

Ma. Celina Eladia G. Meneses, 2016

Volume 2 Issue 1, pp. 1017-1025

Year of Publication: 2016

DOI- <http://dx.doi.org/10.20319/pijss.2016.s21.16771685>

This paper can be cited as Meneses, M. C. E. G. (2016). KSA Development in the AB English Language Practicum. *PEOPLE: International Journal of Social Sciences*, 2(1), 1017-1025.

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Non-commercial 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, PO Box 1866, Mountain View, CA 94042, USA.

## **KSA DEVELOPMENT IN THE AB ENGLISH LANGUAGE PRACTICUM**

**Ma. Celina Eladia G. Meneses**

Associate Professor, Bicol University, Legazpi City, Philippines  
[mcgmeneses@bicol-u.edu.ph](mailto:mcgmeneses@bicol-u.edu.ph)

---

### **Abstract**

*In response to the prevailing mismatch between education and industry needs, the AB English program of Bicol University was revised to include a student internship program, the Language Practicum, which attempts to augment classroom learning with actual knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSAs) necessary in the workplace. This study assessed the level of attainment of these learning domains for the holistic development of the students, as reported by the trainees themselves and by their sponsoring agencies, towards determining the success of the entire program. A focus-group discussion provided a validation of results of both assessments. Applying the evaluation theory by Stufflebeam and Shinkfield, and using the descriptive-evaluative method involving a total enumeration of the trainees and their supervisors, the study revealed an outstanding assessment of KSA development, both in the point of view of the trainees who came up with a mean rating of 4.58, and that of the supervisors who arrived at a mean rating of 4.56. Slight inadequacy was registered by the trainees in terms of skills, which they rated as 4.50 or superior, but was refuted by their supervisors who rated them an average of 4.53 or outstanding. Findings point to the conclusions that the Language Practicum was highly*

*successful, and that industry partnership is important in the maximum development of students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The program is recommended for continuance.*

### **Keywords**

Language Practicum, KSA Evaluation, AB English

---

## **1. Introduction**

Today's educational landscape has put premium on the practical side of education, that of ensuring a job for every graduate of any course. The AB English program, first offered in Bicol University in 1987, is not to fall behind. Its revision in 2009 gave way to the inclusion of a Language Practicum course, renamed Student Internship Program (SIP) in 2014, intended to give AB English students a feel of the industry they are training to join, and to provide them additional and highly significant inputs in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that they need in the job they are preparing for.

This research is an evaluation of the first batch of Language Practicum trainees, specifically designed to know what knowledge, skills, and attitudes they developed during the practicum, and to what extent these have been attained. To achieve balance of results, assessments come from both the trainees themselves and their supervisors.

Data gathered from this research will serve as valuable basis for Bicol University to update and improve its course offerings, and specifically upgrade the AB English program to fit the needs of the industry, thereby providing, at least on a micro level, a solution to the pervasive mismatch between academe and industry, which is still a concern in the country up to this day.

This research is anchored on the quasi-evaluation approaches/model of program evaluation, adhering to the definition of the term, "model/approaches" provided by Stufflebeam and Shinkfield (2013), as "an evaluation theorist's idealized conceptualizations for conducting program evaluation" (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2013, p. 63). Its question-oriented approaches which address specified questions (often employing a wide range of methods) and its method-oriented approaches which typically use a particular method, both stress that it is usually better to answer a few pointed questions well than to attempt a broad assessment of a program's merit and worth (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2013).

While this quasi-evaluation "may not meet the requirements of a sound evaluation" (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2013) but it can investigate questions that will provide evidence on the program evaluated, such as the Language Practicum of the AB English program of Bicol University, to assess and help improve aspects of its implementation.

Equally important is the anchoring of the research on Kirkpatrick's Training Evaluation Model which seeks to meaningfully measure learning in organizations through the four levels: "reaction, learning, behavior, and results" ("Kirkpatrick's Learning", 2013). This study particularly addresses the first three levels, where respondents are made to assess what they thought and felt about the training, the resulting increase in knowledge or capability, and the extent of behavior and capability improvement and implementation or application. The effects on the business or environment resulting from the trainee's performance expected at the fourth level, which may be a subject of subsequent studies. Level 3 is also modified to focus more on the learning in the academe as applied to job performance, instead of the intended application of learning from the training to the actual job.

## **2. Materials and Methods**

A descriptive type of research, this study used survey-questionnaires to gather information on the development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSA) of Language Practicum trainees, as assessed by the trainees themselves and by their supervisors. Respondents included a total enumeration of 86 fourth year students from two classes of AB English SY 2012-2013 and 30 sponsoring employers. KSAs were assessed using a Likert rating scale with 5 as the highest (Outstanding) and 1 as the lowest (Poor).

Data were validated via a triangulation methodology, using a focus-group discussion likewise meant to enrich the findings of the study. This was formed by a small group of fifteen (15), mostly from the sponsoring agencies, three Language Practicum trainees representing the three batches of trainees from 2013-2015, and a representative from the academe, specifically the department chair of the English Department of Bicol University College of Arts and Letters. Sponsoring agencies include the following industries: school/educational institutions, government agencies, media centers, and private companies.

## **3. Results and Discussion**

This research looks at both the self-assessment of the Language Practicum by trainees and the assessment made of them by their supervisors, in order to arrive at valid conclusions on the investigation at hand.

### 3.1 Trainees' Self-Assessment

As assessed by the trainees of the Language Practicum, their development of Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes is rated outstanding on the whole, at 4.58 average mean. Knowledge is rated 4.63 (outstanding); skills is 4.50 (superior); and attitude is 4.61 (outstanding). Knowledge is most developed.

Details indicate that in the knowledge domain, task accomplishment and productivity was rated 4.66 or outstanding. This is the most developed aspect in this domain. The other key aspects followed closely: management of office/work procedure was rated 4.63 or outstanding; and, knowledge on the key functions of the job was rated 4.59 or outstanding.

On skills, listening and following instructions was rated 4.66 or outstanding. This is the most developed aspect in this domain. The two other aspects were rated outstanding as well: use of technology in the workplace was rated 4.63 or outstanding; and, speaking in both formal and informal situations was rated 4.62 or outstanding. Writing documents, letters and memos was rated 4.09 or superior.

The attitude domain posted these ratings: desirable attitudes as self-esteem, positivity and assertiveness was rated 4.68 or outstanding. This was the most developed aspect in the attitudes domain. Relationship with clientele was rated 4.63 or outstanding; personal appearance or professional image also earned a rating of 4.63 or outstanding while work qualities and habits was rated 4.49 or superior.

Table 1 shows these data clearly.

**Table 1:** *Trainees' Assessment of KSA Development in the Language Practicum*

<b>KSA</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Adjectival Description</b>
<b>Knowledge</b>		
Knowledge on the key functions of the job	4.59	Outstanding
Management of office/work procedures	4.63	Outstanding
Task accomplishment and productivity	4.66	Outstanding
<b>Average</b>	<b>4.63</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Skills</b>		
Writing of documents, letters, memos and reports	4.09	Superior
Speaking in both formal and informal situations	4.62	Outstanding
Listening and following of instructions	4.66	Outstanding
Use of technology in the workplace	4.63	Outstanding

	<b>Average</b>	<b>4.50</b>	<b>Superior</b>
<b>Attitudes</b>			
Desirable Attitudes as self-esteem, positivity and assertiveness	4.68		Outstanding
Personal appearance or professional image	4.63		Outstanding
Work qualities and habits	4.49		Superior
Business ethics with executives and coworkers	4.64		Outstanding
Relationship with clientele	4.63		Outstanding
	<b>Average</b>	<b>4.61</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Average Mean</b>		<b>4.58</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>

A few observations are given. On knowledge, key function on the job was rated lowest. In the focus-group discussion, Rasco shared: “It is true that Information Technology and Computer Literacy are two of the skills asked of us during training that we could not respond to properly due to lack of enough training.” This was stressed by Ochoa who shared her observation: “they are able to use Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel but when it comes to the more complicated aspects of Excel such as formulas and generating other web sheets, they do not know how to do it. It might be necessary to provide orientations on office procedures before students are deployed to their sponsoring agencies.

On skills, listening and following instructions was rated outstanding which gives an impression that AB English students are skilled at this micro skill in communication, and are willing to learn from their supervisors. Work qualities and habits being rated as lowest in the attitudes domain might just be the prodding needed to insist on a thorough orientation on desirable work habits before deployment. If not, it is also possible to integrate this in regular classroom instruction in courses such as Organizational Communication and Business Writing.

### **3.2 Supervisors’ Assessment**

The development of the trainees’ Knowledge, Skills, and Attitude (KSA) is rated overall as Outstanding, with a mean of 4.56. The Knowledge domain is rated 4.52 or Outstanding; Skills domain is 4.53 or Outstanding; and Attitudes domain is 4.61 or Outstanding.

The results of the assessment of the trainees’ skills, knowledge, and attitude as shown in Table 2 indicates the high level of success of the Language Practicum. It is an assurance that the training has been able to provide AB English students with the venue in which to practice what they have learned in the classroom, and reinforce the same, side by side with acquiring a work attitude which may not be simulated in simple class activities.

In terms of knowledge, rated highest among the indicators is the trainees' task accomplishment and productivity, with mean rating of 4.75. Some improvement can be done in terms of knowledge on key functions of the job, which received a mean rating of 4.44, and in the management of office or work procedures, which has a mean rating of 4.36.

This is understandable, though, considering this is the first time most of the trainees would have been exposed to real work settings, and could not have been made immediately familiar with such procedures. However, this setback is surely compensated by the trainees' ability to accomplish tasks assigned to them, as indicated by their Outstanding rating for productivity and task accomplishment. Whatever their lapses in knowledge of procedures, they make up for knowledge in finding ways to ensure that the work is done.

Under the skills domain, highest rating is given to listening and following instructions, with mean rating of 4.81. Following are the use of technology in the workplace, and speaking in both formal and informal situations, which received mean ratings of 4.63 and 4.61, respectively. Lowest rating was given to writing of documents, letters, memos, and reports, with only a 4.07 mean rating.

Having a high rating in listening and following instructions definitely supports the earlier finding that the trainees excel in task accomplishment and productivity. Though found slightly lacking in knowledge of office procedures and key functions of the job, they are found to be good listeners which make them effective in following instructions. Their likewise favorably assessed ability to use necessary technology and to use good speaking skills to communicate what they need to accomplish the task, must have made them very skilled in accomplishing their tasks properly, making them highly productive in the workplace.

Work attitude is considered just as important as skills and knowledge. It is therefore greatly reassuring that this has been rated by the sponsoring agencies as Outstanding. Particularly assessed were self-esteem, positivity, and assertiveness which gained a mean rating of 4.60; personal appearance or professional image with a mean rating of 4.60; work qualities and habits with 4.61; business ethics with executives and coworkers with 4.64; and relationship with clientele with 4.59.

**Table 2:** Supervisors' Assessment of KSA Development in the Language Practicum

Learning Domain/Indicators	Rating	Description
<b>Knowledge</b>		
Knowledge on the key functions of the job	4.44	
Management of office/work procedures	4.36	
Task accomplishment and productivity	4.75	
Average	<b>4.52</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Skills</b>		
Writing of documents, letters, memos and reports	4.07	
Speaking in both formal and informal situations	4.61	
Listening and following of instructions	4.81	
Use of technology in the workplace	4.63	
Average	<b>4.53</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Attitudes</b>		
Desirable Attitudes as self-esteem, positivity and assertiveness	4.60	
Personal appearance or professional image	4.60	
Work qualities and habits	4.61	
Business ethics with executives and coworkers	4.64	
Relationship with clientele	4.59	
Average	<b>4.61</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>4.56</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>

With minimal differences in the ratings, it can be generalized that the AB English trainees have impressed their immediate supervisors with the work attitude they displayed and also developed in the workplace, be it in terms of self-expression or in their interactions with supervisors, co-workers, or clients.

These findings, however, especially that on skills, were somewhat contested during the Focus Group Discussion. Despite the outstanding ratings given by the supervisors to the trainees, some FGD participants pointed out the observed lack of skills in terms of computer literacy. For instance, according to Ochoa of DSWD, they do not know “more complicated aspects of MSExcel such as formulas and generating other web sheets”. However, according to the FGD participants who are AB English graduates and former Language Practicum trainees, the training was successful in the development of skills, knowledge, and attitude.

Latigay, a 2015 graduate, declared, “There were skills we had already before the training started and others that we had to learn during the job itself, especially when the job you are given

is not relevant to your course, [but] that way you can adjust and adapt to the work environment. Either way, I learned a lot from the training.”

Rasco, a 2013 graduate, related how challenges became opportunities for learning, particularly when it came to the lack of ICT skills. “We were only able to resolve that issue by being honest and asking questions on how to do the task asked to be done. Communicating your difficulties and weakness to your supervisor effectively is the key in surviving the training....” This is a clear example of positive attitude in facing challenges in the workplace.

### 3.3 Overall Assessment

Overall, trainees and supervisors have rated the attainment of knowledge, skills, and attitudes during the Language Practicum as outstanding, with average rating of 4.57. The trainees collectively rated themselves 4.58, while the supervisors rated them 4.56, both at the outstanding level. Knowledge, in particular, got an average of 4.58, Skills got 4.52, and Attitudes, 4.61, all of which fall under the adjectival rating of Outstanding.

Table 3 summarizes the data.

**Table 3:** *Level of Attainment of KSA Development of Language Practicum Trainees*

KSA	Ratings		Average Rating	Adjectival Description
	Trainees'	Supervisors'		
Knowledge	4.63	4.52	4.58	Outstanding
Skills	4.50	4.53	4.52	Outstanding
Attitudes	4.61	4.61	4.61	Outstanding
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.58</b>	<b>4.56</b>	<b>4.57</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>

## 4. Conclusion and Recommendations

The Language Practicum of the AB English program of Bicol University is successful in developing the competencies required by the program. However, it is recommended that further assessment of competency acquisition be made by identifying the task accomplishments which are the tangible manifestation of this. Strong recommendation for the continuance of the practicum is likewise made, with careful planning of specific tasks that would particularly lead to full attainment of knowledge, skills, and attitudes expected of graduates of the program.



## References

- Focus group discussion on the AB English language practicum 2013 and beyond. 12 May 2015.  
Max's Restaurant, Pacific Mall, Legazpi City.
- Kirkpatrick's learning and training evaluation theory, (n.d.) Donald Kirkpatrick's learning evaluation model 1959; review and contextual material Alan Chapman 1995-2014. Retrieved April 24, 2013 from <http://www.businessballs.com/kirkpatrick-learning-evaluation-model.htm>
- “OJT” Retrieved July 1, 2013 from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OJT>
- Stufflebeam, D.L. & Shinkfield, A.J. Evaluation theories, models and applications. Retrieved April 22, 2013 from [https://books.google.com.ph/books?id=xx6UgC6UdFM C&pg=PA57&dq=objectivesbased+evaluation+by+tyler&hl=fil&source=gbs\\_toc\\_r&cad=4#v=snippet&q=an%20evaluation%20theorist%E2%80%99s%20idealized%20conceptualizations%20for%20conducting%20program%20evaluation&f=false](https://books.google.com.ph/books?id=xx6UgC6UdFM C&pg=PA57&dq=objectivesbased+evaluation+by+tyler&hl=fil&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=4#v=snippet&q=an%20evaluation%20theorist%E2%80%99s%20idealized%20conceptualizations%20for%20conducting%20program%20evaluation&f=false)