Classroom Culture in English Classes of the Mindanao State University -Tawi-Tawi College of Technology and Oceanography (MSU-TCTO): Prospect for Institutionalizing Ambitious Teaching

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ABSTRACT

The study assessed the classroom culture of language teachers of the Collegiate Department of the Mindanao State University - Tawi-Tawi College of Technology and Oceanography with the aim of institutionalizing ambitious teaching in the classrooms. Ambitious teaching is defined as not only understanding where your students are coming from, but also holding very high expectations of them. It is to engage children in not only building foundational skills but also building problem-solving skills and higher-order thinking skills. Fourteen language teachers self-evaluated their respective classroom culture using the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument for Classrooms (OCAI-C). This was cross-validated by the 185 students enrolled in their English classes using the same questionnaire. The OCAI-C categorizes the classroom focus into 6 dimensions namely dominant characteristics, teacher's attention, classroom management, classroom glue, strategic emphasis, and criteria for success. Each dimension was evaluated in terms of 4 classroom culture classifications which are building relationships, continuous improvement, high expectations, and a stable environment. The results show that the Mindanao State University - Tawi-Tawi

College of Technology and Oceanography (MSU-TCTO) language teachers were more focused on building relationships, which suggested that their classroom affinity was more on developing mutual trust, care, and sense of belongingness, support, and respect. The MSU-TCTO classroom culture was more focused on developing foundational skills. Nevertheless, there was evidence that language classes had already ventured beyond building relationships. Thus, institutionalizing Ambitious Teaching in English classes is attainable, but it entails persistent reshaping of the teacher's focus to set high learning expectations.

INTRODUCTION

It is stipulated in the handbook of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED, 2014) that with the advent of globalization, the Philippines has shifted its focus of education from an input-based, teacher-centred instruction paradigm to an outcome-based, learner-centred educational model to address the pressing need for producing globally-competitive and well-equipped learners. This is the view of the Outcome-based Education (OBE), which the Philippine Commission on Higher Education (CHED) defines as an approach that focuses and organizes the educational system around what is essential for all learners to know, value, and be able to do to achieve a desired level of competence.

The Mindanao State University - Tawi-Tawi College of Technology and Oceanography (MSU-TCTO), located at Bongao, Tawi-Tawi, Philippines, as one of the higher education institution under the supervision of CHED, has adopted the OBE; however, to date, teachers have yet to completely transitioned their teaching methodologies towards the new educational framework. With this, Ambitious Teaching is studied as it is tailored towards OBE. While OBE focuses on the end result, Ambitious Teaching is concerned with the processes to achieve the desired learning goal. One of the factors that should be considered in the class is the classroom culture that teachers nurture. An Ambitious Teaching classroom is described as allowing the learner to freely explore beyond the targeted learning outcomes. Coupled with high-quality teaching, this will provide students opportunities to engage in rigorous academic work and accomplish more than what they are expected to achieve (Lampert et al., 2010).

Quinn et al. (2014) categorized the classroom culture into 6 dimensions as (i) *classroom characteristics* which either student-centred, innovative, lively and enthusiastic place, results-oriented or an orderly structured place; (ii) *the classroom glue* which refers to the kind of student outcome that was established from the teaching and learning processes; (iii) *teachers attention* or the kind of attention given by the teachers to students; (iv) *classroom management*; (v) *strategic emphasis*, which is the learning processes

employed by the teacher to achieve the desired learning goal; and (vi) *criteria for success*, the teacher's standards of what his/her students should achieve in the class.

Classroom culture is one of the components for developing ambitious teaching, a pedagogical approach that gives prominence to holistic high-quality learning and higher-order thinking skills. Ambitious teaching is commonly applied in the fields of sciences and mathematics. However, the potential for applying such a pedagogical model in English language teaching has to be explored. All courses and degree programs in the Philippine Higher Education curricula use English as a medium of instruction.

Research Problem and Aims

Outcome-based education, as designed by the CHED in the Philippine setting, is a learning paradigm aimed at achieving higher-order learning. In the OBE, the class should be designed in such a way that the teaching strategies and classroom settings are focused on attaining the desired outcomes. However, it is up for the teachers to choose which among the teaching strategies and approaches are suited to attain the specific learning goal. To date, there are no studies conducted which establish the instructional practices and approaches of the language teachers in MSU-TCTO. Are the teacher's lessons and instructional practices intended just to occupy learners for the day or are they designed to develop learner's critical thinking skills and make informed decisions? Are the classrooms

organized to make high impact interactions? The classroom practices, teaching methods, strategies and techniques that teacher's practices define the culture nurtured in their classes. Thus, the study scrutinizes the current state of language teaching in MSU-TCTO especially on attaining outcome-based education in the Philippine setting.

The research is focused on 1) determining the current and preferred classroom culture of the language teachers and students in MSU-TCTO; 2) identifying the dominant classroom characteristics, teacher attention, classroom management, classroom glue, strategic emphasis, and criteria of success that English language teachers promote in their classes; and 3) exploring the prospect of language teachers to shift from their current instructional practices to ambitious teaching.

Research Significance

This study hopes to improve teaching and learning processes and outcomes in teaching English as a language in institutions of higher learning in the Philippine context. Specifically, this study provides relevant data that could be used as a basis for institutionalizing Ambitious Teaching as a means of improving the current teaching-learning standards. Institutionalization of such a teaching paradigm would enhance the capability of the school to introduce Ambitious Teaching as a means of achieving an OBE framework as required by the Commission on Higher Education of the Philippines. The study also offers a new teaching paradigm to teachers in order

for them to be attuned with 21st-century educational principles. The results of this study could provide input and feedback to the administrators on the policies and standards that should be adopted to realize the educational goal for excellence.

Literature Review

MSU-TCTO as an Institution of Higher Learning. At present, State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the Philippines and abroad are trying their best to be called Center of Excellence (COE) and/or Center of Development (COD). As one of the SUCs and HEIs in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), Philippines, the Mindanao State University - Tawi-Tawi College of Technology and Oceanography (MSU-TCTO) has grown into an institution of academic excellence. MSU-TCTO is among the 11 major campuses of the Mindanao State University System created by RA No. 6060 on August 4, 1969, to meet the growing demands of the Mindanao, Sulu, and Palawan (MINSUPALA) region. The mandates of the University System are (1) to perform the traditional functions of a university in instruction, research and extension service; (2) to help accelerate the program of integration among peoples of southern Philippines, particularly the Muslims and other cultural minorities; and (3) to provide trained manpower skills and technical know-how for the economic development of the MINSUPALA region. Furthermore, MSU's vision is to be a premier

supra-regional university committed to the social, political and economic development of Mindanao while achieving international recognition as a leading institution of higher learning (Mindanao State University, 2007).

Recently, per CHED instruction to the HEIs, the MSU-TCTO adopted the Outcome-Based Education (OBE) framework. CHED is committed to developing competency-based learning standards that comply with existing international standards when applicable (for instance outcomes-based education for fields like engineering and maritime education) to achieve quality and enable more effective integration of the intellectual discipline, ethos, and values associated with liberal education. CHED defines outcomes-based education (OBE) as an approach that focuses and organizes the educational system around what is essential for all learners to know, value, and be able to do to achieve a desired level of competence. OBE is open to incorporating discipline-based learning areas that currently structure HEI curricula (Commission on Higher Education, 2014).

Ambitious Teaching. In support of the OBE system in the Philippines, ambitious teaching could be very helpful as it is a student-centred teaching approach that aims to develop higher-order thinking skills. Ambitious teaching deliberately aims to get all kinds of students-across ethnic, racial, class, and gender categories-not only to acquire but also to understand and use knowledge to solve authentic problems. Inherent to ambitious teaching are the seven principles which are anchor

learning; use students' ideas and experiences as resources; authorize students to use practices for a purpose; foster productive discourse; scaffold talk, writing and participation; make thinking visible in other to "work on ideas" together, and build complex and cumulative understandings over time; as the core stance for ambitious teaching. The principles of high-quality teaching are teachers understand that the children are sense makers; teachers must design instruction for all children to do rigorous academic work in school and to have equitable access to learning; teacher's instruction requires clear learning goals; teachers must know and connect with their students as individuals and as learners; teachers must be responsive to the requirements of the school and community environments; the measure of good teaching is students' learning; the teachers represent the nature of discipline with integrity, and the teachers engage their students in reflecting on their own learning. Moreover, ambitious teaching requires that teachers teach in response to what students do as they engage in problem-solving performances, all the while holding students accountable to learning goals that include procedural fluency, strategic competence, adaptive reasoning, and productive dispositions (Kazemi et al., 2009).

It is elaborated during the Massive Open Online Course Camp of the University of Michigan (Leading Ambitious Teaching and Learning, 2017) that beyond the straightforward transfer of facts and skills, ambitious teaching has teachers and students making meaning of rich academic content, co-engaging in authentic practical and intellectual puzzles, and creating new knowledge and capabilities in themselves and others. Globally, ambitious teaching sits at the very centre of policy-driven educational improvement efforts, with schools and systems pressed to engage students in "deeper learning" and the development of 21st-century skills.

Further, literacy is considered ambitious when the teachers were planning with one another, bringing in families and the community and giving opportunities for kids to connect outside the classroom. Within the classrooms, there were some buddy reading and kids were applying or finding problems outside the school. The kids wrote every day as their writing experience. There is an ambitious literacy environment when the teachers help the learners analyze the text and talk to each other and engage in the text. The teachers help them learn how they can form an argument or express an opinion of a text (Duke, 2017).

In Beecher Community District's Vision for Ambitious Teaching of Reading Instruction, the instructional implications of ambitious teaching of reading instructions are 1) explicit instruction of essential practices for effective reading instruction; 2) recognize the role that motivation plays in students' reading by modelling for students how to engage with complex texts that do and do not interest them; 3) enable active constructions of meaning through performance reading responses such as gesture, mime, vocal intonation,

characterization, and dramatization; and 4) construct a collaborative environment that builds on the strengths of individual students (Aurino et al., 2017).

It is believed that the students will respond positively to high expectations when they are clearly defined (Mike, 2017). Secondly, students can reach high expectations, regardless of where they start, with appropriate support. Teachers should set high expectations for all students about what they will learn, how to demonstrate understanding and application, and how they will be assessed. Students will come to our schools with different stories, backgrounds, and skill levels. The teachers must consistently adhere to high expectations and provide support as needed to help all students achieve.

Also, Hassrick et al. (2017) said in their book entitled, *The Ambitious Elementary School* that teachers perceived parents as parents not just for their own child, but also for partners in the overarching goal of providing ambitious literacy instruction for all students at the school.

Realizing ambitious teaching entails many aspects to consider and one of these is assessing the kind of classroom culture that a teacher has shaped in his/her classes. Classroom culture involves creating an environment where students feel safe and free to be involved in worthwhile activities which are considered as the foundation for better learning. For the students to learn, they must feel safe, engaged, connected, and supported in their classrooms and schools. These conditions of learning are the

elements of a school's climate that students experience personally since they contribute to student's achievement and success (Point to Point, 2018; Waldman, 2016).

Therefore, with the preceding discussions on ambitious teaching, Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) and the educational vision of MSU-TCTO on academic excellence and higher learning, institutionalizing ambitious teaching in MSU-TCTO would be advantageous. The related literature and studies cited here showed that ambitious instruction runs in the whole gamut of instructional processes. It involves ambitious leadership, ambitious instruction, and ambitious teaching and learning.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was conducted at the Mindanao State University - Tawi-Tawi College of Technology and Oceanography (MSU-TCTO) located at Sanga-Sanga, Bongao, Tawi-Tawi. The Philippines. MSU-TCTO, a state-run university with complete basic and advanced education, is one of the eleven campuses of the Mindanao State University System (MSUS). The campus is situated in a rural island community in the southern Philippines. This study used a descriptive quantitative-qualitative design. A quantitative design was used since the "Now" and the "Preferred" classroom cultures in relation to ambitious teaching were measured using a 100-point scoring system. In all aspects of this study, the design was mostly descriptive since there was no attempt to generalize the results in

a larger population. The paper exhaustively describes the currently practised and the desired classroom cultures of English language classes.

The Research Respondents

Two groups of respondents were asked to evaluate the "now" and their "preferred" classroom culture. The first group consisted of the 14 faculty members of the Language Department of the College of Arts and Sciences and the language teachers of the College of Education of the Mindanao State University - Tawi-Tawi College of Technology and Oceanography, Philippines, who had at least one English subject taught during the Second Semester of AY 2017-2018. The second set of respondents was college students who were enrolled in a language class of the language teacher-respondents during the same semester. 14 classes were purposely chosen comprising a total of 185 student-respondents. The "now" classroom culture refers to the culture that the English teacher currently espouses in their English classes while the "preferred" is their preference or aspirations on what and how an ideal English class should be.

Research Instrument

The Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument for Classrooms (OCAI-C) adapted from Quinn et al. (2014), serves as the main instrument of the research. The OCAI-C depicts various attributes and characteristics of a classroom which is categorized into six dimensions which are 1) dominant classroom characteristics; 2)

teacher attention; 3) classroom management; 4) classroom glue; 5) strategic emphasis; and 6) criteria for success.

Each dimension has four alternatives that represent four types of classroom culture focus which are building relationships, stable environment, continuous improvement and high expectations. The respondents were to divide the 100 points among those four alternatives, depending on the extent to which each alternative is similar to the classroom characteristics that are currently prevailing for the "now" classroom culture and the type of classroom environment that the respondents envisioned or hoped to be like for the "preferred" classroom culture. Higher points are given to the alternative that is most similar to the classroom attribute of the "now" and "preferred" classroom. The respondents may assign any combination of points, provided that the total score for each dimension is 100 points.

Data Gathering Procedure

The study administered the OCAI-C twice. The first cycle was the respondents' assessment of the "now" classroom culture. After a week, the same instruments were administered to the same set of respondents for the "preferred" classroom culture. This was done to avoid the possibility of a theoretical rating by simply comparing their "now" and "preferred" responses.

The gathering of data in each stage was done simultaneously among the English teachers to avoid comparing of notes and influencing the scoring of other teacher-respondents. Similar data gathering scheme

was applied in the case of the student respondents. Data gathering was done four weeks before the end of the semester to give ample time to the students to observe and experience the culture that their English teachers promoted in their respective classes.

Statistical Treatment and Analysis of Data

The "now" and "preferred" classroom culture were statistically analyzed using the scoring system by Quinn et al. (2014). As proposed by the authors, the indicators were grouped corresponding to the building relationships, stable environment, continuous improvement, and high expectations classroom culture focus as shown in Figure 1. Their averages are plotted in a quadrant. Each quadrant represents the four classroom culture focus. The dots (corresponding to the overall averaged score in each quadrant) were connected. The yellow quadrant represents a classroom culture that is focused on building relationship, green indicates a classroom culture open to change or continuous improvement, the red quadrant indicates that the teacher is in control and students are expected to obey thereby creating a stable environment, and the blue represents high expectations wherein students are expected to achieve more than what is required. A rectangular plot that is skewed towards a certain quadrant describes a classroom culture.

Lastly, the prospect of MSU-TCTO Language teachers to shift from their current instruction to ambitious teaching was attained through a comparison between the current and preferred classroom culture. The comparison focuses as to whether or not the shift from current to a preferred culture, which closely resembles ambitious teaching.
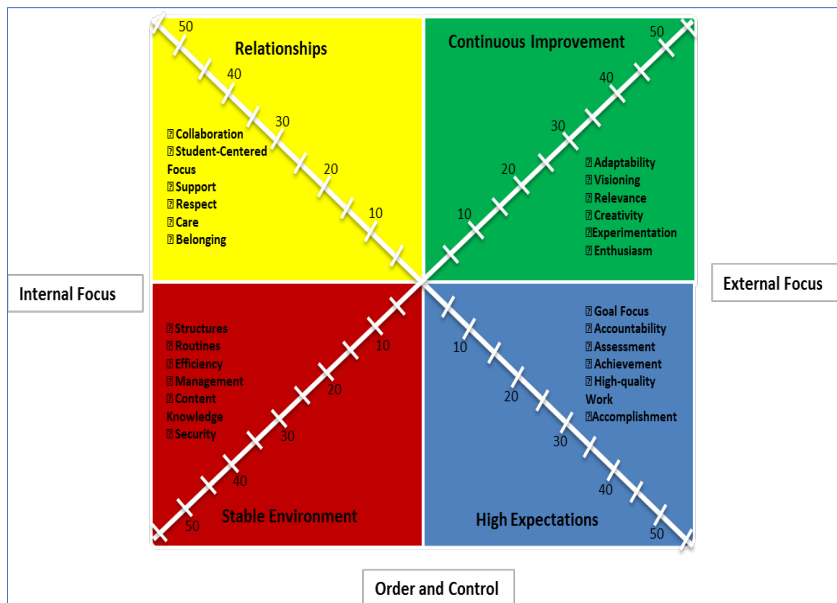

Figure 1. Quadrant used for plotting of scores of classroom culture by Quinn et al. (2014)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The classroom culture in English classes of MSU-TCTO was being judged using the Assessment of Language Classroom Culture towards ambitious teaching (Quinn et al., 2014) as the assessment tool. The tool comprises the attributes of the 4 classroom cultures which are building relationships, stable environment, continuous improvement, and high expectations. These 4classroom culture attributes are further characterized in terms of 6 classroom dimensions, such as dominant classroom characteristics, teacher attention, classroom management, classroom glue, strategic emphasis, and criteria for success.

Two groups of responses apportioned a 100-point score to each dimension, in which an attribute that closely resembled the "now" or "current" classroom characteristics were given higher scores. The same instrument and procedure were used to evaluate the "preferred" classroom culture.

On Classroom Culture as Assessed by the Students

The succeeding tables present the "now" and "preferred" classroom culture as perceived by the respondents. "Now" classroom culture is the current setting of how a classroom operates and its attributes that characterized such culture as established by the language teachers, while the "preferred" classroom culture represents one's aspiration of how a classroom flourishes and achieves students' expectations.

Table 1 presents the mean score of the four classroom culture in each of the six classroom dimensions of the "Now" classroom culture as rated by the 185 student-respondents. The results show that from the point of view of the students, the present classroom culture as employed by their language teachers is focused more on building relationships. This culture is manifested in five dimensions, namely dominant characteristics, teacher attention, classroom management, classroom glue, and strategic emphasis of their present language classes. Note that the mean scores of the 5 dimensions ranging from 29.63 to 32.36 are higher compared to the other classroom culture focus. This suggests that the emphasis of current language classes is on mentoring, facilitating and supporting the students where they felt like they belong to an extended family. For them, learning in the classroom accelerates because of caring, openness and mutual trust between students and teachers. In such a case, learning outcomes are concentrated mostly on developing students' social and emotional support, which is often a characteristic of a culture in a closely-knit society. On criteria of success, however, students perceived that their language teachers had set high expectations in their current language class. As shown in Table 1, the highest rating along this dimension falls on high expectations having a mean score of 25.03. This implies that the students felt that their language teachers were focused on goals and had high expectations for the quality of their work. This simply suggests that, at present, teachers are trying their best to make their students achieve higher learning apart from developing foundational skills.

Table 1

Students' mean rating on the "now" classroom culture of English language classes disaggregated by classroom culture dimensions

Classroom culture dimensions	"Now" classroom culture focus			
	Building a relationship	Continuous improvement	High expectations	Stable environment
Dominant characteristics	29.63	25.85	22.98	21.53
Teacher attention	32.36	24.98	20.86	21.79
Classroom management	31.33	22.45	25.30	20.92
Classroom glue	31.51	24.51	24.49	19.51
Strategic emphasis	29.64	26.74	22.29	21.38
Criteria of success	21.19	24.26	25.03	21.51

As shown in Figure 2, the rectangular plot of the criteria of success dimension (in red colour) is skewed towards the blue quadrant as compared to the other five dimensions which are all skewed towards the yellow quadrant. Note that the yellow quadrant represents a classroom culture geared towards building relationships while the blue quadrant characterizes high expectations.

As to the preferred classroom culture by the students, the mean responses summarised in Table 2 closely resemble their "now" classroom culture evaluation. Though in the previous result on "now" classroom culture, particularly on the criteria of success that portrays a classroom culture that sets high expectations, the students would like their classroom to flourish fully to building relationships in all classroom culture dimensions. It is evident in Table 2 that the highest ratings in all classroom culture dimensions fall under a classroom culture that builds relationships. The results

suggest that students are more favourable to classrooms that adhere to a sense of belongingness, respect, support and care. MSU-TCTO students prefer to focus more on social and interpersonal skills but with a higher learning goal on the criteria for success.

The diagram presented in Figure 3 clearly depicts an identical scoring of the six classroom culture dimensions. Scores of each dimension almost coincide in all quadrants representing the classroom focus. The diagram further shows that the rectangular plots of the six classroom culture dimensions are skewed towards the yellow quadrant describing a "preferred" classroom culture inclined towards building relationships. Nevertheless, it can be noted that the lowest mean scores in both the "now" and "preferred" classroom cultures are in a stable environment. This implies that apart from building relationships, the second prevailing and preferred classroom culture is either towards continuous improvement
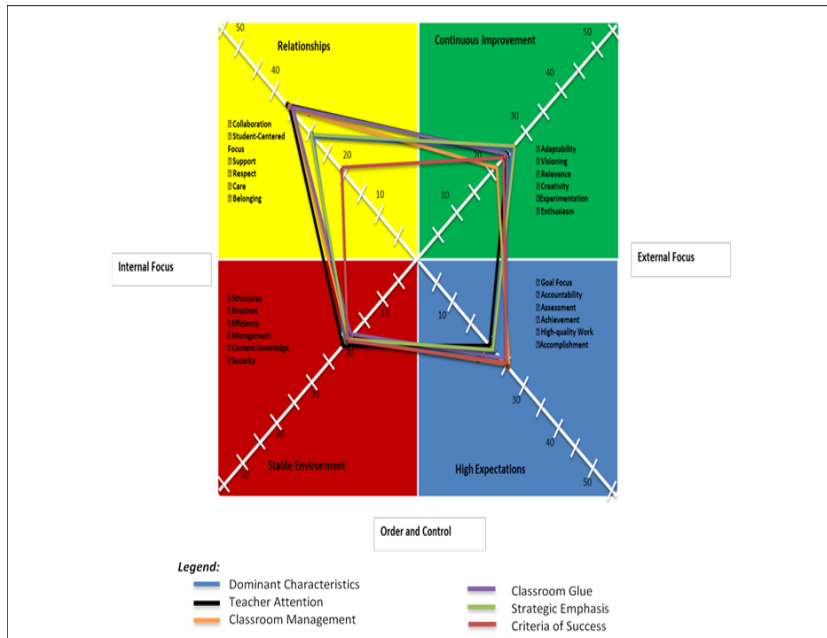
Figure 2. Diagram on the "now" classroom culture of English classes disaggregated by classroom culture dimensions as rated by the student

Table 2

Students' mean rating on the "preferred" classroom culture of English language classes disaggregated by classroom culture dimensions

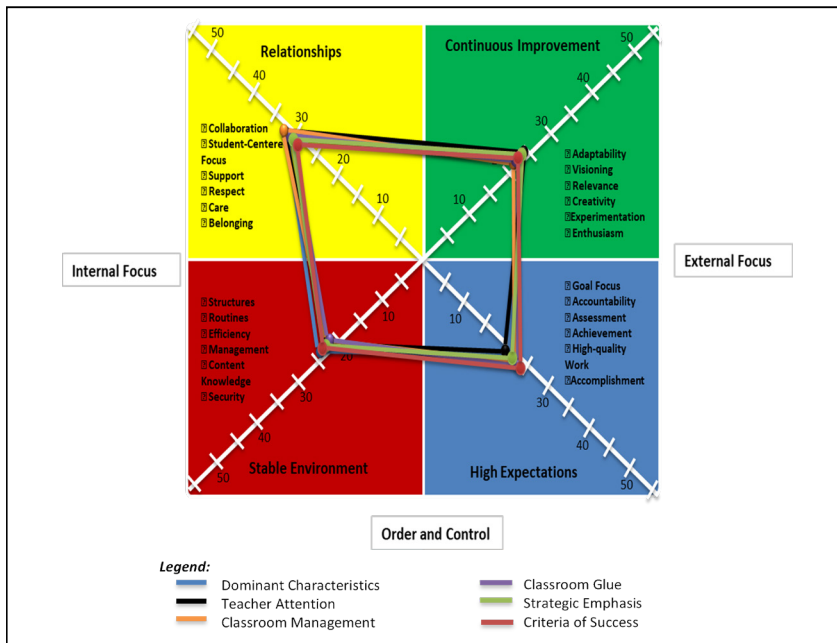| Classroom culture dimensions	"Preferred" classroom culture			
	Building relationship	Continuous improvement	High expectations	Stable environment
Dominant characteristics	30.00	24.74	22.75	22.51
Teacher attention	30.16	25.84	22.46	21.54
Classroom management	30.32	23.65	24.51	21.51
Classroom glue	30.00	23.73	24.81	21.46
Strategic emphasis	29.78	25.51	23.03	21.68
Criteria of success	28.59	23.86	25.05	22.49

Figure 3. Diagram on the "preferred" classroom culture in English classes disaggregated by classroom culture dimensions as rated by the students

or high expectations. The prospect for shifting from internal focus (building relationships) to external focus (continuous improvement and high expectation) could still be achievable.

The overall students' mean aggregate rating on the "now" and "preferred" classroom culture as presented in Table 3 elaborates on the trend described above. Generally, the students' current and desired classroom cultures on the six dimensions are almost identically distributed. In the "now", they assessed their classroom culture as building a relationship with a mean percentage score of 30.61 which is also closely similar to their assessment in the "preferred" with a mean score of 29.81. Ranked second is the continuous improvement followed by high expectations while the stable environment is consistently

at the bottom for both the "now" and "preferred" classroom assessments. This is explained by the previous results in which the "now" and "preferred" classroom culture by this group are almost identical. This implies that students prefer to retain the status quo.

Figure 4 shows the overall "now" and "preferred" classroom cultures of the students. The black and rectangular box in the diagram represents the "now" while the red depicts the "preferred" classroom cultures. It could be noticed that the two plots almost overlapped in the diagram depicting similarities of the students' "now" and "preferred" cultures. Figure 4 further shows that the two rectangular plots are both skewed to building relationship quadrant followed by continuous improvement and close behind is the high expectations

Table 3

Overall students' rating on the "now" and "preferred" classroom culture in their English language classes

Classroom culture focus	Now	Preferred
Building a relationship	30.61	29.81
Continuous improvement	24.80	24.56
High expectation	23.49	23.77
Stable environment	21.11	21.86

classroom culture. Further analyses were made to examine how individual students rated the current and preferred classroom cultures of their language classes. This was done by identifying the dominant classroom culture focus which respondents rated the highest. In case of tie scores in two or more classroom focus, the score is classified as "multiple domains". The results are summarized in Table 4.

Of the 185 student-respondents, 112 rated building relationships as the current classroom culture of language classes in MSU-TCTO. This constitutes almost one-third (60.5%) of the total population. A small proportion of the respondents rate the current language classroom as high expectations (12.4%), followed by continuous improvement with 9.2%. The individual ratings conform to the earlier findings which showed that the current classroom culture is on building a relationship. However, a number of student respondents (13.5%) judge their language classes to have multiple focuses.
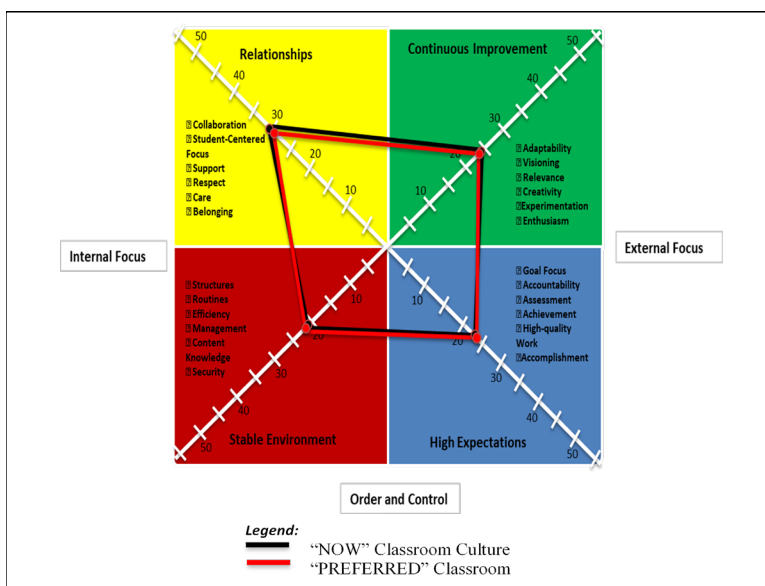

Figure 4. The diagram on the students' overall dominant rating on the "now" and "preferred" classroom culture in their English classes

Table 4

Percentage distribution of students' overall dominant rating on the "now" and "preferred" classroom culture in their English language classes

Classroom culture focus	Now		Preferred	
	Number	Percent (%)	Number	Percent (%)
Building relationship	112	60.5	98	53.0
Continuous improvement	17	9.2	25	13.5
High expectation	23	**12.4**	18	**9.7**
Stable environment	8	**4.3**	10	**5.4**
Multiple domain focus	25	**13.5**	34	**18.4**
Total	185	**100.0**	185	**100.0**

On Classroom Culture as Assessed by the Language Teacher

This section presents two independent ratings by the language teachers' classroom culture - one as they currently practised and the other as they wish for their students to flourish and exceed expectations. Table 5 shows the mean scores given by the teachers on their current teaching practice or culture. It is observed that their currently existing classroom culture along the six dimensions is focused on building a relationship, except strategic emphasis. The result is closely similar to their students' evaluation as discussed in the previous section. This suggests that most of what they are employing right now concerns most on developing students' affective learning domain in language teaching. Their dominant classroom culture is geared towards building a relationship with mean average scores of 32.5 on dominant classroom

Table 5

Teachers' mean rating on the "now" classroom culture of English language classes disaggregated by classroom culture dimensions

Classroom culture dimensions	"Now" classroom culture			
	Building relationship	Continuous improvement	High expectations	Stable environment
Dominant classroom characteristics	32.5	24.3	27.1	16.1
Teacher attention	34.4	21.1	22.5	20.0
Classroom management	37.1	23.2	21.4	18.2
Classroom glue	29.6	22.9	28.2	19.3
Strategic emphasis	26.1	31.1	26.4	16.4
Criteria of success	31.8	25.4	25.7	17.1

characteristics; teacher attention, 34.4; classroom management, 37.1; classroom glue, 29.6; and 31.8 for the criteria of success. However, on strategic emphasis, language teachers are currently inclined towards the continuous improvement of their students with a mean score of 31.1. This confirms the earlier students' evaluation of the "now" classroom culture where developing relational skills dominate in English language classes. Nonetheless, teachers believed that their emphasis is to build a continuous improvement of the students in and outside the classroom.

The graphical representation of the current classroom culture as self-rated by the language teachers is shown in Figure 5 .

Distinct from the rest is the light green rectangular plot which is skewed towards the continuous improvement (green quadrant). However other classroom dimensions are slanted to building relationships (yellow quadrant). Moreover, it is also visible that most of the plots of most dimensions are explicitly a little skewed towards the blue quadrant which represents a culture that aims for high expectations on students indicating that the said classroom practice is also observed by teachers although not the most dominant. The preferred classroom culture by the teachers as presented in Table 6 closely resembles their currently practised culture. Highlighted numerical figures in the table below exemplify the highest average score by dimension.

Of the 6 dimensions, the language teachers hoped to shift their classroom focus from building relationships towards continuous improvement specifically on dominant classroom characteristics (31.8), classroom glue (28.4) and strategic emphasis (32.5). However, the teachers prefer to retain their current classroom to
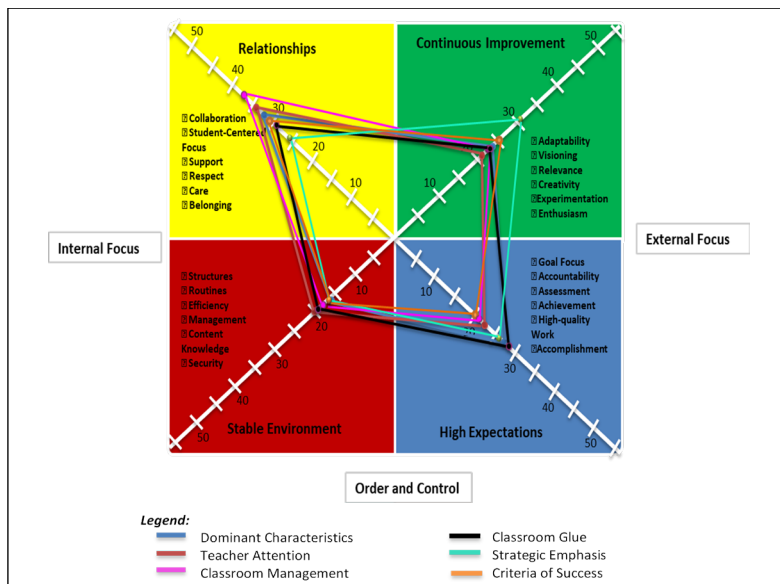

Figure 5. The diagram on the "now" classroom culture in English classes as rated by the language teachers

simply building relations along with teacher attention (32.0), classroom management (33.7) and criteria for success (28.2). The above result is presented in Figure 6. Four of the rectangular plots portraying classroom characteristics, classroom glue and strategic emphasis are distinguishably slanted towards the quadrant for continuous improvement while the teacher's attention, classroom management and criteria for success are skewed in the direction of the yellow quadrant (building relationship).

Table 6

Teachers' mean rating on the "preferred" classroom culture of English language classes disaggregated by classroom culture dimensions

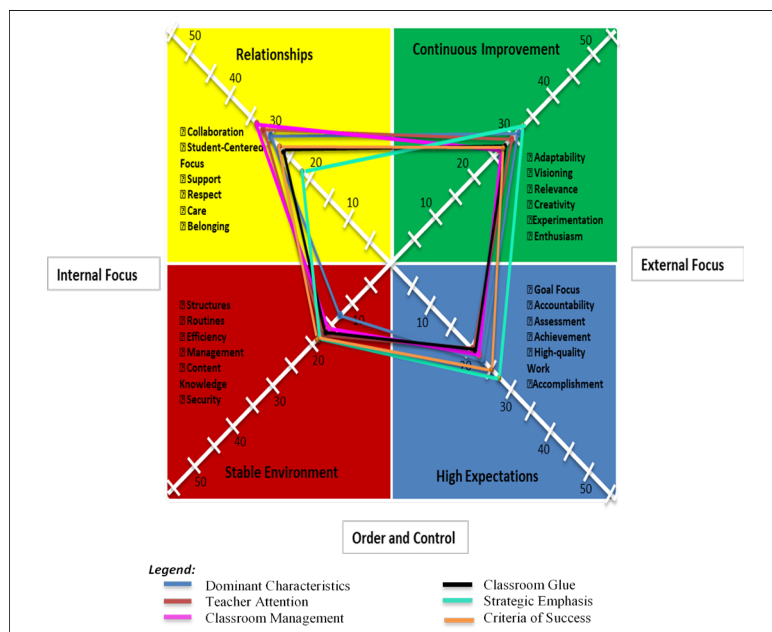| Classroom culture dimensions	"Preferred" Classroom Culture			
	Building relationship	Continuous improvement	High expectations	Stable environment
Dominant classroom characteristics	30.4	31.8	23.9	13.9
Teacher attention	32.0	29.6	20.9	17.5
Classroom management	33.7	27.4	22.1	16.8
Classroom glue	27.9	28.4	26.4	17.3
Strategic emphasis	22.5	32.5	27.1	17.9
Criteria of success	28.2	27.9	25.0	18.0

Figure 6. The diagram on the "preferred" classroom culture in English classes as rated by the teachers

To examine the overall prevailing classroom culture of teachers, the combined average scores of all classroom dimensions of the current and preferred classroom focus were obtained and the results are summarized in Table 7. Overwhelmingly, *building relationships* emerged as the main classroom focus of language teachers at present. Of the 4 classroom focus, *building relationship* topped the rest having a mean score of 32.3 followed by high expectation with 25.2, continuous improvement with 24.6 points and stable environment with 17.19. In general, teachers' focus is on basic learning skills. That is, despite the mandate of the CHED to introduce OBE, the present learning outcomes are still lower than what is desired.

In contrast, the language teachers' aspiration for their classroom is slightly different from what is currently practised. The overall mean scores between building relationships and continuous improvement only differ by 0.5 in which the latter is higher. This means that they are equally favourable for a classroom that builds a relationship (29.1) but at the same time continuously aspire for improvement (29.6). The results show that while there are

indications teachers wish to elevate learning goals to a higher level, they are equally glued to basic learning skills.

The visual of the overall classroom focus scores in Figure 7 evidently displays that the "now" classroom culture (black) of the language teachers is skewed towards the yellow quadrant which is on building a relationship. On the contrary, the "preferred" classroom culture is almost equally skewed towards the yellow and green quadrants. Similar to the analyses made on the students' assessment, the distribution of the teachers' individual dominant responses along the 4 classroom culture focus is tallied and the results are summarized in Table 8. The result provides a glimpse of how the 14 language teacher respondents assess their current and desired classroom environment.

Parallel to the earlier results, more than three-fourths (78.57%) rated their current classroom as focusing on building relationships. As opposed to the current culture, teachers have no unanimity on their views as to how language classes prosper in the future. Although only 35.71% said they would like to retain the culture of building relationships, the remaining proportion of teachers are dispersed to continuous

Table 7

Overall teachers' mean rating on the "now" and "preferred" classroom culture in their English language classes

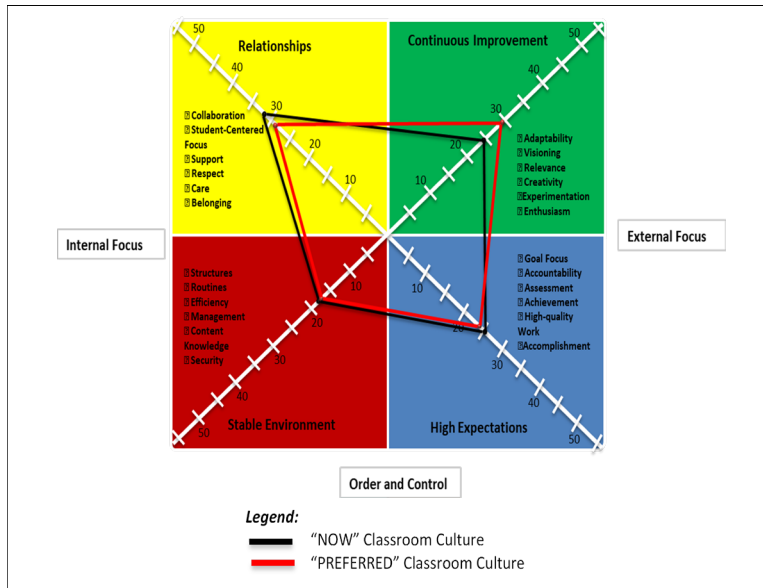| Classroom culture focus	Now	Preferred
Building a relationship	32.3	29.1
Continuous improvement	24.6	29.6
High expectations	25.2	24.3
Stable environment	17.9	17.0

Figure 7. The diagram on the teacher's overall rating in their "now" and "preferred" classroom culture in their English classes

Table 8

Percentage distribution of teachers' overall dominant rating on the "now" and "preferred" classroom culture in their English language classes

Classroom Culture Focus	Now		Preferred	
	Number	Percent (%)	Number	Percent (%)
Building relationship	11	**78.57**	5	**35.71**
Continuous improvement	1	**7.14**	4	**28.57**
High expectation	1	**7.14**	2	**14.29**
Stable environment	0	**0.0**	0	**0.0**
Multiple classification	1	**7.17**	3	**21.43**
Total	14	**100**	14	**100**

improvement, high expectation and multiple classifications. The non-unanimity of teachers' preference would create difficulty in shifting the current culture. No teachers prefer a classroom in a stable environment.

CONCLUSION

In all indications, the current classroom culture of English classes in MSU-TCTO is more of building relationships - the most basic and fundamental of all learning cultures. The Outcome-Based Education espoused by the Commission which focuses on developing higher-order skills is not yet fully met. Promising though is the aspiration of the teachers to shift towards continuous improvement; a classroom culture that is

geared towards higher-order learning. Thus, institutionalizing ambitious teaching - a pedagogical approach which is aimed to develop a learning outcome beyond the classroom - is probable but will face a lot of challenges specifically in reshaping the mind-set of the students and the teachers to shift their preference to an externally focused learning goal - a condition for ambitious teaching. The students should be exposed to academic work that is not only geared towards building relationships (i.e. care, support, respect, collaboration and belongingness) but also sets higher goals other than emotional and personal development To gradually realize ambitious teaching, the school has to remodel its instructional paradigm, modify teachers' learning goals and restructure classroom emphasis into a collaborative and holistic learning environment that would propel students' learning toward higher-order thinking and continuous learning.

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