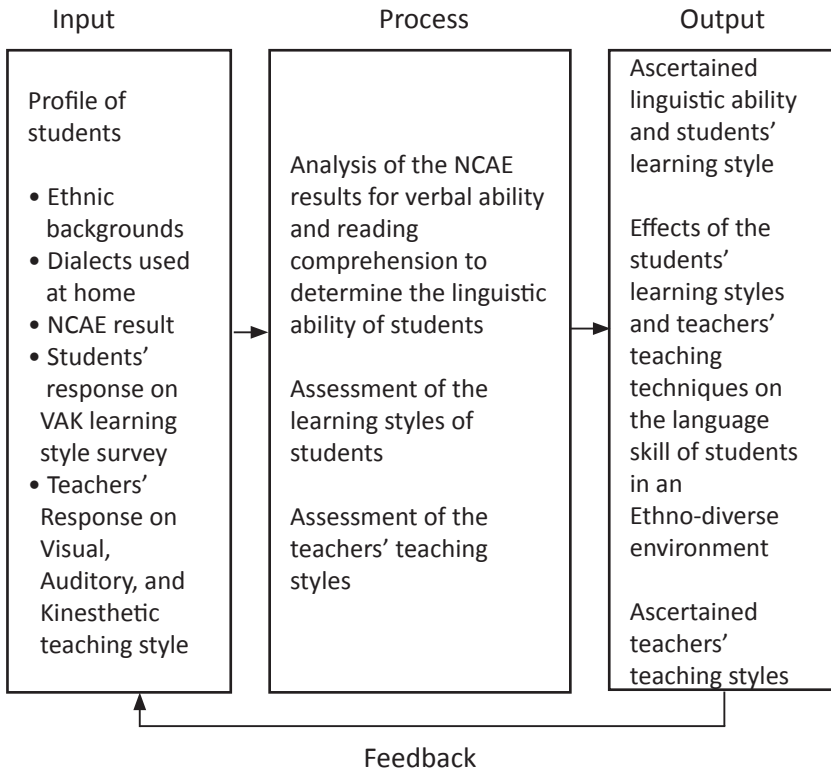


Figure 1. Research Paradigm of the Study

The paradigm illustrates the conceptual framework of the study using the Input-Process-Output model. This was based on Dunn and Dunn's learning theory. As shown, the study considered the ethnic background, dialect used, NCAE result, students' responses in the

Learning Style Inventory and teachers' responses in the Teaching Style Survey assignificant inputs in order to establish a baseline information on the students' ethno-linguistic characteristics, linguistic ability and learning styles as well as the teachers' teaching styles. Furthermore, the study would establish the effects of students' learning styles and teachers' teaching styles on students' linguistic ability in an ethno-diverse environment.

Statement of the Problem

The study aimed to describe the effects of the students' learning style and teachers' teaching style on the linguistic ability of students in an ethno-diverse environment.

Specifically, it intends to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the students in terms of the following variables:
 - 1.1. ethnic background;
 - 1.2. dialects used at home; and
 - 1.3. learning styles?
2. What is the linguistic ability of the students in the following areas:
 - 2.1. verbal ability; and
 - 2.2. reading comprehension?
3. Is there a significant difference in the verbal ability and reading comprehension of the participants when grouped into profile variables?
4. What is the profile of the third year English language teachers in terms of their teaching styles?
5. Is there a significant interaction effect in the students' learning styles and the teachers' teaching styles on the students' linguistic ability in verbal ability and reading comprehension?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Descriptive research was employed to give a general view on students' ethnicity, learning styles and teaching styles.

Participants of the Study

There were two types of participants involved in the study: teacher-participants (n=4) and student-participants (n=211). The teacher-participants were the third year English teachers of the four national high schools in Conner. These were the teachers of the student participants when they were in third year. The student-participants are the fourth year students who took the NCAE in 2013-2014.

Table 1: Participants of the Study

Participants	S1	S2	S3	S4	Total
Teacher 1	1	1	1	1	4
Students	40	70	74	27	211
Total	41	71	75	28	215

Legend:

S1 Apayao State College

S2 Conner Central National High School

S3 Conner National High School

S4 Benjamin Leguiab Memorial National High School

Instrumentation

The study made use of the 2013-2014 NCAE result to determine the students' linguistic ability concerning verbal ability and reading comprehension. The researcher had utilized the Survey questionnaires in the research, one for teacher-participants and one for student-participants. The survey questionnaire for teachers consists of 30-item teaching styles.

It includes ten visual teaching techniques, ten (10) auditory teaching styles, and ten (10) kinesthetic teaching methods. (www.education.com/references/article/ref-teaching-tips). With the use of the point value to determine the degree of times a teaching style is administered to students, often = 5 points; sometimes = 3 points; and seldom = 1 point. To identify the teaching style of the teacher, add the scores on each teaching style and the highest score is the teachers' teaching style. The survey questionnaire for the students includes the demographic data on the students' ethnic affiliation, the dialect used at home and learning style. The survey questionnaire on learners' learning style consists of 30 items, 10 for visual, 10 for auditory and 10 for kinesthetic learning style. The Learning Style Inventory Survey was retrieved on January 12, 2015, from www.odessa.edu/dept/gov't/dill/brian/courses/1100orientation/learningstyleinventory-survey.pdf. A score of 21 points or more in a learning style indicates toughness in that region. The highest of the three scores denotes the most efficient approach to information taking. The second largest score signifies the modality which increases primary force. For instance, a score of 23 in visual pattern indicates a strong visual learner.

Data Gathering Procedure

1. The researcher sought the approval of the Schools Division Superintendent.
2. Upon approval of the Schools Division Superintendent, the researcher coordinated with the principal, Head teacher and Teacher-in-Charge of each participant-school.
3. The participants of the study were identified and notified of the schedule, venue, and time for the administration of the questionnaire.
4. The researcher floated the survey questionnaires and requested for the results of the NCAE from the school participants for the Academic Year 2013-2014.
5. The researcher collected, tabulated and analyzed the results of the survey questionnaires.

Data Analysis

The following statistical instruments were utilized to evaluate the effects of the students’ learning style and teachers’ teaching style on the linguistic ability of students in an Ethno-diversed environment.

Frequency and percentage distribution was used to present the ethnic background, dialect spoken at home, linguistic ability and learning style as well as the teachers’ teaching style. One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test was used to verify the difference in the students’ learning ability when grouped according to the defined student profile variables and their teachers’ teaching style on their linguistic ability for both reading comprehension and verbal ability. The students’ verbal ability and reading comprehension level were obtained using the following tables:

Table 2: Description of the Students’ Verbal Ability level

Percentile Rank	Characteristics	Descriptive Interpretation
1-25	Commits many spelling, grammar and punctuation errors; ideas are not organized; uncooperative, off task and unproductive	Emerging
26-50	Most sentences have punctuations and are complete; main idea or topic is in the first sentence; semi-defined topic; works with a partner most of the time	Developing
51-75	Few spelling and grammar errors; good main idea or topic sentence; effectively works with a partner; participates in discussion most of the time approaching	Approaching Proficiency
76-100	Have correct spelling, grammar and punctuations; interesting, well-related main idea on topic sentence	Proficient

Table 3: Description of the Students' Reading Comprehension level

Percentile Rank	Characteristics	Descriptive Interpretation
1-25	Tells few events from story not necessarily in order; misinterprets message or theme of a text	Emerging
26-50	Summarizes few events in reading selections from text; little or no interpretation of message or theme	Developing
51-75	Summarizes many events in the reading selection in correct order including many details and vocabulary from text; interprets message or theme literally	Approaching Proficiency
76-100	Summarizes events in the reading selection in correct sequence using details and vocabulary from text; interprets messages or theme with higher-level-thinking	Proficient

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Students' Ethnic Background

The students of the four school participants are from different ethnic backgrounds; eight ethnic groups (Malaueg, Kalinga, Isneg, Ibaloi, Kankana-ey, Itawes, Applai and Bago) and two non-ethnic groups (Ilocano and Taglog), as shown by the percentages 26.07%, 22.75% and 12.80% the Malauegs, Kalingas and Ilocanos, respectively, outnumbered the rest of the groups. The first two belong to the Indigenous People (IP), while the third is a non-IP group of Conner. These are the prominent groups of people in the Municipality based on the survey of National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), Conner as of 2014. The data imply that the municipality is indeed a home of diverse groups of people. This could be because of its geographic location, aside from the different ethno-linguistic groups that inhabit the rugged terrain of the Cordillera Region of Northern Philippines known as the Ibaloy tribe from Benguet; Kankana-ey tribe from Benguet and Mt. Province; Ifugao/Kiangan tribe from Ifugao;

Kalinga tribe from Kalinga; Apayao/Isneg tribe from Apayao and the Bontoc tribe from Mt. Province (Mandirigma Research Organization, 2012). Some of its populace also came from its neighboring provinces which include the Itawes and Ibanag tribe from Cagayan; Bago tribe from Ilocos; Ilocanos from Pangasinan; Isabela and Nueva Vizcaya (Cariño, 2012).

Dialects by Students Spoken at Home

Result revealed the most spoken dialects at home by the student-participants are Ilokano, Malaueg and Kalinga with 41.23%, 26.07% and 16.59% respectively. It is important to note that these data are consistent with the result of the survey of the Cordillera Administrative (CAR), Department of Tourism, that the common language used by its populace from different tribes is Ilokano. It is also implied in the NCIP survey as of 2014 that Ilokano is the primary language used in the municipality in order for the different tribes to understand each other especially in commercial centers where the Indigenous People's native language is not commonly used.

Students' Learning Style

The dominant learning style of the students is Visual with 46.45%, followed by Kinesthetic learning style with 29.38% and Auditory with 14.22%. From the 98 students who are visuals, 10.4% are Malaueg, followed by 10.0% Kalinga and 6.6% Ilocano. These imply that these learners learn through seeing. They benefit from diagrams, charts, pictures, films, and written directions, demonstrations and other visual materials.

Students' Verbal Ability

Majority of the tribes are under the "developing" level of linguistic craft with an overall mean of 43.85. Three among the tribes fall under "Approaching Proficiency" level, and one group falls under "emerging" level. Remarkably, among the tribes, it is the Applai tribe that has the highest score in this area, which means that, they are the students who commit few errors in grammar, present good ideas or topic sentences, and

they are the group who effectively work with a partner and participate in discussions most of the time. However, none of the clusters reached the expected proficiency level. This denotes that there is a real need for schools to look into the root causes of not having achieved the desired proficiency level.

Students' Reading Comprehension

Result unveiled that the dominant level of linguistic ability of the different ethnic tribes regarding reading comprehension is “approaching proficiency” with an overall mean of 56.14. Malaueg and Itawis fall under “developing” level, and Tagalog falls under the “emerging” level. It is worthy to note that among the ethnic groups who are proficient in reading comprehension is the Applai tribe. This result shows that these groups of students can summarize events in the reading selection in correct sequence using details and vocabulary from the text. They also interpret messages on the theme with higher-order-thinking-skills (HOTS).

One-Way Analysis of Variance Test for Significant Difference in the Students' Linguistic Ability when Grouped According to their Ethnic Affiliation

ANOVA test revealed a significant difference in the participants' linguistic ability in both reading comprehension and verbal ability when grouped according to ethnic affiliation. The finding shows that the students from the Applai tribe scored highest in reading comprehension. While the Itawis, Malaueg, and Tagalog belong to the three lowest average. This result indicates that among the tribes, it is only the Applai tribe which recognizes the consistent application of principles expressed by the author. Although, it is not an exemplary performance since it is only about five scores higher than the passing score.

One-Way Analysis of Variance Test for Significant Difference in the Students' Linguistic Ability when Grouped According to Spoken Dialect

Analysis of Variance Test for significant difference both for reading comprehension and verbal ability when grouped according to their

spoken dialect had a marked difference. The participants with the highest mean percentages are the Ilocanos and Kankana-eyes, which means that, this group of students are more proficient in reading comprehension and verbal ability.

One-Way Analysis of Variance Test for Significant Difference in the Students' Linguistic Ability when Grouped According to their Learning Style

Analysis of Variance test showed no significant difference in the students' linguistic ability in both reading comprehension and verbal ability when grouped according to their learning styles.

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Teachers' Teaching Style

Half (50%) of the teacher-participants are visual-kinesthetic in terms of their teaching styles. Results disclosed that teachers, despite the call for individualized teaching and learning to meet each learners' needs successfully, teachers still teach students using only one teaching style. With this, teachers only meet a particular learning style in the classroom. In this case, the teacher does not cater to the varying students' learning styles.

One-Way Analysis of Variance Test for Significant Interaction Effect of the Student-Participants' Learning Style and their Teachers' Teaching Style on their Verbal Ability

Analysis of Variance test unveiled that the interaction effect of the participants' learning style and their teachers' teaching style on their performance in verbal ability is not significant. The finding implies that, the students' linguistic competence in verbal ability is not affected both their learning style and their teachers' teaching style. Learning styles, therefore, of the students in the locale are not given much consideration in the teaching-learning process. So, no matter what the teachers' teaching styles are, it would not affect the verbal ability of the students.

One-Way Analysis of Variance Test for Significant Interaction Effect of the Participants' Learning Style and their Teachers' Teaching Style on their Linguistic Ability regarding Reading Comprehension

Analysis of Variance test unveiled that the interaction of the participants' learning style and their teachers' teaching style on their reading comprehension level is not significant. The result implies that the students' linguistic ability in Reading Comprehension is not affected by both their learning style and their teachers' teaching style.

CONCLUSION

The following conclusions were derived from the discussion of the results:

The teaching styles and the learning styles of students and educators do not affect the students' linguistic ability.

The students' verbal ability and reading comprehension are affected by the ethnic background and dialects spoken at home.

The students' verbal ability and reading comprehension are below the required passing score which indicates that several interventions should be done to improve the present status.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are drawn:

It is important for English language teachers and school heads to find the root causes for low-level results in verbal ability and reading comprehension and look out the factors that are hindering students to perform well in these linguistic competence areas.

Since ethnic background and spoken dialects at home affect linguistic skills, there is a need for English language teachers to conduct further research on how ethnic origin and spoken dialect affect linguistic ability.

Another study may be carried out to investigate the language skills among the Applai tribe.

Presentation of the results of their study may be made during In-Service Trainings.

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