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Language Instruction: Towards Creating A Culture and Climate for Thinking

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Abstract:

The study determined what the teachers teach during language instruction in creating a culture and climate for thinking. The respondents of the study were teachers and learners of a public school. The method used in this study was descriptive research design. The method of gathering data was a survey questionnaire. Statistical treatments used were percentage, mean, standard deviation and Mann Whitney U-Test. The findings of the study revealed that majority of the teacher-participants are in the age bracket of 35 to 39 years old, females, with master's units and in the service for five to nine years. The leaner-participants are mostly females and in the HUMMS strand. In teaching language class, teachers give more emphasis on self-system which means willing to exchange ideas, willing to show evidence, be curious and question the reliability of information. While on teaching language class as perceived by the learners it is more on knowledge utilization which implies that there is transfer to learn, observe, conduct research, create or perform, and innovation. Result reveals that assessment of the teacher and learner-participants on what are taught in language instruction have significant difference, when grouped accordingly; therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Keywords: language instruction, creating, culture and climate, thinking

Introduction:

Schools and classrooms, as cultural entities, reflect underlying values, beliefs, norms, and artifacts, similar to other human organizations (Schein, 2018). These cultural aspects form a symbolic language that emerges from shared values, often implicitly influencing observable behaviors and interactions—akin to an iceberg with hidden depths supporting visible elements.

Examining school culture involves exploring interactions across various levels, from individuals to national influences (Erez & Gati, 2020). With the advent of digital transformation and the emphasis on 21st-century skills, there's an increased need for teaching thinking skills in education, especially after the global pandemic pushed learning online.

Teaching thinking originated from the premise that intelligence is not fixed and draws from diverse fields, including neurology, psychology, and sociology (Higgins, 2021). Various approaches, such as those developed by Feuerstein (2017), Lipman (2017), and Ritchhart (2020), suggest that thinking processes can be cultivated through both social and affective domains, emphasizing school culture and teacher influence (Perkins et al., 2019; Topping & Bryce, 2020).

The concept of a "culture of thinking" integrates cognitive, social, and emotional dimensions of learning, making thinking visible, valuable, and active in the classroom (Ritchhart, 2021). Key dimensions in this approach include developing a "language of thinking," promoting dispositions, enhancing mental management, and encouraging higher-order knowledge application (Tishman et al., 2018).

This systematic focus cultivates metacognitive skills, enabling students to analyze and transfer knowledge across contexts (Flavell, 2017; Schraw, Crippen, & Hartley, 2020). Critical thinking, meanwhile, has been recognized as essential for navigating the information age, supporting students in making evidence-based decisions and fostering rational judgment (Chaffee, 2017; Paul, 2018; Siegel, 2017). Fostering a culture of thinking and critical thinking in schools requires a multifaceted approach.

This includes building students' metacognitive skills and self-regulation (Zimmerman, 2020) and reinforcing the values that drive effective learning strategies. By cultivating these skills, educators can prepare students not only to succeed academically but also to engage critically and thoughtfully with the world beyond the classroom. This study seeks to understand how these cultural dynamics can foster a thinking culture within language instruction, with a focus on collaborative community engagement to shape learners' success.

Methodology:

The researcher used descriptive-comparative research design. Descriptive design is suitable wherever the subjects vary among themselves and one is interested to know the extent to which different conditions and situations are

obtained among these subjects. The word survey signifies the gathering of data regarding the present conditions. A survey is useful in: (1) providing the value of facts; and (2) focusing attention on the most important things to be reported. In this study, it was utilized to assess the process of a culture of thinking approach in language instruction. It also used comparative research method to determine the significant difference in their assessment when grouped accordingly.

The method of gathering data is a survey questionnaire which is a product of a thorough reading of related literature and studies. After the construction, the questionnaire was validated by the experts and piloted to respondents who are not included in the survey and the researcher's colleagues and she asked the help of her former professors in the graduate school in the revision of the survey. Moreover, the last step in the validation is proposal defense where the comments and suggestions of the panel were included in the revision.

The population of the study were teachers and learners of Lucsuhin Integrated School, a public school. The locale was chosen because the researcher observed the need to create a learning environment that provides optimal opportunities for students to explore their thoughts, ideas and performance in learning a language.

The respondents were eight (8) Senior High School teachers and 119 Senior High School students. The teachers were chosen purposively, in total enumeration while the learners were randomly selected. After the gathering of data and asking permission from the different offices, the gathered data were subjected to statistical treatment of data.

Results:

The findings were systematically presented, analyzed and interpreted following the sequence of the research questions as enumerated and explained in this section.

1. **What is the profile of the teacher-participants in terms of age, sex, educational attainment, and length of service and the learner-participants in terms of sex and strand?**

Table 1
Profile of the teacher and learner-participants

PROFILE	**Teachers**		**Students**	
Age	f	%	f	%
20-24 y.o	1	13		
25-29 y.o	1	13		
30-34 y.o	1	13		
35-39 y.o	2	25		
40-44 y.o	1	13		
45-49 y.o	1	13		
50-54 y.o	1	13		
TOTAL	**8**	**100**		
Sex				
Male	1	13	58	49
Female	7	88	61	51
TOTAL	**8**	**100**	**119**	**100**
Strand				
TVL			33	28
HUMSS			51	43
ABM			35	29
TOTAL			**119**	**100**

Educational Attainment				
Bachelor's Degree	2	25		
with Masteral Units	5	63		
with MA/MS/MST Degree	1	13		
TOTAL	8	100		
Length of Service				
below 5 years	2	25		
5-9	5	63		
10-14	1	13		
15-19	0	0		
TOTAL	**8**	**100**		

Table 1 shows the profile of the teacher and learner-participants as follows:
Majority of the teacher-participants were in the age bracket of 35 to 39 years old (25%), while the rest were 13 percent for 20 to 24, 25 to 29, 30 to 34, 40 to 44, 45 to 49, 50 to 54 years old. Most of participants were females (88%), rather than males (13%). Majority of the teacher-participants had Master's units (63%), others were Bachelor's degree holders (25%), and 13 percent were Master's degree holders. Mostly, participants had been served within five to nine years (63%), while several of them were serving for five years and below (25%) and 10 to 14 years (13%).

Thus, majority of the learner-participants were females (51%) than males (49%) too. Mostly from HUMMS section (43%), rather than ABM (29%) and TVL sections (28%).

2. What is the assessment of the teacher-respondents and learner-respondents on what are taught in language instruction to create a culture and climate for thinking?

Table 2
Assessment of the teacher-respondents and learner-respondents on what are taught in language instruction

	STATEMENT	TEACHERS (N=8)			STUDENTS (N=119)		
	In our language class, I teach my students how to:	**MEAN**	**SD**	**REMARKS**	**MEAN**	**SD**	**REMARKS**
A.	**Retrieval**						
1.	Choose important details	4.00	0.00	Always	3.60	0.60	Always
2.	Summarize	4.00	0.00	Always	3.40	0.66	Always
3.	Ask questions	4.00	0.00	Always	3.28	0.68	Always
4.	Sort out	3.63	0.52	Always	3.02	0.80	Often
	Sub Mean	**3.91**	**0.13**	**Always**	**3.32**	**0.68**	**Always**
B.	**Comprehension**						
5.	Express opinion	3.88	0.35	Always	3.41	0.66	Always
6.	Give examples	3.88	0.35	Always	3.47	0.67	Always
7.	Make a statement	3.88	0.35	Always	3.33	0.70	Always
8.	Simulate	3.63	0.52	Always	3.11	0.73	Often
9.	Compare/Contrast	3.88	0.35	Always	3.32	0.66	Always

10.	Summarize	3.75	0.46	Always	3.39	0.69	Always
11.	State why/Explain	3.88	0.35	Always	3.38	0.72	Always
12.	Express result	3.50	0.53	Always	3.29	0.69	Always
13.	Translate differently	3.50	0.53	Always	3.22	0.80	Often
	Sub Mean	**3.75**	**0.42**	**Always**	**3.32**	**0.70**	**Always**
C.	**Analyzing**						
14.	Guess	2.38	1.30	Sometimes	3.02	0.87	Often
15.	Make inferences	3.50	0.53	Always	3.06	0.72	Often
16.	Make Error analysis	3.50	0.76	Always	2.82	0.98	Often
17.	Suggest Alternative Views	3.13	0.64	Often	3.15	0.77	Often
18.	Generalize	3.50	0.53	Always	3.33	0.68	Always
19.	Classify	3.38	0.74	Always	3.57	0.62	Always
	Sub Mean	**3.23**	**0.75**	**Often**	**3.16**	**0.77**	**Often**
D.	**Knowledge utilization**						
20.	Transfer to learn	3.63	0.52	Always	3.45	0.67	Always
21.	Observe	3.38	0.74	Always	3.57	0.63	Always
22.	Conduct Research	3.00	0.93	Often	3.45	0.59	Always
23.	Create or perform	3.50	0.53	Always	3.41	0.69	Always
24.	Innovate	3.50	0.53	Always	3.34	0.69	Always
	Sub Mean	**3.40**	**0.65**	**Always**	**3.44**	**0.66**	**Always**
E.	**The metacognitive system:**						
25.	Watch the lesson in progress	3.63	0.52	Always	3.47	0.69	Always
26.	Observe how my friends learn	3.38	0.74	Always	3.31	0.78	Always
27.	Seek meaning / ask for explanation	3.50	0.53	Always	3.45	0.66	Always
28.	Present strategy	3.25	0.71	Always	3.42	0.63	Always
29.	Evaluate	3.63	0.52	Always	3.40	0.67	Always
30.	Name the cognitive process	3.13	0.64	Often	3.23	0.67	Often
31.	Try to refute the evidence presented	3.38	0.74	Always	3.23	0.68	Often
32.	Observe Time management	3.50	0.53	Always	3.45	0.69	Always
	Sub Mean	**3.42**	**0.62**	**Always**	**3.37**	**0.68**	**Always**
F.	**The self-system**						
33.	Willing to exchange ideas	3.75	0.46	Always	3.45	0.69	Always
34.	Willing to show evidence	3.75	0.46	Always	3.44	0.68	Always

35.	Be curious	3.75	0.46	Always	3.42	0.71	Always
36.	Question the reliability of information	3.38	0.74	Always	3.39	0.65	Always
37.	Demand time to think	3.75	0.46	Always	3.31	0.70	Always
38.	Ask Questions	3.75	0.46	Always	3.55	0.66	Always
	Sub Mean	**4.43**	**0.61**	**Always**	**4.11**	**0.82**	**Always**
	OVERALL MEAN	**3.56**	**0.53**	**Always**	**3.34**	**0.70**	**Always**

Range:
4.00-3.25 Always
3.24-2.50 Often
2.49-1.75 Sometimes
1.74-1.00 Never

Table 2 presents the assessment of the teacher-respondents and learner-respondents on what are taught in language instruction as follows.
The assessment of teacher-participants in teaching language class was always in terms of self-system (4.43) rather than on retrieval (3.91), comprehension (3.75), metacognitive function (3.42), knowledge utilization (3.40) and often in analyzing (3.23).

Hence, assessment of learner-participants in teaching language class were also always in terms of knowledge utilization (3.44), rather than metacognitive function (3.37), self-system (3.34), retrieval and comprehension (3.32) and often in analyzing (3.16).

This means that in teaching language class of the teachers were more self-system or willing to exchange ideas, willing to show evidence, be curious and question the reliability of information. While on teaching language class as perceived by the learners were more on knowledge utilization or there is transfer to learn, observe, conduct research, create or perform, and innovation.

3. Is there any significant difference in the assessment of the teacher and learner-participants on what are taught in language instruction to create a culture and climate for thinking, when they are grouped accordingly?

Table 3
Difference in the assessment of the teacher and learner-participants on what are taught in language instruction

ASSESSMENT	N	EV	SD	U-TEST	P-VALUE	REMARKS	
Teachers	38	1463.00	96.10	4.27	1.94E-05	Reject Ho	Significant
Students	38						

Level of Significance = .05

Table 3 reveals that assessment of the teacher and learner-participants on what are taught in language instruction have significant difference after obtaining the Mann Whitney U score of 4.27 with a probability value of 1.94E-05 at .05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference assessment of the teacher and learner-participants on what are taught in language instruction is rejected.

This implies that assessment administered by teachers in teaching language instruction to the learners is effective.

Discussion:

Majority of the eight teacher-participants were in the age bracket of 35 to 39 years old (25%), while the rest were 13 percent for 20 to 24, 25 to 29, 30 to 34, 40 to 44, 45 to 49, 50 to 54 years old. Most of participants were females (88%), rather than males (13%). Majority of the teacher-participants had Master's units (63%), others were Bachelor's degree holders (25%), and 13 percent were Master's degree holders. Mostly, participants had been served within five to nine years (63%), while several of them were serving for five years and below (25%) and 10 to 14 years (13%). Thus, majority of the 119 learner-participants were females (51%) than males (49%) too. Mostly from HUMMS section (43%), rather than ABM (29%) and TVL sections (28%).

However, the assessment of teacher-participants in teaching language class were always in terms of self-system (4.43) rather than on retrieval (3.91), comprehension (3.75), metacognitive function (3.42), knowledge utilization (3.40) and often in analyzing (3.23). Hence, assessment of learner-participants in teaching language class were also always in terms of knowledge utilization (3.44), rather than metacognitive function (3.37), self-system (3.34), retrieval and comprehension (3.32) and often in analyzing (3.16). This means that in teaching language class of the teachers were more self-system or willing to exchange ideas, willing to show evidence, be curious and question the reliability of information. While on teaching language class as perceived by the learners were more on knowledge utilization or there is transfer to learn, observe, conduct research, create or perform, and innovation.

Result revealed that assessment of the teacher and learner-participants on what are taught in language instruction have significant difference after obtaining the Mann Whitney U score of 4.27 with a probability value of 1.94E-05 at .05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference assessment of the teacher and learner-participants on what are taught in language instruction is rejected. This implies that assessment administered by teachers in teaching language instruction to the learners is effective.

Therefore, it is concluded that majority of the teacher-participants are in the age bracket of 35 to 39 years old, females, with master's units and in the service for five to nine years. The leaner-participants are mostly females and in the HUMMS strand. In teaching language class, teachers give more emphasis on self-system which means willing to exchange ideas, willing to show evidence, be curious and question the reliability of information. While on teaching language class as perceived by the learners it is more on knowledge utilization which implies that there is transfer to learn, observe, conduct research, create or perform, and innovation. Result reveals that assessment of the teacher and learner-participants on what are taught in language instruction have significant difference which means that assessment administered by teachers in teaching language instruction to the learners is effective.

Furthermore, it is recommended that teachers may strengthen the utilization of K to 12 basic education curriculum senior high school – applied track subjectin in promoting culture for interactive language and application skills. Hence, the high school teachers may polish their language towards proficiency in English, since, the medium of instruction is English and Filipino if the subject is Filipino. Eventually, teachers may match books to instructional strategies in teaching language such as language experience approach, total physical response, compare & contrast, chanting & recitation, using graphic devices, mentor and model texts, picture word induction model, using visuals and graphic organizers, role playing, reader's theatre, retelling, vocabulary notebooks, posters, word walls, collaborative writing, drawing and sketching, listing and labelling to create culture of climate for thinking for their leaners. Result reveals that assessment of the teacher and learner-participants on what are taught in language instruction have significant difference.

Conclusion:

This study provides valuable insights into the profiles, instructional strategies, and assessment approaches of teacher-participants and learner-participants within the language instruction setting. The majority of teacher-participants are females aged 35 to 39 with master's degree units and have been teaching for five to nine years. The learner-participants are predominantly female and mostly enrolled in the HUMSS strand. The study reveals a notable difference between teachers' and learners' perceptions of language instruction.

Teachers emphasize the self-system, focusing on fostering a willingness to exchange ideas, show evidence, and encourage curiosity and critical questioning. In contrast, learners perceive language instruction primarily as an avenue for knowledge utilization, allowing them to apply their learning through observation, research, creative expression, and innovation.

The statistically significant difference in assessment, confirmed by the Mann Whitney U test, highlights that teachers' methods effectively facilitate language learning and engagement. These findings suggest that enhancing language instruction with strategies that balance the self-system and knowledge utilization may further benefit learners.

Teachers are encouraged to leverage the K to 12 basic education curriculum's applied track to foster interactive language skills and apply diverse instructional strategies, such as using visual aids, collaborative writing, role-playing, and graphic organizers, to create a culture and climate conducive to critical thinking. By implementing these recommendations, language instruction can become more responsive to students' learning needs, fostering both cognitive and metacognitive skills essential for academic and personal growth.

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