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**ENGLISH TEACHERS' PRACTICES IN USING ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN LITERATURE SUBJECTS: BASES FOR THE FORMULATION OF ACTION PLAN**

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**ABSTRACT**

This qualitative study explored the practices of English teachers in using alternative assessment strategies to improve students' performance in literature subjects. The findings revealed that teachers view alternative assessment strategies as: goes beyond traditional testing, authentic demonstration of learning, supports diverse learning styles, and increases student engagement. Teachers' practices in using alternative assessment strategies were: using performance-based activities, employing collaborative learning activities, utilizing creative multimedia projects, and writing reflection and portfolio assessment. However, difficulties such as time constraints, subjectivity in grading, unequal group participation, and limited resources and technology were identified. Teachers overcome these difficulties by using clear rubrics, careful planning and time management, scaffolding and clear instructions, and peer assessment and collaboration. The action plan entitled RICCA-LIT (Reflective and Innovative Classroom Competency in Assessing Literature) Program was formulated as a result of the study.

**Keywords:** *Alternative Assessment Strategies, RICCA-LIT Program*

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## INTRODUCTION

Assessment plays an essential role in the teaching and learning process because it provides evidence of students' understanding and informs instructional decisions. Traditionally, educational institutions have relied on written examinations and objective tests to measure students' knowledge. While these methods can effectively assess factual recall, they often fail to capture deeper learning processes such as interpretation, critical thinking, and creative engagement.

In response to these limitations, educators have increasingly explored alternative assessment as a more authentic and student-centered approach to evaluating learning. Alternative assessment emphasizes the use of performance-based tasks such as portfolios, reflective journals, multimedia projects, and oral presentations that allow students to demonstrate their understanding in meaningful contexts.

According to Adelabu and Alex (2023), alternative assessment strategies promote higher-order thinking by encouraging learners to engage in real-world tasks rather than relying solely on traditional testing formats. Similarly, Ocal Dorterler and Akay (2022) in their journal entitled International Journal of Progressive Education explain that alternative assessments focus not only on the final outcomes of learning but also on the learning process itself, enabling students to express their understanding through creative and reflective performances.

The researches of Gcabashe (2024) and Majola (2023), have also highlighted the benefits of alternative assessment in fostering learner independence, creativity, and critical

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thinking. Authentic assessment activities allow students to actively participate in constructing knowledge and expressing their ideas in diverse ways.

The teaching of literature presents unique opportunities and challenges in this regard. Literature education aims not only to develop students' knowledge of literary works but also to cultivate interpretive, analytical, and reflective thinking.

As a literature teacher, the researcher has observed how students' engagement with literary texts can vary depending on the assessment strategies used in the classroom. Initially, the researcher relied on traditional forms of assessment such as quizzes, written examinations, and identification tests.

Therefore, this study sought to explore the practices of English teachers in using alternative assessment strategies to improve students' performance in literature subjects. Specifically, the study aimed to examine teachers' views of alternative assessment, identify the practices they use in conducting literature classes, determine the difficulties they encounter in implementing these strategies, and explore how they overcome these difficulties. The findings of this study served as the basis for developing an action plan to enhance the use of alternative assessment strategies in literature instruction.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Research Methodology

This chapter outlines the fundamental processes of qualitative research and its key components, such as the research method, design, study participants, sampling design, research instrument validity, data gathering procedures, and data analyses.

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## Research Method

This study used the qualitative research method with in-depth interviews to determine the alternative assessment strategies used by English teachers in teaching literature subjects, which served as the basis for the formulation of the action plan. According to Moore (2022), descriptive research methods are meant to describe or explain what happens to whom and where, rather than how or why. Researchers and psychologists use descriptive research methods to collect data and explain the complexities of behaviors, patterns, and other phenomena.

## Research Design

The study employed a qualitative design using the phenomenological approach. According to Holmes (2022), the phenomenological approach is concerned with the individual's subjective experience, and data is often collected through interviews and other qualitative approaches.

According to Van Manen (2021), phenomenology is concerned with the study of lived experience and the meaning individuals assign to their experiences. Rooted in the philosophical work of Edmund Husserl, phenomenology focuses on examining phenomena as they are perceived in consciousness, emphasizing how individuals experience, interpret, and give meaning to events in their everyday lives.

Furthermore, this study employed this strategy by recognizing the difficulties that English teachers have when using alternative assessment. To get the necessary data, the researcher asked the respondents to reply freely and meaningfully.

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## Participants in the Study

The participants in this study consisted of a total of (8) English teachers who were teaching literature subjects in the College of Education during the time the research was conducted. Since the number of teachers handling literature courses was small and manageable, the researcher employed total sampling, also known as total enumeration, in selecting the participants.

Total sampling, also known as total population sampling, is a technique in which all members of a population who meet the criteria of the study are included as participants. According to Canonizado (2024) and Narmada (2024), this method is particularly appropriate when the population size is small and when the researcher aims to gather data from every member of the group in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being studied.

In this study, all eight (8) English teachers who were teaching literature-related courses during the first semester of the school year 2025–2026 were included as participants. Using total sampling enabled the researcher to collect insights from the entire group of teachers responsible for literature instruction during the specified period.

To ensure fairness and maintain confidentiality, the participants were identified using numerical labels such as Participants 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8.

## Research Instrument

The researcher used an in-depth interview guide questions as the research instrument to gather comprehensive and in-depth information during the interview process.

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The interview guide questions were composed of the study's primary questions, which focused on how teachers' view of alternative assessment strategies, their practices and difficulties and how they overcome these difficulties they encountered in using alternatives assessment strategies in teaching literature subjects.

### Validity of the Research Instrument

The validity of a research instrument was determined its effectiveness in measuring what it is designed to measure (Robson, 2011).

The research instrument was validated by experts in literature, English and research to remove ambiguity between questions and maximize possible responses from participants.

### Data Gathering Procedures

The data collection process was done after the research proposal was approved by the panel of experts. After approval, the researcher requested formal permission from the Dean of the Graduate School and the respective department deans to conduct the study. Once authorization was granted, data gathering was carried out among all English teachers who taught literature subjects during the previous semester.

The data collection involved all English teachers who taught literature subjects during the previous semester. Since the total population was small and manageable, total enumeration was employed, meaning that all qualified participants were included in the study. Data were gathered through a questionnaire distributed via Google Forms, which allowed the researcher to efficiently gather participants' responses while allowing them to express their

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experiences, insights, and perspectives regarding the use of alternative assessment strategies in teaching literature.

Participants were encouraged to share their narratives and reflections on their practices in implementing alternative assessment strategies in teaching literature subjects. They described their views, practices and difficulties they encountered and how they overcome their difficulties and addressed them.

### Data Analyses

The data gathered in this study were tabulated, organized, analyzed, and interpreted using thematic analyses following the framework of Braun and Clarke (2006, as cited in Blanza, 2022).

Thematic analysis involves the following steps: it begins with familiarization, where the researcher carefully reads the data multiple times to understand its overall meaning. Next is generating the initial codes, which involves identifying and labeling important parts of the data. This is followed by searching for themes, where similar codes are grouped into broader patterns. The next step is reviewing themes, where the researcher checks if the themes accurately reflect the data and refines them if needed. Then comes defining and naming themes, where each theme is clearly explained and given an appropriate label. Finally, in producing the report, the researcher presents the findings in a clear and organized way, using evidence from the data to answer the research questions.

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## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study was conducted to determine the practices of English teachers in using alternative assessment strategies to improve students' performance in literature subjects and to use these findings as the bases for the formulation of an action plan.

A phenomenological research design was used to gain a deeper understanding of English teachers' experiences and practices in using alternative assessment strategies in teaching literature subjects. A researcher-made questionnaire administered through Google Forms served as the main instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was validated by a panel of experts. Permission was secured from the appropriate school authorities, including the Dean of the Graduate School and the respective department heads. The data gathered from the participants were organized, analyzed, and interpreted using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and themes related to teachers' views, practices, challenges, and strategies in implementing alternative assessment.

The following were the findings of the study:

Alternative Assessment Strategies were viewed as goes beyond traditional testing, authentic demonstration of learning, support for diverse learning styles, increased student engagement.

Alternative assessment Strategies practices used by teachers were using performance-based activities, employing collaborative learning activities, utilizing multimedia projects, writing reflection and portfolio assessment.

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Difficulties of English teachers in using alternative assessment strategies were time constraints, subjectivity in grading, unequal group participation, and limited resources and technology.

How teachers overcame the difficulties they encountered in using Alternative Assessment Strategies were the use of clear rubrics, careful planning and time management, scaffolding and clear instructions, and peer assessment and collaboration.

Based on the results of the study, an action plan entitled Ricca-Lit was formulated.

## Conclusion

Based on the findings, the following insights were drawn:

The findings reveal that teachers view alternative assessment strategies as ways to provide students with meaningful opportunities to show their learning. Through authentic tasks, students can interpret literary texts, share their personal insights, and participate more actively in class. These responses show that teachers see assessment not just as a way to measure knowledge, but also as part of the learning process. It also suggests that alternative assessment helps students become more engaged, express their ideas more freely, and better understand literary concepts.

The practices identified by the participants show that teachers use a variety of ways in implementing alternative assessment strategies in literature classes. These practices provide students with opportunities to analyze literary texts, express their interpretations creatively, and interact with their peers during learning activities. More importantly, these strategies indicate that teachers are shifting from traditional, test-centered assessment toward

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more learner-centered methods that emphasize active participation and meaningful engagement. Through these practices, students are not only assessed based on what they know but also on how they apply their understanding, communicate their ideas, and relate literary concepts to real-life experiences.

The findings also reveal that teachers encounter several difficulties when implementing alternative assessment strategies. The difficulties experienced by teachers indicate that shifting from traditional assessment methods to more authentic approaches is not always straightforward, as it involves additional demands in terms of time, evaluation processes, and classroom management. Overall, the findings imply that the success of alternative assessment strategies depends not only on their design but also on how well they are supported and managed within the teaching context.

The responses of the participants indicate that teachers employ several ways to overcome the difficulties associated with alternative assessment strategies. It also suggests that teachers are not only aware of the difficulties but are also actively adapting their practices to ensure that assessment remains fair, organized, and effective. The use of structured methods, clear expectations, and student involvement in assessment suggests that teachers are developing practical solutions to manage classroom demands while still maintaining meaningful learning experiences.

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