Assessment and Evaluation of BPSU English Discoveries Online (EDO)

Sherrilyn B. Quintos[1], Yolanda D. Reyes[2]

Cynthia M. Ronquillo, Rowell G. de Guia

Abstract: *English Discoveries Online (EDO) is a six-week computer-assisted, interactive platform of the ICT English Proficiency training Plan of Edupower and Edusoft for the improvement of English language skills, such as listening, reading, speaking, writing, grammar, and vocabulary. One hundred and twenty-six students were given a 37-item questionnaire to survey the difficulties of the students in the EDO course. Their test results before and after the program were used to test the effectiveness of the program in the improvement of English proficiency. Results showed that before the implementation of the program, there were technical difficulties met mostly on logging-in to the site but were addressed quickly by EDO's technical team. During the implementation of the program however, other problems surfaced such as activities being too difficult or too easy for EDO students, inadequate time to complete the tasks at hand, some course components and features not working properly, needing more time and help to complete the required tasks independently using learning tools and needing someone's help to get started in completing the required tasks using learning tools. These problems though did not surface anymore after the implementation of the program. With the level of performance of the students after the program, there had been improvement in their English proficiency indicated by Advanced 1 level as compared to the initial level of English proficiency of Intermediate 2. Overall, there was no problem met by students after the implementation of the program. Results further indicated improvement in students' English proficiency , from Intermediate 2 to Advanced 1 which indicated the EDO program very effective in improving one's English proficiency.*

Keywords: English proficiency, computer assisted, performance, efficiency

1. Introduction

English Discoveries Online (EDO) is a computer-assisted, interactive platform for English language learning which targets language skills, such as listening, reading, speaking, writing, grammar, and vocabulary, using a variety of topic-based materials covering authentic genres (adapted from ICT English Proficiency training Plan of Edupower and Edusoft). The program is designed by a global developer of computerized English learning solutions called Edusoft Ltd.
It took its first step as an English online course in BPSU through the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Training for BPSU English Department faculty members using EDO as proposed by the University President himself, Dr. Delfin O. Magpantay. The training, conducted by EduPower Team, served as a pilot project for the school as a means of evaluating the effectiveness, sustainability, and potentials of EDO for the benefit of the faculty members and students.

The first EDO course for university students was offered for one hundred (100) university students participated, successfully completed the EDO course, and were awarded with certificates.

The second batch of BPSU EDO students started the online course and completed the course following the six-week course and study plan. Then, the 3rd batch finished the course after six weeks.

The English learning program paves the way in achieving BPSU's mission of making its academic offerings and its students globally competitive.

With this, the researchers attempt to make an in depth analysis of the effectiveness of the EDO program as an independent language learning platform and as a tool in developing English language proficiency among BPSU students.

Project Objectives
1) Identify the challenges that students encountered before, during and after the EDO course.
2) Assess the performance level of the students before and after the course.
3) Evaluate the effectiveness of the course based on the students' performance.

2. Methods of Research

This study was conducted to assess and evaluate the effectiveness of EDO in the four (4) campuses of Bataan Peninsula State University. The program has been running for one and a half years from batch one to batch three. In this study, the total number of participants is 126 (N=126).

The initial step of the study was the construction of assessment instrument which has three major parts: the Pre-Implementation Part, the During Implementation Part, and the Post-Implementation Part. The subdivision of the instrument into three (3) parts was intended to fully assess the program from its commencement to its terminal phase. The participants were asked to assess the EDO courses they were enrolled in based on its efficacy, relevance, and effectiveness.

The second step of the study was the evaluation of the EDO program which is done using a comparative analysis of the Pre-test and Post-test results. The students' performance in the pre-test and post-test serves as the gauge of the effectiveness of the EDO program. In this study, the Mean of the students' scores in the pre-test is computed in order to identify the level of their proficiency before they took the course. The pre-test mean was then compared to the

computed Mean of the students' scores in the post-test. The comparison was done in order to identify improvement or decline in students' proficiency. The result of the comparison serves as the basis for the evaluation of the EDO program offered to students in BPSU's four campuses.

3. Results and Discussions

The Assessment and Evaluation of English Discoveries Online (EDO) at Bataan Peninsula State University led to the answers to the questions regarding the challenges encountered by the EDO students in the use of the software before, during and after the program; the performance level of the students before and after the course as a way of assessing EDO as an online language learning tool, and the effectiveness of the program based on the course performance of the students.

To answer the question on the difficulties encountered by the EDO students in the use of the software before, during and after the program, a 37-item questionnaire was floated to the respondents. The following results appeared:

Table 1: Mean per question before the implementation of the program

Question	Scale								Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
	4 Strongly Agree		3 Agree		2 Disagree		1 Strongly Disagree			
	f	%	F	%	f	%	F	%		
Q1	11	8.7	59	46.8	42	33.3	14	11.1	2.53	Agree
Q2	22	17.5	77	61.1	20	15.9	7	5.6	2.9	Agree
Q3	20	15.9	76	60.3	24	19	6	4.8	2.87	Agree
Q4	21	16.7	66	52.4	34	27	5	4	2.82	Agree
Q5	20	15.9	60	47.6	41	32.5	5	4	2.75	Agree
Q6	36	28.6	69	54.8	19	15.1	2	1.6	3.1	Agree
Q7	36	28.6	67	53.2	21	16.7	2	1.6	3.1	Agree
Q8	15	11.9	74	58.7	34	27	3	2.4	2.8	Agree
Q9	18	14.3	75	59.5	28	22.2	5	4	2.87	Agree
Q10	25	19.5	80	63.5	18	14.3	3	2.4	3	Agree
Q11	20	15.9	64	50.8	22	17.5	20	15.9	2.67	Agree
GENERAL MEAN									2.85	Agree

Table 1 show that Items 7, with a mean of 3.1, and 8, with a mean of 2.8, are the challenges encountered by the students. These items reflected the descriptive value Agree. Some of the students encountered logging-in problems, which either were promptly addressed and solved, and in some cases took time to be addressed and solved. These could be attributed to weak internet connections especially if logging-in is done at peak hours or traffic hours especially if many users or EDO students are on-line at the same time. However, in normal conditions, these students admit logging-in problems were solved promptly addressed as indicated with a high mean of 3.1.

Table 2: Mean per question during the implementation of the program

Question	Scale								Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
	4 Strongly Agree		3 Agree		2 Disagree		1 Strongly Disagree			
	f	%	F	%	f	%	F	%		
Q1	20	15.9	72	57.1	29	23	5	4	2.85	Agree
Q2	14	11.1	60	47.6	44	34.9	8	6.3	2.63	Agree
Q3	27	21.4	73	57.9	20	15.9	6	4.8	2.96	Agree
Q4	15	11.9	64	50.8	41	32.5	6	4.8	2.7	Agree
Q5	17	13.5	75	59.5	28	22.2	6	4.8	2.82	Agree
Q6	17	13.5	73	57.9	30	23.8	6	4.8	2.8	Agree
Q7	21	16.7	82	65.1	19	15.1	4		2.95	Agree
Q8	21	16.7	63	50	36	28.6	6	4.8	2.79	Agree
Q9	25	19.8	75	59.5	23	18.3	3	2.4	2.97	Agree
Q10	24	19	77	61.1	22	17.5	3	2.4	2.97	Agree
Q11	40	31.7	68	54	12	9.5	6	4.8	3.13	Agree
Q12	38	30.2	76	60.3	8	6.3	4	3.2	3.17	Agree
GENERAL MEAN									2.9	Agree

Table 2 shows the mean per question during the implementation of the program. Five items appeared to be the problems of the students all with agree descriptive equivalent. They are: course activities being too difficult or too easy for them with a 2.97 mean; needing more time to complete the required tasks independently using learning tools with more time with a mean of 2.96; some course components and features of their account did not work properly with a mean of 2.79; needing more time and someone's help to complete the required tasks independently using learning tools with a mean of 2.7 and needing someone's help to get started in completing the required tasks using learning tools with a mean of 2.63.

Difficulty or non-difficulty of the course assigned to them might be dependent on stock knowledge of the students, relevance or immediacy of the items in the course because of their year level, course taken whether they are in the Education program or any other program in the university including their majors, mindset of the students during the activity or even interest in English, failure to recognize instructions, newness or familiarity with the topic and easiness or difficulty in the use of technology for learning. Since EDO is an additional course taken by students who wanted to improve their English proficiency, it is understandable that they sometimes lack time and attention in course units to accomplish thereby sometimes missing the scheduled time for the accomplishment of such tasks. Accomplishment of other school requirements which is their priority is also a consideration for needing more time to accomplish their course tasks.

Some technical problems also arose during the program implementation which led to some accounts not working properly. There had been cases where power surge, inclement weather, wi-fi connections, peak hours are the culprits.

Table 3: Mean Per Question after the Implementation of the Program

| Question | Scale | | | | | | | | Mean | Descriptive Equivalent |
| | 4 Strongly Agree | | 3 Agree | | 2 Disagree | | 1 Strongly Disagree | | | |
	f	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Q1	31	24.6	77	61.1	14	11.1	4	3.2	3.07	Agree
Q2	32	25.4	73	57.9	17	13.5	4	3.2	3.06	Agree
Q3	32	24.6	75	59.5	16	12.7	4	3.2	3.06	Agree
Q4	29	23	70	55.6	22	17.5	5	4	2.98	Agree
Q5	27	21.4	73	57.9	21	16.7	5	4	2.97	Agree
Q6	24	19	67	53.2	29	23	6	4.8	2.87	Agree
Q7	19	15.1	62	49.2	35	27.8	10		2.71	Agree
Q8	22	17.5	60	47.6	36	28.6	8	6.3	2.76	Agree
Q9	28	22.2	70	55.6	22	17.5	6	4.8	2.95	Agree
Q10	25	19.8	44	34.9	37	29.4	20	15.9	2.59	Agree
Q11	26	20.6	57	45.2	34	27	9	7.1	2.79	Agree
Q12	20	15.9	58	46	41	32.5	7	5.6	2.72	Agree
Q13	31	24.6	62	49.2	27	21.4	6	4.8	2.94	Agree
Q14	21	16.7	63	50	32	25.4	10	7.9	2.75	Agree
Q15	13	10.3	55	43.7	41	32.5	17	13.5	2.51	Agree
GENERAL MEAN									2.85	Agree

Table 3 reveals the mean per question after the implementation of the program. The responses of the students revealed all agree responses on the fifteen (15) questions under it. These are their itemized responses: 3.07 mean on EDO experience helped them improve as students; both 3.06 mean on EDO course activities prepared them to be better students in other courses and subjects and EDO course helped them improve in their study and learning skills in English; 2.98 mean on EDO course helped them improve in their study and learning skills not only in English but in other courses/subjects as well; 2.97 mean with exploring helped them master the skills required for the EDO lesson; 2.95 with their English skills language improved; 2.94 mean with enjoyed learning EDO; 2.87 mean with was able to explore the other features of the course; 2.79 mean on the amount paid for the course was worth the learning they acquired; 2.76 mean on all their expectations met after completing the EDO course;2.75 mean on their English language skills improved as reflected in their final EDO grade; 2.72 mean on was able to use all other features of EDO like the Grammar Book, Explore, Recorder, etc.; 2.71 mean on the time allotted for the final test was enough; 2.59 mean on the amount paid for the course was affordable and 2.51 mean on would like to enroll again in EDO to improve further in their English skills.

From the responses, it was found out that the students did not encounter any problems in the terminal phase of the program.

On the performance level of the students before and after the course, Table 4 shows the results.

Table 4: Performance level of the students before the course

Scale	Proficiency Level	f	%	Mean
9	Advanced 3	1	0.8	
8	Advanced 2	0	0	
7	Advanced 1	6	4.8	4.98
6	Intermediate 3	50	39.7	
5	Intermediate 2	25	19.8	Intermediate 2
4	Intermediate 1	28	22.2	
3	Basic 3	7	5.6	
2	Basic 2	9	7.1	
1	Basic 1	0	0	

Before the EDO course, students took a grade test to know their proficiency levels in English and the results were as follows: 6 students or 4.8% of the respondents were Advanced 1; 50 students or 39.7% were Intermediate 3; 25 or 19.8% Intermediate 2, 28 or 2.2 % were on Intermediate 1 while 7 or 5.6% had Basic 3 and 9 or 7.1% had Basic 2. Overall, the English proficiency level of the 126 respondents with a mean of 4.98 was Intermediate 2.

The EDO program a well-thought courseware for development of English proficiency has become effective in its purpose as far as Bataan Peninsula State University EDO takers were concerned. In fact as to efficiency of the EDO program in the improvement of students' English proficiency, it was very good. Its different components were helpful to student-learners to learn English concepts well.

Table 5: Performance level of the students after the course

Scale	Proficiency Level	f	%	Mean
9	Advanced 3	14	11.1	
8	Advanced 2	34	27	
7	Advanced 1	35	27.8	72.85
6	Intermediate 3	21	16.7	
5	Intermediate 2	5	4	Advanced 1
4	Intermediate 1	6	4.8	
3	Basic 3	7	5.6	
2	Basic 2	3	2.4	
1	Basic 1	1	0.8	

Studies have proved that using Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) in language learning has a positive effect. As Fotos and Browne (2004) pointed out, a large number of works for the past decade "strongly emphasize the significant role of CALL in developing linguistic proficiency and communicative competence in L2 learners as well as promoting increased levels of learner autonomy, motivation, satisfaction, and self-confidence"

In another study on online learning, Lapsley et al. (2008) investigated the validity of equivalency theory among 63 students by comparing two introductory upper-division human resource management courses: one taught online, the other in a traditional classroom. MANCOVA results supported equivalency theory, and further suggest that the online learning pedagogy may be superior in its overall effect on student performance.

The EDO program a well-thought courseware for development of English proficiency has become effective in its purpose as far as Bataan Peninsula State University EDO takers were concerned. In fact as to efficiency of the EDO

program in the improvement of students' English proficiency, it was very good. Its different components were helpful to student-learners to learn English concepts well.

Table 6: Effectivity of the EDO program in improving students' English proficiency

Scale	Range	F	%	Descriptive Equivalent	Mean	Remarks
5	81-100	49	38.9	Excellent		
4	61-80	55	43.7	Very Good		
3	41-60	11	8.7	Good	4.12	Very Good
2	21-40	10	7.9	Fair		
1	20&below	1	0.6	Poor		

4. Summary and Conclusions

English Discoveries Online (EDO) is a six-week computer-assisted, interactive platform for English language learning which targets language skills, such as listening, reading, speaking, writing, grammar, and vocabulary, using a variety of topic-based materials covering authentic genres from the ICT English Proficiency training Plan of Edupower and Edusoft.

Its first time implementation at BPSU raised some questions on the difficulty of its use for first-time users as well as its effectiveness in improving the English proficiency of the same.

A 37-item questionnaire was floated to EDO students to find out their difficulty in the use of the program. Results showed that before the implementation of the program, there were technical difficulties met mostly on logging-in to the site but were addressed quickly by EDO's technical team. During the implementation of the program however, other problems surfaced such as activities being too difficult or too easy for EDO students, inadequate time to complete the tasks at hand, some course components and features not working properly, needing more time and help to complete the required tasks independently using learning tools and needing someone's help to get started in completing the required tasks using learning tools. These problems though did not surface anymore after the implementation of the program.

With the level of performance of the students after the program, there had been improvement in their English proficiency indicated by Advanced 1 level as compared to the initial level of English proficiency of Intermediate 2.

As far as the results are concerned then, the EDO program or course is found very good or very effective in improving the learners' English proficiency.

5. Recommendations

Based on the findings above, the following are recommended:
1) A blended learning environment for EDO takers, that is, from English professors in the classroom is suggested with the use of EDO course components. In this set-up, the course instructor can provide answers and assistance to the queries of the students.

2) A laboratory room or several computers in the library is recommended to be used for on-line learning at strictly specified time for the accomplishment of students' tasks.
3) The development of an English course software which can be purchased at a lower cost to develop students' English proficiency is proposed.
4) A study on the development of computer course wares in other courses for the development of students' proficiency in particular courses is recommended.

References

[1] Community College Research Center (2013). **Creating an Effective Online Instructor Presence** Teachers College: Columbia University.
[2] Fotos, S., & Browne, C. (2004). **The Development of CALL and Current Options. In**
[3] **S. Fotos and C.M. Browne (Eds.),** *New perspectives on CALL for second languageclassroom* (pp. 3–14). Mahwah, NJ: Law-rence Erlbaum.
[4] Fulcher, G. (2000). **Computers in Language Testing**. In P. Brett & G. Motteram (Eds.), *A special interest in computers* (pp. 93-107). Manchester: IATEFL Publications. Retrieved October 8, 2007, from http://www.le.ac.uk/education/testing/ltrfile/Computers.html
[5] Godwin-Jones, B (2001).**LLT Vol5 Num2 Emerging Technologies - Language Learning ...** *llt.msu.edu/vol5num2/emerging/default.html.*
[6] Kozma,R. (2000).**The Online Course Experience - The VHS Collaborative** *www.go**vhs**.org/Images/SRIEvals/$file/SRIAnnualReport 2000.pdf*
[7] Lapsley, R., Kulik, B., Moody, R., & Arbaugh, J.D. (2008). **Is identical really identical?an investigation of equivalency theory and online learning,***The Journal of Educators Online*, 5 (1).
[8] Paadre, Taimi H. (2011). **Did Learning Mathematics Online Increase Students' Math Proficiency?: An Outcome Study of a Vocational High School's Use of an Online Mathematics Program.** Published dissertation: Northeastern University.
[9] Papadima-Sophocleous, S. (2005). **Middlesex University ResearchRepository.***https://eprints.mdx.ac.uk/8009/1/Papadima_-phd..pdf*
[10] Sitzmann, T., Ely, K., Bell, B. S., & Bauer, K. (2010). **The Effects of TechnicalDifficulties on Learning and Attrition during Online Training**. *Journal of ExperimentalPsychology: Applied, 16 (3)*, 281-292.
[11] Snae, C (2008). **Distance Online Learning and Evaluation Framework** *www.gelbukh.com/polibits/38_08.pdf*
[12] Song, Liyan et al. (2004). **Improving Online Learning: Student Perceptions of Useful and Challenging Characteristics**. *The Internet and Higher Education.* Elsevier Inc.