

# INTEGRATIVE APPLICATION ON DEPED SPECIAL PROGRAM IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE: STUDENTS' ACCEPTABILITY AND TEACHERS' PERCEPTION

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## **Abstract**

This study aimed to assess the level of acceptability of restoring the Spanish language as a special subject; the extent of student's self-efficacy; and the importance of reviving the teaching of Spanish language to uplift the quality of language education in the Philippines. The results of the study showed that Cervantes' language is highly accepted and that the students are ready and highly motivated to learn it as their special subject, because of its importance and the students' awareness of its advantages. Students' self-efficacy shows that in communication skills, the two skills in which the respondents are highly confident in doing are listening and reading. As regards the teachers' perception to remedy and prevent the problems arising in teaching Spanish, findings showed that an orientation of students to motivate them to study it was highly preferred. The students' level of acceptability in learning it has a significant relationship with language motivation and self-efficacy to acquire language proficiency in a new language. The teachers' integrative application in DepEd special program in foreign language should focus on their increasing level of awareness on problems encountered in teaching the Spanish language to be able to provide activities to prevent and remedy those problems.

**Keywords:** *Spanish language, level of acceptability, self-efficacy, motivation*

## **Introduction**

Language is a vital tool of knowledge, a means of communicating thoughts and vehicle for expression of ideas. It forges friendships, cultural ties, and economic relationships. The success of an individual depends to a certain extent on his ability to communicate with people where and when the need arises. Anyone has to communicate to be able to understand and be understood as he deals with people from all walks of life. Acquired communication skills enable an individual to gain additional skills and competencies to make him a useful, effective member of society.

The restoration and integration of Spanish language as a special subject in the secondary school curriculum seeks to develop the Filipino student's skills in speaking, reading, writings and listening. Furthermore, Lapus, (2009) stated that since the Spanish language is fundamental to acquire communicative competence in a foreign language, it will give students and teachers opportunity to learn the basics of Spanish and be exposed to more opportunities of interaction in the international arena.

This research was anchored on the notion that to ensure the success of foreign language learning, curriculum planners as well as language educators must first look into the factors which may either impede or improve the learning and acquisition of a foreign language. To achieve this goal, the study aimed to identify the level of acceptability in restoring the Spanish Language in the third and fourth year levels of secondary education in Honorato C. Perez Sr. Memorial Science High

School, Cabanatuan city and to determine the teachers' perception in integrative application of teaching foreign language.

Specifically, it attempted to:

1. Describe the profile of the student-respondents in terms of: age, gender and year level
2. Describe the profile of the teacher-respondents as regards: age, gender, and subject taught – Filipino, English, and Spanish.
3. Illustrate the level of acceptance of students of the Spanish Language as their special subject.
4. Determine the degree of language motivation possessed by students-respondents
5. Identify the degree of self-efficacy exhibited by the student-respondents
6. Determine if there is any significant difference between the perceptions of students and teachers on the former's acceptability in foreign language, motivation and self-efficacy.
7. Establish if a significant difference exists between the grades of 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year students in Spanish subject.
8. Find out the importance of restoring the teaching of Spanish to uplift the quality of language education in the Philippines.
9. Describe the language teachers' perceptions on possible problems that the students will face in learning Spanish language, as perceived by them.
10. Provide acceptable solutions to prevent the problems of students in learning other foreign language, besides English, as perceived by the teachers.

This study explores the students' level of acceptability in restoring the Spanish language as a special subject; the language teachers' perception in integrative application of Spanish language and its importance in our modern days to uplift the quality of language education; and the motivation and self-efficacy of the students to learn it.

This study is limited to identifying their level of acceptability in its restoration and determining how language teachers perceive the integrative application on teaching the Spanish language in Honorato C. Perez Sr. Memorial Science High School, in Cabanatuan City implementing the DepEd special program in foreign language.

Spanish language, sometimes called “Español” or “Castellano” in Spanish, is a Romance language in the “Ibero-Romance” group that evolved from several languages and dialects in central-northern Iberia during the 9th century and gradually spread with the expansion of the Kingdom of Castile (present northern Spain) into central and southern Iberia during the later medieval period. Modern Spanish developed with the readjustment of consonants (*reajuste de las sibilantes*) that began in the 15th century. About 358 million people speaking Spanish as a native language and a total of 417 million use it worldwide. According to *Ethnologue* (2000), currently these figures are up to 400 and 500 million people, respectively so that Spanish appears the second most natively spoken language in the world, after Mandarin Chinese. Moreover, Spanish is one of the six official languages of the United Nations and used as an official language of the European Union, and Mercosur.

Spanish is widely considered to be the most beneficial second language for a speaker. The Hispanic world has contributed significantly to the growth of learning Spanish as a foreign language across the world.

## **Language Teacher**

The teacher's role is crucial in determining the effectiveness and dynamics of language teaching. The majority of the studies examined what a "good" or "effective" language teacher is, and not the distinctive characteristics of language teachers that make them unique. They do provide empirical evidence into "ways in which language teachers' characteristics have been conceptualized" (Borg, 2006). They show that language teachers share characteristics with their counterparts in other teaching domains; however, and more important, they demonstrate that certain characteristics are unique to the domain of language teaching.

Given the qualities of effective foreign language teachers, Bell (2005), through a survey, identified these traits, as perceived by tertiary Foreign Language teachers in the United States. She found that teachers of various Foreign Languages (e.g., Spanish, French, and German) showed a strong consensus on the types of knowledge and behaviors that language teachers need to possess and display.

## **Local Literature**

The Spanish language had been an official language in the Philippines by Title XIV, Article 93 of the 1899 Malolos Constitution. The Philippine Academy of Spanish Language could again play an interesting role in teaching and learning foreign language.

Former President Gloria Macapagal- Arroyo initiated and pursued the restoration of Spanish language in Philippine Education as an elective in high school. The Department of Education through Memorandum No. 560 S. 2008 recognized the Spanish language as an essential part of Spain's historical and cultural legacy in the Philippines.

In fact it encourages secondary schools to offer basic and advanced Spanish in the Third and Fourth Year levels, respectively, as an elective.

Through the Bureau of Secondary Education (BSE), the DepEd has implemented the Special Program in Foreign Language on a pilot basis starting School Year 2009-2010. Initially, the program offers Spanish as a foreign language in one school per region, at two classes of 35 students each, per school. The Special Program in Foreign Language involves schools whose students have demonstrated competence in English and is capable of learning another foreign language.

This program aims to develop students' skills in listening, reading, writing, or communicative competence in a foreign language; prepare them to engage in meaningful interaction in a linguistically diverse global workplace; and develop understanding and appreciation of other people's culture (DepEd Memorandum No. 560, S. 2008).

## **Methods**

### **Research Design**

Using the descriptive survey method, the present investigation involved description, recording, analysis, and interpretation of conditions that exist.

### **Participants**

Some 135 high school students respondents in the 3rd and 4th year levels during academic year 2011-2012 and the 10 language teachers at Honorato C. Perez Sr. Memorial Science High School (HCPMSHS), Cabanatuan City comprised the study.

Selected teachers from HCPMSHS were trained under the supervision of the *Instituto de Cervantes* and the Bureau of Secondary Education to effectively implement the program.

### **Sample and Sampling Procedure**

In determining the appropriate size of population, the study used the stratified random sampling which divided the respondents into smaller groups known as strata. The strata were formed based on members' shared attributes as characteristics like age, gender, year level etc.

### **Research Site**

The research was conducted at HCPMSHS, Region III of the 15 pilot schools selected by DepEd regional offices based on Mean Percentage Score in English, ability to provide substitute teachers to take over the classes of teachers in training, and availability of classrooms and support facilities and equipment.

### **Materials and Instruments**

The main instrument used to gather the needed information from the participants was the questionnaire, supplemented by interview. In preparing the questionnaire, the researchers did some reading on local and foreign literatures that are directly or indirectly related to the study. To ensure the reliability of the answers, the test-retest reliability method was employed. The researchers distributed the two sets of questionnaires twice with the same respondents, students and language teachers.

## **Questionnaire for Students and Teachers**

### ***Part I***

From the students, personal profiled information such as age, gender, and year level was drawn.

The teachers' personal profile was used to gather information on selected variables such as age, gender, and subject taught.

### ***Part II***

The Language Acceptability Scale was employed to reveal the respondents acceptability learning the Spanish language.

The Language Teachers' Perception on students' level of language acceptability scale was measured through a questionnaire.

### ***Part III***

Students' motivation was assessed based on their agreement to premises, while that of the teachers perception on students' level of language motivation.

### ***Part IV***

For students' Language Self-efficacy Scale an instrument measured the level of confidence among the respondents' ability to perform various communication tasks in a second language.

For teachers' Language Teachers' Perception on students' level of language self-efficacy an instrument measured the students' level of confidence in performing various communication tasks in Spanish language.



**Part V**

An instrument measured the language teachers' perception on the importance of the DepEd special program in teaching Spanish language.

**Part VI**

An instrument measured the teachers' possible problems in teaching the Spanish language.

**Part VII**

An instrument measured the main solutions to students' problems in learning Spanish, as perceived by the teachers.

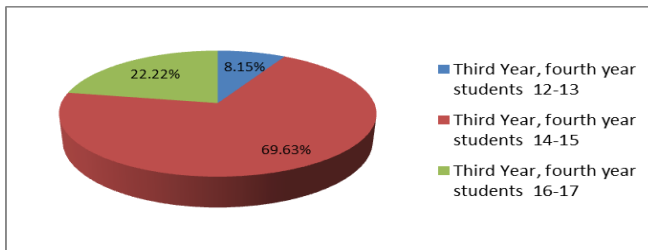
**Response Mode:**

<p><b>Part II was rated on the following scale:</b></p> <p>5- Strongly accepted</p> <p>4- Accepted</p> <p>3- Moderately accepted</p> <p>2- Not accepted</p> <p>1- Strongly not accepted</p>	<p><b>Part III</b></p> <p>5- Strongly motivated</p> <p>4- Motivated</p> <p>3- Moderately motivated</p> <p>2- Not motivated</p> <p>1- Strongly not motivated</p>
<p><b>Part IV</b></p> <p>5-Highly confident</p> <p>4- Confident</p> <p>3- Moderately confident</p> <p>2- Not confident</p> <p>1- Strongly not confident</p>	<p><b>Part V, VI, and VII</b></p> <p>5- Strongly agree</p> <p>4- Agree</p> <p>3- Moderately agree</p> <p>2- Disagree</p> <p>1- Strongly disagree</p>

To make sure that all distributed questionnaires were fully accomplished and retrieved, the researchers clarified and entertained all questions from the participants on the items included in the checklist.

#### IV. Results and Discussion

The graph below shows the distribution of Students-Respondents according to age.

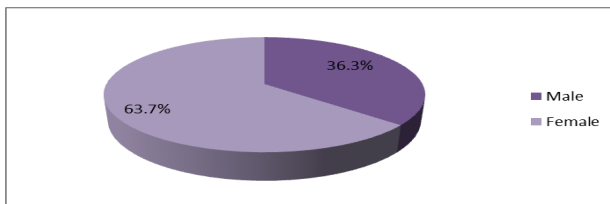


**Fig. 1 Distribution of Students- Respondents as to Age**

The majority of the student-respondents were in the age bracket of 14-15 years with the frequency of 94 or 69.63 percent, followed by the age bracket of 16-17, of 30 frequency or 22.22 percent, and 12-13, of 11, frequency or 8.15 percent.

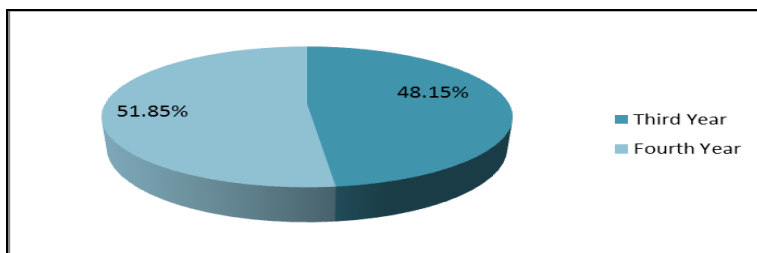
This finding implies that most of the respondents were in their teenage years that indicate new cognitive skills permitting highly abstract thinking (Allen & Meyer, 2009).

The graphs reveal that the majority of the respondents were female with the frequency of 86 or 63.70 percent, while 49 or 36.30 percent were male.



**Fig. 2 Distribution of Students-Respondents as to Gender**

The graph below shows that the majority of the respondents were 4<sup>th</sup> year students with the frequency of 70 or 51.85 percent while 65 or 48.15% were 3<sup>rd</sup> year students.



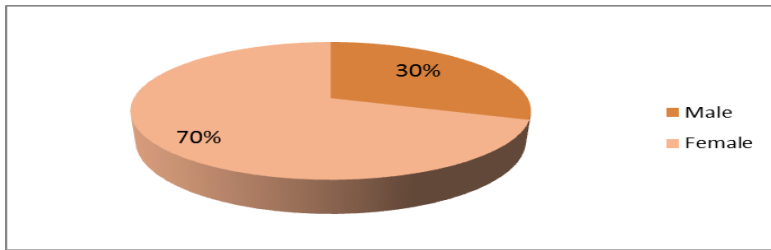
**Fig. 3 Distribution of Students-Respondents as to Year Level**

The data show that the majority of the teacher respondents were in the age bracket of 31-40 years with the frequency of 5 or 50 percent, followed by the age bracket of 20-30, with frequency of 3 or 30 percent, and 41-50 of 2 or 20 percent frequency.

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency(f)</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>(Language Teachers)</b>	<b>Bracket</b>		<b>(%)</b>
<b>Language teacher on:</b>	20-30	3	30
<b>Filipino, English and</b>	31-40	5	50
<b>Spanish</b>	41-50	2	20

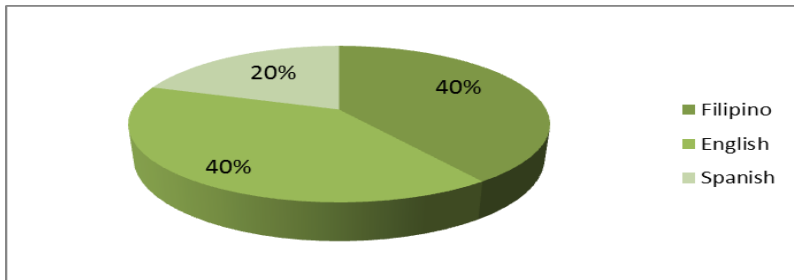
**Fig. 4 Distribution of the Teacher- Respondents as to Age**

The majority of the respondents were female with the frequency of 7 or 70 percent, while 3 or 30 percent were male.



**Fig. 5 Distribution of the Teacher- Respondents as to Gender**

The graphs below show that the majority of language teachers in Honorato C. Perez Sr. Memorial Science High School teach Filipino with the frequency of 4 or 40%, English subjects also with frequency of 4 or 40 percent, while 2 or 20% teach Spanish subject.



**Fig. 6 Distribution of Teacher-Respondents according to Subject Taught**

**The Evaluation in the Students’ Language Acceptability Scale of the Students.**

The respondents’ perception with regard to the students’ language acceptability showed a very high readiness to learn Spanish language, that ranked no.1 with a weighted mean of 4.28 and verbal interpretation of “strongly accepted”. Ranked no.2 with a weighted mean of 4.20 and a verbal interpretation of “strongly accepted” was the restoration and integration of Spanish language as a special subject. Based on the data gathered from the students’ language acceptability, the

top five rankings which underlie DepEd Memorandum No. 560, s. 2008 (Special Program in Foreign Language) describe that this program was designed to develop the macro skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing using simple and practical language. It was also designed to prepare students for more complex interactions, if not more formal use of the language. The finding confirmed the students' favored and felt ready in taking this program, because they were aware of the effects of restoring of Spanish language as their special subject.

The top five items which received the highest mean revealed that the students had high level of acceptability and readiness based on their agreement on the premise to accept Spanish language as their special subject because of its importance and their awareness of the positive effects of learning it. Meanwhile, it can be noted that the lowest mean ranked of no.7 with a weighted mean of 3.40 and verbal interpretation of "accepted" shows that students are able to write in Spanish.

The latter suggests that students strongly accepted the DepEd special program, "the restoration of Spanish language as a special subject". Their readiness to learn it acknowledges the fact that students are competent to learn to communicate it.

The overall mean for Language Acceptability Scale is 3.80, describing that the respondents "accepted" its premise to learn such.

### **The evaluation in the students' language motivation scale of the students**

The respondents' perception on the importance of the Spanish language and the reasons for exerting much effort in learning it that they gained confidence in using the Spanish language well; it is ranked no.1 with a weighted mean of 4.16 a verbal interpretation of "strongly

motivated”. To support this result Gardner (2001) affirms four sections of motivations: the external influences, individual differences, language acquisition contexts, and outcomes. In the socio-educational model, motivation to learn the second language includes three elements: first, the motivated individual exerts effort to learn the language; second, wants to achieve a goal; and third, enjoys the task of learning the language.

The top five items which received the highest mean reveal that students were highly motivated, based on their strong agreement on the premises to learn and master the Spanish language, because of the benefit which they could get from doing such. The majority of the respondents reported that they were motivated on the idea that knowledge of the Spanish language will help them to have better lives in the future, to understand people who use the language and to participate in business transactions in the government, economics, and school with its use.

Notably, the lowest rank no. 15 with a weighted mean 2.92 and a verbal interpretation of “moderately motivated” shows that students need Spanish to get the best job.

The latter suggests that 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year students were highly motivated by the idea that their proficiency in Spanish language would help them to achieve their goals in life in the future. Other than those reasons, only a few of them would acknowledge the fact that they really loved to learn the Spanish language without thinking of its probable profit.

The overall mean for Language motivation is 3.52 which describes that the respondents were all strongly motivated to learn the Spanish language.

### **The Evaluation in the Language Self-efficacy scale of the students.**

The respondents assessment as regards their self-efficacy revealed that out of ten items, “that students’ listen to, and understand, the details of short conversations in Spanish language” ranked no. 1 with a weighted mean of 3.89 and a verbal interpretation of “confident”. These findings can be attributed to the fact that since the respondents were already in their junior and senior years, they have already received adequate exposure and training on those activities inside the Spanish class. The final rank of 10 with a weighted mean of 2.72 and a verbal interpretation of “moderately confident” shows that students can recite in the Spanish class fluently.

The overall mean for self-efficacy is 3.35 which indicates that the respondents’ level of self-efficacy is described as “confident” in doing communication tasks. Had there been truth in the concept that achievement is greatly influenced by the learners’ perception of their abilities and that it positively affects a person’s choice of task and the effort put into completing a task as well persistence in gaining mastery of the task, there must be rhyme and reason to believe that the respondents are more likely to involve less in communication activities, as they reported less confidence in doing. In this case, it can be said that the respondents are more confident in doing listening and reading, which both pertain to acquisition of a language.

### **The interpretation about the correlation between the students’ level of acceptability and language teachers’ perception in integrative application in teaching Spanish language**

The significance value as resulted in the Levene’s test Equality of Variance is less than 0.05. Hence, the p-value of two-tailed test where

equal variance is not assumed is 0.175 which is greater than 0.05. (see the table listed below).

		Levene's Test Equality of Variances (Significance)	Two-tailed t-test for Equality of Means (significance)
Language Acceptability	Equal variances assumed	0.007	0.438
	Equal variances not assumed		0.175

This finding only means that there is no significant difference between the perceptions of the students and teachers regarding the acceptability level of Spanish language.

**Interpreting the correlation between the students' level of language motivation and language teachers' perception in integrative application in teaching Spanish language**

Based on the significance value of the Levene's test, not assuming that there is an equal variance, the p-value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05 to mean that a significant difference exists between the perceptions of students and teachers in relation to motivation in learning Spanish. It implies that the perceptions of teachers on the importance of Spanish that motivated them to learn it differs from those of the students in the value of learning it. To support this result, Combs & Collier



(2006), hold that “a good teacher incorporates social and academic language development into every lesson”.

### **Interpreting the correlation between the students’ level of language self-efficacy and language teachers’ perception in integrative application in teaching Spanish language**

Not assuming that there are equal variances as based on the significance value resulted from the Levene’s test, no significant difference exists between the perceptions of students and teachers regarding the Spanish language self-efficacy. It implies that ideas and views of students in the application and usage of Spanish do not differ from those of the teachers about its effectiveness. This result is reinforced by Hurley’s (2005) claim that linguists who have studied code-switching characterize it as “a systematic and rule-governed language behavior”.

### **Comparing the performance of third and fourth year students in their Spanish subject**

Based on the results of the Levene’s test for equality of variance which has significance of 0.108, equal variance must be assumed and this leads to the p-value of 0.081. This result of the t-test for equality of means reveals that there is no significant difference between the performance of third and fourth year students in their Spanish subject.

### **The teachers’ perception on the importance of DepEd special program in teaching Spanish language**

The finding yields that teachers can improve the students’ ability in learning second foreign language, a skill that ranked no.1 with a weighted mean of 4.70 and a verbal interpretation of “strongly agree”. In

contrast, the lowest ranked no.10 with a weighted mean of 2.90 and a verbal interpretation of “moderately agree” shows the teachers’ perception that students would be engaged in academic discussion.

The overall mean for teachers’ perception on the importance of DepEd special program in teaching Spanish language is 3.86. This figure described that respondents “agree” to the premises on the importance of DepEd special program in teaching Spanish language scale.

### **On the evaluation of Teachers’ possible problems in teaching Spanish language**

The teachers’ perception on the possible problems in teaching Spanish shows their perception on students’ level of readiness ranked no.1 with a weighted mean of 3.90 and a verbal interpretation of “agree”. Lastly, no.10 with weighted mean of 2.90 and a verbal interpretation of “moderately agree” shows that students feel frightened, when they don’t understand what the teacher is saying in Spanish language which was a possible problem.

The overall mean for the teachers’ perception on possible problems in teaching it 3.37, showing that respondents “agree” to the premises on possible problem in teaching Spanish language scale.

### **Evaluating Common Remedies to prevent Problems Arising from teaching Spanish Language**

The teacher’s perception on common remedies to prevent the problem arising in teaching Spanish showed that the item “orient students to motivate them to study it” ranked no.1 with a weighted mean of 4.90 and a verbal interpretation of “strongly agree”. This result matches the study of Hashi (2001), to the effect that one who is interactively motivated to learn a second language has a desire to identify

with another language community, and tends to evaluate learning situation positively and accurately. Ranking sixth with a weighted mean of 2.50 and a verbal interpretation of “moderately agree” shows that adding additional time in teaching Spanish language was a probable remedy in preventing the problem arising from it.

The overall mean on teachers’ perception on the common remedies to prevent the problem arising from teaching Spanish is 3.97, which described that respondents “agree” to the premise on teachers’ perception on preventing problem in teaching Spanish language scale.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The teachers’ perceptions on the importance of Spanish language that motivated them to learn it differs from those of the students. It can be attributed to the fact that the Spanish language has lesser importance to them compared with the English language.

The efficiency and effectiveness of the DepEd special program of integrative application of foreign language lies in the teachers’ awareness on the problems that might arise. They need to introduce activities in order to stimulate the learners interest, make them active in their studies and apply their communication skills in varied real-life situations. In light of the findings and conclusions, the researchers recommend that linguistics and psychologists fused to enrich language pedagogy. Moreover, language teachers must underscore students’ background, acceptability, motivation, and self-efficacy whenever they come up with classroom activities, plan their instructional strategies, emphasize the teaching of all communication skills, as well as provide a variety of classroom activities and strategies that are unique, engaging, entertaining and learners-based. Moreover, they ought to minimize the use of paper and pencil test in assessing their student’s performance

instead give more drills, simulations, group dynamics and other activities that will actively involve learners in the whole process. Besides, in choosing reading materials to be given, teachers should assess whether or not the materials suit the learners' level and interest. Similarly, the relationship of language proficiency and language acceptability, motivation, and self-efficacy must be further investigated, using these factors as variables: Teachers' profile including their teaching methods and strategies. Also a wider sampling be done in another research setting in comparing results.

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