Need-based Course Content for the English Bridge Program (EBP)

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Abstract: The study was guided by the research and development approach with the freshman BS Accountancy (BS Acc) students of the Mariano Marcos State University (MMSU) as respondents. It used the English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT) and the communicative needs survey questionnaire developed by Mina (2009). The study found that students 1) are fair users of English; and 2) feel that the development of their vocabulary and macro-language skills are very highly necessary while communicative grammar and language focus, on the other hand, are considered highly necessary. The BS Acct program admits only the top 50-100 in the admission test. If this highly quota course has a fair competency level in the English language, it is safe to infer that this case holds true to majority of the populace. The multi-dimensional content formulated for the EBP is envisioned to address this need. Thus, its implementation is highly recommended.

Keywords: Needs analysis, Syllabus, Proficiency

Introduction

The gaps in school achievement among students entering the university are well documented in the country. Studies show that students entering college have different academic preparations, specifically on macro-skills of the English language. As a proof, there are tertiary institutions that offer remedial classes such as English Plus as mandated by CHED Memorandum Order No. 59, series of 1996 for incoming freshmen who fail to show competence on the needed English language entry skills in the tertiary level both in oral and written examinations.

This variation on postsecondary persistence and attainment may be attributed to the disparity on English language curriculum in high school, course contents, priorities in responding to needs, strategies, and instructional materials used by the institution in general and teachers in particular.

In addition, assuming that secondary institutions use the same curricula, it is possible that high school teachers use different syllabi which are dependent on how they respond to the needs of their students. Moreover, since a variety of syllabi are used, it follows that they also employ various strategies, and utilize different instructional materials.

All of these variations contribute to the achievement gaps among high school graduates and eventually to their readiness to learn and apply more advanced language skills and competencies in college.

These differences are aggravated by some factors once said graduates enroll in postsecondary education. For one, language teachers fail to identify the real entry level proficiency of the students. Second, since there are no remedial classes such as English 0 or English Plus in state colleges and universities like MMSU, students are learning some inputs prematurely. This means
that learners are forced to internalize concepts and to learn the skills without enough competencies in the prerequisite skills. In effect, the learning process becomes burdensome to them. Finally, since there is no standardized diagnostic examination which is administered to all in-coming freshman college students, their language deficiency is not well-defined. Thus, such deficiency is not given proper attention.

Being a comprehensive institution of higher learning, MMSU, the locale of this research, also faces the challenge of improving the state of English proficiency among students. It has been observed that teachers have difficulty attending to every student due to different constraints such as class size and classroom set-up. However, some faculty members have been finding ways to ease these problems. It was revealed by one of the English instructors at MMSU during the preliminary casual interview that his educational strategies have been continuously modified in an attempt to find more meaningful techniques that would result to better learning, consequently providing more relevant education. In addition, English professors integrate grammar lessons in various English subjects as the need arises since a course on intensive English, which supposedly addresses problems on grammatical competence of students, is not offered in the university. Meanwhile, as disclosed by another MMSU faculty, instructors in the other disciplines, except in Filipino, are required to use English and exemplify a good speaking model for the students. Further, the English-only policy (EOP) has been encouraged to be implemented in all offices in the university. This aims to provide wider English exposure to the students. However, these efforts are limited to improve the state of English proficiency among MMSU students.

The concern about college readiness and the need for remediation—helping students prepare for college level success—is not new to Philippine educational system. In 2007, CHED issued Memorandum Order 3, series of 2007 on revised policies and standards for the Bachelor of Science in Accountancy (BS Acc) program. In the said Memorandum Order, Article X Section 50 states:

> Admission to the BS Accountancy program should be restricted to students who can demonstrate a high probability of success in the study of accounting through satisfactory academic performance, a qualifying examination, an interview and/or appropriate means...students should meet an English language requirement to be set by the college/department.

As such, the EBP has been offered to incoming BS Acc students nationwide. The EBP provides a cultural context for developing language skills and preparation for the reading, writing, speaking, listening, note taking and research that the students will be undertaking in the program. It further aims to provide the thinking skills needed in analyzing problems and theories related to accounting.

In response, MMSU, specifically the CBEA, has been offering EBP for its in-coming accountancy students since summer of 2007. However, the instructors who taught the subjects under the program in 2007, 2008, and 2009 found difficulty in handling the EBP and experienced various teaching-related problems.
Inasmuch as the EBP teachers want the students to experience and internalize the dynamics of the learning process, it becomes almost impossible due to limited opportunities to embrace such. Obviously, concerned faculty members have been aware of these realities as an off-shoot of their practices. However, these practices with their accompanying outcomes have cropped up year in and year out due to the absence of an initiative that could help organize these observations surrounding the problems encountered in implementing the EBP at MMSU.

In this perspective, the current research is focused on the identification of the English language proficiency and the perceived communicative needs of the freshman BS Accountancy students which were used as bases in formulating a course content for the EBP.

Specifically, it answered the following questions:
1. What is the proficiency level of the freshman BS Accountancy students of AY 2010 - 2011?
2. What are their perceived communicative needs? and
3. How can the students’ English language level of proficiency and perceived communicative needs be used in the formulation of the course content of the EBP?

**Literature Review**

**Status of English Proficiency among Filipino Students**

According to Roces (2001), the Philippines is still the third largest English-speaking country in the world and sixth largest in terms of English speaking population. In fact, Filipinos were envied in Asia for their adeptness in the English language two decades ago.

However, the country has been overtaken linguistically by many of its Asian neighbors. Now, the Philippines has lost its language advantage in the use of English. As a matter of fact, the result of the National Achievement Test (NAT) administered by the DepEd last 2004 to almost a million senior high school students proved that the Filipinos vaunted edge in English is fast becoming a thing of the past. Based on the results, only 18 percent among the respondents passed the competency level for English, while only two percent got only 75 percent or higher. More than half of the examinees also had a passing grade of only 34 percent which is way below the mastery level of 75 percent for English (Manila Bulletin, 2005).

Moreover, in a similar study conducted a year later, then Education Undersecretary Fe Hidalgo said that several DepEd studies revealed that many public secondary school students have not acquired the necessary competence in reading or, if not, they do not understand what they are reading. This disclosure is based on the dismal result of the High School Readiness Test (HSPT) administered by the DepEd (Rimando, 2005).

Parallel to that, as reported by Rimando (2005), almost seven percent of the graduating high school students registered mastery in English. All the rest had recorded near mastery (42.2%)
and low mastery (44.2%). Expectedly, such poor performance contributed to the low level of English proficiency among Filipino college graduates.

**Syllabus Design**

Institutional syllabi are generally perceived as an indispensable element of second language courses. They can be in a variety of structures, can stand for various theories of learning, and can be realized in different ways.

A syllabus can also be seen as a summary of the content to which learners will be exposed (Yalden, 1987). It is seen as an approximation of what will be taught and that it cannot accurately predict what will be learned.

A complete syllabus specification will include all five aspects: structure, function, situation, topic, and skills. The difference between syllabuses will lie in the priority given to each of these aspects.

According to Nunan (2001), syllabus design is concerned with the selection, sequencing and justification of the content of the curriculum. This, according Karau (1987) involves a logical sequence of three main stages: needs analysis, content specification, and syllabus organization. This follows very closely the general model advocated by Taba (1962) which gave the following steps: needs analysis, formulation of objectives, selection of content, organization of content, selection of learning activities, organization of learning activities, decisions about what needs evaluating and how to evaluate.

**Needs analysis.** Needs analysis has been defined in different ways by different linguists. According to Richterich (1972), language needs are the requirements which arise from the use of a language in the multitude of situations which may arise in the social lives of individuals and groups. By analysing the language needs of specific groups of learners, it would be easy to identify those notions and functions which will be most valuable to teach. The concept of needs analysis enables the syllabus developer to discriminate between various learner types and to produce syllabus inventories specifically geared to their needs.

**Content specification.** After having determined the language needs of the learners, the next step is to decide on the content of the syllabus. Most language syllabus content is drawn from inventories or lists which may be word frequency lists, inventories of functions or lists of specific topics. Content can also be specified through a series of checklists which deals with communicative functions, discourse skills, and study skills.

**Syllabus organization.** Having once decided on what to teach, the next state is to decide on an appropriate strategy of presentation. The objective of organizing a syllabus should be to promote learning, and not just to provide a description of the language. Therefore, the content matter should be organized to facilitate teaching and learning.
Theoretical Underpinnings

Theory of Connectionism
The Law of Readiness of Thorndike’s connectionism considers the preparedness of the learner to acquire or learn a skill. This is important because contentment or dissatisfaction is determined by the learner’s extent of his preparatory set, that is, his readiness for action. Correspondingly, the Natural-order Hypothesis, a second language acquisition/learning theory claims that grammatical structures are acquired in a predictable order (Krashen and Terell 1983). Since there is a predetermined order of acquiring or learning a concept, it can be said therefore that skills are acquired gradually and in a staircase pattern.

In addition, the law stresses the importance of students’ preparation for learning. It is necessary that for learning to take place, learners must have the needed skills essential for the acquisition of a new skill. If for instance, the learner lacks the pre-requisite skills needed, instructors must wait until a learner is ready to learn. Meanwhile, preparatory experiences, like EBP or English Plus that will hasten the development of readiness are provided when learners show signs of unpreparedness for a target skill. This bridges the gap of what the learners already know to what they are supposed to learn.

Conceptual Framework

In a country where English is used as a second language like the Philippines, the role of academic institutions in fostering English language competence among students is paramount. This is so because, it is hoped that after learning the English language through the years in the academe, graduates are expected to have achieved a certain level of language competence.

Nevertheless, such expectation ends up with frustrating consequences, particularly when would-be college students manifest a wide range of readiness and responsiveness to more advance language instruction.

On one hand, such reality prompts some tertiary and higher education institutions to address such problems by offering students remedial and/or tutorial classes just to foster their readiness and on the other, the alarming consequences are ignored thereby prompting students to take language learning for granted. When that is brushed aside, the ability of students to maximize the potentials of their chosen fields of specialization via the use of the English language as the primary medium of communication is terribly sacrificed.

Reflecting on that alarming consequence, the offering of the EBP was mandated by CHED. The EBP is an intensive course for in-coming college in order to improve the quality of language proficiency among students as well as provide the entry level skills they need. The absence of a syllabus that could provide students with a comprehensive and yet meaningful take-off in
undergoing a more advanced learning instruction that cuts across the different macro-skills – listening, speaking, reading, writing, and grammar.

To realize such, it was necessary to explore on the English language entry level and the communicative needs of the students. Once these are analyzed, they help evolve the realities surrounding the dynamics of SLL such as students’ English language needs, lacks and wants. These could then be used by concerned EBP instructors in developing an EBP syllabus; specifically by rationalizing the real intent of the program, by structuring the lessons in a progressive yet productive manner, by deciding on the specific details, by fostering active learning processes, by providing mechanisms that enable both instructors and students to keep track of expected learning and by ensuring that the material is going to be used creatively, thus providing room for flexibility depending upon specific needs of learners.

**Methodology**

This study employed the research and development (R and D) approach which involves two stages: planning and development. Primarily, this study was conducted at the MMSU, Batac City, Ilocos Norte, specifically at the CBEA and the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) during the first semester of the School Year 2010.

In gathering the primary data needed in this study, all 86 freshman BS Acc students enrolled during the first semester of the SY 2010-2011 were considered.

In order to provide answers to the research problems, this study used four data-gathering tools:

**English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT).** This is a communicative competence test in English which measures: knowledge of the mechanical rules of the language; knowledge of the meaningful use of the language; appropriacy of relationships and settings and oral language performance. The four macro language skills of: listening speaking, reading, and speaking are provided for in this test.

**Communicative Needs Assessment Survey Questionnaire (CNASQ).** This survey questionnaire checklist was used to identify the perceived communicative needs of the respondents.

**Academic Writing Scale (AWS).** This is a nine-band scale with specific description for each of the bands.

**Interview Assessment Scale (IAS).** This is a nine-band-scale used to assess the speaking abilities of the respondents.

**Data Gathering Procedure**
Needs analysis. This stage involved activities undertaken by the researcher prior to the development of the syllabus. Specifically, the researcher conducted an English Proficiency examination to the 86 freshman BS Accountancy students to determine their proficiency level along English macro-skills in particular and the English language in general.

Moreover, this stage also included the identification of the communicative needs of the respondents. This was done through the use of a survey checklist on their English language communicative needs also developed by Mina (1999). Copies of the questionnaire were administered to the student-respondents involved in this research.

Content specification. Based on the result of the needs analysis, the researcher identified the skills and sub-skills of the English language which compose the course content of the EBP.

Syllabus organization. The development of the syllabus was patterned after the model proposed by the Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities (AACCUP) of the Philippines. It includes the following parts: preliminaries and the syllabus proper.

Moreover, the syllabus includes organization of content, selection of learning activities, organization of learning activities, decisions about what needs evaluating and how to evaluate.

Presentation, Analysis, and Interpretation of Data

Level of Proficiency in English

The test, being communicative in approach, is based on these four criteria: a) Knowledge of the meaningful rules of the language; b) Knowledge on the mechanical rules of the language; c) Appropriacy in terms of settings and relationships; and d) Oral language performance. Under each criterion are the four macro-language skills – reading, listening, writing, speaking, and the specified language functions that indicate the examinee’s communicative competence.

The general performance of the Accountancy students in the English language is summarized in Table 1. Among the students, only 33 percent of them can be considered competent in the use of the English language. All the rest, comprising the majority are below the expectation level.

Table 1. Overall English Language Competency of the Students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Interval</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Descriptive Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>150.00 – up</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>Very Competent User of English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>134.93 – 149.99</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>29.07</td>
<td>Competent User of English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>119.87 – 134.92</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>41.86</td>
<td>Fair User of English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104.80 – 119.86</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18.60</td>
<td>Moderate User of English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 – 104.79</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.98</td>
<td>Limited User of English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean= 127.40  SD=15.07  Total items=220
It is alarming to note that these data indicate that the respondents lack the necessary English language competence required by the BS Accountancy program. This finding confirms the result of the study conducted by Dufourt (2003), Carrasca (2007), and Bartolome (2007). Their studies delved on the identification of the level of English proficiency of freshman students of MMSU. Their research outputs reveal that majority of the respondents have an average proficiency level. Some findings were yielded from this study where college freshmen do not meet the expected language skills required of them in college.

Also, the result corroborates with the result released by the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) in 2005 based from a careful evaluation of the results of the NAT taken in 2005 that only 6.6 percent of the graduating high school students registered mastery in English (Rimando 2006).

While Table 1 shows the overall English language competency of the students, Table 2, on the other hand shows the level of performance of the students along the macro-skills.

Table 2. Overall Percentages of Students’ Mean Scores across Language Skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable/Areas</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>103.86</td>
<td>61.09</td>
<td>CUE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5.42</td>
<td>36.13</td>
<td>MUE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11.84</td>
<td>59.20</td>
<td>FUE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.27</td>
<td>41.80</td>
<td>FUE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>127.49</td>
<td>57.95</td>
<td>FUE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend:
- 81 – 100 Very Competent User of English (VCUE)
- 61 – 80 Competent User of English (CUE)
- 41 – 60 Fair User of English (FUE)
- 21 – 40 Moderate User of English (MUE)
- 0 – 20 Limited User of English (LUE)

The data revealed that among the macro-skills, the students are only at a competent level in terms of reading and listening while oral and writing are within the moderate and fair levels, respectively. However, using the competency standard in any subject area set by the NSCB which is mastery level (75 – 100 percent), near mastery (50 – 74 percent), and low mastery is below 50 percent, it can be noted that the BS Accountancy students are in the low mastery level. This means to say that the students are not equipped with the foundation skills as far as language is concerned.

The Communicative Needs of Freshman BS Accountancy Students
This section presents the self-perceived communicative needs of the respondents. Though this data is subjective in nature, the incorporation of such will fill in the gap of what they really know and which skill they want to learn.

Table 3 shows the result of the self-perceived communicative needs survey of the freshman BS Accountancy students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contents</th>
<th>Weighted Mean Ratings</th>
<th>Descriptive Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. Vocabulary building through</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Contextual strategy</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>VHN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Structural Analysis</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td>VHN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Linguistic Signals</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>VHN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Composite Mean</strong></td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>VHN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II. Communicative Grammar</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Giving instructions and direction</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>HN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Describing events, people’s character, physical features, etc.</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>HN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Describing a process</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>HN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Giving information</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>VHN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Explaining a process</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>HN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Defining and elaborating</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>VHN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Narrating events, experience, process</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>VHN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Giving suggestions, conditions, wish</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>HN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Reporting scientific developments and experiments</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>MN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Gathering information through interviewing and asking questions</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>VHN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Generalizing and summarizing</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>VHN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Composite Mean</strong></td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>HN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Continuation of table 7...*
### Mean Ratings

#### III. Language Focus

1. prepositions and prepositional phrases  & 4.53 & VHN  
2. Direction words & 4.06 & HN  
3. Adverbs and adverbials & 3.97 & HN  
4. Imperatives & 3.92 & HN  
5. Adjectives & 4.50 & VHN  
6. Degree comparatives and equivalents & 3.95 & HN  
7. Articles & 3.99 & HN  
8. Relative words & 3.49 & MN  
9. Auxiliaries and modals & 3.95 & HN  
10. Tense aspect system & 4.96 & VHN  
11. Subject-verb agreement & 4.63 & VHN  
12. Pronoun-antecedent agreement & 4.02 & HN  
13. Use of negative words & 3.77 & HN  
14. Use of active/passive voices & 3.81 & HN  
15. Use of verbal & 3.86 & HN  
16. Use of referential “it” and “there” subjects & 3.43 & MN  
17. Use of reported speech & 3.84 & HN  
18. Framing wh-questions and other question forms & 3.94 & HN  
19. Sentence embedding & 4.57 & VHN  
20. Verb systems & 4.62 & VHN  
21. Verb-noun restrictions & 3.95 & HN  
22. Conjunctions & 4.72 & VHN  
23. Lexical collocations and semantic restrictions & 4.53 & VHN  

**Composite Mean**  & **4.13** & HN  

#### IV. Macro-language skills

1. Reading & 4.54 & VHN  
2. Listening & 4.71 & VHN  
3. Speaking & 4.53 & VHN  
4. Writing & 4.51 & VHN  

**Composite Mean**  & **4.57** & VHN  

**Overall Mean**  & **4.37** & HN  

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*Legend:*  
4:50 – 5.00  Very Highly Necessary  (VHN)  
3:50 – 4.49  Highly Necessary  (HN)  
2:50 – 3.49  Moderately Necessary  (MN)  
1:50 – 2.49  Slightly Necessary  (SN)
Vocabulary building, which includes contextual strategy, structural analysis, and linguistic signal are perceived by the students to be very highly necessary. This implies that the non-conventional way of getting the meaning of a difficult term is wanting. It could be inferred that the students find the usual dictionary way of getting meaning is difficult.

As to communicative grammar, four items are considered very highly necessary while four are also considered as highly necessary. It is interesting to note that reporting scientific developments and experiments is considered to be moderately necessary by the students. This is attributed to the notion that accountancy students are not concerned about science experiments and investigations.

As regards language focus, on the other hand, eight are rated very highly necessary. Meanwhile, two are rated moderately necessary. Finally, the respondents considered the rest of the criteria as highly necessary. This implies that the discussion of language units is still a need for the students. One can note from the data that the respondents, being college students still lack the needed grammar competency level. For college students, it is expected that they should have already achieved a very good foundation of grammar, since it has been taught in their formative years up to their high school. Furthermore, as incoming college students, it is also expected that they should have already assimilated and sharpened their knowledge of grammar assuming that these very important language skills on grammar should have already been developed in the elementary and high school.

Finally, the respondents consider all the macro-language skills to be very highly necessary. One can surmise that the four macro-skills are the needed skills of college students to enable them to perform and cope with academic work. In college, students need to explain, to perform, to argue, to listen to lectures, and to write journals.

Generally, with a weighted average mean of 4.09, the entire criteria listed in the survey are perceived to be highly necessary by the respondents. It implies that these criteria must be considered in the development of an EBP syllabus.

Utilizing the Level of English Proficiency and the Perceived Communicative Needs of the Students in the Formulation of the Course Content of the EBP

What it means to know a language goes beyond simplistic views of good pronunciation, correct grammar, and even mastery of rules of politeness. Knowing a language and the proper ways to use it involve a mastery and control of a large number of interdependent components and elements that interact with one another. They are also affected by the nature of the situation in which communication takes place (Valdes & Figuera 1994). This is actually what is meant to be proficient in the target language.
In general, most of the respondents are not very competent users of English as far as the needed entry competency level is concerned. This is manifested in their scores in the ELPT. The data show that there is a need of filling up the gap of what the respondents know and what they should know as regards the different skills and sub-skills measured in the ELPT. This will enable them to perform well in the different English subjects that they need to take in college.

It is therefore necessary to determine the topics and skills which will fill in the gap. The data gathered in the needs analysis were utilized to realize this purpose.

First, students’ knowledge of the meaningful rules of the language which include vocabulary building and use of linguistic signals, knowledge of the mechanical rules of the language which covers dictation portion which tests the listening comprehension of the test takers and their knowledge on punctuation, appropriacy in terms of settings and relationships, and oral language performance are deemed necessary to be included in the syllabus since majority of the respondents are considered fair users of English.

Second, with regard to the perceived communicative needs of the students, all the items under vocabulary building were included since the items were rated very highly necessary. Meanwhile, under communicative grammar and language focus, only the skills and sub-skills which were rated highly necessary and very highly necessary were included in the syllabus since the general weighted average mean of the items is highly necessary. Finally, all the language skills under the English language macro-skill were included because the respondents believed that these skills are highly necessary for them to perform well in college.

The English Bridge Program Syllabus

The English Bridge Program (EBP) aims to link the gap of what the students already know and what they have not yet mastered in relation to the language skills that they should have had in control with upon enrolment in college. Further, it intends to put all the in-coming BS Accountancy students at the same level so that they could move at the same pace in all their English language-based undertakings in college. Finally, the program is set to provide the basic thinking and study skills necessary for them to survive in the BS Accountancy program.

The syllabus is an output of an intensive needs analysis which includes the identification of the students’ proficiency level and their perceived communicative needs. Since the program covers all the English language macro-skills such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, and grammar, all the features of the different types of syllabus were determined. Thus, the English Bridge Program syllabus is a multi-dimensional one.

The English Bridge Program Syllabus is divided into two major parts: preliminaries and the syllabus proper. These are the standard parts of a syllabus prescribed by the AACCUP. However, a minor revision was done to suit the nature of the program. Thus, course requirements and bases for grading were not included in the syllabus since this is a non-credit course. The preliminaries include the university mission and vision, college goals, program goals, course code and title, time duration, course description, course prerequisites, and general objectives of the program.
Meanwhile, the syllabus proper has these parts: specific objectives, units/topics, time frame, value infusion, activities, evaluation, and references.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

**Conclusions**

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Among the four macro-skills, writing seems to be the most difficult to the respondents.
2. Students’ level of competence on their knowledge of the meaningful and mechanical rules of the language, appropriacy in terms of settings and relationships and oral language performance is below the competency level.
3. The freshman BS Accountancy students lack the necessary English language competence which is expected of them.
4. The syllabus is comprehensive enough for it caters to the development of all the English language macro-skills: listening, reading, writing, and grammar.

**Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusions, the researcher offers the following recommendations:

English Bridge Program teachers should use the developed syllabus in teaching the EBP to address the English language deficiency of the in-coming BS Accountancy students.

Researchers should use the course content and the syllabus as bases in developing teaching resource materials for the EBP.

The administration should conduct an English proficiency examination to all the in-coming MMSU students to determine whether the students have the needed English language entry skill or not. Though the EBP is offered to the in-coming BS Accountancy students, said program should also be offered to other students who might need the program.

**References**


STI Campaign to help boost English proficiency among students. Manila Bulletin. 389 (1); B.9.

