



Explicit instruction in teaching Filipino language

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Abstract

Filipino Language cognition is vital in the total development of literacy education and communicative skills among Filipino students under the K12 curriculum. It is supported by the Mother Tongue Based- Multi Lingual Education Program of the Department of Education and the offering of Specialized Filipino subjects in the Senior High School. In these subjects, students are expected to submit academic papers; in which difficulties in writing has been observed. With this concern, teachers need to teach the students the basic grammar and well-formed sentence structures and punctuations. Moreover, teachers found that their teaching strategies are obsolete and ineffective; and exploring more is expected. Explicit instruction is one that will guide and give concrete direction that allow students practice the task independently. Thus, this paper focuses on Explicit Instruction; if gives remarkable increase in the study of Filipino Language. Sequential Explanatory Design was used; structured within the framework of the Quasi- Experimental Design, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and interview-Triangulation was utilized to gather testimonies and observations on the use of explicit instruction. The study showed that explicit instruction has positive impact and therefore can be used as alternative strategy in teaching Filipino Language.

Keywords: explicit instruction, Filipino language, learning style questionnaire, senior high school program

Introduction

Writing in Filipino is considered vital in the total development of literacy education and communicative skills among Filipino students in the K12 curriculum. It is supported by the Mother Tongue Based- Multi Lingual Education (MTB-MLE) Program of the Department of Education and the offering of Filipino subjects in the Senior High School Program (SHS). There are two core Filipino subjects in SHS namely Language and Communication and Reading and Writing and one Specialized subject entitled Filipino for Specific Purpose. These three Filipino subjects focus on developing students' academic writing and communication skills, negotiating styles and techniques, and importantly place great emphasis on the vocabulary and expressions needed to effectively communicate in each chosen field using the First Language. These will introduce them to Research so that they can later cope with research undertakings required in their respective strand. It is clear that Senior High School Program demands students to acquire effective and comprehensive academic writing skill in order to graduate from the Program and later enroll in College.

However, despite the academic essay writing opportunities offered to students, it has been observed that students' academic writing performance remains poor. Pablo and Lazaten (2018) findings show that the students of grade 11 in the Division of Laoag City have difficulties in writing academic essays such as lack of variety of ideas in terms of content and ideas, lack of connectives in terms organization, incorrect word or idiom and word usage in terms vocabulary and word choice, poor sentence structures in terms of language use and many others. The same result was found in the study of Wornyo (2016) [22], he found that the grammatical errors in the English of students at the university level range from subject-verb agreement errors, errors in tenses, challenges with the use of prepositions,

errors in the use of pronouns etc. Of these errors, subject-verb agreement errors are very common in the writing of students. It is evident from his study that his respondents who are using the first language disclosed that they were most of the times confused over the grammar rules and were unable to decide which rule to apply in specific contexts. They all viewed the learning of grammar as a difficult task. The same notion some people gave during the on-line interview in quora.com (Celestino, 2018) [5]. Netizens were asked if Filipino can be considered an easy language. There were responses that have proved Filipino is not an easy language (Collin, 2014) [9]. Tagalog and other Philippine languages have features that are not found in many language families, so that's what makes it hard to learn (Sundita, 2018) [19]. The same perception and experiences are happening to the students of Senior High School of Labhigh; they found Filipino as a difficult subject and Filipino grammar is not easy to learn.

With all the diverse learners in each classrooms, there is a strong need for teachers to remind and reteach the students the basic grammar including proper article, connectives, adjectives, correct usage and well-formed sentence structures; the proper use of punctuation is also necessary to be tackled before requiring students to write academic papers to lessen the difficulties and come up with a quality output.

Furthermore, it is perceived today that many strategies oversimplify a complex reality, in which there is a great deal of mutual interaction. One way to consider is the system theory, in which all parts of the teaching-learning process are balance; there are connections among the various elements from top to bottom or reverse; so that they fit together as a whole. The student, the classroom, the institution and the community are the intervenor and/ or who compose the system. In the study of Biggs (2006) he commends that the teacher has to achieve good teaching

practices that are vital within the connecting systems and subsystems. It is the point of view of the System Theory of Von Bertalanffy (1968) ^[3] that a system is open to, and interact with their environments; it also generally means that they are self-regulating (they self-correct through feedback); that the institution with the administrator and different department heads and the teachers must work altogether for the common good of the client- the students. If they found that the methods, strategies and style of teaching do not confer or lead to a more learning environment; an action from the people in the institution are expected to happen. Since Language is not easy to learn and understand, teachers are expected to do something to make learning easy. An effective teacher requires the implementation of creative and innovative teaching strategies in order to meet students' individual needs. From the teacher's part; exploration, investigation and experimentation of different teaching strategies is necessary. That is one way of showing how teachers care for their students. Moreover, students prefer certain methods of learning more than others. Those dispositions referred to as learning style, form a student's unique learning preference and aid teachers in planning of small group, individualized instruction and many more. Rahmanita and Cahyono (2018) ^[15] in their study found that the use of Tumblr improves EFL student' ability in writing argumentative essays. The result showed that there is a significant improvement in students' ability in writing after being taught by using Tumblr. This leads to the conclusion that Tumblr can be used effectively to help students improve their ability in writing argumentative essays. Irais Ramírez etc (2018) ^[12] paper describes college students' writing development Self and peer correction were implemented to promote error awareness along with the use of an error code and error log in a fifth semester class. The results show that both strategies such as Tumblr and self and peer correction benefited students' writing skills and self-awareness which in turn produced, among other outcomes, the development of critical self-assessment of their writing and responsibility for their own learning. If those strategies were proven effective, there is the possibility that explicit instruction is useful and effective strategy too.

In the study of Spencer and Petersen (2018) ^[17], results suggest that narrative instruction delivered exclusively in an oral modality had a positive effect on students' writing. Implications include the efficiency and inclusiveness of oral language instruction to improve writing quality, especially for young students. In the study of Koukourikou, Manoli, and Griva (2018) ^[13] about the impact of explicit collaborative reading strategy instruction that involves previewing, main idea identification, clarification and summarization; data indicated an improvement in the students' reading comprehension ability. It was found that the students of the experimental group enhanced their reading comprehension ability between the pre-test and post-test measurement, which was statistically significant in the delayed measurement as well. In their study, Explicit-guided instruction was measured; this involves using highly structured and sequenced steps in teaching specific skill with a close supervision and guidance of the teacher. The educator intentionally aims to teach students using a series of actions in three main stages: preparing for the lesson, interacting with students over the course of the lesson and consolidating the lesson taught (Gauthier, Bissonnette & Richard, 2013). Planning for educational activities was

adopted: the educator demonstrates what they must do (modeling the practice); then guides students through a group activity so that students have the necessary skills to complete the task, and then the students practice the task independently (autonomous practice). In explicit instruction, the teacher is in complete control and employs a high degree of structure. This kind of instruction was inspired by Vygotsky theory of zone of proximal development (ZPD) reiterated as the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem- solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers (Mind in Society, 1978) ^[21]. This encompasses range of abilities that an individual can perform with assistance but cannot yet perform independently. These skills are called "proximal" because the individual is close to mastering them but needs more guidance and practice in order to perform these actions independently (Cherry, 2019) ^[8]. The concept of ZPD is that students could acquire knowledge and skills when they were guided by those who are more knowledgeable. Thereupon, the presence of the teacher who has a higher level of knowledge and skills than the learner, social interactions and supportive activities help guide the learner through explicit instruction.

Thus, this paper defined explicit instruction as gradual and step-by-step guided instruction of the teacher in meaningful teacher-student interactions through modelling and collaborative activities. This paper will find out if Explicit instruction is useful and give remarkable increase in the understanding of Filipino language structure which include grammar and use of punctuation marks before writing any academic papers as part of the Core and Specialized Filipino subject requirement in Senior High School. This paper will tell the possible effect of explicit instruction in learning grammar and punctuations; hence, impact of Filipino grammar to the academic paper and its quality is not included in the study.

Statement of Problems

1. Is Explicit-guided instruction gives an increase - performance in the study of Filipino Language?
2. What are the experiences of the students in the use of explicit instruction in learning Filipino Language?
3. What are the perception of Language Teachers and Language Student Teaching Supervisor on the use of explicit instruction in teaching First Language?

Methods

Mixed method using Sequential Explanatory Design was used. This method is a two-phase design where the quantitative data is collected first followed by qualitative data collection to further explain and interpret the findings from the quantitative phase. Quantitative part was structured within the framework of the Quasi- Experimental Design. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was utilized to gather information and testimony of student- respondents on the use of explicit instruction; this is to support the computed result. On the other hand, two other Filipino Language teachers were invited to observe the students and the whole class while explicit instruction is on-going. One Student Teaching Supervisor was interviewed to get his point of

view of the same. From here, triangulation was applied and considered the salient part of the paper. Triangulation means using more than one method to collect data on the same topic. This is a way of assuring the validity of research through the use of a variety of methods, which involves different types of samples. However, the purpose of triangulation is not necessarily to cross-validate data but rather to capture different dimensions of the same phenomenon. In this study, triangulation happened based on the following: first is the experiment on the use of explicit instruction, followed by the focus group discussion (FGD) of the student respondents and interview to the teachers. And to make the result more appreciative and convincing; the perception of the Student Teaching Supervisor on the use of explicit instruction was also gathered.

Two groups from Grade 11 – Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) strand of the X University, Senior High School were the participants of the study. They were both heterogeneous sections with a final average of 86 in Filipino. They underwent evaluation for self-learning styles using the Learning Styles Questionnaire (LSQ) of Honey P. and Mumford A. (2000) [11]. Honey and Mumford's model, Learning Styles Questionnaire (LSQ), is directly derived from Kolb's theory and ask people directly how they learn. This LSQ probes general behavioral tendencies of the students. They postulate that people prefer different methods of learning, depending upon the situation and their experience level, thus they move between the four modes of learning, rather than being dominantly locked into one mode. This Honey and Mumford's LSQ was used as a tool of the researcher in grouping the students; LSQ result is relevant to know what learning style is given to each group rather than sticking with a preferred method. LSQ result of experimental group of this study is into organizing category who prefer challenges of new experiences, involvement with others, assimilation, role-playing, problem solving and small group discussions. From here, the teacher prepared daily lesson log or popularly known as lesson plan for experimental group for four lessons according to the category of the students with the objective of guiding each group closely. These daily lesson logs were subjected for evaluation, comments and suggestions. Lessons in language include the use of grammar, correct usage of Filipino terms, connectives and punctuation marks. These lessons were taken from the suggested curriculum guide of the Department of Education. The researcher prepared a 40 test items based on the available textbooks and workbooks. Table of specifications (TOS) was regarded following the low order thinking skills (LOTS) and high order thinking skills (HOTS) as basis in constructing the test. Table of Specifications is use to identify the domains being measured and to ensure that a fair and representative sample of questions appear on the test. TOS allows the teacher to construct a test which focuses on the key areas and weigh those different areas based on their importance (Chase,1999). The test was validated by two Filipino subject

teacher and one Assessment professor; after which comments were consider in the revision of the test.

Result and Discussion

Is Explicit-guided instruction gives an increase in the Study of Filipino language?

Both groups were administered pre-test and follow-up measurements to account for any potential improvement in their performance. The first group was the experimental (n = 46, 22 female) which experienced the explicit method of instruction while the second group (n = 46, 24 female) received the traditional method of instruction. The final average grade of the experimental group (M = 86.6) and the control group (M = 86.95) in their Filipino subject were comparable. The points that they obtained from the Pre-test were the initial scores. Pre-test scores were compared using t- test and results show that the mean scores of the control group (Mean = 25.87, SD = 2.38) did not significantly differ from the mean scores of the experimental group (Mean = 25.84, SD = 3.11), $t = 0.90$, $p > 0.05$. The two groups had the same lessons to learn. They differed only on the techniques/ strategies used. The class sessions were held during their Filipino subject schedule with the close supervision and instruction of the researcher –implementer. The researcher-implementer used board and chalk- lecture instruction throughout the session for control group without using any collaborative- guided activities. Giving of instruction was given once and repetitions of lessons were not made. The experimental group was taught using explicit instruction wherein the six teaching functions of explicit instruction was followed such as: review, presentation, guided practice that includes; high frequency of responses, ensure high rates of success, provide timely feedback, clues, and prompts and have students continue practice until they are fluent, correction, independent practice and monitoring were employed to the class (Archer and Hughes, 2011) [2]. Teacher guided the students by giving highly structured guide questions and directions with sequenced steps to teach a specific skill. Different teaching styles were use like mini lesson, collaborative/ peer or small group discussion, know-want-learn style and other students' centered activity with the close supervision of the teacher. Supplementary materials and exercises to enhance learning were given if students ask for more. Different scaffolding or supportive activities were utilized.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Result of the Control and Experimental Group

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental Group	46	32.1087	2.75865	.40674
Control Group	46	28.1087	3.74895	.55275

In this study, the fundamental of explicit instruction was proven true. A t-test was conducted to compare the score of the control group and the experimental group. There was a significant difference in the score of experimental groups (M=32.1087, SD= 2.76) and control group (M=28.1087, SD= 3.75) conditions; $t(45) = 78.8$, $p=.00$. These results suggest that explicit instruction does have an effect on language learning.

Table 2 shows the result of t-test that determined significant differences between control and experiment group

Table 2: Post- Test result of Control and Experimental Groups

Variable	Test Value = 0.05					
	t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Experimental Group	78.819	45	.000	32.05870	31.2395	32.8779
Control Group	50.762	45	.000	28.05870	26.9454	29.1720

Specifically, the result suggests that when a teacher uses this strategy, the understanding of language structure increases. Explicit instruction defined concrete interactions sequence between students and teacher. It assesses how much students already know on the subject matter and tailor subsequent instruction, based on the initial evaluation of skills. Students repeatedly practicing skills at a pace determined by the teacher’s understanding of student needs and progress” (Steedly, Dragoo, Arefeh & Luke, 2008) ^[14]. Explicit instruction is systematic, direct, engaging, and success oriented. Students prefer very effective and efficient details of instruction because the details do make a significant difference in promoting growth and success. A teacher can design a perfect lesson plan, but if this plan is delivered in a manner that fails to involve or engage students because of ineffective giving of instruction, learning will not occur. Because effective delivery of instruction is paramount in explicit instruction, extends the discussion of delivery skills with an emphasis on monitoring students’ responses, providing feedback on correct and incorrect responses, and maintaining a brisk pace that helps to engage students (Archer and Hughes, 2011) ^[2]. Accordingly, a competent teacher learns to build effective learning situation and to select teaching strategies to guarantee maximum retention and application of the learning. Explicit instruction offers avenue for teachers’ creativity and resourcefulness at the same time use and see the students’ potential and ability. The findings of this study supported the concept of Explicit Instruction wherein teacher employs highly structured and sequenced steps in giving instruction in teaching specific skill. With this approach students follow a series of tasks given by the teacher base on the student preference of strategy that will engage him in pursuit of learning. The said preference was determined before the experiment happen through the use of Learning Styles Questionnaire (LSQ).

Experiences of students in the use of Explicit Instruction

Students in the experimental group who were interviewed during the Focus Group Discussion indicated that they have enjoyed learning grammar and punctuation marks if done with their peer. They have expressed their satisfaction to the different small activities prepared for them in addition to the clear instruction posted by their teacher. They are enjoying while learning at the same time. Explicit instruction encourages the students to engage in activities that let them internalize the Filipino language structure, use of punctuation, connectives and correct usage with their peers and teacher as well.

Students declared how explicit instruction helps them achieved better performance in the above- stated topics:

*SR1,5 “If the instruction was given ahead and if time is sufficient there is no reason for activity failure. And the most important is the presence of the teacher who is facilitating the group; approachable and willing to repeat the instruction for us.”

SR2 “One –on- one instruction given by my teacher and my classmates help me improve my correct usage in Filipino; in the first place it is a difficult subject to learn but I was able to get good score because of the support given to me.”

SR3 “Student- centered activities and feedback was provided every time student needs help; there is a prepared activity with clear instruction if we still need more for practice purposes. I love many activities, in here I have learned a lot”

SR4,5 “The art of giving instruction is an important thing a teacher should develop; and my teacher has it. I easily understood the use of comma, semi-colon and hyphen because of her close supervision and kind giving of instruction”

***SR - Student Respondent**

Students were very vocal in sharing their ideas, observation and experiences. They appreciate the presence of the teacher and their style of giving direction; nor hesitant in raising question to their teacher. They love peer and group activities; for them group work can create an environment where they “teach” and explain concept to one another. In the study of Wornyo (2016) ^[22], he found that learning activities was effective in helping learners to discover new things. The use of constructive teaching and learning activities enable learners to improve on their performance in grammar and usage test. The same result was given by Alasgarova (2018) ^[1] when his study showed that Content and Language Integrated Learning techniques not only motivates students to participate actively during the lessons but also contributes for better understanding of the material. However, more time is required to produce activities and task. In the study of Rupley *et al.* (2009) ^[16] one feature of explicit instruction moved children toward mastery of word identification. Students were able to use the alphabetic code than students who do not receive such instruction. Explicit instruction guides students in developing flexible, problem-solving attitudes toward identifying words using the cue systems and context. Fluency was also developed through teacher-directed explicit practice in reading text. In this approach, they used the heart of the direct instruction method; these are explicit explanations, modeling or demonstrating, and guided practice.

The same result was proven true in this study. Explicit instruction challenge students within the classroom; it offers the avenue for teachers’ ingenuity, resourcefulness and maximum used of students’ potential. Students did not find the subject boring and difficult during the use of explicit instruction. Lessons were imparted through meaningful teacher- students’ interactions and best giving of direction.

Perception of Language Teachers and Student Teaching Supervisor on the use of explicit instruction.

The presence of two Language teachers were appreciated during the conduct of the study. After the second day of

implementation of the explicit instruction, Language teachers and Student Teaching Supervisor were interviewed. Unstructured and very informal discussion happened at the faculty room for about an hour. Their observation was noted and taken very important in this study.

1. Do you consider explicit instruction as an effective strategy in teaching language?

Answer:

T1 - *Explicit instruction is new to me. I have been teaching in Basic Education for 5 years, until now I am not familiar with it. For two consecutive meeting of observation, I found that there is a strategy that will enhance my style in giving instruction or direction to my students; aside from the different activities that my students could do while following the order or task given to them. Base on my opinion, explicit instruction could be an effective strategy especially if the teacher will be undergone training and workshop in the use of the said strategy.*

T2 - *At first, I am thinking if explicit is the same as differentiated instruction; because students were sometimes divided in many groups and subgroups. But when the teacher and other students are in the point of giving direction to their classmates, I realize that explicit is more of clear and vivid giving of direction; and the chunks of activities matter in reaching out their goals. At the end, I could say that explicit instruction is an effective strategy in teaching grammar; but to do it with a twist is another thing I need to find out.*

ST Supervisor – *At my age now and the length of service as Supervisor, I observe that explicit instruction is really effective in teaching not only in Language but also in Literature. But this is not new to me. I am using this for a decade but the name explicit was not discovered yet. Anyway, it is the obligation of the teacher to give thorough and clear instruction to his students*

From the point of view of the teachers and the student teaching supervisor, explicit instruction is an effective strategy in teaching Language. Though for the new teacher; he is not familiar with this while for the seasoned teacher it is old as he but the name “explicit” was not developed yet; but still the effectivity is the same. As mentioned by Luke (2006) ^[14], with continued guidance and ample opportunities, students learn to integrate information in a way that helps them to recall learning at a later time, even in a different situation or setting. The same result was given by Fandino (2010), when his study suggests that explicit strategy instruction in Socio-affective Language Learning is helpful in heightening learner awareness of the importance of paying attention to their own feelings and social relationships as part of their learning process. Therefore, explicit instruction is effective strategy in teaching.

2. Base on your observation, what are the strength and weaknesses of the explicit instruction as a strategy in teaching Filipino Language?

Answer:

T1 – *Strong points- Students will be supervised by the teacher and the possibility of student mentoring- classmates during the activity; teacher is soon to be fluent and effective in giving direction because of repeated posting of instruction.*

Weak points - students will just rely on the assistance of their classmates; and the idea of dependency maybe

acquired because of too much guidance coming from the direction giver – the teacher.

T2 – *Strong points - Students may experience many activities; one thing that they are waiting for in a classroom setting. They are truly guided by the teacher; this will lessen the number of failures.*

Weak points – Students will depend mostly on teacher’s direction; critical thinking may not fully develop.

ST Supervisor – *Strong points – This will help teachers to be more concrete and concise in giving direction. Students will also be guided in their activity.*

Weak points – repetition of direction is a waste of time; students will always rely on teacher.

3. Will you recommend this strategy to other Language teachers?

Answer:

T1, T2 and ST Supervisor – *Of course, explicit instruction is highly recommended as a strategy in teaching Language, other lessons and in the other subjects. Teacher should try this one; to see for themselves the unique characteristics of the strategy. For sure, they will enjoy using it while learning on the art of writing effective instructions.*

*T1- Language teacher 1

*T2 – Language teacher 2

*ST Supervisor – Student Teaching Supervisor

Base from the perception of the Language teachers and the supervisor; they have observed that explicit instruction monitors the students’ way of doing the assigned task independently; by peer or group. This strategy improves the teachers’ skill in the development of different instructions for the activities they wish to have in their classes. The narrative also specifies the common weak point of the strategy; most of the times, students depend and wait for their teacher’s guidance and instruction. The statement of the respondents of this paper go with the experience of Chelliah (2016) ^[7]. She guided her students in writing composition and the same for other activities. She noticed that students tend to be very dependent on their teacher when working on projects. She gave clear oral and written instruction and the resources to complete the project. For every activity, students keep on waiting for her instruction and did not take the initiative to work and search harder. Sometimes, nothing much is done.

Conclusion

Participants of the experimental group showed remarkable evidence of improvement based on the t-test result. The use of explicit using guided instruction in doing student-centered activities like mini lessons, peer teaching, collaborative study and other small activities gave an increase in students’ performance. The t- test result further concluded that there is a statistically significant difference between mean of the post test at .05 significant level. Thus, explicit instruction is effective and could be used as alternative strategy in teaching Filipino language. It is visible from the t-test result, teacher and supervisor’s perception that explicit instruction could guide students in doing different tasks; whether by peer or group, it is because of the quality- time and impressive instruction spent and done by teachers in assisting students from the beginning to the last part of the lesson. Hence, too close and redundant

giving of directions will lead to dependency.

Recommendations

1. Explicit instruction is an alternative strategy in teaching Language; it can also be tested in other subjects in Junior and Senior High School. The Head teacher with the approval of the principal may encouraged his subordinates to utilize this strategy in teaching different subjects in basic education.
2. The use of Learning Styles Questionnaire (LSQ) maybe administered before the use of any teaching strategy so that teacher can plan activities suited for the students' needs and interest. Teachers may consider other test to measure students' interest.
3. The presence of the teacher is highly expected during the implementation of the explicit instruction. A close supervision is advised.
4. Encourage above average students to assist and help their classmates in doing task; this is a big help for the teacher employing explicit instruction for she has set of students who could assist other students.
5. Teacher should list many instructions for different activities if she plans to use explicit instruction in her class; this list may help in the planning stage and for making her daily lesson log easy.
6. The Department of Education may include "The Use of Explicit Instruction in Teaching" in their annual teacher's seminar and workshop so that teachers are equip with information and ready for its implementation.
7. A similar study maybe done in other school in a wider scope and student respondents in different academic strand/ discipline.

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