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

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ABSTRACT

This study looked at what Bachelor of Public Administration (BPA) students at Kapalong College need when it comes to learning English. It focused on their skills in listening, reading, writing, and speaking. By combining numbers and personal stories, the research assesses how well students are doing and what struggles they face in communicating in school and work. The findings showed that while all areas need work, speaking was the most important skill to improve. Students struggle with confidence, fluency, and formal conversation. Writing was also a challenge, especially when it comes to creating formal documents for administrative tasks. In interviews, students shared that they don't get enough practice with structured speaking and often find it hard to use communication techniques well. Based on these insights, a new English for Specific Purposes (ESP) program is suggested. This program would include hands-on training, real-life examples, and focused learning on public administration topics. The goal was to help students communicate better in their fields, setting them up for success in both school and their careers.

KEYWORDS: *Macro Skills, Needs Analysis, Public Administration, Philippines, Speaking*

RATIONALE

Language skills describe the capacity to comprehend and articulate thoughts through spoken or written words. This includes phonology/speech sounds, morphology/word formation, syntax/sentence structure, semantics/words meanings, and pragmatics/social use of language. Children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) face challenges with all these components, particularly with social engagements and utterance of phrases. Even though language problems are no longer part of the criteria used to determine if someone has an ASD, they continue to be significant, as they influence communication development profoundly. There is a variety of therapies, such as telehealth, which facilitate better language skills and interactions (Hao, 2023). For instance, Blume et al. (2024) highlighted that pragmatic and expressive language challenges persist in ASD populations and require focused intervention. Moreover, Gilhuber et al. (2023) further emphasized that traditional assessments often overlook nuanced deficits in syntax and semantics, suggesting the need for both standardized tools and informal measures. Consequently, clinician-guided tele-assessments confirmed that using tools like TELE ASD PEDS alongside caregiver-led tasks achieved diagnostic accuracy comparable to in-person methods while offering practical monitoring via inventories and checklists. These findings reinforce the importance of combining telehealth, inventory techniques, and direct assessment tools to support comprehensive language development in children with ASD (Corona et al., 2023).

The global economy relies on language proficiency for communication, education, and career advancement. Code-switching is frequently used in classrooms across India, where bilingualism and multilingualism are prevalent due to the prevalence of multiple languages. Altering between two or more languages through code-switching aids in comprehending and improving understanding, as well as promoting social interaction. In Indian education, teachers often use code-switching to clarify lessons and engage students in second-language (L2) acquisition. Nevertheless, while it may be seen as an effective approach by some educators, many others fear that it could prevent complete immersion in the target language. Despite India's emphasis on language education, research is still focused on investigating how code-switching affects language development (Kumar et al., 2021). Meanwhile, in Hong Kong, Chan (2019) showed that Cantonese–English code-switching is a strategic social and pragmatic classroom tool, supported by classroom inventories tracking usage patterns across different speech contexts. Adding perspective from Pakistan, Murad et al. (2024) conducted action research using reading-comprehension inventories to show that code-switching scaffolds low-achieving undergraduates, improving understanding, responsiveness, and classroom rapport. Consequently, in Malaysia, there is around of 68.8% of learners believe code-switching helps them grasp English more effectively; their study also employed classroom inventory techniques to track how often and in what contexts students switched languages (Nur' Ain Elias et al.,2022).

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In the Philippines, a study at Tarlac Agricultural University emphasized the importance of conducting an English language needs analysis to create curricula that address learners' specific language challenges. For students pursuing public administration in particular, effective communication is essential to both professional obligations and academic success. Many students still struggle with speaking, writing, and reading comprehension—three language skills that are necessary for managing administrative tasks and interacting with different stakeholders—despite national initiatives like the K–12 curriculum aiming to improve bilingual skills. Thus, a comprehensive needs analysis is required to pinpoint specific language gaps in order to address these issues (Ferrer & Sagun, 2022). Further, Aquino (2022) found that senior high students who code-switch during English classes not only grasp concepts more effectively but also report higher confidence and academic achievement. Similarly, at a private institution in Davao del Sur, Ngo et al. (2023) surveyed third-year psychology students to identify gaps in macro-skills—revealing that speaking and writing were only at moderate proficiency and recommending customized ESP interventions based on inventory results. Consequently, at Kalinga State University (Cordillera Administrative Region), a study assessed English freshmen's macro-skill needs in Purposive Communication, using self-evaluation inventories to pinpoint weaknesses in speaking, writing, reading, and listening. These findings underscore the importance of conducting comprehensive needs analyses—including inventory techniques—across diverse Philippine contexts to identify students' specific language challenges and design curricula that address real skill gaps in speaking, writing, reading, and grammar (Malao et al. 2022).

In many local colleges and universities, particularly in Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences, and Technology revealed that Public Administration students struggle to understand academic English and extract key information, affecting their ability to write formal documents, interpret policies, and engage in public discourse. This highlights the urgent need for a localized needs analysis to identify language gaps and guide the development of a contextualized curriculum suited for local governance settings.

There's been a lot of research on language skills for Public Administration students, but most studies mainly look at reading comprehension. This leaves out important areas like writing, speaking, and listening, which are key for doing well in school and the workplace. For example, Sodoy (2024) talks about reading issues but doesn't consider the other language skills needed for good governance and policy communication. Likewise, Escandallo et al. (2024) focuses on reading problems but misses how speaking, writing, and listening are all connected and important in this field. Plus, Edrada (2024) looks at Agriculture students, whose language needs aren't the same as those in Public Administration. While Agriculture students need strong reading skills for technical stuff, Public Administration students need more well-rounded communication skills for topics related to governance and leadership. Also, there are studies conducted in the same locale (Botohan et al., 2024; De Vera et al., 2024; Watin et al., 2024) but all just focused with reading skill and not all the four macro skills. This study aims to fill those gaps by doing a needs analysis and suggesting a specific language curriculum to improve skills in all areas, so Public Administration students can excel both academically and professionally.

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 an essential program to develop the language proficiency of the students?

NEEDS ANALYSIS

A. Purpose of the Needs Analysis

This Needs Analysis aimed to figure out what Public Administration students need when it comes to speaking English. Since good communication is key for their studies and future jobs, this assessment is important. The results helped create a curriculum that tackles their language challenges and boosts their speaking skills.

By looking closely at what students struggle with, we focused on the specific language skills they need. Instead of using a one-size-fits-all English course, we'll concentrate on language that fits their field, like formal talks, policy discussions, and communication within administration. By spotting issues like pronunciation or how well students can respond, we can come up with targeted support to enhance their spoken English.

This analysis also helped us choose the right activities and materials for teaching. With solid evidence in hand, teachers will be able to design exercises that build confidence and speaking strategies. The insights from this study helped us arrange the teaching content in a way that makes sense for students' skills and career goals. In the end, this Needs Analysis helped set up a practical language program that allows Public Administration students to communicate clearly, confidently, and professionally.

B. Target Population

This needs analysis focused on the language-learning needs of Public Administration students across their first, second, and third years of college. A total of 100 students took part in the survey, offering valuable insights into their speaking proficiency and communication challenges. To gain a deeper understanding, 10 students were randomly selected for follow-up interviews, allowing for more detailed discussions about their experiences and learning preferences. By including students from different academic levels, the study aimed to capture the progression of their speaking skills over time, identifying common struggles and areas for improvement. The combination of survey responses and interviews ensured a thorough assessment, helping educators design a curriculum that directly addresses their needs, builds confidence, and enhances their ability to communicate effectively in the field of Public Administration.

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C. Framework of the Target Situation Analysis

1. Why is the Language needed?

Language is key for good communication, especially for Public Administration students who need to take part in formal talks, policy discussions, and professional interactions. Being able to speak well is important for sharing ideas clearly and confidently in both school and work settings. This study pointed out the need for strong spoken English skills since being good at verbal communication helps students explain policies, lead talks, and work with various people effectively. By focusing on language learning, students can build fluency, coherence, and speaking techniques that allow them to express themselves well in their field. This approach helped in creating a curriculum that not only improves language skills but also boosts the confidence needed for public speaking and administrative tasks.

2. How will the language be used?

Public Administration students used spoken language a lot for class discussions, policy talks, and professional chats. Whether they're in formal debates, meetings, or just having casual conversations in person or over the phone, good communication is key. Being able to speak well helps them be clear, confident, and connected in their work.

3. What will the content areas be?

This study looked at subjects where good spoken English is a must, especially in Public Administration. Since this field involves a lot of talking and presenting, students need to polish their communication skills for discussions about policies, briefings, and formal talks. The study also focused on workplace communication, helping students get ready to present reports, pitch proposals, and have professional conversations with coworkers and others. By tackling both school and work speaking needs, the goal was to help students express their ideas clearly and confidently, so they are ready for jobs that require solid verbal communication.

4. Where will the language be used?

Public Administration students practiced speaking English in different professional and school situations to make sure they can communicate well in their area. They used their language skills in meetings, discussions about policies, presentations, and reports where it's important to speak clearly and persuasively. Speaking well also matters in phone calls, public talks, and negotiations, which all need a good amount of confidence. On top of more formal settings, students got to sharpen their speaking skills while working in offices, interacting with coworkers, bosses, and others involved. By improving their spoken English, they will be better at sharing their ideas and will also boost their overall language abilities, making them ready for successful chats in both social and work settings.

D. Framework of Learning Needs Analysis

1. Why are the learners taking the course?

The Bachelor of Science in Public Administration students took this course because it equips them with the language and communication skills, they need in their academic and professional field. Also, this course is considered as practical and necessary in bridging the gap between their English language proficiency and specific demands in their professional career especially having effective communication skills, in public service.

2. How do learners learn?

Learners learn best through a combination of discussion and activities that allows them to apply the knowledge they have learned, through experiences and practice. Activities that involved the utilization of authentic materials and application of knowledge through real-world situations. Furthermore, teachers also considered the learner's learning style so that students can easily understand and grasp the concepts, ideas, and information being conveyed.

3. What resources are available?

While our resources today are very accessible including material resources, such as textbooks, and any printed materials, we do also have technological resources like computers and other digital platforms and equipment, and spaces like classrooms that were conducive for learning, yet our best resources are our teachers and educators who are well-equipped with ESP courses. These learning resources being mentioned help support the learning-teaching process and make learning experience more engaging.

4. Who are the learners?

The learners are the first year, second year, and third year students of Bachelor of Science in Public Administration from Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology. These learners possess basic knowledge of different components of English language which they used during any of their activities. Their academic interests are mostly centered on the public service field such as writing memos, reports, and other public documents, understanding policy and governance, and leadership and management skills. As a result, many of their courses focus on preparing students for government service, policy-making, and public sector management. Yet, their overall English language proficiency and attitude toward the language remain limited, since English is not their focus and treated only as their minor subject in the curriculum.

5. Where will the ESP course take place?

For better learning and smooth process of teaching and learning, ESP course must be taught or situated in a safe, organized, and conducive classroom environment where learners can focus, participate, and learn effectively. For college learners, particularly Public Administration students, a conducive classroom does not only enhance their understanding but also promotes participation, improves learning abilities and classroom performance, and fosters academic achievement.

6. When will the ESP course take place?

In college, particularly in Public Administration, the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course should take place during the regular academic semester as part of the curriculum. Including ESP course in their regular academic schedule supports their academic and professional career in public service. Consistent exposure to language not only fosters academic excellence but also supports students to be equipped with the language and be able to apply it in their professional careers.

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E. Methods of Needs Analysis

To accurately determine the language needs of the Public Administration students, the researcher utilized two methods for data collection: the researcher-made test questionnaires and interviews. These methods were selected to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data of the students' current English proficiency level and their learning preferences. The test questionnaires consist of a total of 60 items focused on four macro skills — listening, reading, writing, and speaking, with 15 questions for each skill. The primary objective was to identify which skill being mentioned was most challenging for the students. Based on the combined results, speaking skill emerged as the most challenging area. The findings become the foundation for developing the proposed ESP course, since the public service field needs a strong speaking skills ability for their professional career and communication. To supplement the test results, in-depth interviews were conducted to gain a deeper understanding of the student's struggles and preferences.

i. Questionnaire

The test questionnaires served as the primary instrument for the needs analysis. It was a researcher-made questionnaire that aimed to assess the English language proficiency level of the 100-selected Public Administration students from 1st year to 3rd year students. Also, the test questionnaires adopted an exam-type format, requiring the students to choose the most appropriate or correct answer based on their own understanding and preferences. It covered the four macro skills namely: listening, reading, writing, and speaking, with 15 questions allocated to each skill. Moreover, the items in the test questionnaire were created based on the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy. The findings revealed that speaking skill was the student's challenging area. This method provided a clear and measurable data, which played a significant role in the development of ESP syllabus.

ii. Interview

Apart from the administered test questionnaires, interviews were also conducted with ten (10) randomly selected students from the same group of respondents. These interviews were intended to complement the quantitative data by providing more in-depth qualitative insights. The researchers gathered insights on the student's difficulty in speaking skills, challenges and factors, and their possible steps or actions to improve their speaking skills. The findings offered valuable insights that help in designing ESP course to address not only the weaknesses of the students but also their practical needs and learning goals.

F. Procedure of the Needs Analysis

Initially, the class was randomly grouped, and each group was assigned to different non-board programs of KCAST to conduct a needs analysis. The researchers initiated the data-gathering procedure through administering test questionnaire and conducting an interview to their assigned program, the Bachelor of Science in Public Administration, particularly the 1st year to 3rd year students. To identify the specific English language needs of the students, test questionnaires were administered to assess which among the four macro skills proved to be the most difficult for the students, and an in-depth interview were conducted to support the findings from the test assessment and gained insights about their English language proficiency level, specifically in speaking. These tools were designed to evaluate the respondents' English proficiency that were aligned with the respondents' field of study, which is Public Administration.

Out of the total population, one hundred (100) Public Administration students were selected to answer the questionnaire using an exam-type format. After the survey, ten (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 speaking proficiency results, factors affecting their speaking performance, specific difficulties, the impact of their speaking proficiency level on confidence, and the steps they plan to take for improvement. Also, a concluding question asked them what topics they would include if they were to design an English language program tailored for BPA students.

After the data collection procedure, the researchers consolidated the answers from both the survey and the interviews. The results were organized into tables for clearer analysis and interpretation. In the quantitative phase, the general average or mean for each item were identified to determine the skill with lowest average result. While, in the qualitative phase, the researchers looked at how often certain answers appeared and common themes to find out what the learners specifically needed, wanted, and lacked in English, specifically in speaking skills. Based on these findings, the researchers proposed the design of an ESP syllabus tailored to help Public Administration students improve their speaking proficiency. This proposed syllabus may also serve as a reference for future curriculum improvements.

G. Data Collection

Initially, the researcher chose and identified 3 sections to accommodate the one hundred (100) required respondents, then they asked permission to BPA instructors to take-over their class and utilized their class schedule for the administration of the test questionnaires. Thereafter, an in-depth interview has been conducted.

i. Questionnaires

After the allotted time given to the respondents, test questionnaires were collected and checked for tabulation of results. The test questionnaires composed of 60 items were divided into four topics or macro skills, the first fifteen (15) items covered the listening skills, another fifteen (15) items for reading, and the other fifteen (15) items are questions related to writing skills, and the remaining fifteen (15) items for speaking skills questions. The scores of the respondents were listed according to their correct and mistake items, 1 indicates correct item and 0 for wrong item. After tabulating the scores, the result revealed that speaking skills or items got the lowest average score, indicating that speaking was the challenging skill among the BPA students surveyed. This result served as a crucial basis for developing a specialized English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course focusing on speaking.

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ii. Interview

The results from the administered test questionnaires serve as the basis for structuring and crafting the interview questions. The researcher selected ten (10) random students from the same group of respondents to answer the questions about their reactions to their speaking assessment scores, contributing factors to their low performance, challenges with the different technique to improve speaking, and how speaking proficiency affected their confidence. Additionally, they were also asked about the possible steps they are willing to take to improve their speaking skills and what specific topics/subjects they want to include in designing an English language program or curriculum that would best suit to their needs as Public Administration students. The researcher combined the survey results and interview answers to get a clearer and more complete understanding of the students' needs. This helped the researchers create an ESP course that focuses on the target skills and appropriate specific situation of Public Administration students.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter presents the findings from both the quantitative and qualitative phases of the study. On the quantitative phase, it highlights the results from the test questionnaires being administered highlighting the four macro skills. On the other hand, the qualitative phase presents the interview data summarizing the insights of the participants on the results and findings of their language proficiency. The results of both phases were presented in a table as shown below.

Level of Language Proficiency in Terms of the Four Macro Skills

This quantitative study seeks to assess the student's proficiency in the four macro skills in language learning: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. Each skill was examined through a specific focus or topic to assess their foundational knowledge. In particular, listening skill was evaluated through their knowledge of the different barriers to effective listening, reading skill through assessing their reading comprehension, writing skill through their knowledge of the writing process, and speaking through understanding the different techniques to improve speaking. The study aims to measure the extent of students' knowledge and understanding of these core concepts, and to determine specific areas for further instruction and support.

Table 1
Level of Language Proficiency in Terms of Listening Skills

Listening	Mean	Description
1	55%	Average
2	52%	Average
3	48%	Low
4	63%	Average
5	72%	High
6	61%	Average
7	46%	Low
8	51%	Average
9	38%	Low
10	57%	Average
11	57%	Average
12	53%	Average
13	43%	Low
14	47%	Low
15	26%	Very Low
Overall Mean	**51%**	**Average**

Listening. In terms of listening skills, Public Administration students demonstrated an overall mean score of 51%, which is interpreted as "Average." This suggests that their ability to understand and interpret spoken language is satisfactory an essential skill for following lectures, instructions, and public communications. The highest score of 72% reflects some students' strong capacity to comprehend detailed auditory information, while the lowest score of 26% indicates difficulties encountered by others in certain listening tasks, such as overcoming behavioral barriers in listening.

This aligns with the findings of Pham (2021), which showed that using audiovisual materials greatly improved students' listening comprehension, especially for EFL students. Students' overall performance in listening tasks improved as a result of the incorporation of contextual visual cues, which improved their ability to process spoken information. In addition, Nadiyya and Suryadi (2024) found that students who were exposed to English songs showed enhanced listening abilities, which lends credence to this. They ascribed this to music's rhythmic and repetitive qualities, which, particularly for students not preparing for licensing exams, helped strengthen word recognition and auditory processing.

Table 2
Level of Language Proficiency in Terms of Reading Skills

Writing	Mean	Description
1	46%	Low
2	69%	Average
3	40%	Low
4	61%	Average
5	45%	Low
6	22%	Very Low
7	59%	Average
8	28%	Very Low
9	27%	Very Low
10	53%	Average
11	63%	Average
12	21%	Very Low
13	33%	Low
14	44%	Low
15	39%	Low
Overall Mean	**43%**	**Low**

Reading. As presented in Table 2, it was revealed that the students had an overall mean of 43%**,** which is interpreted as "Low". This suggests that students have a fair ability to comprehend written materials such as memos, reports, and emails that are important for processing internal documents in public service fields. Moreover, the highest score of 69% indicates that some students demonstrate adequate reading comprehension, enabling them to effectively understand and analyze routine workplace documents. In contrast, the lowest score of 21% reveals that there are students who struggle with

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understanding written texts, which may hinder their ability to process instructions and interpret important communication in professional settings.

Correspondingly, this aligns with the findings of Cabural and Infantado (2023) who found that many senior high school students, especially those not preparing for board exams, displayed below-average reading proficiency, lends support to this. Poor comprehension skills were identified as primarily caused by a lack of organized reading programs and restricted access to interesting resources. Similarly, Manuel (2022) observed that readers at the frustration level in public senior high schools frequently had trouble with vocabulary and decoding, particularly in self-paced learning settings. Students on non-board tracks experienced these challenges more acutely because their academic programs frequently gave less attention to reading development, which led to weaker literacy foundations.

Table 3
Level of Language Proficiency in Terms of Writing Skills

Writing	Mean	Description
1	35%	Low
2	48%	Low
3	51%	Average
4	23%	Very Low
5	62%	Average
6	50%	Average
7	37%	Low
8	55%	Average
9	19%	Very Low
10	19%	Very Low
11	38%	Low
12	35%	Low
13	24%	Very Low
14	40%	Low
15	32%	Low
Overall Mean	**38%**	**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 the writing process, are fairly limited. The low writing score implies that Public Administration students were not knowledgeable enough about the various writing processes, especially in writing formal and professional documents, which could hinder their effectiveness in professional communication and public service tasks. Yet, the highest mean of 62% with a descriptive equivalent as average indicates that some students have the capacity to understand the components of writing any documents accurately.

This was supported by the findings of Maba (2022) and Manatad and Escandallo (2024) discovered that students in non-board programs frequently struggle with writing because they don't practice enough and use poor drafting techniques. They stressed that writing confidence is increased by feedback and a variety of exercises. Moreover, Handayan (2023) and Rosas and Escandallo (2024) found that high achievers employ better drafting techniques, while low achievers concentrate more on revising than planning, producing less coherent writing. This implies that the secret to enhancing the abilities of non-board students is to teach them efficient writing procedures.

Table 4
Level of Language Proficiency in Terms of Speaking Skills

Writing	Mean	Description
1	25%	Very Low
2	58%	Average
3	32%	Low
4	51%	Average
5	37%	Low
6	18%	Very Low
7	42%	Low
8	16%	Very Low
9	36%	Low
10	33%	Low
11	21%	Very Low
12	48%	Low
13	29%	Very Low
14	18%	Very Low
15	48%	Low
Overall Mean	**34%**	**Low**

Speaking. As presented in Table 4, speaking was the weakest among the macro skills, with an overall mean of 34%, classified as "Low." The scores suggest that students are struggling with understanding various techniques to improve speaking and communication skills. This is critical for Bachelor of Science Public Administration students, who are expected to have an expertise in public service fields, including public communication which involves a great demand of good speaking skills. However, the highest average mean of 58% reflects that speaking skills among students of Public Administration were satisfactory in some respects, particularly in understanding and evaluating whether some speeches is appropriate for its context as reflected in item no. 2. Yet, the lowest score of 16% reveals the urgent need for intervention and focus in speaking instruction.

This aligns with the study of Trinh and Pham (2021), who found that students who do not major in English encounter psychological obstacles like criticism and worry about making mistakes that prevent them from participating in speaking activities in addition to linguistic challenges. To develop oral communication skills, they stressed that emotional factors are equally as important as language proficiency. Additionally, Xuan Mai et al. (2024) discovered that a lack of vocabulary and a fear of mispronouncing words were the main barriers to speaking in English classes, according to both students and instructors. Students' confidence and willingness to speak were reduced by these cumulative psychological and linguistic difficulties, underscoring the significance of establishing encouraging learning environments.

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Table 5
Level of Language Proficiency of the Four (4) Macro Skills

Macro Skill	Mean	Description
Listening	51%	Average
Reading	43%	Low
Writing	38%	Low
Speaking	34%	Low
Overall Mean	**42%**	**Low**

In terms of the four (4) macro skills, the overall mean was 42%, described as "Low". This reflects the students' concern about the overall low or fair language proficiency level that indicates that learners are significantly underperforming in essential language competencies. As presented in Table 5, only listening skill where students approach an average level of proficiency suggest that public administration students have better passive understanding and can comprehend spoken language satisfactorily. Meanwhile, reading proficiency was slightly better than writing and speaking but still falls under "Low" category, reflecting that students' comprehension and critical reading skills was fair. Moreover, the two productive skills namely writing and speaking were notably weaker among those macro skills, described as "Low", which suggests the need for intervention and instructional strategies as these skills were significant for public administration students in their professional field particularly in public service.

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

This section presented the qualitative results of the study. To address this research question, in-depth interviews were conducted with the participants. Probing questions were used to explore their experiences and perceptions related to their speaking abilities. While the research question encompasses all four macro skills, the students' responses during the interviews placed particular emphasis on speaking as a significant area of concern. Many admitted that they often struggle to express their thoughts clearly and confidently, especially in academic or formal settings. They pointed factors such as limited exposure to English, lack of practice and confidence, anxiety when speaking English, and insufficient speaking techniques as key contributors to their difficulty in developing strong speaking skills.

Table 6
Themes and Supporting Statements Based on the Level of Speaking Proficiency Among Public Administration Students

Emerging Themes	Supporting Statements
Limited Exposure to English Practice	• *"Maybe it's due to lack of exposure. We don't really have many speaking activities in class, mostly written reports." (IDI_7)* • *"It's hard for me because I don't have anyone to practice with. We also don't often have group discussions or presentations." (IDI_8)* • *"I haven't really been exposed to an English-speaking environment in my daily life. Most of my peers and I use Bisaya in conversations. Because of that, I'm not used to speaking English often, so it's hard for me to express ideas clearly when it's needed in class or work." (IDI_9)*
Lack of Confidence and Anxiety	• *"My confidence is really affected because of my speaking proficiency. In academic or professional settings, I feel shy when I have to communicate in English. I'm afraid I won't be understood or will embarrass myself. That's why I really want to develop my skills so I can be more confident in the future." (IDI_9)* • *"Sometimes, I feel shy to speak in class or to present because I lack confidence in my English." (IDI_3)* • *"It's really scary sometimes. In class, I hesitate to volunteer or present because I'm afraid of making mistakes." (IDI_7)*
Motivation for Continuous Improvement	• *"I felt mixed emotions when I found out the result. I was sad because it was low, but I'm still grateful because this is a wake-up call. I realized I really need to study harder. This is not the end, but the starting point of my improvement journey." (IDI_9)* • *"I will practice every day, even just by saying short English sentences. Like talking to myself in English." (IDI_7)* • *"I'm not satisfied with the result of my English-speaking assessment, but I'm also not discouraged. For me, this result is a starting point. It shows that I still have things to learn and improve on. I'm actually more motivated now to practice and work harder to improve." (IDI_10)*
Unfamiliarity with Speaking Techniques	• *"Maybe because we weren't properly oriented about speaking techniques like pausing, intonation, or organizing thoughts." (IDI_7)* • *"In my view, the difficulty with speaking techniques is due to a lack of materials and guidance. In class, we don't get much instruction on practical tips like pausing, intonation, and organizing thoughts. We mostly rely on self-study, which makes it hard to understand and master on our own." (IDI_10)* • *"It's hard for me because I don't have anyone to practice with. We also don't often have group discussions or presentations." (IDI_8)*

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Importance of English in Governance	• *Our audience is the people in the community, right? So of course, English is very important so we can voice out what we want to say—not just within our community. We can also relay our messages to different places. That way, different types of issues can be addressed. Hopefully, we still have more years to improve in that area, so that our English will become more organized and we'll know how to use it." (IDI_1)* • *"So, as we all know, being a Public Administration student is not easy because, aside from needing strong communication skills, you also need to emphasize clear communication to connect effectively. One of the main factors influencing my speaking performance is that, as a Public Administration student, it's my responsibility to enhance those skills because I know that someday I'll need to use them—not just for today but also in the near future." (IDI_5)* • *"If I were to design an English program for Public Administration, I would include a subject like 'English for Policy and Governance.' It's important for us to know how to express policies and government plans in English, especially when reporting to the public or working with English-speaking stakeholders in the future." (IDI_9)*

The responses in Table 5 reveal five primary themes about the language proficiency of Public Administration students. First, due to most classroom activities concentrated on written assignments rather than interactive speaking opportunities, students reported having limited exposure to English speaking. Their ability to become fluent was hindered by their infrequent practice in group discussions and presentations. Second, a lot of students expressed feelings of anxiety and low confidence when speaking in English, frequently anticipating errors or embarrassment. This further decreased their involvement in oral activities. Third, despite these obstacles, students demonstrated strong motivation to improve their English skills, understanding the value of regular practice and seeing their present problems as a springboard for improvement. Fourth, students felt that their instruction did not sufficiently address their lack of familiarity with effective speaking techniques, such as pausing, intonation, and organizing thoughts, which they felt were inadequately addressed in their instruction. Lastly, students acknowledged the importance of English in community communication and governance, considering that being able to communicate in the language is necessary to effectively communicate with their audience and express policies.

In first theme, *"limited exposure to English practice,"* was supported by the study of Lubna et al. (2024), and Awatin and Escandallo (2024) which found that non-English major students frequently struggle with developing their English language skills due to the lack of daily opportunities to engage in meaningful practice. This lack of exposure to English not only impairs their fluency but also impedes the growth of their speaking, writing, and listening skills. These students thus have a difficult time developing their confidence and communication skills in English without regular practice and interaction. Similarly, Pomat et al. (2024) highlighted that students in English-Medium Instruction (EMI) programs face significant challenges due to minimal exposure to English outside the classroom, resulting in increased foreign-language anxiety and decreased confidence. Furthermore, Wang et al. (2023) found that non-English majors frequently struggle with vocabulary acquisition due to a lack of English language environment, noting that 61.3% of students perceived this absence of contextual use as a major barrier hindering their retention and application of new words.

Moreover, the second theme, *"lack of confidence and anxiety,"* was supported by Nety and Nurhaeni (2020), and Ca-as and Escandallo (2024) who discovered that shyness, anxiety, a fear of making mistakes, and a limited vocabulary are frequently the causes of students' low self-confidence when speaking English. According to their study, learners can successfully overcome these obstacles and develop into more engaged language users by implementing techniques like lowering anxiety, expanding vocabulary, increasing confidence, and encouraging group discussions. Similarly, Ahsan et al. (2020) found a direct negative relationship between shyness and speaking performance among EFL learners, emphasizing that reducing psychological barriers through preparation and planning activities can significantly improve oral achievement. Consequently, Le Xuan Mai et al. (2024) reported that fear of negative evaluation and a lack of confidence in public speaking were major factors hindering students' willingness to speak, with many learners expressing hesitation due to fear of making mistakes in front of their peers.

Furthermore, the third theme, *"motivation for continuous improvement,"* was corroborated by Maming et al. (2023), who discovered that learning styles and motivation are important factors in helping students become better speakers. As a component of the affective domain, motivation propels students to persist in practicing and participating in learning activities despite obstacles. The result of their study demonstrates that motivated students are more likely to overcome obstacles and look for chances to improve their English. Moreover, this link between motivation and sustained progress is also supported by He et al. (2022), who found that clear goal-setting and a vivid ideal L2 self significantly enhance learners' willingness to communicate and their actual effort in English, showing how motivation roots learners to long-term speaking development. Additionally, Razawi et al. (2023) showed that incorporating socio-affective strategies, such as peer encouragement and emotionally supportive classroom interactions, substantially boosts intrinsic motivation for speaking, helping students maintain their drive to improve.

In addition to that, the fourth theme, *"unfamiliarity with speaking techniques,"* resonates with the study of Tiu et al. (2023), and Escandallo and Baradillo (2024) which showed that a lack of formal instruction in fundamental speaking abilities like tempo, intonation, and coherent idea organization causes

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many students to struggle with oral communication. Students frequently convey messages ineffectively without the right instruction and practice in these areas, which impairs their confidence and overall speaking performance. Further, this aligns with Sikubwabo et al. (2024), who developed the Voice Coach tool based on TED Talk benchmarks to train voice modulation such as the pitch, volume, and speed, showing strong evidence that explicit prosody instruction significantly boosts novices' speaking effectiveness through immediate feedback. Similarly, the study by Safitri and Misdi (2020) found that integrating structured pre-task planning, during-task fluency focus, and post-task form correction helped students internalize speaking structures, thereby improving their use of tempo, coherence, and intonation in spontaneous speech.

Consequently, the fifth theme, *"importance of English in governance,"* supported by the study of Dada (2025), who underlined that language policies, especially those pertaining to English, have a significant impact on how knowledge is constructed and how educational discourse is shaped. His research showed that in multilingual societies, English serves as a tool for representation and power in addition to being a language of instruction. This illustrates how students believe that using English is necessary to participate in public service and express policies clearly. Moreover, Emilia et al. (2025) analyzed English-education policies across ASEAN primary and secondary levels and found that English is consistently positioned as the dominant foreign language, often mandated in curricula and used in instruction, reinforcing its role not just in communication but in shaping opportunities for civic participation and socio-political mobility. Consequently, Imanova et al. (2025) examined English-in-education policy in Kazakhstan's public schools and reported a strong top-down emphasis on English proficiency for administrative and governmental advancement; however, they noted that such policies often overlook local needs, positioning English as a gatekeeper in governance and access to public service roles.

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 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) realization of limitations toward personal growth; (2) struggle with self-confidence in verbal expression; (3) limited exposure to practical language engagement; (4) desire for curriculum improvement and practical English training; and (5) identifies barriers to proficiency development.

Table 7
Insights Based on the Needs Assessment Regarding the Development of Public Administration Students Speaking Skills

EMERGING THEMES	SUPPORTING STATEMENTS
Realization of Limitations Toward Personal Growth	• *"I felt a little discouraged by the result, but I saw this as an opportunity to improve myself." (IDI_3)* • *"I also see it as an opportunity for growth. It shows me where I need to focus and motivates me to improve." (IDI_4)* • *"I feel a bit disappointed but also motivated to work on improving my English speaking proficiency." (IDI_6)* • *"I am not satisfied with the result of my English-speaking assessment, but I am also not discouraged. For me, this result is a starting point. It shows that I still have things to learn and improve on. I am actually more motivated now to practice and work harder to improve." (IDI_10)*
Struggle with Self-Confidence in Verbal Expression	• *"The lack of practice and fear of speaking in English are what affected my performance." (IDI_3)* • *"My speaking proficiency has sometimes made me hesitant to participate actively in discussions or give presentations." (IDI_6)* • *"My confidence is really affected because of my speaking proficiency. In academic or professional settings, I feel shy when I have to communicate in English. I'm afraid I will not be understood or will embarrass myself. That's why I really want to develop my skills so I can be more confident in the future." (IDI_9)* • *"I worry about messing up my pronunciation or sounding awkward. The same goes for professional settings ,I get anxious when I have to present." (IDI_5)*
Limited Exposure to Practical Language Engagement	• *"I lack exposure to formal or professional English settings. Most of my communication tends to be written or informal, so I struggle to articulate thoughts clearly and confidently in spoken English." (IDI_4)* • *"It is due to lack of exposure. We do not really have many speaking activities in class mostly written reports." (IDI_7)* • *"It's hard for me because I do not have anyone to practice with. We also do not often have group discussions or presentations." (IDI_8)*

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	• *"I have not really been exposed to an English-speaking environment in my daily life. Most of my peers and I use Bisaya in conversations." (IDI_9)*
Desire for Curriculum Improvement and Practical English Training	• *"I would choose a Formal Presentation Skills Program, public speeches, policy briefings, Q&A sessions, and using visual aids." (IDI_5)* • *"Topics like public speaking, persuasive communication, and English for professional writing will better prepare students for real-world administrative tasks." (IDI_6)* • *"If I were to design an English program for Public Administration, I would include a subject like 'English for Policy and Governance." (IDI_9)* • *"I would definitely include Interview and Interpersonal Skills Training. It's very important that we know how to handle formal conversations with officials, stakeholders, and clients. We need to be trained in proper professional communication and public interaction." (IDI_10)*
Identified Barriers to Proficiency Development	• *"One of the reasons that affected my speaking performance is time management. We have so many academic requirements, reports, and projects. Because of that, there is little time to practice English speaking. Sometimes I am too tired to practice after class, so my exposure is really limited." (IDI_10)* • *"Maybe it is because the techniques used are not effective for them. A lack of communication may cause struggles in building fluency and confidence." (IDI_5)* • *"There is sometimes a fear of making mistakes, which prevents active participation." (IDI_4)* • *"Maybe because we were not properly oriented about speaking techniques like pausing, intonation, or organizing thoughts." (IDI_7)*

The result of the study showed that BPA students face significant challenges in developing their English speaking skills due to factors such as low confidence, limited language exposure, and a lack of curriculum emphasis on practical communication. Despite their struggles, many students recognize their limitations and show motivation for improvement. The research underscores the need to align communication training with job-oriented learning objectives, ensuring students have structured and relevant speaking opportunities that prepare them for professional roles. Additionally, the findings reflect a strong desire for curriculum enhancements that foster internationally competitive communication competencies. The study of Santoso et al., (2023) supports this by emphasizing the importance of public speaking skills in English for Public Administration students in the global era.

The study of Hasanah and Pratiwi (2024) aligns with the theme Realization of Limitations Toward Personal Growth by emphasizing the crucial role of self-awareness in students' development of English-speaking skills. The findings show that students' emotional and accurate self-awareness, along with their ability to reflect on feedback and mistakes, contribute significantly to their progress in speaking. This conscious recognition of their limitations, such as pronunciation issues or emotional reactions, encourages growth by fostering a mindset open to self-improvement, peer support, and the use of tools to enhance their language skills, ultimately leading to greater self-confidence and participation in class discussions. The study aligns with the theme this by emphasizing how learners with a growth mindset recognize their own limitations not as fixed barriers but as opportunities for development. This awareness encourages them to reflect on their weaknesses, persist through challenges, and adopt effective strategies to improve their language proficiency. By acknowledging that language learning requires effort, patience, and continuous practice, students become more open to feedback and more resilient in their journey toward fluency key traits for personal and academic growth (Suman, 2023).

Additionally, this study found that students struggled with self-confidence in verbal expression, particularly in academic and professional contexts. Many participants felt shy and nervous due to their perceived lack of proficiency, which limited their participation in discussions and presentations. Fear of mispronunciation and awkwardness further discouraged them from engaging in spoken communication. This lack of confidence became a major barrier to effective communication and academic involvement. To overcome these challenges, targeted speaking practice and supportive learning environments are crucial in helping students develop fluency and confidence. The research findings align with previous studies, showing that many students struggle with anxiety and a lack of confidence in their speaking abilities. To address this, incorporating interactive classroom activities and practical communication courses, such as public speaking, can help reduce anxiety and strengthen students' confidence in real-world language use (Capacio and Datugan, 2024). Additionally, the study of Asnaini et al., (2025) supports this directly identifying low confidence as a central barrier to effective English speaking among EFL students. It highlights how negative past experiences, peer influence, lack of supportive feedback, and emotional instability collectively undermine students' belief in their speaking abilities. This multidimensional view of confidence as both a psychological and social issue reinforces the need for structured speaking activities and supportive environments that specifically target anxiety reduction and confidence building in verbal expression.

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Moreover, the study of Ardhana and Sadikin (2025) supports the theme of Limited Exposure to Practical Language Engagement by demonstrating how role-play can address classroom deficiencies in real-world speaking practice. Their Classroom Action Research showed that structured role-playing significantly improved students' confidence in speaking English by creating more active and cooperative speaking opportunities. This method breaks the routine of passive learning by simulating authentic communication scenarios, encouraging students to engage in meaningful interactions that mirror real-life use of language. Thereby directly tackling the lack of practical language engagement in typical classroom settings. Additionally, another study revealed that students struggled to improve their spoken English skills due to limited exposure to practical language use, as their communication was often written or informal, making verbal expression difficult. Participants noted that classroom activities rarely included speaking exercises, and many lacked opportunities to practice with peers outside of school. The absence of English-speaking environments in their daily lives further hindered their oral fluency, highlighting the need for interactive and immersive language activities to build confidence and proficiency. Previous research underscores the significance of task-based and cooperative learning strategies in improving students' spoken English through engaging and interactive activities. Encouraging self-regulated learning and integrating speaking through listening can effectively bridge the gap in real-life language exposure, fostering greater fluency, confidence in oral communication, and highlighted the impact of these approaches in enhancing language proficiency (Islam & Stapa, 2021).

Furthermore, this study emphasized students strong desire for curriculum enhancements, specifically advocating for practical English training tailored to academic and professional needs. They expressed interest in integrating specialized subjects and communication techniques, such as public speaking, policy briefings, and interpersonal skills, to better prepare for real-world professional interactions. This is further supported by a study that highlighted students' motivation to learn was driven by the language prestige and professional value. This reinforces the importance of enhanced curriculum that focuses on real-world communication skills such as public speaking and interpersonal training (Ameen and Mahmood, 2023). Similarly, the study of Utami and Rismadewi (2024) supports this by demonstrating that Problem-Based Learning (PBL) effectively enhances students English-speaking skills through engaging, real-world tasks. By focusing on pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension within the English for Personality Development course, the PBL model encouraged meaningful communication and active learning, making speaking practice more relevant and practical. The positive results highlight the importance of integrating dynamic and student-centered approaches like PBL into the curriculum to better prepare learners for real-life communication challenges.

Lastly, the fifth theme centers on the identified several barriers to English proficiency, including heavy academic workloads that limit students' opportunities to practice speaking. Ineffective teaching methods, particularly in areas like intonation, pausing, and idea organization, further hinder their progress. Additionally, the fear of making mistakes reduces classroom participation, emphasizing the need for more supportive learning environments and refined instructional strategies to build confidence in spoken English. Another study supports through highlighting that incorporating group discussions, motivational approaches, and technology can significantly enhance students' self-confidence and create dynamic learning environments. These strategies provide more opportunities for speaking practice, minimize the fear of making mistakes, and encourage active participation by addressing the challenges posed by ineffective teaching methods. It is also being emphasized that the effectiveness of these techniques in fostering engagement and improving language proficiency Maisaroh et al., (2024). The study of Gobena (2024) supports this through revealing a range of psychological obstacles such as fear, anxiety, shyness, low motivation, and lack of interest that hinder students' progress in learning to speak English. Among these, lack of confidence emerged as the most significant factor, rooted in students' fear of making mistakes and being judged by peers. These emotional barriers prevent learners from fully engaging in communication, ultimately stalling their proficiency development and highlighting the need for supportive, mistake-friendly environments to foster growth in language learning.

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

The proposed syllabus integrates needs analysis to tailor English language instruction to students' backgrounds, learning preferences, and communicative challenges. By employing pre-lesson needs analysis, educators can set clear learning objectives and select materials that directly support proficiency development. In lessons, needs analysis allows for adaptive teaching methods that respond to students diverse learning needs. in post-lesson needs analysis refines instructional strategies, ensuring continuous professional growth and improved student outcomes. This highlights that this structured approach optimizes teaching effectiveness, aligning language training with real-world applications to enhance students' readiness for professional communication Wang (2024).

Integrating a needs-based approach into the proposed syllabus ensures alignment with the job demands of Public Administration graduates. By incorporating targeted training in communication and presentation skills, students can develop competencies that match the expectations of administrative roles in international and professional environments. The research further underscores the necessity of structured and coherent syllabus design, ensuring that English courses do not merely cover theoretical aspects but actively cultivate speaking skills through practical application. Ayub and Khaleel (2024) recommend a revised English-speaking curriculum that directly addresses employability and global competency, supporting the proposed syllabus as an effective program for enhancing the language proficiency of Public Administration students.

Public Administration students struggle with English speaking due to ow confidence, limited exposure, and a lack of practical training in their curriculum. Despite these challenges, they are

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motivated to improve and recognize the need for communication skills that match job requirements. A study supports this and highlights that government officials require strong English proficiency to communicate effectively with foreign stakeholders. To address this, the proposed syllabus focuses on practical training to enhance speaking skills and align learning with real-world needs. By refining teaching methods and integrating hands-on activities, the program helps students develop communication skills essential for academic and professional success (Lin et al., 2021).

CONCLUSION

As researchers and future English educators, we recognize the need to address the challenges that Public Administration students face in developing proficiency in the four macro skills: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. This study revealed that among these skills, speaking and writing emerged as the most problematic areas, with reading and listening also needing improvement. The findings under Research Question No. 1 showed that students had a low overall proficiency, particularly in speaking (34%) and writing (38%), suggesting limited understanding of effective communication techniques and the writing process. Although listening was rated "average" at 51%, many students struggled with barriers to effective listening. Reading also scored low at 43%, highlighting comprehension difficulties and limited vocabulary. These results show that students need greater exposure and practice in using English both academically and in real-world contexts to enhance their fluency and accuracy.

Additionally, students provided meaningful insights under Research Question No. 2, reflecting a strong awareness of their limitations and a desire to improve. They identified factors such as limited exposure to English, lack of confidence, and ineffective instructional methods as major barriers to their language development. Many students expressed anxiety in speaking tasks, especially during presentations and discussions, which significantly affected their confidence. Despite these challenges, students showed motivation to enhance their skills and emphasized the importance of public speaking, interpersonal communication, and other practical language applications for future careers in governance. Their responses also stressed the value of curriculum reform that prioritizes practical English training tailored to the needs of Public Administration professionals.

To sum up, this study demonstrates that Public Administration students encounter significant difficulties in mastering the four macro skills, with speaking and writing as the weakest. Their low proficiency in these areas hinders their ability to communicate effectively in academic and professional settings. Students themselves acknowledged the need for more practical exposure and suggested improvements in the curriculum to include targeted communication training. By designing a syllabus that integrates needs analysis and real-world communication tasks, educators can better support students' development and help them gain the confidence and skills required for future roles in public service. Addressing these challenges is essential to foster their language competence and ensure their readiness for professional communication.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has identified that Public Administration students have a difficult time speaking English, especially when it comes to confidently and clearly expressing their ideas in formal and academic contexts. The researchers suggest creating an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) curriculum that emphasizes oral communication improvement as a solution to this issue. This curriculum ought to incorporate practical speaking exercises that are pertinent to their line of work, like attending meetings, making presentations, and participating in policy debates. Students can better understand the value and relevance of speaking fluently if language instruction is matched with their future positions in public service.

Moreover, the institution should also use techniques like classroom debates, public speaking workshops, structured speaking exercises, and peer interaction activities to help students improve their speaking abilities. This ought to be made to boost pupils' self-esteem and lessen the nervousness that comes with speaking English. In order to effectively teach ESP content, teachers must also receive training in techniques that promote student engagement and mimic authentic communication situations. Technology can also improve learning and engagement. This includes interactive speaking apps, video recording for self-evaluation, and speech recognition tools.

Thus, to guarantee that the speaking exercises accurately represent workplace communication, collaboration between educators, curriculum designers, and public administration specialists is crucial. In order to make the learning process more student-centered and responsive to their needs, it is important to encourage regular feedback from students. Students will progressively overcome their speaking challenges, gain confidence, and improve their communication skills in both academic and professional contexts with the support of a practice-focused and encouraging learning environment.

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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.