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THE FILIPINO STUDENTS' USE OF TWO COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES IN UNDERSTANDING BIOLOGY CONCEPTS

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ABSTRACT

This study determined the usefulness of two (2) communication strategies in secondary Filipino students' understanding of 10 biology concepts. Using a mixed method design (quantitative and qualitative), it involved 122 incoming third year students from a public high school who expressed their understanding on homeostasis, autotrophs, cell division, replication, sexual reproduction, diversity, evolution, inheritance, fertilization, and mutation. English was more commonly used with also more correct responses while code-mixing was the more commonly used speech pattern. The Z-test on two-population proportion showed significant difference between the proportions of correct responses both in using English and Filipino, and, in using code-mixing and code-switching. The Fisher's exact test showed a relationship between the language used by the students and the correct answer given by the students on sexual reproduction (p-value = 0.0462, $\alpha=0.05$). The result of the test implies that except for the concept on sexual reproduction which has to be explained in English, the students may use either English or Filipino in explaining the other concepts. The reasons for the students' use of the two strategies were the science teacher and familiarity with the language/speech pattern.

Keywords: Bilingual, code-mixing, code-switching, Filipino, language.