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A NEEDS ANALYSIS ON THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE NEEDS AMONG PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION: BASIS FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the English language needs of Bachelor of Public Administration (BPA) students, focusing on their skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. It aimed to determine their proficiency levels and create a syllabus specifically designed to improve their language abilities. A needs analysis was conducted with BPA students at Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology, which revealed difficulties in reading comprehension, writing accuracy, speaking confidence, and listening. The results indicated that reading and writing were the most challenging areas, with students struggling to understand complex texts and to express their ideas clearly due to limited vocabulary and grammar skills. The study also reflected on how these challenges negatively impacted students' confidence and academic performance. Based on the findings, a skills-based English for Specific Purposes (ESP) syllabus was proposed, featuring structured lessons, real-world materials, and practical exercises related to public administration. This approach aimed to enhance students' language skills and better prepare them for effective communication in both academic settings and their future careers.

KEYWORDS: *Language Needs, Language Skills, Needs Analysis, Public Administration, Syllabus*

INTRODUCTION

Language skills are of the utmost importance for public administration students since they guarantee proper and effective communication. During their future professional lives, graduates will be required to listen, read, write, speak, and present to a diverse public. To assess and enhance these competencies, several researchers have employed various inventory techniques such as SWOT-based reflective inventories (Manolachi, 2022), needs-based survey inventories (Ferrer & Sagun, 2022), and structured speaking assessments (Fondales et al., 2020). These tools have revealed specific gaps in reading comprehension, oral fluency, and professional writing, skills that are essential for effective public service. Improved public speaking skills in English, in particular, will render students more competitive on the international labor market. For all these reasons, students' language development, including public speaking, is a necessary step toward their professional achievement.

In Poland, bureaucratic language poses a major challenge for students pursuing a Bachelor of Public Administration, leading to difficulty understanding legal texts, poor communication with the public, and low confidence in managing administrative tasks (Ruczkowski, 2022). Similarly, Indonesian public administration students struggle with complex vocabulary, which limits their comprehension and language skills. To address these issues, project-based learning and vocabulary development strategies have been proposed to enhance understanding and improve students' language proficiency (Misnawati et al., 2024). Moreover, in Ukraine, Lebyedyeva (2020) emphasized the need for English language instruction among future civil servants, noting that adapting to European Union legal standards requires strong communicative competence. Using descriptive and structural analysis methods, the study highlighted the importance of role-playing, communicative tasks, and professional English modules to prepare students for multilingual administrative environments.

In the Philippines, research at Pangasinan State University, Bayambang Campus, identified significant language skill challenges among Bachelor of Public Administration (BPA) students. The study revealed that these students have difficulties in both written and oral communication, especially in essay writing and speaking English clearly and confidently. Faculty members considered these issues more severe than the students themselves, particularly regarding oral communication (De Asis et al., 2024). Additionally, a separate study conducted in the Zamboanga Peninsula highlighted ethno-linguistic barriers affecting administrative communication. Many frontline government workers and civil servants had limited English proficiency, which hindered effective communication with the public. Since BPA students are future public administrators, the research emphasized the need for focused language training programs to enhance communication skills and improve public service delivery (Legarde, 2023). Furthermore, research at Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences, and Technology examined the English language needs of Bachelor of Public Administration students, specifically focusing on reading skills. The study found that many students struggled to comprehend academic texts,

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particularly those related to governance, policy-making, and administrative functions. The researchers emphasized that these difficulties could hinder students' ability to analyze government documents, interpret legal frameworks, and communicate policy effectively (Sodoy et al., 2024).

Students at Kapalong College of Agriculture Sciences and Technology (KCAST) face significant challenges with language skills, especially in reading comprehension and learning technical vocabulary. A recent study showed that although many students felt confident about their reading abilities, they had trouble understanding main ideas and specialized terms vital for their academic and professional growth This gap makes it hard for them to work with texts related to their field and limits their ability to apply what they learn in practice (Edrada, 2024). Since strong communication skills are increasingly important, it's crucial to address these issues. Without focused support, students may struggle in both their studies and future jobs, highlighting the need for this study to create effective language learning strategies. Moreover, the result of this study, will be the basis of the researchers in crafting a syllabus that will address the identified language needs and skills and to enhance the English language skills of the Public Administration students.

Moreover, recent studies on needs analysis conducted at Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences, and Technology (KCAST) have primarily focused on a single language skill which is reading. For instance, the study titled "The English Language Needs of Office Administration Undergraduate Students Focusing on Reading Skills" by Watin et al. (2024) found that students had difficulties understanding technical vocabulary and complex sentence structures, which hindered their academic and workplace preparedness. Similarly, Sodoy et al. (2024), in their study "The English Language Needs of Public Administration Undergraduate Students Focusing on Reading Skills," reported that students struggled with identifying main ideas, scanning for relevant information, and comprehending specialized vocabulary in the context of public administration. Furthermore, Escandallo et al. (2024), Botohan et al. (2024) and the study of De Vera et al. (2024) which conducted a needs analysis among Bachelor of Science in Business Administration major in Marketing Management students and two other pograms which also concentrated on reading skills. While these studies offer valuable insights, they do not explore the other core language skills such as writing, speaking, and listening. This reveals a clear research gap that needs to be addressed, especially for Bachelor of Public Administration students who must develop comprehensive communication skills to perform effectively in their academic and professional environments.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the level of language proficiency in terms of the four macro skills among Public Administration students?
2. What are the insights of the students based on the results and findings of their language proficiency?
3. Based on the results, what syllabus can be proposed as essential program to develop the language proficiency of the students?

NEEDS ANALYSIS

A. Purpose of the Needs Analysis

This Needs Analysis aimed to evaluate the English language skills of Business Administration students to ensure their communication met both academic and professional standards. Although reading had been highlighted as a challenge, the analysis also looked at their writing, speaking, and comprehension skills.

Understanding these needs helped course designers create targeted lessons that improved basic and advanced language abilities. It also guided the choice of learning materials and activities to keep students engaged and help them learn effectively. The results helped build a curriculum that supported students' academic goals and prepared them for communication in the workplace.

B. Target Population

The population of this conducted needs assessment came from the Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology. The respondents for this study were Public Administration students from first year to second year during the second semester of S.Y. 2024–2025. The study focused on the language skills among these students. Participation was open to students of any gender who were willing to participate. A total of 100 students were selected, with 38 first-year, 42 second-year, and 20 third-year students. Afterwards, 10 students were randomly selected to answer questions for the interview.

C. Framework of the Target Situation Analysis

1. Why is the Language needed?

Language served as a fundamental tool for expressing ideas, sharing information, and understanding the world. It enabled people to communicate clearly, solve problems, and build relationships. For Public Administration students, language played an especially important role in their academic and professional growth. Their future careers required them to share ideas clearly, interact with diverse stakeholders, and perform effectively in professional settings. Strong skills in reading, speaking, and writing helped them express thoughts accurately, avoid misunderstandings, and contribute meaningfully. This study also focused on their ability to critically read and analyze texts, which was vital for understanding public policies, government processes, and administrative systems. Being able to comprehend complex information equipped students to make informed decisions and respond appropriately to challenges. Therefore, language was essential not only for communication but also for analyzing and applying important knowledge in public service.

2. How will the language be used?

Public Administration students used language every day in various important activities, such as writing scholarly papers, giving presentations, participating in class discussions, and engaging in extracurricular events. Clear and effective communication was essential not only for these academic tasks but also for face-to-face and phone interactions. It enabled students to express their ideas clearly, understand different perspectives, and collaborate successfully with others. Strong

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language skills were crucial for building trust, promoting openness, and developing meaningful relationships in both academic and professional settings. These skills were fundamental to their success as future public administrators.

3. What will the content areas be?

The relevant subject areas for Public Administration students included their academic courses, particularly English and other subjects that required the use of the English language. These courses provided a foundation for developing essential communication skills. Additionally, their areas of interest, such as business-related settings and public sector workplaces, also demanded effective language use. In these environments, students were often required to present reports, write proposals, and communicate clearly with colleagues and stakeholders. For Public Administration students, developing strong language skills was not only important for academic success but also crucial for professional effectiveness. Mastering language helped them perform well in real-world situations and prepared them for future career challenges.

4. Where will the language be used?

Students used language in a variety of social and professional settings, including meetings, public demonstrations, reporting, and telephone conversations, to express themselves clearly and effectively. These situations provided valuable opportunities for students to practice and improve their language skills, such as grammar, vocabulary, and other important linguistic features. Developing these skills was essential for maintaining clear and professional communication, especially when working in public administration offices. By refining their language abilities, students became better equipped to handle the demands of their future careers, ensuring they could communicate confidently and accurately in different work environments.

D. Framework of Learning Needs Analysis

1. Why are the learners taking the course?

Learners took the Bachelor of Public Administration (BPA) course because it prepared them for careers in public service that required strong communication skills. As part of the program, students were required to complete English courses, which many recognized as important not only for academic success but also for professional development. They understood that proficiency in English was crucial for effectively communicating within the public administration field. This included drafting reports, presenting proposals, and engaging with the public and colleagues. Therefore, students pursued BPA to gain the knowledge and language skills needed to perform confidently and professionally in their future roles.

2. How do learners learn?

Students showed better learning outcomes when interactive methods such as group discussions, role-playing, and hands-on activities were used in the classroom. These methods helped maintain their interest and encouraged active participation, which led to a better understanding of the lesson. On the other hand, when teaching was mostly lecture-based or centered on the teacher, students tended to lose focus and became passive learners. This limited their ability to absorb and apply important concepts. Using interactive strategies not only promoted engagement but also improved critical thinking and communication skills. It created a more supportive learning environment that benefited both teaching and learning.

3. What resources are available?

Public Administration students had access to a variety of resources to support their learning, and one of the most valuable was the teacher, especially those who were trained to handle English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses. These teachers possessed strong teaching skills and subject knowledge, guiding students in using language effectively within the context of public service. In addition to skilled instructors, students also benefited from well-designed resources such as textbooks, workbooks, and printed materials. These materials offered structured and focused content that helped learners improve their language proficiency and apply their skills in both academic and professional environments.

4. Who are the learners?

The learners were first-year, second-year, and third-year students enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration program at Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology. They came from diverse personal backgrounds and possessed basic knowledge of various components of the English language, which they regularly applied during reading activities. Their academic interests were largely centered on entrepreneurial fields such as sales, marketing, and human resource management. As a result, many of their courses focused on business management and practical communication tasks like writing business letters. However, their overall attitude and proficiency in English remained limited, as English was treated as a minor subject in their curriculum rather than a major area of focus.

5. Where will the ESP course take place?

Students tended to learn more effectively in a classroom environment that promoted focus and minimized distractions. For college-level learners, especially those studying Public Administration, a quiet, well-ventilated, and organized setting significantly enhanced concentration. Eliminating external noise such as traffic or vehicle sounds helped students listen attentively to lectures and participate more actively in discussions. A calm and supportive physical environment not only boosted comprehension but also encouraged engagement and academic success. Proper classroom conditions were essential for fostering a productive learning atmosphere, enabling students to absorb information more efficiently and perform to the best of their abilities.

6. When will the ESP course take place?

For students, particularly those studying Public Administration, consistent exposure to English for Specific Purposes (ESP) was essential. Including ESP courses in their regular academic schedule helped increase their understanding of how the language was used in practical situations. Regular engagement with the language allowed them to build confidence in using English in real-life contexts such as writing reports, communicating in professional settings, and participating in workplace discussions. When students received continuous support and practice, they became more capable of using the language effectively and appropriately in both their academic work and future careers in public administration.

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E. Methods of Needs Analysis

In order to properly identify the language needs of Bachelor of Public Administration (BPA) students, the researchers used two methods for data collection: a survey questionnaire and interviews. These methods were chosen to gather both quantitative and qualitative data that reflected the students' current English proficiency and learning preferences. The survey was aimed at four basic English skills, i.e., speaking, reading, writing, and listening, with 15 questions each, totaling 60 questions. The main concern was to identify which among the above fields was most challenging for the students. Out of the combined findings, it was determined that most of the students were weak in reading skills. This served as a basis for the proposed ESP course. To complement the survey, interviews were conducted to gain deeper insight into the students' difficulties and preferences.

The survey questionnaire had been used as the primary tool in the needs analysis. It had been created by the researchers to evaluate the English proficiency levels of 100 BPA students. The questionnaire followed an exam-type format, where students had been asked to choose the most appropriate or correct answer based on their own judgment and experience. The four macro skills, which included speaking, reading, writing, and listening, had each been given 15 questions. These questions had been designed to assess specific competencies based on the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy. The results had shown that reading was the weakest skill. This method had provided clear and measurable data to help guide the development of the ESP syllabus.

Apart from the questionnaire, interviews were also conducted with 10 randomly sampled students from the same population of respondents. The interviews were intended to complement the quantitative data with more detailed qualitative answers. The researchers collected data about the students' reading problems, personal preferences regarding where to read, comprehension of difficult texts, and reasons for learning English. The responses provided more details on the students' difficulties with lengthy texts, unfamiliar terminologies, and technical terms. The interviews offered valuable insights that assisted in designing an ESP course that not only addressed the students' weaknesses but also their practical requirements and objectives in learning.

F. Procedure of the Needs Analysis

At first, the class was randomly grouped, and each group was assigned to different programs to conduct the needs analysis. The group assigned to Bachelor of Public Administration (BPA) students designed the data-gathering process using both a survey questionnaire and an interview. To fully understand the language needs of their respondents, the researchers used both a questionnaire and interview method. These tools were designed to evaluate the respondents' English proficiency and were aligned with the respondents' field of study, which was Public Administration. The questionnaire was composed of four main sections based on the four macro skills in English: speaking, reading, writing, and listening. Each section included 15 multiple-choice questions, totaling 60 items. The purpose of the questionnaire was to identify which among the four skills posed the greatest challenge for BPA students.

Out of the total population, 100 BPA students were selected to answer the questionnaire using an exam-type format. They were instructed to encircle the answer they thought was most correct or appropriate based on their own experiences. After the survey, 10 students from the same group of respondents were randomly selected to participate in interviews. During the interviews, the selected students were asked about their reaction to their reading proficiency results, factors that affected their reading performance, specific difficulties such as annotating complex articles, the impact of their reading level on confidence, and the steps they planned to take for improvement. Also, a concluding question asked them what topics they would have included if they were to design an English language program tailored for BPA students.

After the data collection phase, the researchers consolidated the answers from both the survey and the interviews. The results were organized into tables for clearer analysis and interpretation. Frequencies and trends were analyzed to identify the learners' specific needs, wants, and lacks in English, particularly in reading skills. Based on these findings, the researchers proposed the design of an ESP syllabus tailored to help BPA students improve their reading proficiency. This proposed syllabus was also intended to serve as a reference for future curriculum improvements.

G. Data Collection

To gather valid and relevant data for the ESP Needs Analysis, the researchers had followed a two-stage data collection process: the administration of a structured survey questionnaire and the conduct of interviews. One hundred (100) students from the Bachelor of Public Administration (BPA) program had participated in the survey. The questionnaire was composed of 60 multiple-choice items—15 questions for each of the four English macro-skills: speaking, reading, writing, and listening. Each item required respondents to encircle what they believed to be the correct or most suitable answer, similar to a regular exam format. The goal was to measure students' English proficiency across these areas and determine which skill needed the most attention.

ii. Questionnaires

After tabulating the results, it had been found that the lowest scores were in the reading section, indicating that reading had been the weakest skill among the BPA students surveyed. This result had served as a crucial basis for developing a specialized English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course focusing on reading. To strengthen and validate the survey findings, the researchers had also conducted follow-up interviews with ten (10) randomly selected students from the same population. These interviews had aimed to gain deeper insights into the students' difficulties in reading, their learning preferences, and their overall experiences using English in academic and professional contexts.

ii. Interview

The interview questions had been structured and aligned with the findings of the survey. Students had been asked about their reactions to their reading assessment scores, contributing factors to their low performance, challenges with annotating

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complex articles, and how reading proficiency had affected their confidence. They had also been asked about steps they intended to take to improve their reading skills and what kind of English language curriculum they believed would have suited their needs as BPA students. The qualitative responses from the interviews had been consolidated and cross-referenced with the survey data to ensure a well-rounded understanding of the students' needs. This had helped the researchers design an ESP course that was both skill-targeted and context-appropriate for public administration students.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter presents the findings from both the quantitative and qualitative phases of the study. The first phase focuses on quantitative data, highlighting the four macro skills namely the reading, writing, listening and speaking skills among Public Administration students. The second phase presents qualitative data in a table, summarizing participants' insights of the students based on the results and findings of their language proficiency.

Level of Language Proficiency in Terms of the Four Macro Skills

This quantitative research study aims to test students' knowledge and understanding of the four essential macro skills in language learning: reading, speaking, writing, and listening**.** Each skill is examined through a specific focus area to assess their foundational knowledge. In particular, reading is evaluated through their awareness and use of reading strategies**,** speaking through their familiarity with different types of speech styles**,** writing through their understanding of grammar rules, and listening through their comprehension of the five stages of listening**.** The primary goal is to identify how well students understand these core concepts, and to determine areas where further instruction and support may be needed.

Table 1
Level of Language Proficiency in terms of Writing Skills

Writing	Mean	Description
1	8%	Very Low
2	16%	Very Low
3	17%	Very Low
4	24%	very Low
5	21%	Very Low
6	41%	Low
7	34%	Low
8	47%	Low
9	35%	Low
10	71%	High
11	38%	Low
12	28%	Very low
13	71%	High
14	49%	Low
15	38%	Low
Overall Mean	**36%**	**Low**

Writing . In terms of writing, the overall mean is 38%, which is described as low. This means that the writing skills of Public Administration students, particularly in terms of grammar, are fairly limited. The low writing score implies that Public Administration students may struggle to produce clear and grammatically accurate documents, which could hinder their effectiveness in professional communication and public service tasks. Among the items under this indicator, Item No.10 - *my friends and I going to the mall later* and item No.13 *which sentence correctly uses punctuation?* got the highest mean of 71% with a descriptive equivalent as high. Meanwhile, the lowest mean of 8% was obtain from item No.1 - *everyone should bring own lunch* with descriptive equivalent as very low.

This aligns with Rijal et al. (2023) and Manatad and Escandallo (2024) who emphasized that low writing skills, particularly in grammar, can hinder students' ability to effectively communicate policy analysis and recommendations. They highlighted the importance of writing training in improving these skills, thereby fostering clearer and more organized expression within public administration contexts. This is supported by Misnawati et al. (2024) and Rosas and Escandallo (2024) who highlighted challenges in vocabulary complexity within Public Administration, which may contribute to low writing skills in grammar. They suggested that tailored educational strategies, such as project- based learning and vocabulary reinforcement, can help enhance students' proficiency in this area.

Table 2
Level of Language Proficiency in terms of Reading Skills

Reading	Mean	Description
1	20%	Very Low
2	41%	Low
3	14%	Very Low
4	23%	Very Low
5	28%	Very Low
6	29%	Very Low
7	48%	Low
8	54%	Average
9	22%	Very Low
10	21%	Very Low
11	25%	Very Low
12	32%	Low
13	28%	Very Low
14	41%	Low
15	24%	Very Low
Overall Mean	**30%**	**Low**

Reading. In terms of reading, the overall mean is 30%, which is described as low. This means that the reading skills of Public Administration students, particularly in terms of reading comprehension, are fairly limited. The low reading score implies that Public Administration students may struggle to comprehend and analyze complex texts, which can affect their ability to interpret policies, legal documents, and administrative materials essential to their field. Among the items under this indicator, Item No.8 - what does the passage imply about the reason that soil erosion may become a more urgent concern than petroleum scarcity in the future? got the highest mean of 54% with a descriptive equivalent as average. Meanwhile, the lowest

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mean of 14% was obtain from item No.3 – a reader decides to annotate only selected portions of a complex article rather than highlighting extensively throughout. Which of the following most accurately reflects the rationale behind this approach? with descriptive equivalent as very low.

This aligns with Escandar (2023), who indicated that low reading comprehension among Functional Officials in public adminstration, especially those affected by the equalization process at the Governance Institute of Home Affairs, limits their understanding of roles and affects job performance. The study highlights the need for capacity-building and technical training to strengthen competencies. This is supported by Fernández-Silva et al. (2024), who found that complex legal terms in public administration texts hinder comprehension for non-experts. Their research showed that plain language improves understanding, though factors like term length, frequency, and clarity also affect reading speed, requiring a multifaceted solution.

Table 3
Level of Language Proficiency in terms of Speaking Skills

Speaking	Mean	Description
1	15%	Very Low
2	32%	Low
3	61%	Average
4	24%	Very Low
5	29%	Very Low
6	47%	Low
7	35%	Low
8	39%	Low
9	62%	Average
10	51%	Average
11	30%	Low
12	37%	Average
13	60%	Average
14	45%	Low
15	33%	Low
Overall Mean	**40%**	**Low**

Speaking. In terms of speaking, the overall mean is 40%, which is described as low. This means that the speaking skills of Public Administration students, particularly in terms of speech style, are fairly limited. The low speaking score implies that Public Administration students may face difficulties in delivering clear and appropriate speech in formal settings, which can hinder their effectiveness in public presentations, interviews, and professional interactions. Among the items under this indicator, Item No.9 - *If you are addressing an audience from another program or background, the best strategy is to:* got the highest mean of 62% with a descriptive equivalent as average. Meanwhile, the lowest mean of 15% was obtain from item No.1 – *which speech style is often memorized, follows a fixed structure, and is used in rituals or legal documents?* with descriptive equivalent as very low.

This aligns with Santoso et al. (2023), who emphasized that low speaking skills in public administration can hinder graduates' global competitiveness. Their study highlights the importance of enhancing public speaking abilities in English to prepare students for future job demands, suggesting that learning objectives should be aligned with the communication skills needed in diverse professional environments. This is supported by Siregar et al. (2022) and the study of Escandallo and Baradillo (2024) who found that limited public speaking skills in public administration reduce credibility, hinder effective communication, and limit leadership capabilities. Their findings underline the importance of developing speaking proficiency to enable students to convey ideas clearly and engage with the community professionally and ethically.

Table 4
Level of Language Proficiency in terms of Listening Skills

Listening	Mean	Description
1	36%	Low
2	53%	Average
3	42%	Average
4	46%	Low
5	59%	Average
6	49%	Low
7	45%	Low
8	49%	Low
9	30%	Low
10	21%	Very Low
11	45%	Low
12	64%	Average
13	36%	Low
14	64%	Average
15	38%	Low
Overall Mean	**45%**	**Low**

Listening. In terms of listening, the overall mean is 45%, which is described as low. This means that the listening skills of Public Administration students, particularly in terms of stages of listening, are fairly limited. The low listening proficiency of Public Administration students implies a need for targeted interventions to enhance their ability to effectively comprehend and respond in academic and professional communication settings. Among the items under this indicator, Item No.12 – *what is a good technique to improve concentration while listening?* and item No. 14- *which behavior helps you remember key information?* got the highest mean of 64% with a descriptive equivalent as average. Meanwhile, the lowest mean of 21% was obtain from item No.10 – an appreciative listener usually listens to: with descriptive equivalent as very low.

This aligns with Elias et al. (2020), who emphasized that low listening skills in public administration can hinder participatory processes and democratic governance. Their study highlights that attuned listening is essential for fostering collaboration, encouraging reflection-in-action, and enabling responsive decision-making, ultimately transforming organizations into spaces for accountability and democratic action. Similarly,

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Khanna (2020) found that poor listening often leads to misunderstandings, ineffective communication, and reduced trust among stakeholders. Both studies underscore the importance of active listening in promoting collaboration and inclusive decision-making in public administration.

Insights of the Students on the Results and Findings of their Language Proficiency

Research Question No. 2: What are the insights of the students based on the results and findings of their language proficiency?

To answer this research question, in-depth interviews were conducted with the participants. Probing questions were used to elicit their observations and experiences related to their reading comprehension skills. Although the research question covers all four macro skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing the students' responses in the interviews brought special attention to reading comprehension as a major challenge. Many shared that they often find it difficult to fully understand complex texts, especially those related to academics or public policy. They admitted that unfamiliar vocabulary, a lack of effective reading strategies, and limited exposure to English reading materials all contribute to their struggles.

Table 5
Themes and Supporting Statements Based on the Needs Assessment Regarding the Development of BPA Students' Reading Comprehension Skills

EMERGING THEMES	SUPPORTING STATEMENTS
Building Understanding Through Repetition	✓ "One of the factors was reading and understanding the story in the assessment. I thought that I really need to read it multiple times in order to understand it better." (IDI-01) ✓ "I need to learn the strategies that will help me easily understand a story. I also realized that I need to read it multiple times to fully understand it and be able to answer the questions correctly." (IDI-02) ✓ "For me, my ability to read and understand has improved through reading different types of materials and watching movies with subtitles. These activities have helped me better understand the use of language in various contexts." (IDI-09)
Limited Exposure to English Reading Materials	✓ "Perhaps the biggest reason is that I have not really had much practice reading English materials. In class, we mostly focus on discussions and not so much on reading. We usually only read when there is an assignment. Also, many English terms are very unfamiliar to me. We were not given proper guidance on how to comprehend, especially when it comes to technical articles." (IDI-05) ✓ "What really affected my reading performance was my lack of exposure to English readings and English terms. I am not fond of reading books or articles in English because I often do not understand many of the terms. In class, there is no structured reading practice, so I struggle when the topics are complex. I also lack time to read because I am busy with other subjects, and honestly, I have very little interest in reading." (IDI-06) ✓ "One contributing factor could be my lack of exposure to long and academic texts in English. Most of the reading I do is brief and directly related to class lectures. Additionally, I often read simply to obtain information quickly rather than to deeply understand or analyze the text. Another possible reason is my limited vocabulary in areas related to business and public administration. When I encounter unfamiliar or technical terms, I tend to lose focus and become confused." (IDI-07)
Difficulty Due to Unfamiliar Content	✓ "For me, it was unfamiliar, which is probably the reason why many got that item wrong." (IDI-01) ✓ "We probably misunderstood the content, and in addition, it was unfamiliar to us." (IDI-02) ✓ "Annotating complex articles is really difficult. First of all, the texts are long and contain too many unfamiliar words. The articles are so lengthy that I feel tired while reading, and it even strains my eyes. We were not trained in class on how to properly annotate. It is not just about reading; it is about fully understanding or comprehending every sentence." (IDI-05) ✓ "Some of the factors that affected my performance include limited exposure to complex texts, rushing through reading tasks, and a lack of effective reading strategies. I also tend to doubt myself, which influences how I interpret and respond to information." (IDI-08) ✓ "The common challenges I face are difficult or unfamiliar words, misinterpretation of what I read, and a limited vocabulary. These are the main reasons why I find it hard to understand more complex texts." (IDI-09)
Lack of Strategy Use in Reading	✓ "I believe the main reason is that I do not consistently use reading strategies such as skimming, scanning, or making inferences. I usually read texts from start to finish without applying any specific techniques to improve comprehension. I also do not take the time to predict content or ask questions while reading." (IDI-07) ✓ "I am not in the habit of taking notes while reading. Most of the time, I just read to get the main idea of the text." (IDI-10)

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	✓ "I think I do not know how to take notes or annotate effectively because I am not really interested in doing it. That was one of my struggles when answering the questionnaire. The article was very long and filled with technical terms. I did not know what to highlight or take note of. I lack strategies to identify the important ideas." (IDI-06) ✓ "I am not used to taking notes while reading. Most of the time, I only read to get the main idea." (IDI-03)
Impact of Academic Challenges on Self-Confidence	✓ "It really affected my confidence because sometimes l encounter readings that are difficult to understand, and that is why lsometimes feel embarrassed." (IDI-01) ✓ "Sometimes I hesitate to share my thoughts about what I have read because I am afraid I might have misunderstood it, and this affects my confidence." (IDI-02) ✓ "It affects my confidence, especially in class. For example, during reporting. I feel nervous because I might have misunderstood the material or explained it incorrectly." (IDI-03)

In this study, the first theme that emerged was found that Public Administration students encountered and observed the effectiveness of repeated reading in building their understanding of English texts. The study revealed that students were more confident in understanding when they had the opportunity to revisit the text. This was supported by the study conducted, which stated that repeated reading significantly enhanced students' reading fluency and comprehension by increasing their familiarity with the language and improving their overall performance in reading tasks (Canuto et al., 2024). Also, another author supported by the study conducted, who explored repeated reading as a widely studied intervention for reading fluency. It evaluates the effectiveness of a multicomponent reading intervention paired with repeated reading, showing strong positive effects on reading fluency and comprehension (Wu et al., 2020).

Additionally, the second theme that emerged in this study was limited exposure to English reading materials. Limited exposure made it difficult for them to understand technical vocabulary and complex texts, leading to reduced confidence and poor comprehension. The study revealed that students who had minimal reading practice struggled more with understanding academic content and expressed lower motivation to engage in English reading. This was supported by the study conducted, which stated that insufficient reading exposure, particularly when not modeled or reinforced by teachers, contributed to learners' poor reading habits and weak proficiency in English reading (Ithindi et al., 2020). In line with this, another author supported by the study conducted, which found that insufficient reading exposure, particularly when not modeled or reinforced by teachers, contributed to learners' poor reading habits and weak proficiency in English reading (Handig et al., 2023).

Furthermore, the third theme that emerged in this study was students faced challenges in reading comprehension because the content was unfamiliar. Complex vocabulary and long articles made reading tiring and led to misunderstandings. Therefore, exposing students to a variety of texts and teaching them how to annotate can help improve their reading skills. This further supported by the study conducted, highlighting the mental effort required for reading comprehension, especially when students encounter unknown words and sentence structures (Sardor et al., 2020). In contrast, another author supported by the study conducted, who supports the idea that unfamiliar content requires greater mental effort for comprehension, especially when students struggle with unknown words and sentence structures (Ah & Hyun, 2020).

In contrast, the fourth theme that emerged in this study was that students struggled with reading because they did not use effective strategies, as observed during reading tasks and evaluations. Many students read passively without employing techniques like skimming, scanning, or note-taking to enhance their understanding of the text. This was supported by the study, highlighting that strategic reading methods significantly improve comprehension (Banditvilai, 2020). Similarly, metacognitive awareness plays a crucial role in successful reading, as students who actively manage their reading strategies perform better when interpreting complex texts (Adunyarittigun, 2021).

In line with this, the fifth theme that emerged in this study was that academic challenges significantly impacted students' self-confidence, particularly when facing difficulty in reading. Fear of misinterpretation made them hesitant to share ideas, leading to anxiety in classroom discussions and presentations. This further supported by the study conducted, highlighting that self-confidence plays a crucial role in academic success, as students with higher confidence levels are more likely to engage actively in learning and overcome challenges (Lone, 2021). Also, studies have shown that students who struggle with comprehension often experience lower self-esteem, leading to reluctance in participating in academic discussions (Moneva & Tribunalo, 2020).

Research Question No. 3: Based on the results, what syllabus can be proposed as essential program to develop the language proficiency of the students?

To answer this research question, in-depth interviews were conducted with the informants and participants. Probing questions were asked to elicit their concept regarding the insights about the assessment we conducted. The major themes and supporting statements for research question number 2 were presented in Table 4. Participants had their responses to their own experiences and observation. From the answers of the participants, five major themes emerged: (1) importance of reading comprehension; (2) developing effective reading habits; (3) role of reading strategies in reading development; (4) strategic English for public administration; and (5) reading challenges and confidence struggles of BPA students.

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Table 6
Themes and Supporting Statements Based on the Needs Assessment Regarding the Development of BPA Students' Reading Comprehension Skills

EMERGING THEMES	SUPPORTING STATEMENTS
Importance of Reading Comprehension	✓ "I realized that we really need to practice our reading comprehension or studying skills because this will be very useful in the future when we get a job." (IDI-01) ✓ "I think I really need to practice my reading comprehension because, as a future public administrator, it is very important for us to understand the materials we read." (IDI-02) ✓ "I need to improve my ability to analyze complex texts and understand information in order to enhance my reading comprehension." (IDI-04) ✓ "I realized that it is not enough to simply read; it is also important to fully understand the content of what I am reading." (IDI-10)
Developing Effective Reading Habits	✓ "What I should really do is read books more often and understand them thoroughly so that I can improve my reading comprehension." (IDI-01) ✓ "I will probably start reading academic articles and use a dictionary to help me better understand what I am reading, especially unfamiliar words, and to improve my reading skills." (IDI-03) ✓ "I will probably start practicing daily reading, even just for 20 minutes a day. I plan to read English news articles, stories, or academic text related to my course." (IDI-05) ✓ "My plan is to start reading materials related to Public Administration that are written in English." (IDI-06) ✓ "I plan to read more complex materials, engage in active reading, expand my vocabulary, set specific learning goals, and participate in group discussions." (IDI-08)
Role of Reading Strategies in Academic Development	✓ "Reading strategies are truly very helpful for us to know the techniques that make it easier to understand and comprehend what we read." (IDI-01) ✓ "Learning strategies for understanding texts can really help us a lot. They make it easier for us to analyze readings, and this will also be very useful in the future when we start working." (IDI-02) ✓ "If I were to decide, I would like to have an English subject that focuses specifically on reading government documents or legal texts. I suggest that students be taught how to understand policy papers, official memos, and reports." (IDI-05) ✓ "I would like to have lessons that involve reading practice using articles related to public service. We should be taught how to analyze complex documents, since that is what we will deal with in the future." (IDI-06)
Strategic English for Public Administration	✓ "If I had the opportunity to design an English program for Business Public Administration students, I would include topics such as Business English vocabulary, reading strategies for analyzing reports and case studies, writing formal emails and business letters, and public speaking or presenting ideas effectively." (IDI-07') ✓ "I would also incorporate real-life activities such as mock meetings, presentations, and case studies to make the learning experience more practical and career-oriented. This type of program would not only enhance our English proficiency but also better prepare us for future roles in government or business." (IDI-08) ✓ "As a BPA student, I suggest including topics such as reporting and proposal writing, presentation skills, and writing formal letters in order to enhance students' vocabulary, communication, and writing skills. These are useful in our daily lives and in our future career paths." (IDI-04)
Reading Challenges and Confidence Struggles of BPA students	✓ "It really affected my confidence because sometimes I encounter readings that are difficult to understand, and that is why I sometimes feel embarrassed." (IDI-01) ✓ "Sometimes I hesitate to share my thoughts about what I have read because I am afraid I might have misunderstood it, and this affects my confidence." (IDI-02) ✓ "It affects my confidence, especially in class. For example, during reporting, I feel nervous because I might have misunderstood the material or explained it incorrectly." (IDI-03) ✓ "It definitely has an impact not only in class but also in communicating with other people. If I do not understand what I read, I also struggle to express my ideas. Sometimes, I hesitate to answer or participate in discussions." (IDI-06)

The findings of this study revealed that Public Administration students encountered and acknowledged the importance of reading comprehension in their academic performance and future roles as public servants. This was supported by the study conducted, which stated that the use of innovative reading tools and programs significantly improved students' ability to

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understand complex texts. The study revealed that learners who were exposed to technology-based interventions demonstrated stronger comprehension and reading performance. Furthermore, students who engaged in structured reading activities using digital tools showed improved analytical skills and deeper understanding of the texts they read (Capodieci et al., 2020). Additionally, Keelor et al. (2020) reported that text-to-speech (TTS) tools, particularly when paired with visual highlighting enhanced students' ability to process and retain textual information, resulting in improved reading comprehension.

Moreover, the study revealed that students experienced a growing interest in developing reading habits, which they personally initiated after realizing their struggles in reading comprehension. They shared that setting small goals like daily reading, using dictionaries, and selecting course-related materials helped improve their understanding and engagement with texts. Effective reading habits are a crucial foundation for strengthening comprehension skills and building academic confidence. Consequently, by cultivating these habits, students become more capable of processing complex information and participating meaningfully in academic tasks. This is further supported by a study which emphasized that applying differentiated instruction in reading, tailored to students' individual needs, significantly enhanced reading comprehension and encouraged students to become more independent, strategic readers (Suson et al., 2020). Similarly, Camel (2020) found that cultivating positive reading habits improved students' academic self-esteem and motivation, promoting greater academic success.

In addition, the students showed increased engagement when exposed to academic readings directly related to their course in Public Administration. As they encountered policy papers, formal reports, and administrative texts during their lessons, their familiarity with professional language improved, and their participation in academic discussions became more confident and purposeful. Exposure to these materials not only strengthened their reading comprehension but also gradually developed their sense of identity as future public servants. This is further supported by a study which emphasized that academic reading plays a crucial role in helping students internalize the norms and practices of their disciplines, contributing significantly to the formation of both academic and professional identities (Maguire et al., 2020). In support of this, Kimberley and Thursby (2020) stated that students who engaged emotionally and cognitively with academic texts showed a heightened sense of belonging and identity within their disciplines.

In line with this, the fourth theme focused on the Strategic English for Public Administration. The participants pointed out that using methods like active reading and contextual analysis helped them understand texts better. They also emphasized the need for special training in reading government documents and policy papers. It relates to the claim that applying reading strategies improves students' ability to interpret, combine, and use information effectively, especially in academic and professional settings (Bryson & George, 2020). This aligned with the findings of Ng et al. (2020), who emphasized the importance of strategic reading and analytical skills in building policy capacity and interpreting complex public sector data.

Additionally, the fifth theme is the Reading Challenges and Confidence Struggles of BPA students. Participants admitted that struggling with complex texts often lowered their confidence during academic discussions and public speaking. They hesitated to share their interpretations because they feared misunderstanding the material. This relates to the claim that reading challenges affect students' self-esteem and involvement in learning (Boyes et al., 2020). In a related study, Kimberley and Thursby (2020) also concluded that students experiencing text-based anxiety exhibited reduced engagement and lower academic self-efficacy.

Proposed Syllabus as Program to Develop the Language Proficiency of the Students

A syllabus is a detailed plan that outlines the content, objectives, teaching methods, and assessment strategies of a course. It acts as a roadmap for both teachers and learners, providing clear expectations and a structured path throughout the learning process. More importantly, the syllabus plays a vital role in organizing instruction, aligning educational goals, and promoting an efficient and purposeful learning experience.

One specific type of syllabus is the skills-based syllabus, which centers on the development of core language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Unlike a situational syllabus that is organized around real-life contexts, the skills-based syllabus is structured, with content arranged in a logical sequence of skill development. Through this systematic approach, learners are guided to improve each skill progressively, supported by targeted activities and assessments.

Therefore, a syllabus is an indispensable component of effective teaching and learning. The skills-based syllabus, in particular, provides a structured framework that enhances the mastery of language skills in a focused and organized manner. Ultimately, this type of syllabus not only ensures measurable learning outcomes but also supports the overall growth and confidence of language learners.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, Public Administration students at Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology demonstrated generally low proficiency in the four English macro skills, reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Among these, reading and writing emerged as the most problematic. Reading scores showed the lowest mean at 30%, indicating major difficulties in understanding complex texts, unfamiliar vocabulary, and technical terms related to their field. Similarly, writing skills were rated as low, particularly in terms of grammar and sentence construction, which are crucial for preparing policy documents, reports, and official communications. The findings suggest that students lack the strategic tools necessary for effective comprehension and written expression, affecting both academic performance and professional preparedness.

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In response to the second research question, students' insights revealed a deep awareness of their reading and language limitations. They expressed that low reading comprehension directly affects their confidence, especially in public speaking and classroom participation. Themes such as the importance of reading comprehension, the need to cultivate better reading habits, and the use of reading strategies like annotation and skimming emerged as core recommendations. Students also recognized the need for an English curriculum tailored to Public Administration, one that includes real-world materials such as government documents, policy briefs, and formal correspondence to better prepare them for public service roles.

For the third research question, the study proposed a skills-based English for Specific Purposes (ESP) syllabus specifically designed for BPA students. This curriculum integrates structured reading strategies, grammar-focused writing tasks, speaking drills, and listening comprehension exercises anchored in the context of governance and public service. The syllabus aims to enhance students' ability to communicate clearly, interpret administrative texts accurately, and participate confidently in professional dialogues. By addressing these language gaps, the proposed curriculum supports not just academic growth but also career readiness, ensuring that BPA graduates are equipped to meet the linguistic demands of their future roles in government and public administration.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has successfully identified the language needs of Bachelor of Public Administration students, which highlight the areas that needs to be addressed through the development of a syllabus tailored to their linguistic requirements. The researchers have crafted the skills-based ESP syllabus for Public Administration students is designed to improve their reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in both professional and academic settings. It helps students develop the communication abilities they need to understand government policies, write reports, and participate confidently in administrative discussions. Through structured lessons, real-life materials, and practical exercises, students become better equipped to meet the communication demands of the workplace in governance and public service. This focused approach makes language learning relevant and useful for their future careers.

Subsequently, a skill-based syllabus must be flexible to stay effective and meet students' changing needs, therefore it is prior for modification. Although the syllabus had a clear structure, it needed adjustments to reflect evolving professional demands, different student skill levels, and feedback from ongoing assessments. These changes were often guided by needs analysis, a key process that helped teachers and curriculum designers identify the most important language skills for learners to succeed. This kept the course content current and made sure students were always working toward practical communication goals related to their field.

Moreover, the need for updates also came from the dynamic nature of public administration work, where communication tasks shift with new policies, technology, and innovations in public service. To improve students' language skills further, schools were encouraged to include structured reading activities, writing workshops, speaking practice, and interactive listening exercises in the curriculum. Teachers delivering ESP courses needed special training to effectively address these specific needs, and curriculum updates, guided by both student feedback and input from industry experts kept language instruction relevant. Collaboration between educators, curriculum developers, and public administration professionals was essential to align language teaching with real workplace demands. By staying adaptable and focused on students, the skill-based syllabus remained a valuable tool in preparing learners for success in both their studies and future public sector careers.

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AUTHORS' NOTE

The study used a researchers made test questionnaire to gather data and information as to the current level or status of the students' language proficiency concerning the four macro skills including reading, writing, speaking, and listening. This questionnaire is vital as it served as the basis for the present situation analysis of the students who are the respondents and participants of the study. Also, this test questionnaire underwent a validation process which includes the checking of its content and construct reliability. In addition to this, the output of the study is course syllabus which is a specialized curriculum for language teaching based on the results and findings of the study. However, due to the limited number of words to be included in the study, these important documents are not included. Meanwhile, if you wish to ask for a copy of the test questionnaire and specialized syllabus, feel free to contact the researchers at their specified email address given above of this article. Thank you.