Competency is one of the most important qualities to put into consideration in the field of education. Effective teaching leads to effective learning of both the student and the teacher. Through the years, teaching strategies have been modified; innovations become evident. As stated by Corpuz and Salandanan (2015), “Teaching goes by the changes in students’ learning styles, and so the way how learning is assessed.” However, one strategy used by an educator may be effective, whereas other method may be counterproductive. In the process of teaching, the teacher needs to fully understand that his or her role is not just focused on sharpening mental abilities of the student; rather, he or she must embrace and develop the whole aspect of a student’s capability. This should be considered all throughout the process of teaching—from planning of what to be taught to students to lesson discussions. Also, it is important to know that in evaluation and assessment through examinations, better strategies for better outcomes are essential, and this is the focus of this article.

Administration of examinations is crucial in teaching-learning process. It is an assessment of learning; it evaluates extent and degree of learning. According to Nitko and Brookhart (2011), it guides for planning, implementing, and improving instruction; monitors and report student progress; promote learning by appraising students’ achievement; and measure effectiveness of instruction. For an assessment to be significant, there are principles to be considered. As what Isaacs’ and colleagues’ (2015) ideas imply, good planning and careful execution of the assessment tool are important elements to a successful evaluation. Teachers might be used of creating test papers or other tools to assess student’s learning. But, despite the fact that it is set to be a
“routine” in their function, are proper measures in test making applied? Probably, a teacher might say, “Of course, I mastered making exams.” Well, it is not bad to update one’s self on how this important part of the teaching-learning process be upgraded for better learning, for better education.

An ideal test is a product of several considerations including the objectives and learning outcomes, the types, cohesiveness, language, validity, and reliability. The objective and learning outcomes serve as the determinant of how the exam will be. The types, such as objective and subjective test, each has its own significance in gauging the student’s learning ability. One effective way to guide a teacher in making exams is considering the three domains of learning identified by Bloom and colleagues (1956): cognitive, which refers to mental skills or knowledge; affective, which refers to growth in feelings, emotional areas, attitudes or self; and the psychomotor, which refers to manual or physical skills. This is evident in the six learning outcomes of the modified Bloom’s Taxonomy: remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating. In line with this, the Table of Specification (TOS) was designed to balance the test items according to the teaching-learning circumstances and learning objectives (Garcia, 2008).

In making exams, absolute, brief, comprehensible, and direct-to-the-point instructions also must never be neglected. Among all the exam types, multiple-choice test is considered to be the most effective. This exam, depending on the construction, can cover the learning competencies such as student’s comprehension of what is being taught by the teacher. How to assess if test item is valid and reliable? How to interpret test results? It is through “Item Analysis,” (Garcia, 2008). It is composed of procedures and formula that once applied, will give the interpretation of the exam, in relation to its impact on the teaching-learning process. In fact, there is a standard excel template provided by the Department of Education, Region III, which facilitates the use of this innovation.
Other test designs that will assess students learning abilities include identification, matching type, modified true or false, and essay type. Also, an assessment can be traditional or authentic. Traditional assessment is option-based, contrived, recalled, and teacher-structured, whereas authentic assessment is task-based, direct experience, applied, and student-structured. These two are complementary as what Lucido (2011) stated, “We don’t just assess what students know; we assess what they do and what they can still do.” Moreover, with the changing generation, a competent teacher must be capable of becoming a unique aid of educating the youth. He or she must be able to go deeper to the meaning of teaching profession. In this light, an outcome-based education (OBE) creates an impact. As what Navarro (2018) stated, “OBE envisions the brighter future of the learner—deferred outcome.” An educator must not only functions with an immediate outcome in mind but also envisions the future of the learner.

Knowledge is the impetus of learning. Teaching-learning process definitely needs to be evaluated for its effectiveness and efficiency, and testing is in an apparent way to carry it out. Hence, a teacher must not only master the composition of making multiple choices for his or her periodical exam, or structuring an identification or fill-in-the-blank sentences for quizzes. Incorporating the essential learning competencies is paramount in this critical part of the process, and whatever changes may come in the future brought by modifying trends, as long as these competencies are associated, effective learning will always be attained.

Reference:

Division Memorandum No.117, s. 2017 – Division Training-Workshop on Test Construction.