TEACHING EXPERIENCE AND PART-TIME JOBS AS CORRELATES USAGE IN THE USAGE OF AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT OF TERTIARY ENGLISH TEACHERS

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Abstract

This paper used the descriptive-correlation survey and qualitative method in finding out the relationship of the English teacher's professional competences (educational attainment, years of teaching, and attendance at seminars/training) and employment profile (workload, number of preparation, class size, designation and part-time job) to their usage of authentic assessments in listening, speaking reading and writing. About 77 tertiary English teachers in Davao City were the samples of the study and 9 were purposively selected as participants in the Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Findings revealed that majority of the English teachers were not academically equipped; many are experienced teachers; and, a high number needs more training specifically designed on authentic assessments. The data also showed that their subject preparation is recommendable. But, their workload and the class size are not ideal for authentic assessments. However, these variables showed no link to the respondents' frequency of using authentic assessments. The FGD participants disclosed that these results could be attributed to the applicability and type of the assessment procedure because there are some authentic assessment method s that are suited for their students and there also that are not. Moreover, those authentic assessments that were not always used by them take a lot of time if used in their classes. Only the respondents' teaching experience and part-time teaching job variables demonstrated a significant relationship with their usage of authentic assessments in listening, reading, speaking and writing.

Keywords: teaching experience, part-time jobs, authentic assessments

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1.0 Introduction

Most teachers are involved in testing in some form, ventilating, marking or writing tests. Those who are involved in testing are also teaching. Hence, teaching and testing are not entirely inseparable as part of teachers' responsibilities. Wall (1996) in his Sri Lankan impact study on Test Washbacks, discovered that many teachers are unable or feel unable, to implement the testing methodologies. Those teachers who claimed to have knowledge about students' evaluation could only give vague explanations of what they expected, that showed that they have no such knowledge.

Yang (2008) in her research on the factors affecting EFL teachers' classroom assessment practices of young language learners disclosed that the teachers' perceived competence, assessment education, beliefs about the benefits of assessments, and the complexity of such assessment affect their usage. He pointed out that these difficulties include time constraints, classroom management, pressure from parents, and heavy workloads.

In the same vein, Beaton et al. (1996) also found out that even if teachers received the training, time and resources that would allow them to broaden their assessment practices, students and their working conditions may be the barriers. Hence, Brindley (1997) suggested that if teachers are to assume significant responsibility for assessment, they should be given enough time and resources to do the job properly. Moreover, teachers must be given the chance to carry out their duties within a practical timeframe and to have fair and sound conditions for teaching. They should not be given

large class size and multiple numbers of preparations (Zientek, Capraro & Capraro, 2008).

The aforementioned literature were studies on the English teachers' usage of authentic assessments with its relation to their professional competences and employment profile. Yet, these studies did not cover other variables such as teaching experience, attendance to seminars/training, number of preparations, designations/positions, and part-time jobs. Moreover, majority of these researches used only the survey method with correlation technique and did not support them by a Focus-Group Discussion which the author believed to be very crucial in getting in-depth information regarding the variables of the study. Hence, this is the very reason why the author embarked on this study.

2.0 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored on three main theories and is supported by some related works. These theories include the Eraut's (1994) Professional Knowledge and Competency Theory, Braverman's (1974) Labor Process Theory, and Wiggins' (1998) Authentic Assessment Theory.

In Professional and Competency Theory, Eraut (1994) claimed that accumulation of professional knowledge is carefully managed of both process and prepositional knowledge (e.g. the knowledge is formally acquired in schools/universities (professional knowledge) and through its application in practice (experience). Bromme and Tillema (1995) offered a more implicit explanation on Eraut's position by asserting that professional knowledge

evolves as a product of professional action and establishes itself through work and performance in the profession, not merely by the accumulation of theoretical knowledge through formal schooling and exposure to training but by integrating tuning, restructuring theoretical knowledge to the demands of practical situation and constraints.

In the same vein, Bol, et al., (1998) posited that knowledge and skills help teachers in choosing appropriate useful, administratively convenient, technically adequate and effective assessment methods prerequisite to use of good information to support instructional decisions. Teachers need to be well acquainted with the kinds of information provided by a broad range of assessment alternatives and their strength and weaknesses.

On the other hand, Braverman (1974) introduced the Labor Process Theory, which views the changes in education as part of a post-Fordist shift in capitalism. A key implication of post-Fordism for education is the attempt to relate education more closely to industry (Watkins, 1994). For teachers, the moves to link education directly to corporate industrial goals have meant a massive shift in the nature of their work. This shift has been conceptualized as a process of intensification, which Hargreaves (1994) describes as 'bureaucratically drive escalation of pressures, expectations and controls concerning what teachers do and how much they should do within a teaching day. The characteristic features of intensification as described by Hargreaves are as follows: lack of time, with no time to update skills; the creation of chronic and persistent overload; the replacement of time spent for students with administrative demands; the enforced diversification of expertise; and production of packaged curricula and packaged pedagogy.

Finally, Wiggins (1998) introduced the 'Authentic Language Assessments Theory which stresses the two characteristics for authenticity: (1) assessments need to reflect the intellectual work of practicing professionals, and (2) they need to be characterized by constant and active engagement, exploration, and inquiry on the part of the student. This notion of authenticity - that it is contextually rooted and rich with intellectual opportunity for the participants - closely parallels. Yet, promising and effective as it is, authentic or performance-based assessment is extremely time-consuming, and its administration is inappropriate for large class size because the teacher should deliberately monitor the progress of the students (Brindley, 1997).

3.0 Research Design and Methodology

This study used both the qualitative and quantitative research designs as the latter determines the relationship between one thing (an independent variable) and another (a dependent or outcome variable) in a population. This research designs were descriptive and normative in nature as it established associations between variables

(Hopkins, 2008). It also used the correlation technique in finding out the relationship between the variables of the study. To further investigate the results of the study and to obtain in depth information, the Focus-Group Discussion (FGD) was also utilized.

Seventy-seven (77) full-time English teachers among the 13 selected schools in Davao City were the respondents of the study. These schools include the Davao Doctors College, Holy Cross of Davao College, John Paul II College of Davao, MATS College of Technology, Philippine College of Technology, Philippine Women's College of Davao, Rizal Memorial College, San Pedro College, University of Mindanao, University of Southeastern Philippines - Main, University of the Immaculate Conception and University of the Philippines - Mindanao.

The researcher used a survey questionnaire in obtaining the teachers' professional competency variables, which include their educational attainment, teaching experience, and seminars/training attended and their employment profile variables, which comprise their workloads, class size, number of preparations, designation/special assignment, and part-time job; and their extent of usage of authentic assessments. The authentic assessments in listening, reading, speaking and writing reflected in the questionnaire were adopted from Brown's (2004) "Language Assessment: Principles and classroom practices". Three language experts and statistician validated the questionnaire to check whether the questions and items properly represented all the variables of the study.

On the other hand, an interview guide was used for the Focus-Group-Discussion (FGD) to get in-depth views and experiences of the teacher participants regarding the variables identified in this study. This method also provided reliable information from the participants about their impression of the general results of the survey specifically on the usage of authentic assessments in listening, reading, speaking and writing.

The data were quantified using the following statistical treatments: First, is the Frequency and Simple Percentage which both measure the English teachers' extent of usage of authentic assessments; their professional competences; and the employment profile. Second, is the Chi–Square Test of Independence which was used to measure the relationship between the language teachers' extent of usage of authentic assessments and the variables of professional competences and employment profile; Third, the Weighted Mean which was utilized to find out the teachers' extent of usage of authentic assessment.

4.0 Results and Discussion
English Teachers' Professional Competencies

The data in Table 1 reveal that almost half of the teacher respondents are Bachelor degree holders with

MA units. This means that are not fully academically equipped or they have insufficient knowledge and skills about authentic assessments. On the other hand, half of them are academically equipped. Meaning, they are knowledgeable and skillful on the different techniques of authentic assessments. This is affirmed by the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) participants, especially those who finished their doctoral degrees that their graduate and post-graduate studies provided them with a lot of knowledge and skills in teaching and testing.

On the other hand, the data show that majority of the teacher respondents are very experienced teachers; a significant number is experienced; and, few are less experienced. With this data one could immediately conclude that majority of them are already adept and effective in using authentic assessments. Yet, the study of Zhang's, & Burry-Stock's (2003) disproved this assumption because they found out that regardless of teaching experience, teachers with measurement training report a higher level of self-perceived assessment skills in using performance measures; in standardized testing, test revision, and instructional improvement.

Table 1. Professional competencies of language teachers

Professional Competencies	Frequency	%
Educational Attainment		
Ph. D. or Ed. D.	18	23.40
M.A. degree holder w/ Doctoral units	25	32.40
Bachelor degree holder with M.A. units	34	44.20
Total	77	100.0
Teaching Experience		
11 years or more	37	48.06
6-10 years	25	32.46
5 years and less	15	19.48
Total	77	100.0
Attendance At Seminars/ Training		
11 days and more	21	27.30
6-10 days	17	22.10
5 days or less	39	50.63
Total	77	100.0

Finally, it can be gleaned in the table that majority of respondents need more seminars and training on authentic assessments. This is unanimously supported by the participants who further disclosed that the seminars and training they have attended were not specifically focused on authentic assessments. Some revealed that the seminars/training they have attended were more into general assessment and evaluation, Table of Specification (TOS) and rubrics.

Language Teachers' Employment Profile

The data in Table 2 divulge that a significant number of the English teachers handle a workload that is not recommendable to teaching. Stiggins and Conklin (1992) postulated that one of the reasons why teachers cannot effectively carry out their assessment tasks is because of their multiple subjects. Instead of carefully following the progress of each of the student, some of their time is devoted to the preparation of their lessons and materials. This is also affirmed by the FGD participants.

Table 2. Employment profile of the language teachers

Employment Profile	Frequency	%
Workload		
7 subjects or more	46	59.74
5-6 subjects	18	23.37
4 subjects or less	13	16.88
Total	77	100.0
Class Size		
41 students or more	61	79.22
31-40 students	12	15.58
30 students or less	4	5.20
Total	77	100.0
Number of Preparation		
5 or more different subjects	17	22.07
3-4 different subjects	38	49.35
1-2 different subjects	22	28.57
Total	77	100.0
Teachers with Designation and Assignment		
With	23	29.90
Without	54	70.10
Total	77	100.0
Teachers with Part-time Teaching Jobs		
With	24	31.16
Without	53	68.83
Total	77	100.0

Meanwhile, Lieberman (1988) postulated that today's working situation of teachers is requiring more work, more students, and less time. The data in Table 2 affirmed such claim of Lieberman. The data showed that majority of the respondents have more than 41 students in their classes, which is obviously not ideal for teaching. The works of Apple (1985), Connel (1985), Hargreaves (1990, 1991 & 1994) and Watkins (1994) are among the extensive literatures that exposed the demands upon the teachers who are bombarded with numerous workloads.

On the other hand, when it comes to the issue

of number of preparations, the data revealed that many of them have recommendable number of subject preparations. Only 17 teachers have to face the ordeal of studying and preparing the various subjects assigned to them.

Aside from their usual teaching works, some teachers are designated or given special assignments. The data reveal that 54 or a little more than 70 percent of the respondents does not have any designation or special assignments. Only a few have other responsibilities aside from teaching. Three (3) of the participants who have a designation and special assignment disclosed that their position really disrupts or interferes their desire and application of assessment procedures. Two FGD participants who happened to be designated disclosed that their designation or special assignment considerably affect their teaching performance.

Finally, only a few respondents has ventured on other part-time jobs. Teacher D specifically disclosed that due to her multiple loads and busy schedules, her efficiency in teaching and assessment practices were adversely affected; hence, she decided to quit in moonlighting. Ernst Benjamin, an associate general secretary and director of research of the American Association of University Professors in Washington disclosed in his paper that many part-time faculty are inadequately qualified, less productive, superficially evaluated, carelessly hired, and too easily reappointed. Hence, they are less effective teachers than their full-time faculty counterparts.

Language Teachers' Extent of Usage of Authentic Assessments in Listening

Table 3 shows the extent of usage of authentic assessment in listening among respondents.

Table 3. Language teachers' extent of usage of authentic assessment in listening

Authentic Assessments	Teacher Evaluation	
	Mean	Description
Dictation	2.08	Moderately Extensive
Communicative Stimulus-Response Tasks	2.29	Moderately Extensive
Information transfer	2.42	Extensive
Note-taking	2.57	Extensive
Editing	1.97	Moderately Extensive
Interpretative	2.39	Moderately Extensive
Retelling	2.49	Extensive
Total	2.32	Moderately Extensive

It can be gleaned in Table 3 that the majority of the teacher respondents are extensively using Note-taking, Retelling and Information transfer assessment techniques

in their classes. On the other hand, the participants affirmed to have always used the Note-taking and Retelling and Information transfer techniques because these strategies have become part of their regular teaching routines. They seldom use Communicative Stimulus-Response Tasks, Editing, Interpretative tasks and Dictation technique because these methods are time-consuming and very laborious if used in their classes. Moreover, they have a large class size and a heavy workload that if they used these strategies regularly, they might not be able to carry out their other lessons and other responsibilities effectively.

Language Teachers' Extent of Usage of Authentic Assessments in Speaking

Table 4 presents the English teachers' inclination in using meaningful, real-life situation speaking assessments.

Table 4. Language teachers' extent of usage of authentic assessment in speaking

Authentic Assessments	Teacher Evaluation	
	Mean	Description
Read-Aloud Tasks	2.57	Moderately Extensive
Sentence/Dialogue Completion Tasks	2.28	Moderately Extensive
Picture-Cued Tasks	2.27	Moderately Extensive
Giving Instructions and Directions	2.49	Extensive
Paraphrasing	2.48	Extensive
Interview	2.01	Moderately Extensive
Role Play	2.55	Extensive
Discussions and Conversations	2.52	Extensive
Story Telling	2.31	Moderately Extensive
Oral Presentations and Reporting	2.68	Extensive
Retelling a News Story	2.27	Moderately Extensive
Translation	1.83	Moderately Extensive
Total	2.36	Moderately Extensive

As shown in the data, the teacher respondents predominantly use the giving instructions and directions, paraphrasing, role play, discussion and conversations, and oral presentations or reporting assessment techniques in their classes. They categorically seldom use the read-aloud tasks, sentence/dialogue completion tasks, picture-cued tasks, interview, story telling, retelling news and translation techniques. In the Focus-Group Discussion, the participants disclosed that those assessment techniques which acquired the most number of responses are useful methods in teaching Speech and Oral Communication subjects, and they are very effective in developing the students' confidence.

Language Teachers' Extent of Usage of Authentic Assessments in Reading

Table 5 presents the authentic reading assessments that the English teachers are using. Out of the 9 assessment techniques, the teachers claim to have extensively used the Scanning Tasks, Ordering Tasks, Skimming Tasks, and Summarizing and Responding Tasks. This is so because according to the participants these methods develop the reading skills of the students, and they are useful in research and other English subjects.

The data also show that the teachers seldom use the Read Aloud Tasks, Pictured-Cued Tasks, Information transfer techniques, Outlining techniques, Note-taking and Editing. The FGD participants revealed that they seldom use these techniques because they are only suitable for elementary and high school students, and the two latter techniques are very tasking to apply. Teacher B particularly revealed that she handles 7-8 subjects every semester and in each class, she has more than 45 students. She admitted that she was having difficulties integrating authentic assessments in all her classes.

Table 5. Language teachers' extent of usage of authentic assessment in reading

Authentic Assessments	Teacher Evaluation	
	Mean	Description
Read-Aloud Tasks	2.36	Moderately Extensive
Picture-Cued Items	1.97	Moderately Extensive
Editing (Longer texts)	2.16	Moderately Extensive
Scanning Tasks	2.44	Extensive
Ordering Tasks	2.40	Extensive
Information transfer: reading charts, maps, etc.	2.32	Moderately Extensive
Skimming tasks	2.66	Extensive
Summarizing and Responding	2.65	Extensive
Note-taking and Outlining	2.57	Moderately Extensive
Total	2.40	Extensive

Language Teachers' Extent of Usage of Authentic Assessments in Writing

Table 6 displays the language teachers' usage of writing assessments. In the teacher respondents' data, six (6) out of 13 assessments emerged to be extensively used by them. These include the Vocabulary Assessment Tasks, Guide Questions and Answer, Paragraph Constructions or Essays, Reports, Summaries of video, lectures, et al. and Paragraph Development techniques. The FGD participants disclosed that this happens because these assessment procedures are part of their topics in English 2 (Writing in the Discipline) subject.

Table 6. Language teachers' extent of usage of authentic assessment in writing

Authentic Assessments	Teacher Evaluation	
	Mean	Description
Dictation	2.17	Moderately Extensive
Dicto-comp	2.08	Moderately Extensive
Grammatical Transformation Tasks	2.25	Moderately Extensive
Picture-Cued Tasks	2.22	Moderately Extensive
Vocabulary Assessment Tasks	2.55	Extensive
Short-Answer and Sentence Completion	2.32	Moderately Extensive
Guide Questions and Answer	2.52	Extensive
Paragraph Construction Tasks	2.68	Extensive
Reports (Laboratory, article, book reports)	2.45	Extensive
Summaries of Reading, lectures, video	2.40	Extensive
Interpreting statistical, graphical, tabular data	2.39	Moderately Extensive
Paragraph Development (Narration, Description, Description, etc.)	2.50	Extensive
Library Research paper	2.31	Moderately Extensive
Total	2.37	Moderately Extensive

Moreover, the data also reveal that Dictation, Dictocomp, Grammatical Transformation Tasks, Picture-cued Tasks, Short-Answer and Sentence Completion, Interpreting Statistical, Tabular Graphics, and Library Research techniques are occasionally introduced in their classes. Teacher D specifically reasoned out that they rarely utilized these methods because they are more suitable for elementary and high school students. Moreover, she added that the knowledge and skills the students gain from Interpreting Statistical and Graphical Data technique are not always used in other English subjects.

Relationship between the Language Teachers' Professional Competences and Usage of Authentic Assessments

Table 7 shows the overall results of the correlation among the different variables understudy. The data reveal that the English teachers' educational attainment and extent of usage of listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing assessments have no relationship with each other. This result disproves the assumption of the researcher that the higher the teachers' educational attainment, the

Table 7. Relationship between the language teachers' professional competences and their extent of usage of authentic assessments

Professional Competency	Usage of Authentic Assessment									
	Listening		Reading		Speaking		Writing		Overall	
	β	ρ	β	ρ	β	ρ	β	ρ	β	ρ
Educational Attainment	.012	.920	.072	.535	.064	.578	.010	.929	.005	.967
Teaching Experience	.094	.415	.166	.150	.160	.225	.254	**.026***	.177	.086
Attendance to Seminars/ Training in Assessment	.152	.187	.112	.333	.140	.225	.153	.185	.166	.148

* Significant @ .05, Decision on H1 = accept
β = Beta coefficient
ρ = probability value

more frequent they are in using the authentic assessments or the lower their educational attainment, the lesser they are in using those assessments. This is also supported by the statements of the participants.

The data in Table 7 show that only the writing assessment technique has a significant relationship with teaching experience of the respondents. This implies two things: first, that the more experienced the teacher, the more she/he uses the authentic writing assessments compared to those who are less experienced; and second, that those who are beginner teachers or less experienced are more enthusiastic about using the authentic assessments in their classes compared to the experienced teachers because they are enslaved and accustomed to their traditional testing practices.

The latter assumption is similar to the result of the study of Melnick, et al., (2008) titled "A Comparison of Beginning and Experienced Teacher's Concerns", who discovered that beginning teachers felt more prepared than the experienced teachers in using multiple assessment methods. Only 40% of the seasoned teachers felt comfortable in this area. The respondents were hesitant in applying the new assessment techniques because they felt that the students might not respond positively.

Lastly, in the correlation between the teachers' attendance at seminars/training and their extent of usage of authentic assessments, the data reveal that there is no significant relationship of the two. It means that the number of days the teachers are exposed to seminars in authentic assessment does not influence their usage of the assessment techniques. This result is contrary to the study of Ou (2004) on the "Attitudes toward Communicative Language Teaching: An Investigation of EFL Teachers' and Students' Preferences at Two High Schools in China" which demonstrated that there is indeed a relationship between the teachers' attendance to seminars in CLT and their usage of the introduced techniques.

Relationship between the Language Teachers' Employment Profile and their Usage of Authentic Assessment

Table 8 shows the link between the variables of English teachers' employment profile and their extent of usage of authentic assessments. The data reveal that there is no connection between the teachers' workload, class size, number of preparation, and designation and special assignments to their usage of authentic assessments.

These results suggest that the language teachers existing workload and class size, number of preparation and designation and special assignments do not influence their usage of authentic assessment. These outcomes contradict with the data in the study of Veeman (1984), Meister & Jenks (2000), Meister and Melnick (2003), Easthope (1998) and Melnick and Meister (2008) that proved the significant relationship between the variables. These researchers postulated that teachers' workload, preparation, class size, and academic tasks both directly and indirectly influence their teaching performance and assessment practices.

Finally, when the part-time teaching job variable is correlated with the teachers' usage of authentic assessments, the listening and writing assessments surfaced to have a significant relationship with the former variable. The result implies that due to multiple loads handled by these teachers from other schools, they cannot anymore apply the listening and writing assessment techniques. Table 8 showed the negative value of beta coefficient of -.298. Such case also happened in the study of Easthope (1997) among the teachers in Tasmania, Australia who gave their account of experience of increased workload in the 10 years between 1984 and 1994. The result, they reported, is that their workload was both increased and extended; yet, less money being spent on education. Hence, the teachers has to rationalize their work and reduce their professional commitment by venturing into part-time employment. As an aftermath, the teachers themselves admit that they become inefficient.

Table 8. Relationship between the language teachers' employment profile and their extent of usage of authentic assessment

Employment Profile	Usage of Authentic Assessment									
	Listening		Reading		Speaking		Writing		Overall	
	β	ρ	β	ρ	β	ρ	β	ρ	β	ρ
Workload	.112	.289	.059	.638	.180	.118	.155	.179	.123	.286
Class size	.027	.814	.066	.567	.111	.338	.055	.633	.085	.465
Number of Preparation	.001	.996	.013	.912	.072	.543	.129	.262	.058	.614
Designation Special Assignment	.044	.706	.011	.922	.013	.910	.084	.467	.010	.933
Part-time Jobs	-.219	**.048***	.180	.166	.204	.074	-.377	**.001***	-.298	**.008***

*Significant @ .05, Decision on H1 = accept
β = Beta coefficient
ρ = probability value

5.0 Conclusion

It is a fact that many language teachers carry a deep mistrust on pencil-and-paper tests as they often fail to measure accurately whatever it is they intend to measure. Also, teachers know all too well that the students' true abilities are not always reflected in the test scores they obtain. Hence, some language experts came up with the authentic assessments, which are well suited for evaluation of learners' application of content knowledge, their ability to integrate content knowledge across subject areas, and their abilities to make decisions, to communicate, and to cooperate. In this study, the data disclosed that the English teachers seldom use authentic assessments in listening, reading, speaking and writing because they are not applicable to the type of students they handle. Moreover, these authentic assessments consume much time in the preparation and in evaluation of the students' performance. There are some researches which explore the relationship between the English teachers' length of teaching experience and their usage of various assessment methods, posing a question whether the beginner teachers are more inclined in using assessment methods regularly than the old ones or vice versa.

In addition, the seasoned teachers are more inclined in using the authentic assessments regularly than the least experienced. The result suggests that the seasoned teachers are more deliberate and reflective in using and selecting the effective assessment strategies in their respective classes than the new ones. This is attributed to their number of training and seminars attended on authentic assessments.

Finally, here in the Philippines, some teachers venture on part-time jobs because they want to have additional income. Those who teach part-time, or are indulging in 'moonlighting' are also fulltime employees in other school. Hence, they only do part- time teaching on their vacant time or after their official time in their mother school. In this situation, these teachers who have multiple loads and various subject preparations cannot utilize anymore authentic assessments in their classes because of exhaustion. Moreover, though it is easier to replace an ineffective part-time instructor, the procedures do not assure that the replacement will be an improvement especially if the replacements are new graduates that are not experienced or exposed to training or seminars on authentic assessments.

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