

Guided or misguided?: Teachers' evaluation of an English curriculum guide in the Philippines

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Abstract

Evaluation of a curriculum and all other aspects related to it, including the use of materials for both teachers and learners, is meant to refine educational programs and later use the results as inputs toward improved teaching and learning. This paper reports on a textual evaluation of the existing curriculum guide in 10th grade English under the newly implemented K to 12 Basic Education Program in the Philippines. A total of 30 Grade 10 English teachers from selected public secondary schools in Tarlac Province, the Philippines evaluated the content of the curriculum material using the criteria set by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) intended for English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum guides. The evaluation revealed that the material generally suffices the criteria needed for a language curriculum guide. However, it was found that the reading content of the curriculum guide hardly meets the criteria for the ELA reading component and that the design of the material needs more clarity in relation to the language used and to its overall presentation or format. Other problems identified include overlapping, repetitive, and too many objectives for each language strand that do not match the time allotted in teaching English 10 in the Philippines. Inadequacy on the content in terms of developing learners' multilingual, multiliteracies (specifically media literacy), multicultural, and grammar skills were also perceived as problems by the teachers. The study finally underscores the importance of involving classroom teachers in the processes of creating, selecting, and evaluating curriculum materials, which are considered as integral phases in the language-curriculum-development process.

Keywords: Curriculum guide, K to 12 English Language Arts, NCTE criteria, textual evaluation

1. Introduction

The need to provide organized and productive learning experiences to students is anchored on the function of an effective curriculum. Beyond its academic purpose of contributing to the

development of thinking skills and the acquisition of relevant knowledge that learners need to apply in their studies, career, and daily life, a good curriculum must also forge lifelong learning competencies, as well as social attitudes and skills (UNESCO, 2016). As such, a curriculum implemented in any educational institution has to be responsive and equally holistic. Wiggins and McTighe (2006) describe curriculum as that which takes content and shapes it into a plan toward the conduct of effective teaching and learning. Curriculum is thus more than a list of topics, key facts, and skills.

In language education, a curriculum must be connected and integrated to language learning. According to the APEC Human Resources Development Working Group (2016), the goal of a language curriculum must be toward fluency and literacy, and curriculum materials should be chosen to fit a language policy that has been articulated and founded on language content standards. One of the main aims of an English language curriculum, according to the Education and Manpower Bureau (1998) in Hong Kong, is to provide learners of English with further opportunities for extending their knowledge and experience of cultures of other people, as well as opportunities for personal and intellectual development, further studies, pleasure, and work in the English medium. However, despite the promises of language curriculum in ensuring learner's lifelong development, there are a lot of problems that go along with its implementation.

Problems concerning language curricula across the globe are better disclosed based on how they are implemented. As reported by Yanik (2007), there could really be discrepancies between what is aimed by educational authorities and what is experienced in the classroom. One of those problems relates to the adoption of curriculum materials (Briars, 2014). Hence, what is taught in the classroom is heavily influenced by textbooks and chosen instructional materials that basically affect how contents of a specific language curriculum are delivered in actual instruction. At the macro-level perspective, the main question is *how do curricular materials reflect the national development goals of the society?* On the micro-level, it may include the question of *how curricular materials enable teachers to impart to learners the kind of competencies (i.e., knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are underpinned by values) required for the type of society envisioned and the challenges people have to face at present and in the future?*

The issue on how instructional materials affect language instruction and delivery of the curriculum is prevalent among countries where English is taught both as a foreign and a second language. Allwright (1990) argues that materials should teach students to learn, that they should be resources for ideas and activities for instruction or learning, and that they should give teachers rationales for what they do. O'Neill (1990) affirms, on the other hand, that teaching materials such as textbooks must be suitable for the needs of the students. Conversely, the utility of instructional materials to bridge prescribed competencies with implemented curriculum is not fully realized in several language classrooms. Identifying gaps and weaknesses of the curriculum per se and how it is implemented therefore calls for a process known as curriculum evaluation, a way to make value judgments on the merit or worth of a part or the whole of a curriculum (International Bureau of Education, 2016). In countries outside the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, and others where English is spoken as a first language, several studies were conducted to assess language curricula, determine gaps, and eventually bridge inconsistencies and flawed practices, especially in the

areas of designing curriculum content and utilizing curricular materials such as textbooks, syllabi, and curriculum guides.

Alhamlan (2013) assessed the English language curriculum taught in third-year secondary schools in Saudi Arabia. The results revealed that the syllabus used in the Riyadh region meets the requirements of students. However, based on the perspectives of the student-respondents, problems were traced on the difficulty of the materials in the textbook, the opportunities for students to interact in the classroom, and the number of new vocabulary items in the said materials.

The implementation of the English language curriculum of the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) at a College of Education in Ogun State, Nigeria was evaluated in the study of Tom-Lawyer (2014). The study specifically sought to fill the gap relative to the poor performance of Nigerian students in external English examinations by determining the effectiveness of the schooling of teachers. The findings revealed that lecturers mostly employed a combination of teaching modes in classrooms. Further, students had negative attitudes toward the curriculum, which also impacted its implementation. It was reported that the implementation of the NCE English language curriculum was ineffective.

The study of Sahiruddin (2013) focused on the textual evaluation of English textbooks used in Indonesia. He found that the schoolbooks the central government of Indonesia (through the Ministry of Education and Culture) has adopted do not give focus on local content (specific to the several ethnic groups the country has) but on a more general national content that leaves behind minority groups. Such local cultural content is deemed facilitative to learning on the part of the Indonesian students, where engagement with the material could be better established. As a culturally diverse country, Indonesian language learners need textbooks that are localized and, at the same time, contextualized.

In Brazil, Rodrigues (2015) did a qualitative content analysis of EFL books utilized in several schools. He tried to determine whether English books in Brazil adhere to communicative approaches and if these materials were aligned with the framework of communicative competence. The results of the study revealed that the textbooks showed compliance to a relatively weak version of the communicative approach. Further, textbook writers must embed such materials with more communicative tasks that promote better interaction, negotiation of meaning, learner autonomy, and language experiences grounded on communicative contexts.

In the Philippines, the advent of a new language policy, the Mother-Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE), also elicited issues concerning its implementation in the basic education sector, particularly in primary school levels. Hence, the study of Lartec, Belisario, Bendanillo, Binas-o, Bucang, and Cammagay (2014) focused on the strategies and problems encountered by teachers in implementing the mother-tongue-based instruction in a multilingual classroom. The findings showed that the translation of the target language to mother tongue and improvisation of teaching materials were the strategies employed by the teachers to achieve the goals of the program. As regards problems encountered, the teachers revealed that absence of books written in the mother tongue, lack of vocabulary, and deficient teacher-training impede the efficient implementation of MTB-MLE among the students in the city.

The language situations of the aforesaid countries relate to the need to evaluate how materials such as syllabi and textbooks are designed, utilized, and anchored on relevant standards. Moreover, the selection of materials must not be taken for granted because instructional materials are a primary source for English language arts teachers. Hence, they must be selected wisely (NCTE, 2014). Another teacher's material that takes an important role in the implementation of the curriculum is the curriculum guide, an outline that guides teachers toward instructional planning.

Theoretically, a curriculum guide is defined by Wentzell (2006) as a structured document that delineates the philosophy, goals, objectives, learning experiences, instructional resources, and assessments comprising a specific educational program. The curriculum guide therefore serves as a teacher's tool where competencies and concepts students should acquire and understand, respectively, are articulated, and where ways to achieve pedagogical goals are demonstrated. Just like a syllabus in the tertiary level and a textbook among basic education schools, a curriculum guide directs a teacher toward effective lesson planning, lesson execution, and evaluation.

To make the curriculum guide a useful material for teachers is now a big question. Aside from the fact that it has to be user-friendly, an effective curriculum guide must also be consistent with what is known about child growth and development that is compatible with the philosophy of the school system, must be based upon clear convictions about the educative process, and must meet students' varying needs and abilities, among others (Connecticut State Department of Education, 2010). Neglecting these crucial contents of the guide puts into peril the way teachers would plan learning experiences for the students and, later on, affect the curriculum development process and its implementation in general. Effective implementation of a language program may also rely on how language teachers utilize curriculum guides to create a smooth affinity between what the curriculum dictates and what transpires in language classrooms.

The enactment of Republic Act No. 10533 in the Philippines, otherwise known as the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, has paved the way for the introduction of more contextualized and in-depth learning experiences for Filipino students, especially in the area of English Language Arts. Teachers in basic education were then introduced to the practice of using curriculum guides in English to plan instruction and make learning of the language more efficient. Through memorandum orders from the Department of Education (DepEd), classroom teachers in public schools have started attending trainings, specifically dubbed as Mass Training of Teachers for the K to 12 Basic Education Program (MTOT). Since 2012, DepEd has intended to provide teachers with concrete understanding of the curriculum framework and learning standards, competencies, teaching plans, and assessment. Part of the mass training is having teachers understand the curriculum framework and key stage standards, including content and performance standards. However, a 'walk through' the curriculum guide, which is still part of the training, may not be enough to acquaint the teachers on how the curriculum works, especially on how learners' materials adhere to the curriculum guides and the prescribed curriculum. To support this claim, Palattao (2013) conducted a study on K to 12 instructional materials and found that public secondary schools were not ready in terms of textbooks or instructional materials and content relative to the implementation of the new curriculum. In a news article written by Pazzibugan (2013) for the

Philippine Daily Inquirer, she emphasized that K to 12 is still struggling. As such, one of the teachers interviewed stressed that trainings have improved but are still not enough. Further, in the same article, another teacher commented that teachers were merely handed with a curriculum guide consisting only of few pages. The teachers' module was also incomplete.

Teacher trainings in the Philippines also highlight instructional practices and the process of utilizing materials provided by the country's Education Department. However, the evaluation of instructional materials by teachers is not given much attention. Coming from the perspective of an effective curriculum-development process, the role of teachers in curriculum evaluation is crucial. Hollowell (2008) thus posits that the first-hand knowledge of classroom teachers on instructional methods make them qualified evaluators of a curriculum's effectiveness, such as utilizing the best learning strategies and materials for student success. The voices of classroom teachers as end-users of curriculum materials and as practitioners who directly interact with learners should be recognized for them to participate in the preparation of materials and in the evaluation of their use and effectiveness.

For Leung (2006), the roles of teachers are crucial in terms of curriculum integration. These roles are affected by how teachers make sense of curriculum integration, the challenges they may encounter, and the support they ought to have in the implementation process. Because teachers serve as end-users of curriculum materials, one definite determinant of how the entire curriculum progresses rests on how resources are effectively made sense and utilized in the field. The need to consider the role of teachers in the curriculum-development process therefore extends to how they view the use of materials provided to them by curriculum authorities and experts.

More voices should also be heard in the pursuit of refining and developing the language curriculum. For instance, Freire (2003) believes that from a curriculum-design perspective, the concept of 'co-intentional pedagogy' or 'emancipatory pedagogy' ushers in teacher-student-driven materials development in the educational scene. It is for this reason that they should actively participate in planning, negotiating, acting, reflecting, discussing, and creating dialogues on matters involving different educative agenda (Adam, Zinn, Kemp, & Pieterse, 2014). Aside from asserting the creation of the practice of humanizing pedagogies (Adam et al., 2014), students and teachers in particular could participate as well in realizing pedagogical agenda such as the design of learning materials (Widodo, 2017).

On a relative note, the teacher is the most important resource in the curriculum-development process. The traditional view of the curriculum, which implies that it is developed by one set of people, implemented by another, and received by yet another (Grundy, 1987), no longer applies. With this, another way is to think about curriculum as an activity (Stenhouse, 1975) or as a plan in action (Sharpes, 1988) where teachers can proactively participate in both curriculum construction and implementation. A clamor for a shift from such a traditional perspective stems from the idea that curriculum development should be negotiated and co-constructed by both curriculum experts and education authorities, including teachers. Carl (2005) asserts that teachers are partners in the process of curriculum change. There should be equal recognition of their "voices" to give them opportunities to make inputs during the initial curriculum-development process. When teachers' "voices" are ignored, the outcomes of new thinking about curriculum development may be thwarted, protracting the dangerous situation of teachers and keeping their "voices crying in the wilderness" (Carl,

2005, p. 228). Sharma (1998) also affirms that teachers are the most important component in designing and improving a curriculum. They need to be well-informed so that they can include out-of-school experiences that constitute more learning opportunities into the present formal education agenda. More importantly, they need to be empowered to fulfill such a responsibility (Sharma, 1992).

It is therefore the aim of the present study to evaluate the existing curriculum guide currently used by secondary English language teachers in the Philippines based on what appropriately constitutes such a material as proposed by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) in the United States. The limited number of studies on the evaluation of curriculum materials such as curriculum guides, specifically in the Philippines, makes the present study relevant and equally timely. Undeniably, these curriculum guides, which serve as teachers' blueprint in planning lessons, creating learning experiences, executing instructional strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes, must adhere to the agreed-upon language standards to make them apt with what the umbrella curriculum aims to achieve. As supported by the Connecticut State Department of Education (2010), no guide will be perfect. No guide will ever be a finished product cast in stone. No guide will be free from criticism. However, to be effective, a curriculum guide must earn acceptance by teachers and must be deemed valid by parents and the community as well.

It is hoped that through a textual evaluation of the 10th grade English curriculum guide, using the notion of what is considered as standard, adequate, and effective, the ways by which a language curriculum is rendered will no longer be creating a spectrum of issues that impede the curriculum's effective implementation in the Philippines. Bhowmik (2015) supports the idea that as the proliferation of English education continues, materials to be used for the English Language Teaching (ELT) curriculum are but only a few issues that constitute some of the most intriguing concerns in the field. Thus, examining the appropriateness of curricular materials toward their refurbished versions may fill in an important gap to improve language planning and English language teaching in the country. When things are corrected and issues are ironed out, language teachers would then be empowered to give quality instruction and help schools in the Philippines produce graduates who can apply language conventions, principles, strategies, and skills in interacting with others, understanding and learning other content areas, and fending for themselves in whatever field of endeavor they may be in. Simply put, a shift in the way curriculum development is viewed, using the novel experiences of teachers, is a preparation for the creation of the image of a Filipino language learner who is completely ready to traverse the 21st-century landscape.

1.1 Research Questions

This descriptive study aimed at evaluating the existing 10th grade English curriculum guide utilized among public secondary schools in the Philippines. The criteria for evaluation were taken from the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), which are used when assessing the content adequacy of a curriculum guide in English Language Arts (ELA). Specifically, it sought answers for the following research questions:

1. In what way does the 10th grade English curriculum guide meet the NCTE standards when evaluated based on the following criteria:
 - 1.1 philosophy;
 - 1.2 objectives;
 - 1.3 content;
 - 1.3.1 language
 - 1.3.2 composition
 - 1.3.3 reading
 - 1.3.4 literature
 - 1.3.5 media
 - 1.4 organization;
 - 1.5 policies and procedures; and
 - 1.6 design?
2. What problems do English language teachers from public secondary schools in the Philippines experience when using the 10th grade English curriculum guide?

2. Method

2.1 Research Design

The study employed the explanatory mixed methods design. It is a type of sequential mixed methods research design that aims to explain earlier quantitative findings using qualitative methods. In the context of the present study, quantitative data about the textual evaluation of the 10th grade English curriculum guide were processed using descriptive statistics such as mean scores and standard deviation. These quantitative data were analyzed first prior to the collection of qualitative data. The study's qualitative component includes the responses of teachers as regards the problems or difficulties they have encountered in using the curriculum guide.

2.2 Respondents

The respondents of the study, who served as evaluators, were Grade 10 English language teachers from four of the biggest public secondary schools in the Schools Division of Tarlac Province, Central Luzon, the Philippines. A total of 30 teachers evaluated the existing curriculum guide for Grade 10 English, which comprised the total population of teachers teaching in the aforementioned grade level and learning area in the purposively chosen schools.

The Grade 10 English language teachers were chosen as evaluators of the curriculum guide because they are the end-users of the material. These teachers directly use the English 10 curriculum guide in planning instruction and designing their daily-lesson activities focused on achieving the competencies set for English 10. Hence, they have gained

more experiences using the curriculum guide, which better qualify them as evaluators. Total enumeration was adopted for the study in relation to the selection of the teacher-respondents. The 30 teachers who evaluated the curriculum guide represent the total population of Grade 10 English language teachers in the largest school cluster in the Schools Division of Tarlac Province where the study was conducted. As per Tomlinson (2003), it is important to identify target users' opinions in order to evaluate or develop ELT materials. Along with learners, in essence, it is crucial to clarify teachers' preferences on the aspects of curriculum materials (Kim, 2015).

2.3 Instrument

The main research instrument in this study is an evaluation tool that consists of criteria crafted by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) for English Language Arts curriculum guides. The criteria presented in the instrument were exclusively developed and revised by NCTE's Committee to Evaluate Curriculum Guides and Competency Requirements in an effort to keep pace with the practices of the best curriculum developers (Tschudi, 1991). Although the criteria were created to evaluate ELA curriculum guides implemented among American schools, they are still applicable and equally befitting to the language curriculum guides in the Philippines. The instrument is specifically intended for the evaluation of K to 12 English Language Arts curriculum guides. Hence, it is a valid instrument to evaluate existing curriculum guides in the Philippines. Just like in the United States where the educational system follows the K to 12 Education from kindergarten to senior high school (Corsi-Bunker, 2010), the Philippines has also implemented the same educational system following the debut of the K to 12 Basic Education Program in school year 2012 to 2013.

2.4 Procedure

To describe the adequacy of the Grade 10 English curriculum guide based on NCTE standards, the English language teachers were asked to complete the evaluation tool. Along with the main instrument was an open-ended question the teachers needed to answer. The data, in relation to the teachers' experiences in using the curriculum guide, were used to provide answers to the second question raised in this study. The overall evaluation and the responses of the teachers formed part of the inputs on how classroom teachers could be better involved in the curriculum-development process.

2.5 Data Analysis

The data gathered on the textual evaluation of the 10th grade English curriculum guide were subjected to statistical analyses. Mean scores and standard deviation, which are examples of descriptive statistics, were identified to represent the central tendency and dispersion of the responses, respectively. Qualitative data were analyzed based on the recurring patterns of responses of the teachers relevant to the problems or issues encountered when using the curriculum guide.

3. Results and Discussion

The evaluation of the 10th grade English curriculum guide used by public secondary school teachers in the Philippines focused on assessing how the material meets the standards set by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE). The evaluation specifically looked into the ways by which the curriculum guide was developed through its philosophy; objectives; content, which includes its language, composition, reading, literature, and media; organization; policies and procedures; and design as evaluation criteria. Along with the content evaluation of the curriculum guide is the presentation of the problems and suggestions provided by the teacher-evaluators to improve the material for instructional-planning purposes.

3.1 Evaluation of the 10th Grade English Curriculum Guide Based on NCTE Standards

3.1.1 On Philosophy

The criteria set by NCTE in evaluating curriculum guides for English Language Arts were used for the purpose of describing how adequately the 10th grade English curriculum guide adheres to expected standards. Table 1 presents the teachers' evaluation as to the philosophy of the aforesaid material.

Table 1

Grade 10 English language teachers' evaluation on the alignment of the English 10 curriculum guide to language program philosophy

Item No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
1	The Grade 10 English CG presents a statement of district or faculty philosophy that coherently conveys the beliefs of the developers about students and subject matter.	3.98	0.61	Adequately Evident
2	The Grade 10 English CG promotes a natural, organic integration of language arts experiences.	3.92	0.74	Adequately Evident
3	The Grade 10 English CG encourages teachers to view language as both a subject and a communicative process central to all human life and learning.	3.99	0.74	Adequately Evident

Table 1 continued...

Item No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
4	The Grade 10 English CG recognizes that individual processes of language development and concept development cannot necessarily be grouped into arbitrary grade level expectancies of requirements.	3.66	0.74	Adequately Evident
5	The Grade 10 English CG reflects knowledge of current or recent developments in modern language theory.	3.71	0.81	Adequately Evident
6	The Grade 10 English CG indicates that successful language experiences are essential for all students.	3.74	0.83	Adequately Evident
7	The Grade 10 English CG recognizes the assets of bi-dialectal, bilingual, and non-English-speaking students into exploring language concepts.	3.47	0.93	Somewhat Evident
8	The Grade 10 English CG recognizes the importance of students accepting their native language as that of others.	3.33	1.01	Somewhat Evident
Grand		3.73	0.80	Adequately Evident

Based on the evaluation of the participants, it can be gleaned that the philosophy of the K to 12 Language Arts and Multiliteracies Curriculum of the Department of Education (DepEd) is adequately evident in the curriculum material owing to the grand mean, 3.73. Further, the standard deviation of 0.80 reveals that the weight of evaluation of the participants are closely tied within the mean, which means that the evaluation for each item under the foregoing criterion is relatively less varied or dispersed. As such, the teacher-evaluators generally agree that the curriculum guide adequately adheres to the need to align the content to the philosophy of the existing language program and rationale, which is to represent language as the basis of all communication and the primary instrument of thought and with the view that language is the foundation of all human relationships (Department of Education, 2013). The representation of the philosophy in the curriculum guide evaluated by teachers is therefore satisfactorily fulfilled.

3.1.2 On Objectives

Table 2 presents the evaluation of the teachers on the way objectives are represented in the 10th grade English curriculum guide.

Table 2

Grade 10 English language teachers' evaluation on the alignment of the English 10 curriculum guide to the language program's objectives

Item No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
1	The Grade 10 English CG includes objectives directly related to the philosophy.	3.89	0.76	Adequately Evident
2	The Grade 10 English CG states objectives as tasks that can be performed.	3.95	0.81	Adequately Evident
3	The Grade 10 English CG recognizes that many objectives are desirable even though progress toward them may not be easily observed or accurately measured.	3.69	0.77	Adequately Evident
4	The Grade 10 English CG sets clear objectives for all major components of the English curriculum within the scope and sequence of the guide.	3.73	0.87	Adequately Evident
5	The Grade 10 English CG distinguishes teacher objectives from student objectives.	3.75	0.90	Adequately Evident
6	The Grade 10 English CG includes objectives that are varied and that accommodate a range of student abilities and teaching styles.	3.57	0.95	Adequately Evident
7	The Grade 10 English CG contains objectives for improving both expressive (writing and speaking) and receptive (reading and listening) language.	3.78	0.92	Adequately Evident
Grand		3.74	0.86	Adequately Evident

The grand mean score of 3.74 shows that the second criterion that relates to the representation of a language program's objectives is adequately evident in the 10th grade English curriculum guide. The corresponding value of the standard deviation also reveals that the evaluation scores of teachers are concentrated on the mean score because it does not exceed 1. Hence, the evaluation scores for the items are closely related. The consistency as regards the evaluation of the teachers on the presentation of objectives in the curriculum guide supports the overall result of the textual evaluation. In the preliminary parts of the K to

12 Curriculum Guide in English (Department of Education, 2013), each grade level is given a specific key stage standard in which stipulated are the expected outcomes on the part of the students. For Grade 10, it is clearly stated that students should be able to interpret, evaluate, and represent information within and between learning-area texts and discourses.

3.1.3 On Content

The following tables relate to the evaluation of the Grade 10 English language teachers on the content of the curriculum guide prescribed for the grade level they teach. The NCTE criteria for English Language Arts consider language, composition, reading, literature, and media as important components.

3.1.3.1 On Language

Table 3
Evaluation on the language content of the English 10 curriculum guide

Item No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
1	The Grade 10 English CG recognizes that the content of language study often comes from real life.	3.87	0.81	Adequately Evident
2	The Grade 10 English CG provides for the study of a variety of conversational aspects of linguistics such as semantics, regional and social dialects, grammars, lexicography, body language, and history of language.	3.51	0.89	Adequately Evident
3	The Grade 10 English CG provides for both imaginative and informative uses of language in student groups.	3.58	0.80	Adequately Evident
4	The Grade 10 English CG encourages student application of language appropriate to audience and purpose.	3.73	0.87	Adequately Evident
5	The Grade 10 English CG distinguishes between grammar and usage.	3.78	0.82	Adequately Evident
6	The Grade 10 English CG recognizes that acquiring information <i>about</i> language does not necessarily improve oral or written language performance.	3.22	0.88	Somewhat Evident
Grand		3.61	0.85	Adequately Evident

The teachers' evaluation on the language content of the 10th grade English curriculum guide received a grand mean of 3.61 and a corresponding standard deviation of 0.85. In this regard, language concepts and knowledge of the different ways by which language can be applied in different contexts are adequately evident in the curriculum material. Further, the value of the standard deviation suggests that the mean scores of teachers' evaluation are closely tied. Owing to an ideal language curriculum, Fillion (1991) agrees that such stresses concern for how people learn to use language, how they use language to achieve understanding and appreciation of their experiences, and how language use influences cognitive development. The adequacy of the language content of the curriculum guide is therefore apparent on how language study is viewed in the current language curriculum in the Philippines. As such, the material presents language as central to people's intellectual, social, and emotional development and has an essential role in all key learning areas (Department of Education, 2013).

3.1.3.2 On Composition

Table 4

Evaluation on the composition content of the English 10 curriculum guide

Item No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
1	The Grade 10 English CG suggests strategies for developing composition skills.	3.66	0.90	Adequately Evident
2	The Grade 10 English CG recognizes the significance of composing as a means of self-discovery and of bringing order to human experiences.	3.53	0.85	Adequately Evident
3	The Grade 10 English CG recognizes that composing is a process involving stages such as prewriting, drafting, and revising.	3.67	0.69	Adequately Evident
4	The Grade 10 English CG provides prewriting activities designed to stimulate composing.	3.49	0.86	Somewhat Evident
5	The Grade 10 English CG recognizes that composing is often aided by small-group interaction in an atmosphere of sharing.	3.58	0.92	Adequately Evident
6	The Grade 10 English CG allows for student-teacher interaction (conferences).	3.42	0.86	Somewhat Evident

Table 4 continued...

Item No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
7	The Grade 10 English CG recommends that composing occurs for different purposes and usually for audiences other than the teacher.	3.53	0.85	Adequately Evident
8	The Grade 10 English CG recognizes that analysis of language is an editing tool in the composing process (improves editing).	3.39	0.86	Somewhat Evident
Grand		3.51	0.85	Adequately Evident

The teacher-evaluators described the composition content of the 10th grade English curriculum guide as “adequately evident” with the grand mean of 3.51. The standard deviation obtained for the foregoing criterion reveals that the evaluation scores given by the participants were fairly tied with one another, which is numerically represented as 0.85. In view of the evaluation made, the writing composition content of the curriculum guide provides for sufficient honing of learners’ skills in writing and composition. The actual curriculum guide adequately presents composition-relevant activities as the new curriculum adheres to the guiding principle that successful language learning involves viewing, listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities (Department of Education, 2013).

3.1.3.3 On Reading

Table 5
Evaluation on the reading content of the English 10 curriculum guide

Item No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
1	The Grade 10 English CG provides ways to determine individual degrees of readiness.	3.29	0.97	Somewhat Evident
2	The Grade 10 English CG suggests procedures to help teachers develop students’ reading skills.	3.39	0.86	Somewhat Evident
3	The Grade 10 English CG recognizes that a total reading program, reaching beyond the development of basic reading (decoding) skills, focuses on students’ comprehension.	3.33	0.82	Somewhat Evident

Table 5 continued...

Item No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
4	The Grade 10 English CG relates reading instruction to the whole language arts program.	3.18	1.07	Somewhat Evident
Grand		3.35	0.93	Somewhat Evident

For the second criterion, the teachers evaluated the reading content of the curriculum guide as “somewhat evident.” The grand mean of 3.35 reveals that the curriculum material does not adequately and strongly provide an all-encompassing reading content. Moreover, the standard deviation computed, i.e., 0.93, also describes how discreetly linked evaluation scores are, because it is a relatively low value. The teacher-evaluators consistently adjudged the 10th grade English curriculum guide as rather adequate on the basis of providing ways to determine students’ degrees of readiness in reading, to help teachers develop learners’ reading skills, to develop basic decoding skills toward students’ reading comprehension, and to render reading instruction for the whole language arts program. The “funneling” of domains across the K to 12 Basic Education Integrated Language Arts Curriculum involves the presentation of the development of students’ reading comprehension through the use of content and prior knowledge, comprehension strategies, comprehending literary texts, and comprehending informational texts (Department of Education, 2013). However, their presentation in the actual curriculum guide is hardly fulfilled.

3.1.3.4 On Literature

Table 6

Evaluation on the literature content of the English 10 curriculum guide

Item No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
1	The Grade 10 English CG provides for a comprehensive literature program.	3.76	0.86	Adequately Evident
2	The Grade 10 English CG provides for study of various literary genres.	3.61	0.91	Adequately Evident
3	The Grade 10 English CG recommends that students be allowed and encouraged to select and read all types of literature, classical through contemporary.	3.56	0.72	Adequately Evident

Table 6 continued...

Item No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
4	The Grade 10 English CG recognizes that involvement in a piece of literature is more important than talking about literary terms.	3.65	0.78	Adequately Evident
5	The Grade 10 English CG helps teachers to identify, explore, and accept varieties of affective and cognitive responses.	3.77	0.70	Adequately Evident
6	The Grade 10 English CG provides for the integration of writing and literature.	3.65	0.78	Somewhat Evident
Grand		3.66	0.79	Adequately Evident

Adequacy of the literature content of the 10th grade English curriculum guide was also examined by the teacher-evaluators. The mean score received by the foregoing criterion under *content*, which is 3.66, shows that the material sufficiently satisfies the evaluation guidelines of NCTE based on how literature contents are presented. On the other hand, the standard deviation, which is less than 1 (0.79), reveals how uniformly tied the evaluation scores are.

A majority of the guiding statements in evaluating the literature content of the curriculum guide were evaluated as adequately relevant. According to the authors of the curriculum material, Almonte et al. (2015), the literature content of the English 10 curriculum provides a variety of texts, particularly world literary pieces, that are both relevant and meaningful to students' lives. Further, the material provides for the understanding of cultures – that is, learning the language through text types, and literary appreciation exposes learners to different cultures of the world, including their own (Department of Education, 2013). The descriptions therefore qualify how the English 10 curriculum guide provides a comprehensive literature program: the study of both classical and contemporary literary genres (e.g., narratives, poems, plays) focusing on masterpieces of world literature, provisions on how students could be engaged in literary criticisms and analyses and not merely on simple recall of literary terms, and the aid the material gives to teachers in identifying, exploring, and accepting affective and cognitive responses to learning.

3.1.3.5 On Media

Table 7

Evaluation on the media content of the English 10 curriculum guide

Item No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
1	The Grade 10 English CG promotes audiovisual as well as verbal literacy.	3.84	0.83	Adequately Evident

Table 7 continued...

Item No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
2	The Grade 10 English CG suggests ways of involving students in using media.	3.77	0.70	Adequately Evident
3	The Grade 10 English CG suggests specific media supplements for learning activities.	3.87	0.85	Adequately Evident
4	The Grade 10 English CG lists media resources available to teachers and specific procedures for obtaining them.	3.81	0.84	Adequately Evident
5	The Grade 10 English CG recognizes the use of new technology (computers, word processors) in the teaching of English.	3.91	0.83	Adequately Evident
Grand		3.81	0.81	Adequately Evident

Just like most of the criteria used for the evaluation of the existing 10th grade English curriculum guide, the grand mean of 3.81 reveals that media content is “adequately evident.” The standard deviation of 0.81 also shows how closely linked the mean scores are because a relatively smaller standard deviation means more closely tied data. The evaluation scores of the teachers are consistent, considering the five guiding statements for the material’s media content. The needs of learners as centennials or those who belong to Generation Z (1994-2004) are addressed in context from the material evaluated (Department of Education, 2013).

3.1.4 On Organization

Table 8 illustrates the evaluation of the teachers in terms of how adequately the 10th grade English curriculum guide satisfies the expected organization for such kind of material.

Table 8

Grade 10 English teachers' evaluation on the organization of the English 10 curriculum guide

Item No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
1	The Grade 10 English CG presents a scope and sequence of basic communication skills.	3.74	0.79	Adequately Evident

Table 8 continued...

Item No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
2	The Grade 10 English CG makes clear how particular units and lessons are related to the total English Language Arts program.	3.53	0.81	Adequately Evident
3	The Grade 10 English CG organizes major aspects of the language arts according to some consistent, identified structure or pattern.	3.56	0.72	Adequately Evident
4	The Grade 10 English CG provides a process for learning through which teachers help students become increasingly independent.	3.47	0.86	Somewhat Evident
Grand		3.67	0.79	Adequately Evident

The 10th grade English curriculum guide presents adequate evidence in terms of organization. The grand mean of 3.67 justifies such a statement. On the other hand, the computed value of the standard deviation, which is 0.79, means that the evaluation scores are closed to one another. What is apparent from the curriculum guide is the presentation of the scope and sequence of the material. In any curriculum guide, the scope and sequence would include a list of all the ideas, concepts, and topics that will be covered in the book, in the course, or in the lesson plans assigned within a curriculum (Moreau, 2011). The 10th grade English curriculum guide provides the listing of the integrated language-arts domains in codes such as reading comprehension, listening comprehension, viewing comprehension, vocabulary development, literature, writing and composition, oral language and fluency, and grammar awareness.

3.1.5 On Policies and Procedures

Table 9 presents how the English language teachers evaluated the 10th grade English curriculum guide in view of the policies and procedures reflected in the curriculum material.

Table 9

Grade 10 English teachers' evaluation on the policies and procedures in the English 10 curriculum guide

Item No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
1	The Grade 10 English CG explains teachers' responsibilities and suggests options for content and methodology.	3.65	1.03	Adequately Evident

Table 9 continued...

Item No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
2	The Grade 10 English CG reflects the principle that students themselves should often generate learning activities.	3.45	0.90	Somewhat Evident
3	The Grade 10 English CG reflects the participation of the total educational community.	3.42	0.90	Somewhat Evident
4	The Grade 10 English CG regards textbooks as resources rather than courses of study.	3.53	0.85	Adequately Evident
5	The Grade 10 English CG supports the view that curriculum building is an ongoing process.	3.49	0.86	Somewhat Evident
Grand		3.53	0.91	Adequately Evident

The representation of policies and procedures was evaluated as “adequately evident” in the 10th grade English curriculum guide based on the grand mean of 3.53. With it is the corresponding standard deviation of 0.91, which reflects fairly uniform evaluation scores received by the curriculum guide. It is apparent from the preliminary presentation of the curriculum guide that the English language teachers are guided on what they need to do regarding the delivery of the curriculum’s content and toward making sense of the methodology embedded in the material. However, although the curriculum guide does not explicitly regard textbooks as resources than courses of study, the teacher-evaluators still considered the guiding statement as “adequately evident” in the material. This may be due to the fact that information from textbooks proliferated among public secondary schools are not considered as the sole curricular guide of teachers in teaching English Language Arts.

3.1.6 On Design

Table 10 presents how the English language teachers in the Grade 10 level evaluated the overall design of the 10th grade English curriculum guide.

Table 10

Grade 10 English teachers' evaluation on the overall design of the English 10 curriculum guide

Item No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
1	The Grade 10 English CG is easy to read; the language is clear and effective.	3.47	0.93	Somewhat Evident

Table 10 continued...

Item No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
2	The Grade 10 English CG is presented in an appealing form and style.	3.27	0.93	Somewhat Evident
3	The Grade 10 English CG has a format, such as loose leaf, that makes revision convenient.	3.09	1.01	Somewhat Evident
4	The Grade 10 English CG states its relationship, if any, to other curriculum guides, district goals, or graduation requirements.	3.16	0.83	Somewhat Evident
5	The Grade 10 English CG suggests, as resources, a large variety of specific background materials and school services.	3.27	1.04	Somewhat Evident
6	The Grade 10 English CG provides a model for evaluation of the program.	3.16	1.10	Somewhat Evident
	Grand	3.23	0.97	Somewhat Evident

The grand mean of 3.23 makes this criterion, *design*, the weakest aspect of the 10th grade English curriculum guide. However, the standard deviation, which is less than 1, reveals how the evaluation scores (which are relatively low) are closely tied. Hence, there is an apparent uniformity among the evaluation responses from the respondents. Consistently, the teachers identified all underlying statements under the featured criteria as “somewhat evident.” This means that there is something incomplete or lacking as regards the way the curriculum guide fulfills the standards in terms of design. More evidently, clear language is therefore needed, especially in the case of the teacher-evaluators who are second-language speakers of English. Also, appropriate form and style are hardly observed.

3.2 Problems Experienced by Teachers in Using the 10th Grade English Curriculum Guide

Kitao (1997) identifies the important components of language instruction that include students, a teacher, teaching methods, evaluation, and materials. It is with materials that language instruction is enhanced, strengthened, and made effective for learners, if created strategically and utilized appropriately. Further, the NCTE (2014) justifies how instructional materials serve as essential tools in the English Language Arts classroom. On the part of language teachers, a carefully crafted curriculum guide in English will go a long way in helping teachers plan for better instruction. As Fink (2005) asserts, teachers’ guides in instructional planning are roadmaps that lead the way toward effective language teaching. These guides must be teacher-friendly and must not mislead teachers as end-users of the

material. Table 11 presents the problems experienced by the teachers in utilizing the 10th Grade English curriculum guide.

Table 11

Problems experienced by the teachers in using the English 10 curriculum guide

1	Activities are not appropriate to the different cognitive levels of the Grade 10 learners.
2	There are insufficient authentic language samples.
3	Literary texts are long and less comprehensive.
4	The format or the way the curriculum guide was structured is somehow confusing.
5	There are less tasks included to tap on multilingualism and multiculturalism.
6	There are many repetitive and overlapping tasks.
7	The number of tasks does not match the number of hours prescribed for English 10.
8	There are too limited tasks related to media literacy.
9	There are very few theoretical discussions on grammar.
10	Objectives for each language strand are too broad.
11	Objectives are presented in a language that both teachers and learners may not understand.
12	There is a missing link between the curriculum guide and the learner's material.
13	There are problems on the pacing of activities in the curriculum guide.
14	There are only limited localized and contextualized tasks.
15	Writing activities do not accommodate a heterogeneous class.
16	There are typographical errors in the curriculum guide.

The table presents a summary of the responses of the teacher-evaluators when asked to identify problems they experienced in using the 10th grade English curriculum guide. Generally, there are a total of 16 recurring responses from the teachers. As such, some of the evaluators intentionally did not provide answers for the embedded open-ended question on problems experienced. One of the problems met includes appropriateness of activities for the varying cognitive levels of the students along with the problem that the activities included do not accommodate heterogeneous classes. Pacing of the activities is another issue.

Moreover, on the tasks provided, the teachers responded that language tasks in the curriculum guide do not match the need to develop learners' multilingual, multicultural, and media-literacy skills. The tasks are also repetitive and do not match the time allotted for the teaching of the learning area. In connection to the aforesaid problems, there is also a limited number of authentic language samples that are localized and contextualized. As regards content, literary texts are too long for the learners, and there are very few theoretical discussions on grammar concepts.

On objectives, the teachers responded that they are too broad and that they are stated in a language that is not clear for both teachers and learners. Finally, when it comes to the

format or the way the curriculum guide is presented, the teachers responded that the format tends to confuse them, and it does not directly establish an affinity with other important materials such as the modules provided by the Education Department. Lastly, the teachers noticed that the 10th grade English curriculum guide has a number of typographical errors.

4. Conclusion

This paper, which reports on a textual evaluation of the 10th grade English curriculum guide used in the Philippines, provides an actual determination of how curriculum materials, such as curriculum guides, could be assessed in terms of their content and usability. With this, three important conclusions could be drawn from the present study:

First, the 10th grade English curriculum guide used by public secondary school teachers in the aforesaid learning area is textually adequate in view of the evaluation scores given by the teachers who participated in the study. This illustrates how the material generally adheres to standards based on the criteria set by a reputable pedagogical organization in the United States, the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE). Hence, representation of a language curriculum's standards in a curriculum guide is deemed necessary. On a relative note, this is suggestive of the need to highlight the responsibility of a school or the teachers themselves about selecting appropriate materials. According to NCTE (2014), selecting materials requires in-depth knowledge not only of students' backgrounds and learning experiences but also of their abilities and interests; not only of educational objectives but of the best practices, range and quality of materials for meeting them.

Second, the need to calibrate the specific content and overall design of the curriculum guide is highlighted in the results of the present study. The teachers evaluated the 10th grade English curriculum guide as lacking adequate evidence based on its reading content and comprehensiveness in terms of structural design. Hence, the evaluation may give significant data to material developers and curriculum designers of the Department of Education (DepEd) in the Philippines in a way that there are still aspects to improve to make materials, such as curriculum guides, helpful and effective for teachers. The content of the curriculum guide has to be holistic, complete, and appropriate to the philosophy and objectives of the English Language Arts curriculum implemented. Miller (2000) defines this holistic curriculum as connected to human experience—connections between mind and body, between linear thinking and intuitive ways of knowing, between academic disciplines, and between the individual and the community.

Finally, an important part of the curriculum-development process rests on curriculum evaluation. As such, the process of evaluating the effectiveness and appropriateness of curriculum materials should form part of reshaping and refining the curriculum. In doing so, the role of teachers not merely in the selection process but more importantly, in the process of evaluating curriculum materials remains crucial. As end-users, it is but appropriate to consider teachers in the entire curriculum-development cycle. In this regard, Martin, Cena, and Ma. Nolasco (2014) suggested a bottom-up approach (a *bibingka*, native rice cake solution) in curriculum development. It is an approach that involves teachers in the school level—one that has not been considered in language education planning in the Philippines. This is a great

way to empower classroom teachers and make their voices heard in an educational system where the top-down scheme still remains supreme.

Part of evaluating the effectiveness of the curriculum is not only through examining the content of curriculum guides. Such evaluation may also be extended to other instructional materials such as textbooks, teachers' lesson guides, syllabi, and others that mainly influence the preparation of language-learning experiences for students. Further, involving more teachers to evaluate materials across different schools and grade levels, and using other pertinent aspects of the language curriculum and relevant variables will qualify more the conclusions presented in this study.

Another emerging issue on language-curriculum development is the research space that needs to be filled in terms of the place of World Englishes in language teaching and language-curriculum development in general. Focusing on the existence of varieties of Englishes such as Nigerian English, Singaporean English, including the prevalence of Philippine English, should inform studies and investigations on the development of wider and more accepting perspectives in calibrating the construct of language-curriculum development. For instance, a significant part of the curriculum-development process is the negotiation of issues about the use of external examinations that are marked and assessed using L1 varieties such as American English and British English. Another point to consider is to determine the perceptions of both curriculum experts in English and teachers as practitioners on the possible inclusion of the notion of World Englishes to give credence to emerging localized and indigenized varieties of English. This is another research niche that could pave the way to finally improve the language-curriculum-development process in such a way that it becomes more permeable to newer paradigms that are significantly pragmatic and humanistic in nature (Bhowmik, 2015).

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