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**| RESEARCH ARTICLE**

## Language Assessment Literacy and Assessment Practices of English as Second Language In-Service Teachers

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**| ABSTRACT**

One crucial aspect of the teaching and learning process that teachers need to master is the use of appropriate assessment tools to ensure that the learning objectives and core competencies are acquired by the learners. Central to attaining this mastery is their language assessment literacy (LAL), which is necessary for designing, evaluating, and understanding language assessments. With the importance of this in the instructional process, this study investigated the LAL and assessment practices of the 60 ESL in-service teachers in the five big and mega high schools in Isabela. It employed the descriptive design with a triangulation method, and the data were collected through validated questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and observation in the assessment part of the respondents' instructional process. Results revealed that the ESL in-service teachers are highly proficient in their LAL among the domains of knowledge, skills, and principles, attributing to their built foundational knowledge in assessment during their years of studying. Furthermore, the respondents are also often employing diverse assessment practices, which include the use of traditional and alternative assessments, assessment standards and criteria, student-involved assessment, non-achievement-based grading, and developing digital assessments, since they see the crucial role that assessment plays in both the teaching and learning process. It is notable as well in this part that, though the assessment practices in general were often employed by the respondents, the domain of communicating assessment is always employed. This is due to the importance of communicating assessments in guiding the students to perform properly in their tasks, and for them to monitor their progress in learning. The results recommend a capacity development program to continuously enhance the proficiency of the respondents in the LAL and to improve their frequency of employing various assessment practices.

**| KEYWORDS**

Language assessment literacy; assessment practices; language assessment; ESL in-service teachers; assessment

**| ARTICLE INFORMATION**

**ACCEPTED:** 30 April 2026

**PUBLISHED:** 23 May 2026

**DOI:** 10.32996/ijllt.2026.5.1.15

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### 1. Introduction

Over the course of time, the educational system has persistently evolved and innovated through a multitude of initiatives, ranging from policies and programs to curricular and instructional frameworks, thereby guaranteeing its continuous advancement. Fundamental to this evolution are the educators, who serve as the primary implementers of the curriculum and play an indispensable role in addressing the needs of learners. In this context, a pivotal element of the pedagogical process that educators must proficiently navigate is the application of suitable assessment instruments to ascertain that the educational objectives and essential competencies are attained by the learners. This perspective is firmly grounded in the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), which delineates the characteristics of a proficient educator. Given that assessment and the reporting of assessment outcomes constitute a critical domain within the PPST framework, examining these facets of language instruction is imperative to facilitate a substantive teaching and learning experience, as it enables educators to validate

linguistic competencies and assess pedagogical efficacy, with high-quality assessment underpinning effective instruction (Naponoy & Peckley, 2020 and Bayat & Rezaei, 2015).

In such instances when the ability of language teachers to understand and apply assessment processes is vital, their Language Assessment Literacy (LAL) is crucial. As LAL represents their knowledge, skills, and principles necessary for designing, evaluating, and understanding language assessments to make decisions about students' language abilities (Giraldo, 2020, as cited in Puspawati, 2022). However, both current local and international research studies show that the level of assessment literacy of the teachers is relatively low as they are at a poor level (Hailaya, 2014; Naponoy & Peckley, 2020). These indicate that teachers' low language assessment literacy may harm education quality, as assessment is integral to teaching and learning (Lam, 2015 as cited in Reyes, 2023). In addition, various studies have been conducted regarding this concept, (Ölmezer-Öztürk & Aydin, 2019; Puspawati, 2022; and Giraldo, 2021). However, research gaps still exist as these studies mostly define and measure teachers' LAL knowledge, with few addressing their skills and the principles of their assessments.

Prior to the concept of LAL, Sievertsen (2023) highlight that LAL includes teachers' ability to understand assessment trends and evaluate their practices in their teaching context (Puspawati, 2022). This signifies that LAL is crucial for effective assessment practices, guiding teachers to apply theoretical knowledge into practice as mentioned by Liu and Li (2020). However, discrepancies in these studies include the limitation on the focus as most studies centered on general assessment literacy both locally and internationally (Puspawati, 2022; Reyes, 2023). To address these gaps, this study investigated the level of the language assessment literacy and the frequency of the employment of the assessment practices of in-service language teachers to provide empirical data on the current state of the proficiency of language assessment literacy and the existing conditions on the utilization of the assessment practices of the ESL in-service teachers.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Competencies in Language Assessment Literacy**

The term Language Assessment Literacy (LAL) is derived from the general concept of Assessment Literacy (AL), and in 1990, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), the National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME), and the National Education Association (NEA) provided the first detailed description of teachers' AL. AFT proposed seven standards for teachers' competency in assessing students' educational performance. These standards emphasized the teachers' ability to choose appropriate assessment methods, develop suitable assessments, administer and interpret externally-produced and teacher-produced assessments, use assessment results for decision-making, establish valid grading procedures, communicate assessment results to stakeholders, and recognize unethical, illegal, and inappropriate assessment methods and uses of assessment information. With the evolution of assessment practices, Brookhart (2011) argued that the standards should also encompass the teachers' knowledge and skills in formative assessment and their knowledge and skills specific to their own assessment context. Additionally, Xu and Brown (2016) emphasized the importance of teachers' self-directed awareness of the assessment process, enabling them to interpret assessment policies and principles and adapt them to their classroom context. Scarino (2013) further highlighted the significance of teachers' content knowledge when designing assessments and proposed a more specific, content knowledge-based approach to AL, known as LAL. While LAL shares similarities with AL, it has distinct characteristics specific to language teaching. The main difference between LAL and AL is that language serves as the construct for assessment in which LAL combines AL skills with language-specific competencies, creating a distinction between general AL and LAL. According to Davies (2008), LAL consists of three main components: skills, knowledge, and principles. Skills encompass the ability to conduct tests/assessments, analyze assessments, and report test results. Knowledge components on the other hand, involve the understanding of language measurement and language measurement methodologies, as well as familiarity with the assessment context. The aspect of Principles refers to teachers' awareness of ethical issues, fairness, and the consequences of assessment.

Moreover, a more comprehensive explanation was presented for each individual element where Giraldo (2018) suggests that there are four categories of skills that are crucial for teachers' LAL, namely instructional skills, design skills that pertain to the language assessment, skills in educational measurements, and technological skills required for language measurements, in order to provide a more detailed insight into skill components. In terms of knowledge components, teachers should possess three types of knowledge, as indicated by Giraldo (2018): knowledge of applied linguistics, knowledge of theories and concepts of language assessments, and knowledge of the language assessment context specific to teachers. Lastly, principles essentially evaluate teachers' awareness and actions regarding critical issues in language assessment, such as utilizing assessment results to make decisions about learners, critically analyzing the impact of standardized tests, and being mindful of applying fair and transparent language assessments.

In such efforts that Giraldo attempts to expand and ponder more on the concept of LAL, in which to assess the teachers' LAL, Giraldo (2018) developed sixty-six descriptors for each component. Such development of components of LAL sheds light on the

importance of the definition of LAL through its included competencies wherein it expounds the area of research in LAL and the connection of its definition to the assessment practices. As research has shown that teachers' LAL plays a crucial role in their assessment practices, as teachers with adequate LAL are capable of effectively assessing their students, while those with inadequate LAL encounter challenges in their assessment practices. Recognizing the urgency, Giraldo (2021) stressed the need for teachers to fully grasp the concept of LAL, as they are continuously involved in collecting data on their students' language abilities.

## **2.2 Variations in Assessment Practices**

As a consequence of the shift in paradigms towards constructive methodologies, there has been an increased emphasis on learner development in the field of assessment, specifically through the use of formative assessment. This shift has also resulted in a change in the roles of teachers, making them active participants in the assessment process. They now assume the role of "agents of assessment" (Teasdale and Leung, 2000), with the ability to not only observe and understand the progress of their learners but also intervene and support their ongoing development. From this perspective, formative classroom assessment holds great promise for teachers, as it can inform and enhance their instructional practices, ultimately contributing to the development of their learners. Among the various terminologies used to describe formative classroom assessment, there is a clear focus on the learning aspect of assessment, such as learning-oriented assessment (Carless, 2007) or assessment for learning (McDowell et al., 2011). However, despite its novelty and potential, this form of assessment is not without its theoretical and conceptual challenges, particularly when compared to the more well-defined boundaries of psychometric testing (Leung, 2004; Teasdale & Leung, 2000; Sadler & Reimann, 2017). One such challenge that arises in classroom-based assessment is the issue of teacher individuality. Given that each teacher approaches classroom assessment based on their own beliefs, values, and assumptions, it is difficult to establish a common set of practices within the realm of classroom-based assessment (Borg, 2003; Leung, 2004).

Studies examining the assessment practices of teachers have consistently confirmed this argument. For example, Torrance and Pryor's (1998) investigation into the assessment practices of elementary school teachers revealed significant differences in perceptions and attitudes towards assessment, even among individual teachers. Similarly, Cheng et al. (2008) study identified a continuum of orientations towards assessment, ranging from a "technical orientation" on one end, where teachers strictly adhere to published criteria, to an "assessor as God" orientation on the other end, where assessment judgments are based on unarticulated references. Cheng et al. (2008) further noted that individual teachers' orientations towards assessment fall somewhere between these two extremes in a divergent manner. These individualized practices of classroom assessment were examined by Chi (2022) through a case study that explored the underlying cognitions of two English teachers in an English for Academic Purposes context. The findings of the study revealed that while the participating teachers shared certain cognitions regarding assessment, these cognitions were unique to each teacher and influenced by their individual differences in personal and professional background, approach, and experience. However, the study also identified common cognitions that were considered to be the basic patterns of thinking about assessment (Chi, 2022).

Part of such variation of assessment practices are the inclusion as well of the emerging practices of assessment using technology, as being reflected in the study of Al-Bahlani and Eckey (2023) in which as part of evaluating the assessment practices of both the pre-service and in-service teachers, they constructed another domain of assessment practices due to the prevalence use of technology, which is the development of digital assessment. This is not new in the 21<sup>st</sup> century era, however, only their study includes such domain in which it goes along with other assessment practices domains including the use of traditional assessment, utilization of alternative assessment, communicating assessment, assessment standards and criteria, student-involved assessment, and non-achievement-based grading. These practices are further validated through their construction of a questionnaire to measure the frequency of these assessment practices being done by both the in-service and pre-service teachers (Al-Bahlani, 2024).

## **3. Methodology**

With the main aim of this study to determine the level of language assessment literacy and the assessment practices being employed by the respondents, this particular section describes the methods utilized in the achievement of this objective.

### **3.1 Research Design**

This study employed a descriptive research design to gather the data needed to answer the inquiry of this study in describing the current level of language assessment literacy and in determining the assessment practices being employed by the respondents. In addition to that, to validate the findings of the descriptive result, a triangulation method was also employed, consisting of semi-structured interviews, document analysis of assessment-related files, and observation of the assessment aspect of the instructional process of the respondents.

### 3.2 Respondents of the Study

The 60 ESL in-service teachers as respondents of the study were identified through a total enumeration from the five big and mega high schools in the specific legislative district in Isabela. They were all teaching English-related subjects in the basic education, making them suitable as respondents of this research since they are familiar with the language assessment literacy, and language-related assessment practices.

### 3.3 Research Instrument

In terms of the research instrument, the researcher employed a survey questionnaire consisting of two parts covering the aspects of LAL and assessment practices of the ESL in-service teachers. For the LAL, the instrument was a 66-item questionnaire by Giraldo (2018) containing three (3) main domains namely knowledge with subdimensions of awareness of applied linguistics (4 items), awareness of theory and concepts (15 items), and awareness of own language assessment context (5 items); skills with subdimensions of instructional skills (11 items), design skills (12 items), skills in educational measurement (6 items), and technological skills (3 items); and principles with the subdimension of awareness of and actions towards critical issues in language assessment (10 items). It also used a four-point Likert Scale measurement with the assigned description in each of the descriptors, with numbers ranging from 1 to 4, wherein 1 (Beginning), 2 (Proficient), 3 (Highly Proficient), and 4 (Distinguish). The internal consistency reliability of the questionnaire, through the Cronbach's alpha corresponding value of 0.89, indicated that the items included are good and have high reliability.

Moreover, the Assessment Practices Questionnaire was adopted from Al-Bahlani and Ecke (2023) and consisted of 33 items or indicators with a four-point Likert scale measurement with the following description: 1 (Never), 2 (Rarely), 3 (Often), and 4 (Always). Furthermore, the questionnaire consisted of seven (7) dimensions with varying number of items in each domain including using of traditional assessment (5 items), using of alternative assessment (3 items), communicating assessment (5 items), assessment standards and criteria (4 items), student-involved assessment (4 items), non-achievement-based grading (5 items), and developing digital assessment (7 items). The internal consistency reliability of the questionnaire was evaluated through Cronbach's alpha, with the corresponding value of 0.82, indicating that the items included have high reliability.

### 3.4 Data Gathering and Statistical Treatment

The data were gathered through the survey questionnaire and were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Particularly, the statistical tools employed in describing the level of language assessment literacy and assessment practices of the respondents were the weighted mean.

Furthermore, to validate the statistical findings, a triangulation method was used, consisting of semi-structured interviews consisting of ten (10) questions developed through priori coding, document analysis of the assessment-related files, and observation of the assessment aspect of the instructional process of the respondents. The respondents' responses were recorded using a phone recording tool, and all documents, observations, and recordings were gathered and conducted with their full consent.

## 4. Results/Findings and Discussion

### 4.1 Level of Language Assessment Literacy of the In-Service Language Teachers

**Table 1. Level of Language Assessment Literacy of the In-Service Language Teachers (Knowledge)**

Language Assessment Literacy	Mean	Qualitative Description
<b>A. Knowledge</b>		
<b>Awareness of Applied Linguistics</b>		
1. Compares various approaches for language teaching and assessment; e.g., communicative language testing; task-based assessment.	2.63	Highly Proficient
2. Explains major issues in applied linguistics which include bilingualism, language policy and planning, pragmatics, sociolinguistics, etc.	2.48	Proficient
3. Understand through analysis the trends in second language acquisition and their impact on language assessment; e.g., motivation, cross-linguistic influence, learner strategies.	2.70	Highly Proficient
4. Integrates the knowledge of theories related to language and language use; e.g., models of language ability, discourse analysis, and grammar teaching.	2.73	Highly Proficient
<b>Awareness of theory and concepts</b>		
5. Has knowledge of illustrating the history of language testing and assessment,	2.67	Highly Proficient

and its impact on current practices and society.		
6. Interprets reliability in language assessment and its implications: dependability, classical test theory, item analysis, threats, calculating reliability of tests and items, inter- and intra-rater reliability, etc.	2.67	Highly Proficient
7. Interprets validity in assessment and its implications: construct, content, and criterion validities, construct validity as unitary, Messick's (1989) consequential validity; validity as argument.	2.58	Highly Proficient
8. Know how to calculate statistics procedures for investigating validity such as Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC).	2.07	Proficient
9. Interprets major qualities for language assessment practices (apart from reliability and validity), and their implications for language assessment: authenticity, practicality, interactiveness, fairness, ethics, and impact (including washback).	2.62	Highly Proficient
10. Understand the computation of basic statistical analyses like the mean, mode, median, range, standard deviation, score distribution, etc.	2.47	Proficient
11. Differentiates concepts related to assessment paradigms such as traditional versus alternative; norm-referenced and criterion-referenced testing.	2.55	Highly Proficient
12. Differentiates major purposes and related decision-making for language testing which includes placement, achievement, proficiency, etc.	2.68	Highly Proficient
13. Knowledgeable in explaining major steps in developing tests: test purpose, construct definition, content specifications, test specifications, etc.	2.85	Highly Proficient
14. Understand and examine the meaning and implications of critical language testing: power, ethics, and fairness.	2.82	Highly Proficient
15. Judges the consequences (intended or unintended) stemming from assessments in his/her context.	2.65	Highly Proficient
16. Knowledgeable in evaluating the kind of washback that assessments can have on learning, teaching, curricula, and institutions	2.57	Highly Proficient
17. Contrast various assessment methods, with their advantages and disadvantages; tests, portfolios, performance assessment, self- and peer-assessment, role-plays, among others.	2.85	Highly Proficient
18. Articulates the nature, purpose, and design of scoring rubrics; for example, holistic and analytic.	2.90	Highly Proficient
19. Understand and recognize what feedback implies within a formative assessment paradigm.	2.87	Highly Proficient
<b>Awareness of own language assessment context</b>		
20. Understand and explain one's beliefs, attitudes, context, and needs for assessment.	3.10	Highly Proficient
21. Evaluates the test and assessment policies that influence his/her teaching.	2.95	Highly Proficient
22. Assesses the existing tensions that influence language assessment in his/her school.	2.77	Highly Proficient
23. Knowledgeable of the general guidelines and policies that drive language learning and assessment in his/her context; for example, the type of language curriculum	2.78	Highly Proficient
24. Criticizes the kind of washback assessments usually have on his/her teaching context.	2.50	Highly Proficient
	<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.69</b>
		<b>Highly Proficient</b>

The table clearly specifies the level of language assessment literacy of the in-service language teachers in the domain of knowledge. Overall, the respondents have a highly proficient level of language assessment literacy as evident in its weighted mean of 2.69 with a qualitative description equivalent to "Highly Proficient". This indicates that respondents were most proficient in applied linguistics, language assessment theories and concepts, and their assessment context, as reflected in their knowledge of language use, scoring rubrics, and assessment-related beliefs, attitudes, contexts, and needs.

The high level of proficiency of the respondents in their knowledge on language assessment literacy can be attributed to the existence of foundational subjects in their curriculum when they are still studying, since the curriculum of language majors are

always centered on theories on language and language use, and in the assessment of such language skills. This is being proved by the statement from Teacher Participant 5 saying,

*“During my years of studies as an English major, it is good that we have foundational subjects in our major. I am glad that we discuss various theories regarding language... You remember that we have linguistics, theories in SLA, and even subjects focusing on the teaching and assessment of grammar and the macro skills, these fundamentally equip me with the right and enough knowledge pertaining to language assessment”.*

This validated the existence of foundational subjects in the curriculum of the respondents during their years of studying. This is mentioned and supported by Pangaribuan (2022), and can be noticed in the inclusion of subjects on linguistics and assessment of learning, grammar, literature, and macro-skills in the curriculum.

#### **4.1.1 Awareness of Applied Linguistics**

When it comes to the sub-domain of awareness of applied linguistics, the indicator on integrating the knowledge of theories related to language and language use; e.g., models of language ability, discourse analysis, and grammar teaching garnered the mean of 2.73 with a qualitative description of “Highly Proficient”. This means that the respondents in terms of their awareness of applied linguistics, are most highly proficient in integrating their theoretical knowledge towards language and utilization of language as such in employing their understanding of language competency models, discourse analysis, and instructional methodologies for grammar. This high level of proficiency in integrating their knowledge of theories is being exemplified in their incorporation of it in their instruction and assessment, as corroborated by this statement.

*“I always check for the unfamiliar word, vocabulary checking...before I start my class, I make sure that they know first the words, the vocabulary, and that becomes my routine, and it is effective. Since, for example, introducing first the words, next is spelling, vocabulary, words, and based on the vocabulary words, that will be the starting point of my lesson”- Teacher Participant 4*

As being shown from the quoted response, the teachers are highly proficient in the integration of their knowledge of theories related to language and language use as reflected in their teaching of vocabulary, which is under the grammar teaching. It can be noticed that they are integrating their knowledge properly in grammar pedagogy since they follow the developmental progression of vocabulary teaching, that it starts with the spelling to introduce its phonemic composition followed by the familiarity of the word per se to the learners. As posited by Farid et al. (2024), the integration of knowledge in grammar pedagogy can be validated through the adherence to the incremental framework of vocabulary acquisition, which commences with the teaching of spelling to elucidate its phonemic structure, subsequently progressing to the learners' acquaintance with the word itself. Aside from that, the same finding is reflected in the response of Teacher Participant 7, indicating:

*“After they gave words (vocabulary), I will be asking the learner to construct a sentence using that word. If it happens that they gave an incorrect sentence (in terms of grammaticality), I will write it on the board, and we analyze it, of course, there are those who are knowledgeable that they can see the grammatical errors. In that way, I am already assessing them”.*

This shows their highly proficient literacy in integrating their knowledge of theories related to language and language use, more specifically in grammar teaching, as they let the students to construct their own sentences which in turn will be the sample for their grammatical analysis, which helps them gauge the real language ability of their students as they give them opportunity to analyze it with their guidance (Fang & Yu, 2023).

#### **4.1.2 Awareness of Theory and Concepts**

Moreover, in terms of the sub-domain of awareness of theory and concepts, the indicator on the articulation of the nature, purpose, and design of scoring rubrics; for example, holistic and analytic, gained the mean of 2.90, equivalent to the qualitative description of “Highly Proficient”. This implies that the respondents are most highly proficient in articulating the nature, purpose, and design of the scoring rubrics that they are using like if it is holistic and analytic, which indicates their awareness of theory and concepts. As being supported by the document from Teacher Participant 3 on the use of an analytic rubric.

RUBRIC FOR COLUMN WRITING		SCORE: 80/100		
Criteria	Excellent (4)	Proficient (3)	Developing (2)	Needs Improvement (1)
Content and Relevance	Demonstrates a clear, insightful, and well-supported stance on the chosen issue; stays focused throughout.	Presents a clear stance and adequate support; generally stays on topic.	Somewhat clear stance but lacks sufficient support; occasionally strays off-topic.	Lacks a clear stance; insufficient or irrelevant content; frequently strays from the topic.
Organization	Exceptional structure with a compelling introduction, logical flow, and strong conclusion.	Well-organized with a clear introduction, body, and conclusion.	Basic organization; ideas may be somewhat disjointed or lack clear transitions.	Disorganized and difficult to follow; lacks a coherent introduction, body, or conclusion.
Voice and Style	Strong, consistent, and unique voice; effectively engages the audience; tone matches the column's purpose.	Clear voice and engaging style; tone generally suits the purpose and audience.	Inconsistent voice; limited audience engagement; tone may be unclear or inappropriate.	Lacks a distinct voice; minimal or no audience engagement; tone is inappropriate or unclear.
Language and Mechanics	Sophisticated and varied sentence structure; free of grammatical, spelling, and punctuation errors.	Generally clear and correct language; minimal grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors.	Some errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation that may distract the reader.	Numerous errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation that hinder understanding.
Critical Thinking	Demonstrates deep analysis and originality; provides unique perspectives or solutions to the issue.	Shows solid analysis and originality; ideas are mostly well-developed.	Basic analysis with limited originality; ideas may be underdeveloped or lack depth.	Lacks analysis or originality; ideas are superficial or poorly developed.
Use of Evidence	Effectively integrates compelling and credible evidence; evidence strongly supports the argument.	Adequate use of credible evidence; evidence supports the argument but may lack depth or variety.	Minimal use of evidence; evidence is occasionally weak, irrelevant, or insufficiently integrated.	Little or no use of evidence; evidence is weak, irrelevant, or absent.
Adherence to Ethics	Respects journalistic ethics; avoids bias, stereotypes, or offensive language; maintains integrity and fairness.	Mostly adheres to journalistic ethics; minimal bias or stereotyping; generally fair and respectful.	Some lapses in ethical considerations; may include bias, stereotypes, or offensive language.	Significant lapses in journalistic ethics; biased or offensive language undermines credibility and fairness.

Figure 1. Sample of Analytic Rubric

The usage of the teachers by this kind of scoring rubric signifies their awareness or knowledge of the nature and design of scoring rubrics, particularly with its analytic form. The sample grading rubric is used to gauge the column writing skill of the learners, with the focus on the criteria of content and relevance, organization, voice and style, language and mechanics, critical thinking, use of evidence, and adherence to ethics, which reflects the identification of multiple distinct criteria. These elements exhibit the essential features of analytic assessment, where performance is broken down into measurable parts, as in each criterion, a descriptive form of expected output with the corresponding points and descriptions is reflected, which mirrors the appropriate nature and design of an analytic rubric. Moreover, as the rubric utilizes performance levels such as excellent, proficient, developing, and needs improvement, each with explicit descriptors, this proves the ability of the respondents to distinguish performance across levels, which is one of the defining characteristics of analytic rubric design. As observed in the criterion of *Language and Mechanics*, there is a differentiation between “sophisticated and varied sentence structure” (Excellent) and “numerous errors that hinder understanding” (Needs Improvement). Such articulation demonstrates a profound comprehension of the methodologies required to render assessment both criterion-referenced and diagnostic, thereby facilitating precise feedback. This indicates that the educators possess an understanding of the intrinsic qualities and structural frameworks of the scoring rubrics, as they have employed these tools in their actual evaluative practices to assess the linguistic competencies of the students, specifically regarding the writing skills of the learners. Apart from that, their high proficiency in articulating the purpose of the scoring rubric is also validated by Teacher Participant 15, “I provide clear rubrics and criteria for grading to ensure transparency”, another response shared the common idea from Teacher Participant 14, indicating that “I use rubrics and detailed explanations to make grading criteria clear and meaningful”. These responses imply that the teachers clearly articulate the purpose of the scoring rubrics in the assessment aspect, wherein they see the use of scoring rubrics as a way to measure the actual language skills and performance of the students to maintain the fairness of the assessment.

With this, the result can be linked to their knowledge on theory and concepts which helps them to understand the role and purpose of using rubrics stemming from their goal of guiding their students in attaining the desired outcomes and competencies for their tasks. With this understanding and consideration towards student learning, it enables them to become aware on the nature, purpose, and design of scoring rubrics leading them to become highly proficient in articulating these vital aspects of scoring rubrics. This is corroborated in the studies of Olson and Krysiak (2021), Kosh (2023), and Mertler (2000) in which they stated that the rubrics, when designed with clear outcomes and measurable language, can enhance understanding of assessment purposes. This awareness empowers the teachers to effectively guide students towards achieving desired competencies, causing them to become highly proficient in articulating the nature, purpose, and design of scoring rubrics.

#### 4.1.3 Awareness of own Language Assessment Context

Furthermore, in terms of the sub-domain of awareness of own language assessment context, the indicator stating about the understanding and explaining of one’s beliefs, attitudes, context, and needs for assessment, attained the mean of 3.10 with a qualitative description equivalent to “Highly Proficient”. This indicates that the respondents are mostly highly proficient in understanding and explaining their own beliefs, attitudes, context, and needs for assessment, enabling them to comprehend and elaborate on their perceptions, perspectives, and the reasons for the necessity of assessment. This is being confirmed in the extract from Teacher Participant 1 on the needs for assessment, stating that “So that you will know in which aspect did the student excel, it is like getting to know their multiple intelligences”. This quotation typifies that they comprehend the necessity of having

assessments, which is primarily to identify and understand which aspect(s) of language proficiency the student really excels in, and for them also to be aware of the multiple intelligences being possessed by their learners.

This result can be associated with the reason that being able to understand and explain their beliefs, attitudes, context, and needs for assessment is one of the competencies that a language teacher must have to deliver quality instruction. This is being developed by the incorporation of foundational subjects on testing and assessment as can be observed in the inclusion of the subjects on Assessment of Learning and Teaching and Assessment of Grammar, Literature, and Macro-skills. The inclusion of assessment-related subjects in the curriculum of language majors equips teachers with the knowledge and competencies needed to understand assessment concepts and effectively gauge students' learning and progress. This aligns with Phakiti and Leung's (2024) view that teachers must understand the theoretical foundations of assessment, including their beliefs, attitudes, contexts, and assessment needs, to make informed decisions in language classrooms.

**Table 2. Level of Language Assessment Literacy of the In-Service Language Teachers (Skills)**

<b>B. Skills</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Qualitative Description</b>
<b>Instructional skills has the ability to:</b>		
25. align the curriculum objectives, instruction, and assessment.	3.17	Highly Proficient
26. plan, implement, monitor, record, and report student language development.	3.07	Highly Proficient
27. provide feedback on students' assessment performance (norm- and criterion-referenced).	3.15	Highly Proficient
28. collect formal data (e.g., through tests) and informal data (while observing in class) of students' language development.	3.10	Highly Proficient
29. improve instruction based on assessment results and feedback.	3.08	Highly Proficient
30. utilize alternative means for assessment; for example, portfolios.	3.05	Highly Proficient
31. use language assessment methods appropriately: to monitor language learning and nothing else.	2.98	Highly Proficient
32. provide motivating assessment experiences, giving encouraging feedback, or setting up self-assessment scenarios.	3.13	Highly Proficient
33. communicate norm- and criterion-referenced test results to a variety of audiences: students, parents, school directors, etc.	2.90	Highly Proficient
34. use multiple methods of assessment to make decisions based on substantive information.	2.98	Highly Proficient
35. incorporate technologies in assessing students.	3.02	Highly Proficient
<b>Design skills for language assessments has the ability to:</b>		
36. clearly identify and state the purpose for language assessment.	2.95	Highly Proficient
37. clearly define the language construct(s) a test will give information about.	2.90	Highly Proficient
38. design assessments that are valid not only in terms of course contents but also course tasks.	2.88	Highly Proficient
39. construct test specifications (or blueprints) to design parallel forms of a test.	2.92	Highly Proficient
40. write test syllabuses to inform test users of test formats, where applicable.	2.63	Highly Proficient
41. design assessments that are reliable, authentic, fair, ethical, practical, and interactive.	3.00	Highly Proficient
42. write selected-response items such as multiple-choice, true-false, and matching.	3.10	Highly Proficient
43. improve test items after item analysis, focusing on items that are either too difficult, too easy, or unclear.	2.88	Highly Proficient
44. design constructed-response items (for speaking and writing), along with rubrics for assessment.	2.95	Highly Proficient
45. design rubrics for alternative assessments such as portfolios and peer-assessment.	2.87	Highly Proficient
46. provide security to ensure that unwanted access to tests is deterred.	2.93	Highly Proficient
47. design training workshops for raters, whenever necessary.	2.50	Highly Proficient
<b>Skills in educational measurement (advanced skills not always needed) has the ability to:</b>		
48. interpret data from large-scale tests, namely descriptive statistics such as means, modes, medians, bell curves, etc.; has the ability to calculate descriptive statistics.	2.33	Proficient
49. infer students' strengths and weaknesses based on data.	2.80	Highly Proficient

50. criticize external tests and their qualities based on their psychometric characteristics.	2.42	Proficient
51. interpret data related to test design, such as item difficulty and item discrimination.	2.60	Highly Proficient
52. calculate reliability and validity indices by using appropriate methods such as Kappa, PPMC, and others.	2.28	Proficient
53. investigate facility and discrimination indices statistically.	2.25	Proficient
<b>Technological skills has the ability to:</b>		
54. use software such as Statistical Package for the Social Sciences.	2.07	Proficient
55. run operations on Excel; for example, descriptive statistics and reliability correlations.	2.42	Proficient
56. use internet resources such as online tutorials and adapt contents for his/her particular language assessment needs.	2.57	Highly Proficient
<b>Weighted Mean</b>		<b>2.81</b>
		<b>Highly Proficient</b>

In general, the respondents have a high level of proficiency in the domain of skills as reflected in its weighted mean value of 2.81, with the equivalent qualitative description of “Highly Proficient”. The result means that the ESL in-service teachers are most highly proficient when it comes to their skills regarding language assessment literacy, as evidenced by their proficiency level in the instructional skills, design skills, skills in educational measurement, and technological skills. This is supported in the response of Teacher Participant 15, stating that *“I utilize a combination of instructional, design, educational measurement, and technological skills in language assessment since these skills are essential for ensuring that language assessments are comprehensive, engaging, and effective in measuring students’ actual language abilities”*. The extracted response confirmed that the teachers are using the combination of these skills in language assessment, which reflects their deeper understanding of the necessity in utilizing such to ensure that they provide comprehensive, engaging, and effective means of gauging the real language skills of their learners.

The result can be linked to their strong foundational understanding of these skills, which is enhanced due to the incorporation of subjects related to such skills in their curriculum during their tertiary education levels. As has been proven in the existence of the subjects in assessment of learning, assessment, and teaching of grammar, literature, and macro skills, and the educational technology subjects, which are all geared towards the enhancement of these four aforementioned skills (Al-Maashani and Mudhsh, 2023).

#### **4.1.4 Instructional Skills**

When it comes to the sub-domain of instructional skills, it can be noticed that the indicator indicating that instructional skills has the ability to align the curriculum objectives, instruction, and assessment attained the mean of 3.17 with an equivalent qualitative description of “Highly Proficient” and thus, this means that the ESL in-service teachers are most highly proficient in their skills of constructive alignment which ensures the coherence between the curriculum objectives, instructional strategies, and the assessment tasks, as validated by the document on their Daily Lesson Log (DLL) from Teacher Participant 12.

The sample document clearly demonstrates the clear constructive alignment among the curriculum learning objectives, teaching and learning activities (instruction), and assessment tasks. The primary learning objective across all sessions is for learners to explain the functions, nature, and process of communication, as reflected in the content and performance standards, as well as in the specific learning competency. Furthermore, the teaching and learning activities are carefully structured to support the attainment of this objective. Each session begins with engagement tasks such as “Introduce Yourself” and “These Three Words” to activate prior knowledge and elicit learners’ understanding of communication. These are followed by activities like class discussions, creation of word maps, and reflections on real-life scenarios, which progressively build students’ conceptual understanding of communication elements and functions. Moreover, the activities are contextualized, particularly with references to COVID-19 protocols, enabling students to connect communication concepts with practical, real-world applications. The assessment tasks are also well aligned with both the objectives and activities as can be noticed for instance, the comic strip activity requires learners to apply their understanding of the communication process and functions in a meaningful, context-based output, thereby addressing the performance standard. In the totality, the lesson log exhibits strong constructive alignment, ensuring that what is taught and how it is assessed are directly linked to the intended learning outcomes. This is explicated by Pereira et al. (2024) asserting that the lesson log that demonstrates strong constructive alignment will effectively linking the intended learning outcomes with instructional strategies and assessment methods.

	SESSION 1	SESSION 2	SESSION 3	SESSION 4
<b>I.OBJECTIVES</b>				
<b>A.Content Standards</b>	The learner understands the nature and elements of oral communication in context.			
<b>B.Performance Standards</b>	The learner designs and performs effective controlled and uncontrolled oral communication activities based on context.			
<b>C.Learning Competencies/Objectives</b> Write the LC Code for each	Explains the functions, nature and process of communication (EN11/12OC-la-2)	Explains the functions, nature and process of communication (EN11/12OC-la-2)	Explains the functions, nature and process of communication (EN11/12OC-la-2)S	Explains the functions, nature and process of communication (EN11/12OC-la-2)
<b>II.CONTENT</b>	Functions, Nature and Process of Communication			
<b>B. Establishing a purpose for the lesson</b>	Ask the learners their idea about the subject.	These Three Words Activity  Direction: The learners will write three words associated with the word communication on their notebook. Then, some of the learners will be asked to read what they wrote.	Ask the learners about elements of communication.	Present to the class the COVID-19 safety protocols implemented in the school. Ask the learners how these guidelines function or work.
<b>C.Presenting examples/instances of the new lesson</b>	Create a word map or word cloud about the ideas they shared.	The learners will write three communication activities they engaged yesterday. Some of them will recite what they wrote.	Ask the learners about their knowledge on COVID-19.	Ask the learners their thoughts about the power words have.
<b>D.Discussing new concepts and practicing new skills #1</b>	Present information about Oral Communication in Context as a core subject. Then, present how the learners will be graded.	Discuss communication and its nature.	Discuss how communication is important in disseminating information.	Discuss the functions of communication.
<b>E. Discussing new concepts and practicing new skills #2</b>	Present to the learners the crafted rules and regulations in the subject. Then, let the learners suggest or modify the given rules.	Discuss the elements of communication and the entire process.		
<b>F. Developing mastery (Leads to formative assessment)</b>	The learners will write on their notebook their expectations in the subject.	The learners will do What's More activity on page 11 of the self-learning module. They just need to fill out a row about an experience when they are part of a communication activity. Tell if the activity was successful or not. Then, they need to determine the function of the communication.		The learners will write a two-sentence motivating statement to their fellow learners.
<b>G. Finding practical/applications of concepts and skills in daily living</b>	Ask the learners how the subject can help them to establish their careers.	Ask the learners how communication process can help them to gather information.		Ask the learners how functions of communication can help them to build connection with other people.
<b>H. Transfer new skills/move from abstractions about the lesson</b>	Ask the learners to share their takeaways during the session.	Ask the learners to share what they learned about the nature of communication, and the elements of the communication.		Ask the learners to share the different functions of communication.
<b>I.Evaluating Learning</b>		The learners will submit an exit slip what they learned.	The learners will do Activity 1 What I Can Do.  Direction: Create a comic strip showing how you would communicate to your community the advantages of following health protocols and guidelines amidst COVID-19 pandemic in your municipality or province. You may cut-out pictures of people or authorities to depict your character, but be sure to write your own original scripts and texts.	The learners will answer Exercise III.  Direction: Identify the function of communication in each of the following situations.

Figure 2. Sample Daily Lesson Log

This result may be linked to the country's learner-centered educational landscape, where students' needs, interests, and backgrounds are emphasized in achieving educational goals. Through continued practice, teachers become highly proficient in constructively aligning curriculum objectives, instruction, and assessment while strengthening their instructional planning and design skills. This aligns with Nikoladze's (2023) view that student-centered learning enables teachers to effectively align these teaching and learning components.

**4.1.5 Design Skills**

Furthermore, in the sub-domain of design skills, the indicator about writing selected-response items such as multiple-choice, true-false, and matching obtained the mean value of 3.00 with a qualitative description of "Highly Proficient" which implies that the respondents are most highly proficient in their skill of crafting selected-response items. This is supported in the documents from Teacher Participants 16 and 11.

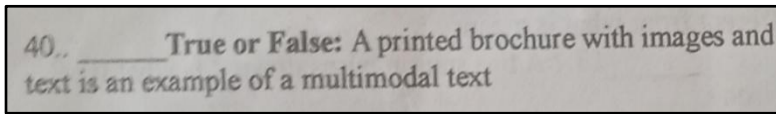


Figure 3. Sample True or False Question excerpted from a Quiz

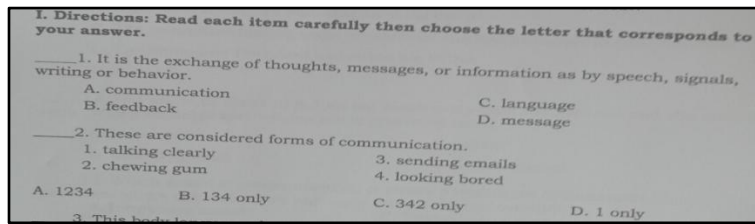


Figure 4. Sample Multiple Choice Questions taken from a Quarterly Examination

These two documents from the ESL in-service teachers exemplified their proficiency in writing selected-response items, such as true or false and multiple-choice types. The first figure was an excerpt from the weekly quiz of the teacher to the students, asking whether it is true or false that the printed brochure having images and texts is an example of multimodal text. This particular item exemplifies the high proficiency of the respondents in constructing such assessment since the item as posited by Safitri (2025) is clearly written, free from ambiguity, and presents a single, verifiable idea, which aligns with best practices in item construction since it only points out the single concept of whether a printed brochure with both images and text qualifies as a multimodal text. The second figure was taken from a quarterly assessment, focusing on defining communication and its forms. As reflected in the image, the respondents exhibit a highly proficient degree of expertise in the formulation of multiple-choice as the selected-response form of item. Each item adheres to essential principles of effective item writing as for example, the item number one (1) that articulately presents a distinctly defined question stem, "It is the exchange of thoughts, messages, or information as by speech, signals, writing or behavior," which is succinct, comprehensive, and devoid of ambiguity. The alternatives being used maintain parallelism in structure and are categorized uniformly, thereby circumventing grammatical cues or distractors that are overtly incorrect. In such way, this item exemplifies vigorous construction practices, such as clarity, relevance, and logical sequencing of options, thereby highlighting the considerable proficiency of the respondents in the development of multiple-choice items.

This result is attributed to their forms of construction being in the traditional form of assessment, in which this type of assessment can be considered foundational, and the respondents are already trained in this type since they are being exposed in such for a long period of time. This is being supported and validated by the findings of Ajmal et al. (2022) and Fazli et al. (2024), highlighting that teachers become proficient in the use of traditional assessment, likely due to their familiarity because of their longtime exposure, perceived expertise, and the established nature of these methods.

#### 4.1.6 Skills in Educational Measurement

In terms of the sub-domain of skills in educational measurement, the indicator about inferring students' strengths and weaknesses based on data has a mean value of 2.80, which is equivalent to a qualitative description of "Highly Proficient". The result indicates that the respondents are most highly proficient in their level in terms of their skill in inferring the strengths and weaknesses of their students based on the given data. This is being affirmed in the extracted statement from the teacher participant.

*"Usually ginagamit namin yung assessment data (language assessment data) na 'yun to see the strengths and weaknesses of the students to improve also our instructions and assessments in terms of strategy. [Usually, we utilize that assessment data (language assessment data) to see the strengths and weaknesses of the students to improve also our instructions and assessments in terms of strategies]" –Teacher Participant 5*

The extracted response exemplified the highly proficient skill of the ESL in-service teachers in inferring the strengths and weaknesses of the students based on the assessment data, since, through the data being obtained from the language assessments they conducted, they see the strengths and weaknesses that their students have in terms of language skills. From such results, they also improve their strategies to address such circumstances, to provide enhanced instructions and assessments to their learners. One reason for this is that they can have a deep understanding and knowledge of interpreting the assessment data that they gathered through the employment of formative and summative assessments and other assessment methods to gauge their students' performance and overall learning. As they are able to properly interpret the results of their assessments for the students, it helps them to easily observe and infer the strengths and weaknesses of their learners, contributing to become highly proficient in this particular skill. As indicated by the study of Monteiro (2021), a deep understanding of assessment data

helps teachers to accurately assess student performance, inferring the areas where they are excelling and need additional support. With this deep knowledge in interpreting the result of their assessment to their students, it is inevitable that the teachers become more skilled and proficient in identifying the areas of strengths and weaknesses of their students based on the assessment data that are available.

#### 4.1.7 Technological Skills

When it comes to the sub-domain of technological skills, the indicator pertaining to the use of internet resources for his/her particular language assessment needs attained the mean value of 2.57, which is equivalent to the qualitative description of "Highly Proficient". This means that the respondents are most highly proficient in their skill towards the use of internet resources and adapt such content that is appropriate for their learning assessment needs. This is validated in the statements of Teacher Participant 1, indicating that *"In terms of criteria, I searched in the internet and the same is true with the rubrics depending on the needs"* and Teacher Participant 3, *"We also seek the different learning materials coming from other sources, especially in the internet to enrich the topics"*. The documented answers articulated the proficiency of the ESL in-service teachers in using the internet to browse and select appropriate materials according to their assessment needs especially when it is needed for enriching their topics.

One reason for this can be due to the exposure of the ESL in-service teachers to the technology and the internet being brought about by the demand of technology integration in the 21<sup>st</sup>-century classroom. Due to their exposure to the technological demand of education in the current century, they can be able to explore various internet resources that can assist them in doing and facilitating their particular language assessment needs which can in turn help them to become highly proficient in this area. This is supported by the study of Mirzapour et al. (2025) stating that the use of technology in education empowers teachers to access a vast reservoir of information on the internet and leverage open educational resources to enhance their assessments according to the context of needs.

**Table 3. Level of Language Assessment Literacy of the In-Service Language Teachers (Principles)**

<b>C. Principles</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Qualitative Description</b>
<b>Awareness of and actions towards critical issues in language assessment</b>		
57. Clearly informs the inferences and decisions that derive from scores in assessments.	2.65	Highly Proficient
58. Uses assessment results for feedback to influence language learning, not other construct-irrelevant sources (e.g., personal bias towards a student).	2.75	Highly Proficient
59. Treats all students, or users of language assessment, with respect.	3.13	Highly Proficient
60. Uses tests, test processes, and test scores ethically.	3.12	Highly Proficient
61. Provides assessment practices that are fair and non-discriminatory.	3.13	Highly Proficient
62. Critiques the impact and power standardized tests can have and has a stance towards them.	2.67	Highly Proficient
63. Observes guidelines for ethics used at the institution in regard to language assessment.	2.80	Highly Proficient
64. Criticizes external tests based on their quality and impact.	2.62	Highly Proficient
65. Implements transparent language assessment practices; and informs students of the what, how, and why of assessment.	2.82	Highly Proficient
66. Implements democratic language assessment practices, by giving students opportunities to share their voices about assessment.	2.88	Highly Proficient
	<b>Weighted Mean 2.86</b>	<b>Highly Proficient</b>

In the entirety of this domain, it gained the weighted mean value of 2.86, equivalent to the qualitative description of "Highly Proficient", meaning that ESL in-service teachers are highly proficient in their awareness of these principles or the critical issues in language assessment. One explanation for this is their knowledge and understanding of various institutional and national policies on language assessment, particularly those that guide them on how to properly perform their role as assessors of the language proficiency and ability of their learners. This knowledge and understanding enable them to become clearly aware of the critical issues that influence their language assessment, as it exposes them to the prevalent things to consider in their assessment. With this exposure and consideration, it can help them to become highly proficient in the principles that are relevant to language assessment. This is supported by Coombe et al. (2020), stating that institutional and national policies on language assessment provide a framework for how language proficiency should be evaluated and how critical issues can be observed properly using multiple lenses. This knowledge helps teachers understand assessment guidelines and expectations, strengthen their awareness of critical issues in language assessment, and ensure that their practices align with established standards.

**4.1.8 Awareness of and Actions Towards Critical Issues in Language Assessment**

In terms of the sub-domain of awareness of and actions towards critical issues in language assessment, the indicator about treating all students, or users of language assessment, with respect gained the mean value of 3.13 with an equivalent qualitative description of "Highly Proficient". This indicates that the respondents are most highly proficient when it comes to their awareness in treating with respect all their students and users of language assessment, as confirmed by the statements of Teacher Participant 10, "When it comes to treating students with respect especially in the privacy of their assessment result, I give it to them personally" and Teacher Participant 3 indicating that:

*"of course, with respect to confidentiality... I should be the only person who knows about it (test scores) and we should not be showing it to their classmates since there is a time when they get the low scores and then they will get bullied out of that particular score. So, some of the students were doing that, that's why I treat it with, secrecy or confidentiality".*

These extracted answers validated that they have a comprehensive grasp on the importance of treating the users of language assessment with respect, particularly in terms of treating the assessment result with confidentiality. This shows that they have highly proficient awareness on this as they acknowledge the fundamental right of test-takers to privacy and that the results of assessments ought not to be revealed or exploited in any manner that could potentially inflict harm or render an unjust evaluation of the individual. This result is due to the emphasis of the current curriculum to a learning environment that should be inclusive, where the ESL in-service teachers are being trained towards inclusive education and increase their awareness on learner-centered pedagogy enabling them to foster culture in the assessment process that values the dignity of each user of language assessment and thus, helping them to treat each student with respect. This is supported by Rendon et al. (2023), who emphasized that inclusive education requires school management to understand curriculum scope and ensure effective information dissemination to foster a respectful assessment culture. When consistently applied, this knowledge enhances teachers' awareness and proficiency in treating students equitably and respectfully in the assessment process.

**4.2 Assessment Practices Employed by the ESL In-Service Language Teachers**

**Table 4. Assessment Practices Employed by the ESL In-Service Language Teachers**

Assessment Practices	Mean	Qualitative Description
<b>a. Using Traditional Assessment</b>		
1. I use true/false questions.	2.53	Often
2. I use multiple-choice questions.	3.73	Always
3. I use fill-in-the-blank questions.	2.47	Rarely
4. I use matching questions.	2.40	Rarely
5. I use short essay questions.	3.12	Often
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.85</b>	<b>Often</b>
<b>b. Using Alternative Assessment</b>		
6. I assign hands-on activities with pre-specified rubrics.	3.57	Always
7. I use oral questions or tests.	3.47	Always
8. I ask students to provide a mini-research paper with references.	2.60	Often
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.21</b>	<b>Often</b>
<b>c. Communicating Assessment</b>		
9. I inform students of assessment (i.e., test) objectives before applying it.	3.58	Always
10. I return homework, activities and tests to students in a way that keeps assessment results of each student private.	3.62	Always
11. I inform students of their strengths according to the method used to assess their performance.	3.48	Always
12. I provide oral feedback to each student about their performance.	3.65	Always
13. I provide written feedback for each student on their performance.	3.15	Often
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>Always</b>
<b>d. Assessment Standards and Criteria</b>		
14. I develop an answer sheet to correct essay questions.	2.82	Often
15. I use Zero when grading students' uncompleted and or partially uncompleted work.	1.67	Never
16. I communicate performance assessment (i.e., tests and hands-on activities) criteria in advance.	3.53	Always
17. I define a rating scale for performance criteria in advance.	3.50	Always
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.88</b>	<b>Often</b>

**e. Student-Involved Assessment**

18. I provide students with suggestions to enable them to monitor their progress in learning.	3.47	Always
19. I train students to assess tasks done by their peers.	3.20	Often
20. I allow students to choose the assessment task they would like to prefer among various assessment tasks.	2.80	Often
21. I give students a chance to develop test questions according to their understanding of the objectives to be achieved.	2.67	Often
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.03</b>	<b>Often</b>

**f. Non-Achievement-Based Grading**

22. I consider students good conduct in class when assigning their overall grades.	2.95	Often
23. I consider students task organization when assigning their overall grades.	3.00	Often
24. I compare students' performance to each other when assigning their overall grades.	2.33	Rarely
25. I consider students' participation in class when assigning their overall grades.	3.33	Always
26. I consider student absenteeism when assigning grades.	3.05	Often
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.93</b>	<b>Often</b>

**g. Developing Digital Assessment**

27. I use Learning Management System (LMS) like Schoology, Google Classroom, and the like to design language skills test.	2.85	Often
28. I give computerized course tasks/tests (e.g., end of unit vocab, grammar, listen and comment on a video etc.).	2.85	Often
29. I assess student language skills (e.g., grammar, vocab, writing etc.) using online tools (discussion boards, wiki, blogs etc.).	2.80	Often
30. I use Learning Management System (LMS) like Schoology, Google Classroom, and the like in reporting to give students feedback on written assignment.	2.60	Often
31. I use varied digital assessment tools according to their effectiveness for classroom purposes.	2.83	Often
32. I provide criteria for online/computerized tests/tasks along with the tests/tasks.	3.00	Often
33. I use Learning Management System (LMS) data (student participation, grades, user activity in online discussion, etc.) to plan future teaching.	2.83	Often
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.82</b>	<b>Often</b>
<b>GRAND MEAN</b>	<b>3.03</b>	<b>Often</b>

When it comes to the totality of the assessment practices, it attained a grand mean value of 3.03 with the equivalent qualitative description of "Often". The result signifies that the ESL in-service teachers are often employing diverse assessment practices in their instructional process. As they often practice the use of traditional and alternative assessments, communicate assessment, assessment standards and criteria, student-involved assessment, non-achievement-based grading, and develop digital assessments. This is due to the reason that assessment plays a crucial role in both the teaching and learning processes. Assessment enables teachers and students to monitor the achievement of learning goals and students' progress. Thus, employing appropriate assessment practices in instruction is necessary to effectively gauge learning progress and the attainment of intended outcomes. With this vital consideration, the teachers are continually doing these assessment practices, resulting in them to often employing and incorporating the assessment practices in their instructional process. As supported by Monteiro et al. (2021), stating that assessment is vital in education because it allows both teachers and students to track progress towards learning goals, providing valuable information for improving teaching and learning, causing teachers to continually integrate assessment practices in their instructional process.

**4.2.1 Using Traditional Assessment**

In totality, the use of traditional assessment garnered the weighted mean value of 2.85 which is equivalent to the qualitative description of "Often", suggesting that the respondents are often employing the use of traditional assessment in their practices, which include the use of true/false, multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, matching, and short essay types of questions. This is corroborated by Teacher Participant 15, "I use traditional assessment practices since these assessments are valuable for evaluating students' knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension in a structured manner. Traditional assessments provide a standardized way to measure progress and ensure accountability". This response resonates with their frequent employment of the traditional assessment in their assessment practices since these are valuable to systematically assess the knowledge on grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension of the learners and they provide a consistent way to gauge the progress of

the students. This is corroborated by Sembey et al. (2024), who mentioned that traditional assessment methods are valuable for systematically evaluating students' knowledge in grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension, offering a consistent framework to gauge student progress and inform teaching effectiveness in English language lessons.

Moreover, the indicator on using multiple-choice questions gained the mean value of 3.73 with the corresponding qualitative description of "Always". This indicates that ESL in-service teachers are always employing the use of multiple-choice questions as part of their assessment practices, and this is being supported through the class observation being conducted, where the teacher employs the multiple-choice type during their second quarter summative tests. Each of the questions in this exam format contains four (4) alternatives or choices to which the students can choose one correct answer per item. This result was linked to the reason that using multiple-choice questions is one of the assessment policies observed both institutionally (school-based) and in the Division of Isabela, as it is departmentally encouraged to use multiple-choice questions primarily in the summative assessment. Since there is a directive on the use of such a type of assessment practice, it is inevitable that the respondents will likely always use this kind of assessment in their language assessment practices. This is supported by Rachmat and Arfiandhani (2019), highlighting that multiple-choice questions are widely utilized in educational assessments due to their effectiveness in evaluating large student groups, and since this practice also aligns and reinforces within the educational institutions as part of their institutional policies.

#### **4.2.2 Using Alternative Assessment**

In general, the use of alternative assessment garnered a weighted mean value of 3.21 with the equivalent qualitative description of "Often", and this posits that the respondents are using alternative assessment often, such as the assigning of hands-on activities with pre-specified rubrics, usage of oral questions or tests, and asking students to provide a mini-research paper with references as part of their assessment practices. This is corroborated with the response from Teacher Participant 15 stating that:

*"I incorporate alternative assessments in my language class since these methods provide a more holistic view of students' language proficiency by assessing their ability to use language in real-world contexts. Alternative assessments encourage creativity, self-reflection, and deeper engagement with the language. In my class, I implement these by assigning real-life communication tasks to my students".*

This extracted answer confirmed that the ESL in-service teachers are using alternative assessment often as part of their assessment practices since they understand deeper that employing such methods can provide them a holistic view of the language abilities of their learners in using the language in real-life context, and these help the students as well to have a deeper immersion with the actual usage of the target language. This is aligned with Safa and Nasiri (2025), that ESL in-service teachers often use alternative assessments because they recognize their capacity to provide a more holistic view of student language ability.

Moreover, the indicator regarding the assignment of hands-on activities with pre-specified rubrics obtained the mean value of 3.57 which is equivalent to "Always". This suggests that the participants consistently employ the methodology of incorporating practical tasks accompanied by predetermined rubrics within their evaluative practices, as evidenced by the observations conducted in the classroom. In one of the classes being observed, the respondent assigned a hands-on activity, such as a spoken word poetry about their real-life experiences and emotions that they already felt. Along with the activity is the rubric to be used by the teacher, which she handed to the students even before the performance, where she explained it thoroughly to the learners. The class observation showed that ESL in-service teachers integrated hands-on activities with pre-specified rubrics in their assessment practices. This may be attributed to the current curriculum's emphasis on authentic and alternative assessments, particularly performance tasks that measure learners' ability to apply learning in real-world contexts. Thus, the need to use rubrics for fair and appropriate assessment encourages teachers to consistently apply this practice in language classrooms (Soto et al., 2018).

#### **4.2.3 Communicating Assessment**

Pertaining to the entirety of communicating assessment, it attained a weighted mean of 3.50 corresponding to the equivalent qualitative description of "Always", implying that the ESL in-service teachers are always communicating assessments as they informed their students of objectives beforehand, maintained the confidentiality of their results, provided both oral and written feedback, and informed the strengths of their learners based on the assessment method that they (teachers) used. This is supported by the response of Teacher Participant 15, saying that *"I always communicate assessment results through written feedback, one-on-one consultations, and online platforms. Communicating assessments is essential because it helps students understand their strengths and areas for improvement, ultimately guiding their learning process"*. From this extracted reply, it can be articulated that they are always implement the utilization of communicating assessment to their learners as part of their assessment practices. They do such practice since they understand the vitality of doing so in helping their students to know their strengths and weaknesses, which can guide them to grasp and navigate their learning process (Sugiono, 2022).

Another, the indicator providing oral feedback to each student about their performance obtained the mean of 3.65, which corresponds to the qualitative description of "Often". The result suggests that ESL in-service teachers often providing oral feedback to each student about their performance as part of communicating assessment and this is supported by the class observation. During the observation, the teacher conducted an assessment task of spoken word poetry. After each of the students performed their chosen pieces, the teacher gave her feedback orally to the learners, emphasizing the strengths and weaknesses of each performance of the students anchored in the specified rubrics. The result was attributed to the important role of oral feedback in the country's learner-centered curriculum. Oral feedback helps inform and guide the teaching-learning process by allowing learners to monitor their progress, make immediate corrections, and engage in deeper reflection. This supports Vogt et al. (2024) view that oral feedback is essential in formative assessment and learner-centered pedagogy, explaining why in-service teachers often provide it as part of their assessment practices.

#### 4.2.4 Assessment Standards and Criteria

In the wholeness of this, it gained the weighted mean of 2.88, which corresponds to the qualitative description of "Often". This implies that the respondents are often employing the assessment standards and criteria as part of their assessment practice as they prepare the scoring tools in advance such as answer sheets, rating scales, and performance criteria and by defining clear grading policies. This is being supported by the response from Teacher Participant 15 explaining that:

*"Yes, I develop, communicate, and define assessment standards and criteria for my students as part of my assessment practices. For me it is essential to do so to establish clear expectations so that students understand the objectives of the lesson and the basis on which their performance will be evaluated... Transparent criteria promote fairness and help students take ownership of their learning".*

This extracted answer verified that the ESL in-service teachers often develop, communicate, and define the assessment standards for their students as part of their assessment practices, since they understand that it is essential to do so to make their learners understand the objectives of their topics and assessments. This is because of the reason that doing such can enable the learners to be aware of what is being expected from them in their completion of tasks and performances. As supplemented by Vogt et al. (2024) as they insinuate that when assessment standards and criteria are clearly communicated to learners, they gain a better understanding of what is expected of them in their work. This clarity reduces ambiguity and helps students focus on the specific skills and knowledge they need to demonstrate. Given its role in improving learners' academic performance, teachers are further encouraged to often employ it as part of their assessment practices.

Furthermore, the indicator stating the communication of performance assessment (i.e., tests and hands-on activities) criteria in advance yielded the mean of 3.53 with the qualitative description of "Always" in this domain. This indicates that the ESL in-service teachers consistently convey the evaluative benchmarks for performance assessments to their students prior to the execution of such assessments, thereby integrating this disclosure into their pedagogical methodologies. The result is being confirmed by this response:

*"Yes Sir, nagbibigay po ako ng rubrics and criteria. Bago nila gawin yung activity... So, bago sila mag-conduct ng speech, bago sila gumawa ng film, sasabihin ko muna yung criteria for judging or criteria or the rubrics kung paano sila i-grade. [Yes Sir, I give rubrics and criteria before they do their activity... So, before they do speeches, produce film, I will first announce the criteria for judging or criteria or rubrics on how they will be graded]." -Teacher Participant 2*

The response from the interview extract reaffirmed the result that the teachers always communicate the performance criteria in advance to their students to ensure the clarity of the criteria being used, for the learners to become aware as well on how they will be graded based on their performances. As reiterated by Sugiono (2022), that communicating performance criteria in advance helps students understand how they will be graded, thereby enhancing their awareness and engagement in the learning process, and because of the vitality of this practice in the instructional process, it will be inevitable for the teachers to often utilize this in their assessment practice.

#### 4.2.5 Student-Involved Assessment

Regarding to the totality of this, it garnered a weighted mean value of 3.03, equivalent to the qualitative description of "Often". This signifies that the respondents are often incorporating in their assessment practice the student-involved assessment wherein they guide the students to monitor their own progress, engage them in peer assessment, make informed choices about assessment tasks, and give the learners the chance to participate in developing test questions based on learning objectives. This is being affirmed by the response of Teacher Participant 15 stating that:

*"I often involve my students in the language assessment process since allowing students to participate in their own assessment process fosters responsibility, self-reflection, and a deeper understanding of language learning. When students see their role in the assessment, they become more engaged and motivated to improve their skills. And by engaging students in their assessment, I create a more meaningful and student-centered learning experience".*

This feedback from the ESL in-service teacher affirmed the result of the quantitative, since by doing so, it can help them to immerse their learners more in improving their language skills. The result was due to the curriculum's support for learner-centered pedagogy, where students take greater control of their learning. Thus, involving students in the assessment process helps promote active participation and ownership of learning. This aligns with Kaur et al. (2022), who found that teachers increasingly use student-involved assessment as part of the shift toward student-centered learning.

Another, in this domain, the indicator on providing students with suggestions to enable them to monitor their progress in learning acquired the mean value of 3.47, which corresponds to the qualitative description of "Always". The result reveals that the ESL in-service teachers are consistently offering recommendations to students, thereby facilitating their ability to assess their academic progress, and this is being confirmed by the statement *"I provide portfolio assessment where they compile their work overtime with my feedback and suggestions, for them (students) to track their progress and take pride in their development"*. - Teacher Participant 15

The extracted response from the ESL in-service teacher substantiated that they always integrating the manner of providing students with suggestions to enable them to monitor their learning progress. As using portfolio assessment is an effective means for teachers to provide suggestions that help students monitor their progress in learning. The result may be attributed to the country's learner-centered educational landscape, which emphasizes self-learning and learner autonomy through the constructivist approach. Since learners are expected to construct knowledge through personal learning experiences, teachers often provide suggestions for monitoring learning progress because this practice helps students become more aware of their learning, identify areas for improvement, and take responsibility for their academic growth. This aligns with Laskar and Bhattacharjee (2022), who emphasized that constructivism promotes active student involvement and self-learning, thereby supporting learner-centered pedagogy and the development of learner autonomy.

#### **4.2.6 Non-achievement-Based Grading**

Generally, this domain obtained a weighted mean value of 2.93, which is equivalent to the qualitative description of "Often", and hence, this indicates that the respondents are often using the non-achievement-based grading as part of their assessment practice since they include the practices of taking into consideration both the academic performance and behavioral factors of their students such as class participation, conduct, task organization, attendance, and comparative performance among their learners. This is reflected in this extract from Teacher Participant 15 indicating that:

*"Yes, in my assessment practice, I consider other factors such as good conduct, task organization, participation, and attendance, in addition to academic performance... It is necessary to integrate these considerations because they help develop students' responsibility, discipline, and engagement. Recognizing their efforts beyond just test scores creates a balanced and holistic evaluation system, which supports not only academic success but also personal and social development"*.

This answer from the ESL in-service teachers confirmed that they are often employing the non-achievement-based grading in their assessment practices since these considerations in assigning overall grades apart from academic tasks results can help enhance the responsibility, discipline, and engagement of the learners, which can help create a balanced and well-rounded assessment system that establishes both academic success and personal as well as social development of the learners. This is corroborated by Chi (2022), as they reiterated that placing greater weight on non-achievement factors can enhance student responsibility, discipline, and engagement, contributing to a balanced assessment system that supports both academic and personal development.

In addition, the indicator about considering students' participation in class when assigning their overall grades attained the mean value of 3.33 with the equivalent qualitative description of "Always". This suggests that the ESL in-service teachers are always considering their students' participation whenever they assign overall grades to them as part of their assessment practice. It is evident with this extract:

*"nagbibigay ka pa rin (grade), nagkokonsider ka rin nung non-achievement base sa mga bata... Katulad kapag nagparticipate, pag nagpakita, then gawa ka nalang siguro ng isang questions per topic o kaya per unit, kapag nasagutan niya, you will give him a passing grade [You still give grade as a consideration to the incorporation of non-achievement-based grading to the students...Like when they participated, you can give them a question per topic or per unit, and when they give the correct answer, you will give them a passing grade]"* -Teacher Participant 2.

One plausible explication for such is that student's participation in their class particularly in the discussion and activities can provide the necessary evidence for their performance in the class which in turn can be used by the teachers in gauging their progress in learning. So, without their participation to class activities in general, it can be difficult to measure their performance and standing in the class. Due to this reason, it can be inevitable for teachers to consider the participation of their students when

they assign overall grades to them, causing them to employ more of this assessment practice. Since class participation serves as evidence of student engagement and learning progress, this aspect is indeed crucial for teachers to assess performance. For without participation, measuring student achievement becomes challenging, this prompts the teachers to incorporate and consider class participation into overall grading practices (Tillema, 2014).

**4.2.7 Developing Digital Assessment**

To a large extent, the domain of developing digital assessment achieved a weighted mean value of 2.82, which corresponds to the qualitative description of "Often". This reveals that the ESL in-service teachers often incorporate the assessment practice of developing digital assessment as they integrate digital tools and Learning Management Systems (LMS) in designing and delivering language assessments, providing timely feedback, and collecting data on student performance. They also employ varied online platforms and assessment tools based on their classroom effectiveness, ensuring that clear criteria are provided and that LMS data can inform their future instructional planning. This is supported by the extract on Teacher Participant 15 stating that:

*"Yes, I use technology to enhance assessment practices. Digital assessments are necessary because they provide instant feedback, improve accessibility, and allow for diverse testing methods. I integrate tools such as Google Forms for quizzes, and Google Classroom for tracking student progress especially when we are shifting to ADM or Alternative Delivery Mode. These tools help streamline assessments while engaging students in a more interactive and dynamic learning experience".*

This extracted response from the respondents confirmed that they are often integrating the development of digital assessment in their assessment practices, as they observe that these are pivotal in modernizing assessments, which encourage the learners to engage in more interactive and dynamic learning experiences. As stated by Wen and Chano (2024), the integration of the development of digital language assessments modernizes assessment practices and fosters dynamic learning experiences for language learners.

Moreover, the indicator, regarding providing criteria for online/computerized tests/tasks along with the tests/tasks generated the mean value of 3.00 with an equivalent qualitative description of "Often", and this signifies that the ESL in-service teachers are often providing criteria for online/computerize tests or tasks accompanying the actual assessment tools. This is being validated by the document from Teacher Participant 2.

PERFORMANCE TASK 5

Cyberbullying Vlog

4. Upload your vlog in the online platform your teacher will give you.

**Goal**  
Your task is to create a vlog about cyberbullying and provide examples of cyberbullying cases that you will present to the school community.

**Role**  
You are a student vlogger who has been requested by the school administration to create a vlog that will raise the awareness of cyberbullying especially during pandemic online classes.

**Audience**  
Your audience is the students of your school, their parents, and your entire school community.

**Situation**  
The challenge involves creating a vlog that will raise the awareness of your school community about cyberbullying.

**Product, Performance, and Purpose**  
You will create a vlog that raises awareness on cyberbullying.

- Form a team with five members. Choose from the following one topic to discuss in your vlog as a group:
  - a. cyberbullying and social media
  - b. cyberbullying and its existence in schools
  - c. what to do when you experience cyberbullying
  - d. steps in preventing cyberbullying
- Research about your chosen topic and plan on how you will present it in the vlog.
- Create a script to guide you in making your vlog. Aside from what you will say, the script should include an outline of your vlog.

Standards and Criteria

Table 5.1. Learning outcome or task description for cyberbullying vlog

Criteria	Below expectations 1	Needs improvement 2	Meets expectations 3	Exceeds expectations 4
<b>Content (30%)</b> <i>Clear and evident focus on the topic</i>	All the contents of the output are <b>not related</b> to the topic.	<b>Only a few of the contents</b> of the output are <b>related</b> to the topic.	<b>Some contents</b> of the output are <b>not related</b> to the topic.	The contents of the output are <b>all related</b> to the topic.
<b>Organization (20%)</b> <i>Logical progression of details/events; clear transitions between ideas</i>	The progression of ideas is <b>disorganized</b> . Transitions are <b>unclear</b> , making the text almost impossible to understand.	The progression of ideas is <b>somewhat organized</b> . Transitions are <b>somewhat clear</b> , leading to vague understanding.	The progression of ideas is <b>organized</b> . Transitions are <b>sufficiently clear</b> , leading to full understanding.	The progression of ideas is <b>well-organized</b> . Transitions are <b>clear and effective</b> , leading to full and easy understanding.
<b>Language (20%)</b> <i>Spelling, mechanics, grammar, and word usage</i>	There are <b>four or more</b> language errors. There are <b>no</b> transition words, adverbs, and identical pairs.	There are <b>two to three</b> language errors. There is <b>little</b> use of transition words, adverbs, and identical pairs.	There is <b>one</b> language error. There is <b>evident</b> use of transition words, adverbs, and identical pairs.	There are <b>no</b> language errors. There are <b>numerous evident</b> uses of transition words, adverbs, and identical pairs.

**Figure 5. Sample of Online/Computerized Tests/Tasks Criteria with the Test/Tasks**

The figure shows that the ESL in-service teachers are providing criteria for online/computerized tests/tasks along with the tests/tasks as part of their assessment practice in the domain of developing digital assessment. This said task focuses on the crafting of a cyberbullying vlog with the theme of cyberbullying on social media, schools, things to do when experiencing it, and ways on how to prevent it. The product of this performance task will be uploaded through the provided online platform, in this instance, the teacher chooses the Google Drive. Along the actual performance task are the standards and criteria on how the cyberbullying vlog will be graded in accordance to each criterion. This result may be attributed to the importance of providing assessment criteria, even in digital formats, as these guide learners in properly completing their tests or tasks. The criteria serve as a systematic checklist that helps students focus on essential elements needed to achieve the desired learning outcomes. Thus, teachers often implement this practice because it supports clearer expectations, better learner performance, and more effective

assessment. This is supported by Novikova (2020), who emphasized the value of assessment criteria in guiding learners, particularly in digital and project-based activities.

## **5. Conclusion**

Based on the empirical findings of this investigation, the conclusions drawn underscore the significance of such factors within the academic realm and the educational framework that contextualizes this study. With regard to the respondents' level of language assessment literacy, the outcomes revealed that they exhibit a high degree of proficiency across all domains of this variable. In particular, within the knowledge domain, this outcome can be attributed to the presence of foundational subjects in their academic curriculum during their formative years, which enhanced their proficiency and understanding of language assessment. Furthermore, their elevated proficiency in language assessment skills is reflective of their robust foundational comprehension of these competencies, a result of the integration of related subjects within their curriculum throughout their higher education. Additionally, the respondents demonstrate considerable proficiency concerning the principles that constitute their language assessment literacy. This result is ascribed to their knowledge and comprehension of diverse institutional and national policies governing language assessment, particularly those that provide guidance on effectively executing their responsibilities as evaluators of their learners' language proficiency and capabilities.

Moreover, regarding the assessment methodologies utilized by the participants, the findings revealed that the ESL in-service educators, as a collective, frequently implement a variety of assessment strategies, encompassing both traditional and alternative evaluation methods, the establishment of assessment standards and criteria, student-involved assessment practices, non-achievement-based grading systems, and the formulation of digital assessments. This is attributed to their recognition of the indispensable function that assessment fulfills within the pedagogical and learning contexts. The adoption of an array of assessment methodologies facilitates both educators and learners in monitoring the accomplishment of educational objectives and the progression of learning. Consequently, given this critical role, the integration of assessment practices within the instructional framework is unequivocally essential, as they serve to accurately and effectively measure and track students' learning advancements and the fulfillment of designated learning outcomes or objectives.

It is also noteworthy in this section that, while the assessment methodologies were generally prevalent among the respondents, the aspect of communicating assessments is consistently employed. This is attributable to the significance of effective communication of assessments in directing students to execute their tasks proficiently and enabling them to track their learning progress. The communication of assessments aids learners in recognizing their strengths and weaknesses through constructive feedback, thereby assisting them in monitoring and evaluating their progress toward achieving their educational goals. This renders it imperative for ESL in-service educators to incorporate such assessment practices.

A limitation of this study is the reliance on the self-reported data provided by the respondents and the limited scope of the study. Therefore, further studies relating to this are recommended to include also the supervisors of the ESL in-service language teachers to validate their self-reported data, and a wider local area is also suggested to be included to generalize the findings of the research.

**Funding:** This research received no external funding.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

**Publisher's Note:** All claims expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of their affiliated organizations, or those of the publisher, the editors and the reviewers.

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