World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology
International Journal of Cognitive and Language Sciences
Vol:13, No:05, 2019

# Differential Item Functioning in the Vocabulary Test of Grade 7 Students in Public and Private Schools

**Authors :** Dave Kenneth Tayao Cayado, Carlo P. Magno

**Abstract :** The most common source of bias detected are those of gender and socioeconomic status. The present study investigated the Differential Item Functioning (DIF) or item bias between public and private school students in a vocabulary test. Studies on DIF were expanded by using the type of school as a source of bias. There were 200 participants in this study. 100 came from a public secondary school and 100 came from a private secondary school. The vocabulary skills of students were measured using a standardized vocabulary test for grade 7 students. Using DIF, specifically the Rasch-Welch approach, it was found that out of 24 items, 12 were biased for a specific group. The vocabulary skills on the use of slang, idiomatic expression, personification, collocations, and partitive relations were biased for private schools while the use of slang and homonymous words were biased for public school students. The analysis debunked the trend that private school students are outperforming public school students in terms of academic achievement. It was revealed that there are some competencies that private school students are having difficulty and vice versa.

**Keywords :** differential item functioning, item bias, public school students, private school students, vocabulary
**Conference Title :** ICALP 2019 : International Conference on Applied Linguistics and Psycholinguistics
**Conference Location :** London, United Kingdom
**Conference Dates :** May 23-24, 2019

Open Science Index, Cognitive and Language Sciences Vol:13, No:05, 2019 publications.waset.org/abstracts/98866.pdf