

Measuring Alignment between Single National Curriculum English 2020 Standards and Punjab Examination Commission Assessment 2023-2024

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Abstract

Alignment ensures standardization among curriculum standards, instruction, and assessment to meet the diverse needs of learners. The current study was structured to explore the alignment between the Single National Curriculum (SNC) 2020 English and the Punjab Examination Commission (PEC) assessment for the 8th-grade 2023-2024. The current study was a quantitative content analysis, using the online Webb's Alignment Tool Second Version (WAT V2). The sources of data were SNC English, the textbook, PEC assessment, and five reviewers. The WAT V2 was used to measure the level of alignment for four criteria: categorical concurrence, depth-of-knowledge (DOK) consistency, range-of-knowledge, and balance of representation. The results of the study revealed that DOK level-1, 5(8.4%), level-2, 20(33.9%), level-3, 30(50.8%), and level-4, 4(6.9%) were assessed from the total standards described in curriculum of 8th-grade. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) 31(81.6%) were targeted in the test, and among them, 7(18.4%) SLOs were targeted more than once for developing test items. The assessment of vocabulary and grammar standards met all alignment criteria, while writing showed no alignment across any dimension, oral communication and reading were partially aligned, meeting categorical concurrence, and DOK levels consistency, with insufficient range and balance representation. On the basis of the results of the study, it is recommended that assessment administration may focus on assessment framework for representative content through DOK levels criteria to support comprehensive language development.

Keywords: Alignment, English, Assessment, Single National Curriculum

INTRODUCTION

Alignment ensures what is intended to teach, how to teach, and how to assess. Alignment refers to the degree of agreement between curriculum standards, instruction, and assessment for coherence of educational outcomes. Alignment supports a clear understanding of curriculum standards for the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process. Curriculum alignment refers to the process of aligning curriculum content, instructions, and assessment to support consistency for effective curriculum implementation. Alignment improves the efficacy of instruction and enhances student achievement (Anderson, 2002; English & Steffy, 2001).

Curriculum standards and assessment alignment are essential to understanding curriculum consistency. Curriculum standard alignment refers to the process of ensuring that content, instruction, and assessments are consistent with established learning standards. It is about making sure that what is taught, how it is taught, and how students are assessed align with what they are expected to know and be able to do at a specific grade level or in a particular subject (Webb, 1997).

Assessment alignment refers to the degree to which assessments measure SLOs. When assessments are aligned, they accurately measure what learners have mastered in the content

and skills emphasized in the curriculum. For example, if a learning standard requires students to analyze literary texts, then an aligned assessment would include open-ended questions or essay tasks rather than simple recall-based multiple-choice items (Pellegrino, Chudowsky, & Glaser, 2001).

Horizontal alignment and Vertical alignment support to understand curriculum effectiveness. Horizontal alignment ensures consistency of the same subject at different grade levels. Such consistency promotes fairness and ensures that all students receive equitable learning opportunities for connectivity of the curriculum content (Webb, 1997). Vertical alignment refers to the progression alignment of different subjects at the same grade level. It involves the logical sequencing of content and skills to ensure simple to complex learning through creating a coherent pathway in different subjects (Brady, 2007). The alignment between curriculum and assessment provides a foundation for effective education systems. When assessments are aligned with curricula, it helps teachers' instructional practices and students are expected to learn in a meaningful way (Pellegrino, Chudowsky, & Glaser, 2001). Misalignment can lead to instructional gaps, reduced learning opportunities, and unfair assessment of students' learning (Fulmer, 2011). The SNC reforms provide valuable insights for the effectiveness of education regarding a unified and standardized curriculum among public, private, and Madrasah institutions in the country. The SNC English 2020 is divided into seven standards based on fifty-nine SLOs (Government of Pakistan, 2020).

The practitioners are using WAT V2 for measuring alignment among curriculum content, instructions, and assessment locally and internationally. The PEC is responsible for organizing standardized assessments across the province. This study was designed to explore whether alignment exists between the SNC 2020 English and the PEC assessments 2023. Using Webb's Alignment Model (2007), the study analyzes the extent to which assessment items correspond to the prescribed SLOs across four key dimensions: categorical concurrence, DOK consistency, range-of-knowledge correspondence, and balance of representation. Fewer studies have been framed to reveal how well PEC assessments align with the SNC English 2020 at the elementary school level.

Statement of the Problem

The effectiveness of the curriculum significantly depends on how well its standards are reflected in the assessments. It is imperative to explore the degree of alignment between the SNC English and assessment to explore to what extent standardized education is proving in Pakistan. The PEC's contribution to developing standardized assessment. Policymakers, curriculum planners, administrators, teachers, and learners have become increasingly concerned regarding whether the PEC assessments truly reflect the curriculum content, SLOs, content scope, and cognitive levels stated in the SNC English 2020. Misalignment between curriculum and assessment leads to a gap in the holistic learning development in English. Previous studies described vibrant results for alignment between the SNC and assessment locally and globally. There is an essential need to measure the existing alignment between curriculum and assessment. The researchers are excited to explore the degree of alignment between the SNC English and the PEC assessment 2023 using WAT V2. Thus, the problem of the study was assessing alignment between the single national curriculum English 2020 standards and the Punjab examination commission assessment 2023-2024.

Significance of the Study

This study is helpful for curriculum planners to provide guidelines for effective curriculum and assessment alignment to ensure oral communication, reading, grammar and vocabulary, and writing content coverage and coherence in the curriculum. The results of the study are supportive for curriculum experts in identifying and improving areas in content representation and DOK levels, which enables them to refine learning standards. The results of the study are helpful for training institutions by providing guidelines for developing training

modules that focus on the alignment between curriculum-based instructions and assessment. This study is helpful for school administration as it presents data that can inform scheduling, monitoring, and assessment processes to improve instructional quality and support curriculum implementation more effectively. This study is helpful for teachers because it supports lesson planning based on SLOs and aids in the construction of assessment tools that match the required DOK levels. This study is helpful for learners by ensuring that they are assessed impartially on what they are taught, which contributes to balanced academic exposure in English.

Objectives of the Study

The Objectives of the study were to;

- Explore the DOK levels in the English curriculum.
- Identify the alignment between SNC English and PEC assessment.
- Determine the alignment between SNC English standards and PEC assessment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The SNC English equips students for developing reading, writing, listening, and speaking essential competencies and skills for effective communication. The English supports to creation of active, proficient users of English who can participate in academic and professional settings. The SNC English outlines SLOs across four major domains: oral communication, reading, grammar and vocabulary, and writing for 8th-grade (Government of Pakistan, 2020). The reading domain emphasizes comprehension, interpretation, and analysis of texts. Students are guided to read a variety of genres, including stories, essays, and poems, and to engage in activities that promote critical thinking, such as identifying main ideas and making inferences. Students may demonstrate literal and inferential comprehension and evaluate textual elements such as tone, setting, and character motivation. This domain plays a foundational role in developing interpretative and evaluative literacy, critical for academic success and real-world communication. The grammar and vocabulary domain focuses on enhancing students' language accuracy and lexical range. It covers grammatical structures such as verb tenses, modals, active/passive voice, and complex sentence formation. Vocabulary development includes learning word formation through affixes, understanding idiomatic expressions, and using contextual clues to deduce word meanings (Government of Pakistan, 2020). Mastery in grammar and vocabulary strengthens clarity in written and spoken language. The SNC outlines objectives that promote confidence, fluency, and appropriate language use in formal and informal settings. Students participate in debates, role plays, presentations, and discussions that promote active listening and articulate speech, vocabulary acquisition is essential for reading comprehension and writing fluency, making this domain a critical support system for other language skills. Oral communication involves listening and speaking skills required for effective interpersonal interaction. (Government of Pakistan, 2020). Harmer (2004) stresses that speaking and listening are interactive processes, and developing these skills enhances both social and academic communication. Pronunciation, tone, stress, and non-verbal cues are also key components of oral proficiency. Writing domain develops the students' ability to produce coherent, organized, and purposeful text. Writing tasks in 8th grade include descriptive paragraphs, narratives, reports, formal letters, and summaries. Emphasis is placed on the writing process, brainstorming, drafting, revising, and editing to help students improve content, coherence, and accuracy (Government of Pakistan, 2020). Writing is a synthesis of reading, grammar, and vocabulary knowledge. As Harmer (2004) notes, writing fosters deeper cognitive engagement with language and provides learners with the opportunity to reflect and refine their thoughts. Four domains are interconnected and work synergistically. Reading supports vocabulary and writing by exposing students to varied sentence structures and ideas. Grammar ensures correctness in writing and oral expression. Oral communication reinforces

active use of language, and writing consolidates language learning through structured expression. This integrative approach aligns with modern language teaching methodologies, where skills are taught not in isolation but as part of a coherent whole (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

The effectiveness of curriculum implementation depends on curriculum content and assessment alignment. Alignment between curriculum and assessment is essential to ensuring that what is taught and what is tested. A well-aligned curriculum supports valid and reliable deep learning. If assessments did not cover the whole content, this leads to misalignment of the curriculum (Polikoff, 2012). Misalignment leads towards vague instruction, and teachers ignore important SLOs that are not reflected in the assessment (Fulmer, 2011; Pellegrino, Chudowsky, & Glaser, 2001).

Alignment models are used to evaluate the coherence between curriculum standards and assessments. The Council of Chief State School Officers recommended four major alignment models in the United States: the Surveys of Enacted Curriculum, the Council for Basic Education, and Webb's Model (CCSSO, 2002). Webb's alignment model, developed by Norman Webb, is used to evaluate the alignment between curriculum standards and assessments across four key criteria: categorical concurrence, depth-of-knowledge consistency, range-of-knowledge correspondence, and balance of representation (Webb, 2007). These criteria provide a structured way to determine whether content demands are matched between the curriculum and test items are not (Webb, 1997). Webb's (2007) DOK framework helps to evaluate how effectively assessment items capture the full breadth and depth of the curriculum. WAT is widely used for identifying mismatches that may affect instructional focus and learning outcomes (Polikoff & Struthers, 2013). It uses expert coding to compare curriculum standards and assessment items based on their cognitive complexity. Webb's alignment criteria provide a valuable framework for evaluating how well assessments reflect the curriculum standards. The description of each criterion is provided below;

- Categorical concurrence ensures that assessment items align with key content, reading literature, reading informational texts, writing, speaking and listening, and language. For example, if the curriculum emphasizes analyzing literary elements in fiction, the assessment should include items that specifically target this domain.
- DOK consistency determines whether the cognitive demand of assessment tasks matches the intended rigor of the standards. It requires students to analyze how dialogue advances the plot in a literary text.
- Range-of-knowledge: evaluates whether assessments cover the full scope of learning objectives. Including items that assess both literary and informational text analysis, writing arguments and narratives, and conducting short research projects, ensuring comprehensive coverage.
- Balance of representation: checks for proportionality in the distribution of items. An assessment that heavily emphasizes reading comprehension but barely addresses writing or language conventions would be misaligned, as it does not reflect the balance in the curriculum. Four criteria ensure that assessments in English are representative and reflective of the full scope and depth of what students are expected to learn (Webb, 1997, Webb, 2007, Webb, 2002).

Webb's DOK framework categorizes tasks based on cognitive demand, helping evaluate the alignment between curriculum and assessment.

1. DOK Level-1 (Recall): Students are expected to recall or recognize basic facts and perform simple tasks. Activities might include reading aloud without analyzing the text or showing only a basic understanding of the material. Questions often require straightforward comprehension, such as recalling information directly from the

text, paraphrasing simple details, or understanding the meaning of individual words or phrases. Examples of tasks at this level include:

- Keep a record of words.
 - Pronounce the words with the correct stress.
 - Demonstrate understanding of familiar word patterns using knowledge of that mark the multi-syllabic words in sentences to decode them.
2. DOK Level-2 (Skills & Concepts): Students move beyond mere recall to actively process and understand segments of text. They are required to make inferences between sentences and grasp important, though not highly complex, ideas. Standards and assessments at this level often involve tasks such as summarizing, interpreting, inferring, classifying, organizing, comparing, or distinguishing fact from opinion. While building on the skills from Level 1, Level 2 demands a deeper comprehension, often involving rewording both questions and answers. Examples of activities at this level include:
 - Ask and answer questions of personal relevance, information, and a variety of communicative purposes.
 - Guess the meaning of the word in the text. Compare with the dictionary meaning to understand the contextual meaning.
 - Recognize features of an effective topic sentence using specific words and vivid verbs.
 3. DOK Level 3 (Strategic Thinking): DOK level-3 focuses on advanced understanding and critical thinking, encouraging students to go beyond the surface meaning of the text while still grasping its essential ideas. Tasks at this level often ask students to explain, generalize, or make connections between concepts. Standards and assessments involve reasoning and planning, requiring students to support their conclusions. Activities may include identifying abstract themes, making inferences across entire texts, or applying prior knowledge. Students might also engage in making less complex connections between different texts. Examples of such tasks include:
 - Demonstrate ‘attentive listening’ skills towards others and be sensitive to the rules of turn-taking and discourse.
 - Apply editing and proofreading skills to a range of different texts and contexts.
 - Analyze that text comprises a group of paragraphs that develop on the main idea addressed by the writer throughout the text.
 4. DOK Level-4 (Extended Thinking): It focuses on deep understanding and the use of advanced thinking and problem-solving skills. Tasks often involve extended activities that may take considerable time to complete, but this time is justified only when the task requires complex conceptual understanding and higher-order thinking, rather than simple repetition. Students are expected to use information from one or more texts and apply it to new and unfamiliar situations. They may also be required to develop hypotheses and perform detailed analyses of relationships between multiple texts (Webb, 2002; Webb, 2007).

In the South Asian context, studies on alignment are relatively limited but current researchers are working on this area with deep interest. Limited studies in Pakistan have focused on English language curriculum and assessment alignment at the school level. Some researchers have explored alignment in curriculum and assessment (Kakar & Kaukab, 2023; Rauf, Shahzad, & Khan 2021). A gap existed in English assessments administered by the PEC. This highlights the need for more focused studies on language subjects, where assessment of skills like writing and speaking often presents additional challenges in alignment. Khan and Iqbal (2012) reported discrepancies between national curricula and board examinations at the secondary level, particularly in subject domains where assessments failed to address higher-order

cognitive skills. Similarly, (Rauf et al., 2021) emphasized the need for alignment to ensure that assessment systems promote rather than hinder curriculum reforms. The SNC English curriculum for 8th-grade outlines SLOs across four major domains: Oral Communication, Reading, Grammar and Vocabulary, and Writing (Government of Pakistan, 2020). The effective implementation of these standards depends on curriculum content and assessments. A study was framed by Kakar and Kaukab (2023) on English textbook and national curriculum alignment in Baluchistan Pakistan. A quantitative research design was adopted for document analysis. Lower levels of cognitive domains were assessed for the grammar and writing domains. Reading comprehension, thinking, and listening skills were slightly focused. There were inconsistencies between the intended curriculum and the assessment. A study was designed by Lestari & Yusuf (2025) to explore alignment between assessment practices and learning outcomes for English in Indonesia. The study was quantitative, based on grounded theories using Biggs' constructive alignment framework. The SLOs and assessment instruments were used as data collection tool. The findings of the study focus on the higher-order thinking levels. However, there is a misalignment between assessment and SLOs.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was a descriptive quantitative content analysis to determine the level of alignment between curriculum standards and assessment. The primary sources of data collection were the SNC English, document of English, the PEC assessment session 2023-2024, WAT v2, and five reviewers, each holding M.Phil or Ph.D. qualifications, were selected through convenience sampling. Before data collection, the reviewers provided training on the use of the WAT v2 and the DOK framework to ensure consistency and accuracy in the coding process. After training, each reviewer independently coded the curriculum documents and corresponding assessment items. Inter-rater reliability was calculated using the ICC, which confirmed a high degree of consistency in reviewer judgments. Data analysis was conducted using WAT v2 in two distinct phases. In the first phase, a document analysis was performed to extract and examine the stated SLOs from curriculum documents alongside assessment items in the second phase alignment study analysis performed using the online WAT v2 platform. This tool assesses alignment based on four key criteria: categorical concurrence, DOK consistency, range of knowledge, and balance of representation. All SLOs and assessment items were coded according to Webb's four DOK levels criteria: level-1 recall, level-2 skills and concepts, level-3 strategic thinking, and level-4 extended thinking for analysis. The WAT v2 then quantified the degree of alignment between the SLOs and assessment items, providing a systematic evaluation of the congruence between intended learning outcomes and actual assessment practices. The reliability of the WAT v2 tool depends on the level of agreement among expert reviewers when coding curriculum standards and assessment items. In alignment studies, the Intra-Class Correlation Coefficient (ICC) is commonly used to assess inter-rater reliability. According to Koo and Li (2016), an ICC value of .7 or above is generally considered acceptable, indicating good consistency among reviewers, while values around .50 reflect moderate reliability and suggest the need for improved training or clearer coding criteria (Shrout, & Fleiss, 1979). For alignment studies, high inter-rater reliability strengthens the credibility of the findings, as it confirms that reviewers are interpreting the standards and assessment items consistently (Martone & Sireci, 2009). Its validity is supported by extensive field use and peer-reviewed studies, which confirm its effectiveness in distinguishing the levels of cognitive complexity embedded in instructional objectives and assessments. The WAT v2, developed by Norman Webb (2005) demonstrated strong content and construct validity in evaluating the alignment between curriculum standards and assessment items.

Table 1: Intra-Class Correlation and Pairwise Comparison

Test	Grade	Intra Class Correlation	Pairwise Comparison	Obj. Pairwise Comparison
PEC	8	.93	.95	.81

Table 1 showed the results of the intra-class correlation reliability for the 8th-grade PEC assessment was 0.93. The pair-wise agreement among reviewers for DOK levels was 0.95, while the objective pair-wise comparison yielded a value of .81, indicating strong consistency across reviewer judgment.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data collected from reviewers were analyzed through the WAT v2 were assessed according to the study's objectives to evaluate alignment between the SNC English and the PEC Assessment.

Objective 1

To explore the DOK levels in English curriculum.

Table 2: Distribution of SLOs by DOK Levels in the English

Class	Total Standards	DOK Level	No of DOK Levels	%age of each level
8	59	1	5	8.4
		2	20	33.9
		3	30	50.8
		4	4	6.9
Total	59		59	100

Table 2 showed the distribution of 59 standards stated in the SNC English curriculum. DOK level-1, 5(8.4%) recall, Level-2, 20 (33.9%) skill, level-3, 30 (50.8%) strategic thinking, level-4, 4(6.9%) were assessed from the total standards described in the 8th-grade curriculum.

Objective 2

To identify the alignment between SNC English and PEC assessment

Table 3: Marks of Assessment given by PEC

Item Marks	1.5	4	8	10	Total
Items	32	1	1	4	38
Total Point Value/Marks	48	4	8	40	100

Note: The total marks are 100, and all items must be solved.

Table 3 showed the items' marks in the test by PEC. There were 32 questions carrying 1.5 marks, comprising a total of 48 marks. There was one subjective question worth 4 marks, and one question valued at 8 marks. Four extended-response questions were each worth 10 marks, contributing 40 marks. Table 3 showed that the PEC assessment consisted of a total of 38 questions that comprised 100 marks.

Table 4: List of Un-coded Items

Grade	Item no. in the Assessment Tool	Total no. of items	Point value/marks	%age w/in Assessment	% value/marks	Point
8	1, 2, 10, 17, 2637, 38	7	19.5	19	19.5	

Table 4 reported that the assessment paper of the 8th-grade revealed that seven items, constituting 19.5% were marked as un-coded by at least three out of five reviewers. These un-coded items accounted for 19.5 marks out of 100.

Table 5: Assessment Items Targeted to Curriculum Standards

Grade	Total SLOs	Total items in test	SLOs Targeted	%age	SLOs targeted more than Once	%age
8	59	38	31	81.6	7	18.4

Table 5 showed that there are a total of 59 SLOs in the curriculum. The test includes 38 items, out of the 59 SLOs, 31(81.6%) were targeted in the test; among these, 7(18.4%) SLOs were targeted more than once for developing test items.

Objective 3

To determine the alignment between SNC English standards and PEC assessment

Table 6: Summary of Attainment of Acceptable Alignment Level on Four Content Criteria

Standards	Alignment Criteria			
	Categorical Concurrence	Depth-of-Knowledge Consistency	Range of Knowledge	Balance of Representation
Oral Communication Skills	YES	YES	WEAK	WEAK
Reading	YES	YES	NO	YES
Vocabulary & Grammar	NO	YES	YES	YES
Writing	NO	NT	NT	NT

Table 6 showed the summary of findings four criteria: categorical concurrence, DOK consistency, range of knowledge, and balance of representation. The 'yes' means that the mentioned criterion given in the tables has met the desired level, 'no' means the mentioned criterion has not met their level, and 'weak' means the criterion level has been slightly fulfilled.

Table 7: Range-of-Knowledge Correspondence and Balance of Representation between Standards and Assessment

Reporting Category		Hits		Range of Standards		Range of Knowledge	%age of Hits of Total Hits	Balance Index		Bal. of Rep
		Num	% of Total	Num	% of Total			Index		
Standards	Dom Num	Stds Num	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD

Oral Communication Skills	2	11	28.7	.67	5	0	45.5	0	WEAK	34	1	.65	.03	WEAK
Reading	1	3	10	0	1	0	33.3	0	NO	3	0	1	0	YES
Vocabulary & Grammar	0	1	1.5	0	1	0	100	0	YES	3	0	1	0	YES
Writing	0	0	0	0	0	0	NaN	0	NT	0	0	N/A	0	NT
Total	3	15	10.0 5	.45	0. 1	0	103	0		37	1	1.9	.09	

Table 7 showed a detailed analysis of the alignment between DOK levels and SLOs. 38 assessment items align with curriculum standards across four domains, focusing on a range of knowledge and a balance of representation. Oral communication skills have the most coverage (2 items, 11 standards) but showed weak alignment in both range and balance representation. Reading is covered (1 item, 3 standards) with no range but balanced representation. Vocabulary and grammar are fully aligned. Writing is not tested in the entire 8th-grade English curriculum.

Table 8: Categorical Concurrence between Standards and Assessment rated by Reviewers

Reporting Category			Level by Standards			Hits		Categorical Concurrence
Standards	Domain Number	Standard Number	Level	Num Std Level	% by RC Level	w/in by Mean	SD	
Oral Communication Skills	2	11	2 3	3 7	30 70	28.7	.67	YES
Reading	1	3	2 3	1 2	33.3 66.6	10	0	YES
Vocabulary & Grammar	0	1	2	1	100	1.5	0	NO
Writing	0	0	3	1	100	0	0	NO
Total	3	15	2 3	5 10	28 54	82	0	

Table 8 showed categorical concurrence between English standards and 38 assessment items, as rated by reviewers, across four domains. Oral communication skills included 11 standards, with 3 at level-2 and 7 at level-3; 30% of standards fell under level-2 and 70% under level-3. This domain achieves YES for categorical concurrence with a mean of 28.7 and a standard deviation of 0.67. Reading has 3 standards, 1 at level-2 and 2 at level-3, about 33.33% and 66.67%, respectively. It received a YES rating. Vocabulary and grammar included 1 standard at level-2 (100%), but is rated NO due to insufficient item coverage. Writing has 1 standard at level-3 but no assessment items, leading to a NO rating. The majority of standards 54% are at level-3, with a total mean of 82 and a standard deviation of 0 for 8th-grade.

Table 9: DOK Consistency between Standards as assessed by Reviewers

Domain	Domain Num	Std Num	Hits		% Under	DOK Level of Item					DOK Consistency
			M	SD		SD	% At	SD	% Above	SD	
Oral Communication Skills	2	11	28.7	0.67	21.61	5	38.3	5	40.1	1	YES
Reading	3	3	1.5	0	20	45	80	45	0	0	YES
Vocabulary & Grammar	0	1	1.5	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	YES
Writing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	NT
Total	5	15	31.7	0	10,40	6.25	29.6	6.25	35.02	0	

NT = Not tested

Table 9 demonstrated the DOK consistency between domains and English assessments assessed by five reviewers. Oral communication skills domains included 11 SLOs with mean DOK levels of mean value 28.7 and showed 21.61% of items below, 38.31% at, and 40.09% above the expected levels, rated YES for consistency. Reading standards covers 3 SLOs with a mean value of 1.5, having 20% below, 80% at, and 0% above the level, also marked YES. Vocabulary and grammar domains have 1 SLO with all items 100% above the expected level, rated YES. Writing domains has no items and is marked NT in 8th-grade students.

Results

- Results of the study declared that 50.8% SLOs were aligned with DOK level-3 (strategic thinking), 33.9% with level-2 (skills/concepts), 8.4% with level-1 (recall), and 6.9% with level-4 (extended thinking). The low representation of levels-1 and levels-4 (combined 15.3%) showed a limited focus on basic level-1 recall and level-4 complex reasoning for 8th-grade English.
- Total 7 (19.5%) questions were marked as un-coded by 3 out of 5 reviewers, representing 19.5 out of 100 total marks.
- SLO coverage was strong, with 31 SLOs out of 59(81.6%) addressed in the 8th-grade English assessment. Among 7 SLOs out of 59(18.4%) were assessed more than once, suggesting focused repetition.
- Content alignment showed that vocabulary and grammar met four levels of alignment criteria. Reading domains met the criteria with 3 domains, showing consistent alignment. Reading standards achieved DOK consistency, with 80% of items matching the intended cognitive level. It had a mean DOK level score of 1.5, with 20% of items falling below and 0% exceeding the expected depth, resulting in a YES rating. The writing standard had no assessment representation and did not meet the minimum level any of criteria. Oral communication skills and reading standards met for categorical concurrence and DOK levels consistency, but fell short in range-of-knowledge and balance of representation. Oral communication skills standards cover 11 items, with 3 of level-2 and 7 of level-3. This domain received a YES rating for categorical concurrence, with a mean score of 28.7 with SD 0.67. It demonstrated weak alignment in the range of knowledge and the balance of representation.

Conclusion

The current study was designed to assess the alignment between the SNC English 2020 and PEC Assessment 2023-2024 using WAT v2 at the 8th-grade level. Vocabulary and grammar was the best-aligned, meeting all four alignment criteria: categorical concurrence,

DOK level consistency, range-of-knowledge, and balance of representation. Oral communication skills showed good DOK consistency and categorical concurrence but lacked range and balance representation. Writing was completely unrepresented in the assessment, failing all alignment levels. Reading showed partial alignment, with DOK consistency. The major focus of assessment was DOK level-2 and level-3 on strategic thinking and conceptual understanding, while lower-levels, DOK-1(recall), and level-4 (higher-order thinking) content were less representative, only 28 SLOs out of 59 SLOs were assessed and 19.5% of items were un-coded

Discussion

The alignment between curriculum and assessment ensures educational practices are consistent and effective for better educational systems. The results of the study exhibited that the major focus on DOK level-2 and level-3 of assessment, level-1, and level-4 were less meet the representative criteria of an acceptable level. The result of the current study is consistent with Kakar & Kaukab (2023). Furthermore, results are consistent with the result of the study framed by Lestari & Yusuf (2025), the alignment between the SNC English curriculum and PEC assessment.

Recommendations

Recommendations are proposed based on the results of the study that assessment items developers may ensure a balanced distribution of assessment on four DOK levels, focusing level-1, and level-4 to promote listening, speaking, reading, and writing domains of the curriculum. The PEC may revisit its assessment procedure to cover a wider range of SLOs, particularly writing composition, and vocabulary application. Oral communication, listening, and speaking are aligned, but the reading and writing domains need more alignment between curriculum and assessment. Assessment administration may focus on representative content through DOK levels criteria to support comprehensive language development.

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