

ENGLISH FOR PROFESSIONAL PURPOSES (EPP) TRAINING COURSE FOR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

The continuing implementation of the new K-12 Curriculum in the Philippines has prompted the teachers to face changes particularly those in the English programs. The inclusion of EAP (English for Academic Purposes) and EPP (English for Professional Purposes) as subject offerings to grades 11 and 12 has challenged the teachers to further their studies and training in language education.

This paper attempted to develop an English for Professional Purposes Training Program to enable the Senior High teachers to cope with the curriculum changes and quality them to be ESP practitioners. An assessment survey was administered to identify their language needs, skills and other priorities as potentialsenior high teachers. Moreover, EAP and EPP course guides from the K-12 curriculum were reviewed to deducesome contents to be utilized as inputs for a course plan, teaching materials, and strategic activities.

In the end, evaluation procedures were undertaken of which the results effected some modifications on the course list, topics, and activities of the proposed training course.

INTRODUCTION

The inclusion of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English Professional Purposes (EPP) as subject titles in Grades 11 and 12 of Philippine Basic Education has prompted the teachers, researchers, and material writers to embrace some changes and keep abreast with the curricular provisions. The Department of Education (DepEd) at the helm of the emerging K-12 includes EAPand EPP in the recent curriculum for its prime goal to develop communication skills in English among the senior high school learners,the end beneficiaries ofthe entire program.

The DepEd's curriculum guide has been disseminated in the entire country. Illustrated within arecontent areas, standard, and learning competencies, both Applied and Tech-Voc track subjects. The italicized notations at the bottom of each page of the Grades 11 and 12 curriculum reminds the concerned, particularly the teachers to modify academic texts to cater to the needs and interacts with the students in their chosen courses. Moreover, the learning competencies on critical

thinking and approaches applicable to the Academics may be replaced (as suggested) by technical applications in Tech-Voc. such as Welding, Housekeeping, Home-Care and related ones.

Though there are some available resources to be used in teaching English in the workplace such as English for Engineering, Nursing, Business, Welding, and other fields, the adaptation and utilization of these materials in the local setting may still require selection and contextualization of its contents since there are some parts which are quite foreign to the young Filipino learners.

Theoretical Framework

Using English across the globe is more important than ever, as it becomes the basis for better communication and the channel for professional progress. The importance of the language is also reflected on different contexts such as education and employment, in which the ability to speak the language fluently and efficiently is an advantage and merit towards growth.

The purposes to which the English language may be used vary among learners. With this comes the significance of a Needs Analysis Theory (Richards, 2001) which helps to determine and establish the target needs and target level performance by investigating the target situation. Doing all these plays a pivotal role and the necessary starting point in materials or course development (Songhori, 2015). This makes sure that the language instruction highly caters to the learners' needs, interests, and target outcomes to fit in the course their needs, wants, and lacks in the language. This way, learning the language is not anymore confined in teaching the students to speak the language fluently but rather, provides a more specific and goal oriented language instruction. (Chen L.P., 2000; Nunan, 2009)

The EAP acknowledges the importance of the learners' communicative needs in an academic context, all geared towards their future work place. Inasmuch as they are presently not engaged in an employment context yet. It is imperative that prior preparation for such is done, specifically in the mastery of the language to be used. Since the participants in this study are being trained in order to be highly responsive and competitive in the professional world, it is vital to equip them with skills to do such. (Jordan, 1997; Hutchinson and Waters, 1987; 2002)

The focus needs to be on the students' level of interest. In the aim of improving their linguistic competence as required by their future work, the things they are good at and the things that they are not are the keys for finding out what is effective and what is not. This serves as a ground for retraining, improving, and adding whatever is needed to the course. This includes the importance of the English language as perceived by the participants themselves, their preferences in terms of the language instruction, the resources available to them, and the different language skills and communicative events deemed to be most important as well.

The EPP, on one hand, requires a more distinct application of the academic training in the workplace. This is the type of training that will be the concern of this study. The senior high school teachers will handle the core subjects, academic and applied track subjects of the target learners. As such, they need to be the experts and specialists in the subjects to be handled in the classroom and in the learners' workplace. (Casper A. 2003)

It is a must to conduct a needs analysis to provide a vital reference to the design of a teaching syllabus, course plans or lists, teaching materials and methods, and facilities for the students and to make contributions on the teaching of English for Academic and Professional Purposes.

Conceptual Framework

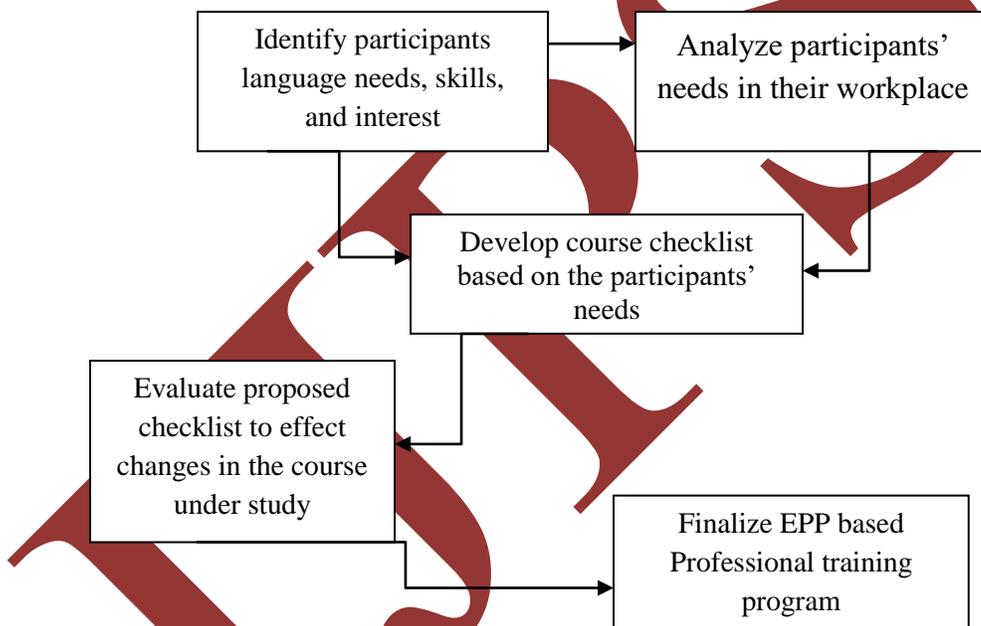


Figure : Development a of an EPP-based Training Course

Statement of the Problems

Along this thought, this paper aimed to identify the needs, and skills as language priorities of the participants in this study to develop an EPP-based training course.

Specifically, it sought to answer research questions, to wit:

1. What is the participants' self-assessed proficiency in English?
2. What are the participants' priorities on their language needs and skills?

3. What contexts from the senior high curriculum guide can be utilized as inputs for the training course?
4. What course list is developed utilizing the participants' language needs, skills, and curriculum inputs?
5. What evaluative feedbacks effected changes in the proposed EPP-based course?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This section discusses the design, methods and procedures in the development of an ESP-based training course for the professionals dubbed as senior high school teachers in this study.

Research Design

The evaluation and survey designs fit in to this study with the use of the descriptive method. This study attempted to find out the prevailing conditions of relationships, underlying effects and implications, practices and beliefs that exist, and necessary procedure. A survey of questionnaire armed at collecting some data relevant to the study. There were other methods utilized like informal interview with the participants but was minimally considered in the data gathering. Also included was document analysis using the K-12 curriculum guide for the senior high school, Grades 11 to 12. A lot of competencies and topics of the target learners were drawn out of the curriculum which served as inputs for content areas in the training program.

Description of the Participants

Thirty six (36) potential senior high school teachers participated in the survey conducted for this study. Eighteen of whom are currently teaching in the public high schools, namely, Andres Bonifacio Integrated, New Era Culiati School and a state run institution of Rizal Technological University. Another eighteen participants came from the New Era University, a private non-sectarian institution in Quezon City. There are 20 females and 16 males as participants of this study. Languages and dialects spoken vary as to Filipino, English, Bicol, Waray, Ilocano, Visaya, Panglatok, Ibanag, Hiligaynon, Kapampangan, Pangasinan and German.

As to years of service, four (4) teachers have taught from three to six months; twelve (12) of them have served the schools where they teach from one to five years. Thirteen (13) participants continue to serve from six to ten years; Lastly, three of them have worked for 13, 19, and 36 years respectively. Four teachers decided not to write years of their service in the survey form.

Instruments Used

The instrument used in this study was the researcher-made questionnaire with a 3-point level of importance scale to facilitate conduct of needs analysis. Another 3-point level of importance scale evaluation sheet was formulated for the program evaluators.

The *survey questionnaire* attempted to find out the participants' personal background, self-assessment of their proficiency in English, prioritized needs, and language skills required of the subjects and participants in the study.

The proposed list of content areas has been derived from the grades 11 and 12 syllabi issued by the Department of Education. This list contains three major components, namely: ESP (English for Specific Purposes); EAP (English for Academic Purposes) and EPP (English for Professional Purposes). The details of each component are anchored on the learning competencies of the senior high school students. From these competencies and performance standards (refer to the DepEd's syllabi) correspond the appropriate techniques and strategies of the teachers who will handle the subjects.

Procedures

This particular section included the discussion on the preliminaries is planning stage to come up with the target situation analysis as groundwork of the course design, the development stage, and lastly, the evaluation and feedback as bases for further modification.

Planning Stage

There were preliminaries which this study went through prior to the construction of the proposed ESP-Based Course design. These composed of needs analysis, formulation and validation of a course list which is the take-off point in the gathering and selection of topics, tasks and other inputs.

Needs Analysis

This study aimed to develop an ESP-based course design for the teachers of the proposed K-12 Senior High School in English. As such, the researcher conducted a needs analysis to find out the nature of the academic tasks of the subjects in the study and determine likewise, some of their language requirements to complement these tasks.

Hence, two important activities were undertaken by this study for its needs assessment: the formulation and administration of a questionnaire to gather personal information and language needs of the subjects; and, a review of the K-12 syllabi in English for Grades 11 and 12 which were issued to all the private and state-run institutions.

The present researcher examined the syllabi of Grades 11 and 12 provided by the DepEd to all the public and private schools in the implementation of its senior high school program. All the components have been summarized and categorized as to reading and writing in particular. A summary list was then presented for content validation to some English instructors who would be teachers of the said English subjects: *Reading and Writing Skills and English for Academic and Professional English*. Five of whom came from New Era University, a private institution and another half from the Rizal Technological University, a state-run university.

Development of the Course Checklist

Since a course list is an essential input in the development of the materials, the participants' priorities were arranged from the highest to the lowest. Thus, the long list was trimmed down when the top choices were picked and consequently, a checklist of the prioritized skills with their corresponding objectives was produced. This checklist serves as the basis in the formulation of proposed course design specifically those concerning language needs, level of interest and familiarity of the participants. The results of the first questionnaire and the chosen topics from the syllabi have been the priority areas in the development the course design. It is the Hutchinson and Waters Model (1982) that has been adopted for any materials development.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Below is the tabular presentation of the results arranged according to the five (5) research questions stated at the beginning part of the study:

Research Question 1. What is the participants' self-assessed proficiency in English?

Table 1: Weighted Means Obtained on Self-assessed Proficiency in English

Items	S(1)	VS(2)	G(3)	VG(4)	O(5)	Weighted mean	Description
Speaking	1	2	13	18	2	3.50	V G
Listening	0	1	14	19	2	3.61	V G
Pronunciation/Accent	0	5	12	19	0	3.39	V G
Oral Presentation/Lecture	0	2	9	23	2	3.69	V G
General Vocabulary	0	5	12	19	0	3.39	V G
Professional Vocabulary	1	4	15	16	0	3.28	V G
General Writing	1	1	14	18	2	3.53	V G
Journal Writing	2	7	9	14	4	3.31	V G

S - Satisfactory G - Good O - Outstanding VS - Very Satisfactory VG - Very Good

In the table, the participants assessed their proficiency level in the language as “very good” in all the items asked. But as the weighted mean results show, there are four of these items that have higher ratings, namely, oral presentation and lecture with 3.69 as weighted mean; followed by listening with the mean of 3.61. General writing ranked as third higher with 3.53 weighted mean, while speaking ranked fourth with the weighted mean of 3.50.

As teachers, the participants’ nature of work requires them to be good speakers, presenters, and listeners as well to their students in their work in the classroom. These are their attributes to fit them in their chosen professions.

Research Question 2. What are the participants’ priorities on their language needs and skills?

Table 2: Weighted Means Obtained on Language Needs

Language Priorities/Needs	Not Important	Important	Very Important	Weighted mean	Verbal Description
To become a more fluent speaker		6	30	2.83	Very Important
To become a more accurate speaker		2	34	2.94	Very Important
To expand my general vocabulary		6	30	2.83	Very Important
To expand my professional vocabulary		4	32	2.89	Very Important
To improve my listening		6	30	2.83	Very Important
To improve my pronunciation		9	27	2.75	Very Important
To improve my reading		6	30	2.83	Very Important
To improve my writing		6	30	2.83	Very Important
To update myself on EPP		4	32	2.89	Very Important
To increase awareness on English for Senior High School (K-12)		8	28	2.78	Very Important

Table 2 indicates line-up of the participants' choices for their language necessities, lacks, and wants. These are dubbed in this study as target needs and learning needs. The former pertains to what the participants need to do in the target situation and the latter refers to what they need to do in order to learn (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987; 2002). As shown in this table, three items were highly rated by them: to become more accurate speaker with the weighted mean of 2.95; to update themselves on EPP with a weighted mean of 2.89; and to expand their professional vocabulary with the mean of 2.89. Except for two, "awareness on K-12" and "improve pronunciation," the rest of the given priorities received almost equal ratings.

Table 3: Weighted Means Obtained on Reading Skills

Reading	Not Important	Important	Very Important	Weighted mean	Verbal Description
Scientific Articles	2	22	12	2.28	Very Important
Journal reports	0	11	25	2.72	Very Important
Novels	0	15	21	2.58	Very Important
Current Events	0	7	29	2.81	Very Important
Essays	0	11	25	2.69	Very Important

As illustrated in Table 3, almost all of the priorities on reading items were found very important by the participants. It clearly indicates that professional teachers are consistent readers of the materials around them especially current events which undeniably everyone cannot avoid to read. The lowest rating but still received similar description "very important" is scientific articles which for them may require ample time and accessibility once needed for readings. Unlike essays, novels, and journal reports, these are within the reach of the participants for reading and classroom use.

Table 4: Weighted Means Obtained on Speaking Skills

Speaking	Not Important	Important	Very Important	Weighted mean	Verbal Description
Speaking to foreign visitors	0	18	18	2.50	Very Important
Speaking to colleagues	2	10	24	2.61	Very Important
Speaking on the phone	4	11	21	2.47	Very Important
Taking part in meetings	1	12	23	2.61	Very Important
Taking part in conferences	1	13	22	2.58	Very Important
Giving Presentations	0	10	26	2.72	Very Important
Giving instructions	0	11	25	2.69	Very Important
Small talk	5	15	16	2.31	Very Important

The teachers of this study gave again similar “very important” ratings to all the items asked under “Speaking” heading. It simply shows that their skills in Speaking are significantly considered in all their language functions. Only “small talk” and “speaking on phones” got low ratings on their choices. Other than “giving presentations” as the lead choice with the weighted mean of 2.72, the rest of the speaking priorities were regarded by them as “very important.”

Table 5: Weighted Means Obtained on Writing Skills

Writing	Not Important	Important	Very Important	Weighted mean	Verbal Description
Business Letters	1	6	29	2.78	Very Important
E-mail	2	15	19	2.47	Very Important
Memorandums	0	11	25	2.69	Very Important
Reports	0	5	31	2.86	Very Important
Research Papers	0	4	32	2.89	Very Important
Summaries (of articles)	1	15	20	2.53	Very Important
Notes	2	13	21	2.53	Very Important
Translations	0	11	25	2.69	Very Important
Glossary	2	11	23	2.58	Very Important

As previously noted in Table 2 of this study, the participants perceived writing as one of their “very important” language priorities. Table 5 reveals their lacks and wants on this skill as shown in their choices which explicitly indicates their prioritized learning on how to write research papers and reports with the weighted means of 2.89 and 2.86 respectively. These are indeed the skills necessary for enhancement in their fields to comply with the written requirements of Grade 12 students. Their curriculum checklist of topics, competencies, and performance standards expect them to accomplish based one of these, namely, concept paper, project proposal, position papers, reaction paper, feasibility, technical reports, and other creative works. It is vital for the students to acquire these skills eventually through their teachers’ writing skills and strategies. The third rank on their choices is *Business Letters* with the weighted mean of 2.78. Again, this requires skills on professional correspondence especially meant for Accounting and Business strands.

Table 6: Weighted Means Obtained on Listening Skills

Listening	Not Important	Important	Very Important	Weighted mean	Verbal Description
Lectures	1	8	27	2.72	Very Important
Instructions	0	6	30	2.83	Very Important
Presentations	0	5	31	2.86	Very Important
Reports	0	9	27	2.75	Very Important
Explanations given by foreign speakers	1	14	21	2.56	Very Important
Teacher talk	1	13	22	2.58	Very Important

The listening skill is one of the priorities of the participants in their profession. As manifested by Table 6, it clearly shows their deep interest on “giving presentations, instructions, and reports,” with the weighted of 2.86, 2.83 and 2.75 respectively. Seemingly not for their classroom work, they rated with lower scale for importance, both the teacher talk and conversation with the foreigners. The proposed course framework would therefore emphasize listening skill and strategy with the verbal skills among the participants through role playing, as the presenters, lecturers, facilitators, and evaluators during the implementation of the proposed EPP training course.

Table 7: Summary List of the Participants’ Priorities on their Language Needs and Skills

Language Needs	Weighted Mean	Reading	Weighted mean	Speaking	Weighted mean	Writing	Weighted mean	Listening	Weighted Mean
To become a more accurate speaker	2.94	Current Events	2.81	Giving Presentations	2.72	Research Papers	2.89	Presentations	2.86
To expand my professional vocabulary	2.89	Journal reports	2.72	Giving instructions	2.69	Reports	2.86	Instructions	2.83
To update myself on EPP	2.89	Essays	2.69	Speaking to colleagues	2.61	Business Letters	2.78	Reports	2.75
To become a more fluent speaker	2.83	Novels	2.58	Taking part in meetings	2.61	Memorandums	2.69	Lectures	2.72
To expand my general vocabulary	2.83	Scientific Articles	2.28	Taking part in conferences	2.58	Translations	2.69	Teacher talk	2.58
To improve my listening	2.83			Speaking to foreign visitors	2.50	Glossary	2.58	Explanations given by foreign speakers	2.56
To improve my reading	2.83			Speaking on the phone	2.47	Summaries of articles	2.53		
To improve my writing	2.83			Small talk	2.31	Notes	2.53		
To increase awareness on English for Senior High School (K-12)	2.78					E-mail	2.47		
To improve my pronunciation	2.75								

Notably, the top-ranked choices of the participants as shown in **Table 7** (with the obtained weighted means arranged from highest to lowest) had common features once compared. They need to become more accurate speakers which corresponds to their desire to improve themselves in oral presentations as their listening and speaking skills. Their language needs to expand professional vocabulary is supported by their reading and writing enhancement through current events and research papers. The succeeding comparisons between and among their needs, wants, and skills are predictors of what they wish to have for their professional growth.

Research Question 3: What contexts from the Senior High Curriculum guide can be utilized as inputs for the professional training course?

The Department of Education has disseminated its K-12 curriculum guide to all levels including the Senior High grades 11 and 12. Although the contents and competencies are intended for the learners, it is but proper for the teachers to have the hands-on, skills, and knowledge as required by the subjects they will handle. Thus, this professional training course is designed to equip the teachers with the desired outputs and prepare them for these subjects, such as the EAP and EPP in particular.

Below is the list of the relevant topics drawn out from both the “Reading and Writing Skills” and “English for Academic and Professional Purposes,” the subject syllabi for the senior high.

1. Reading and Thinking Strategies Across Text Types
2. Critical Reading /Text and Context Connections
3. Reading Academic Texts (Basic Text Types)
 - 3.1 paraphrases / explains a text using one’s own words
 - 3.2 outlines reading text in various disciplines
 - 3.3 summarizes the content of an academic text
 - 3.4 write a précis/ abstract/summary of a text in the various disciplines
4. Purposeful Writing in the Disciplines, Professions and other strands (Business, Humanities, Sciences, Engineering-Tech-Voc., Sports, Arts)
 - 4.1 Concept Paper, Critiques, Position Paper
 - 4.2 Technical and Scientific Reports
 - 4.3 Professional Correspondence and Business Writing
5. Purposive Communication for specific tracks/strands

Table 8: EPP Course List

Major Components	Topics and Activities
ESP (English for Specific Purposes)	1. Introduction of the Course on ESP and Needs Analysis
	2. Review of K-12 Basic Curriculum with emphasis on EAP and EPP for Grade 12.
	3. Preparation, Adaptation of ESP Reading Materials for HUMS, ABM, Tech-Voc, etc.
	4. Learning to Contextualize Selected Materials for Applied Track Subject & Strands
EAP (English for Academic Purposes)	1. Concept and Strategies on Reading Academic Texts(Basic Text Types)
	2. Reading and Thinking Strategies across Text types (Purposive Text Types)
	3. Concepts and Strategies on Purposeful Writing in the Disciplines and for Professionals
	4. Understanding Principles and Uses of a reaction paper, review and critique, concept paper, and position paper
	5. Discussion of Process Approach in Writing
EPP (English for Professional Purposes)	1. Materials Development on paraphrasing, summarizing, and documenting of sources
	2. Production of Teacher's Guide on Purposeful Writing in Various Disciplines
	3. Adaptation for Foreign-Based Teaching Materials for Vocational-Technical Courses
	4. Production of Supplemental Guides to Facilitate Writing of Reports, Surveys, Critiques, Reaction Paper, and others
	5. Evaluation of Adapted and Prepared Instructional Materials

Research Question 5: What evaluative feedbacks effected changes in the proposed EPP-based course?

The content areas presented in Table 8 based on the data gathered from DepEd's curriculum guide for Grade 11-12, (English for Academic {EAP}, English for Professional Purposes {EPP})

and Reading and Writing Skills) and the survey results were listed again in a list to compose the evaluation sheet. The curriculum guides are learners' generated materials, hence, can be modified for teachers' use and preferences.. The academic skills are translated into prioritized skills with corresponding teaching strategies, topics and activities. This checklist was then reviewed by ten evaluators in the person of five (5) high school teachers in public and five (5) from the private institution.

Comparing Tables 8 and 9, the given topics are almost similar, except for the exclusion of the two topics which were found not that essential by the item evaluators. These two topics, entitled *Concepts and Strategies on Reading Academic Texts* and *Discussion of Process Approach in Writing* were found basic by them. The exclusion of these topics was based on the low turn-out of the responses of the evaluators. Some teachers were asked informally of their reasons in disregarding these two topics.(as mentioned in an interview, the topics were meant for learners among the senior high school students themselves not for the professionals anymore.

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The final course checklist in Table 9 now indicates the chosen topics plus the activities placed in another column.

Table 9: Development of an EPP – based Course for Senior High

Major Components	Target Participants	Topics	Suggested Activities
ESP (English for Specific Purposes)	Both the Pre-Service In-Service Teachers	1. Introduction of the Course on ESP and Needs Analysis	Lecture and Discussion
		2. Review of K-12 Basic Education Curriculum on EAP and EPP.	Lecture and Discussion
		3. Selection, Adaptation of Authentic Reading Materials	Discussion of Principles and Standards on Selection of Reading Materials
		4. Learning to Contextualize Selected Materials for Applied Track Subject Strands	Discussion and Workshop of sample lessons
EAP (English for Academic Purposes)	Pre-Service Teachers	1. Reading and Thinking Strategies across Purposive Text types	Lesson Planning and Demonstration Teaching
		2. Concepts and Strategies on Purposeful Writing in the Disciplines and for Professionals	Writesshops and Output Presentation
		3. Understanding Principles and Uses of a reaction paper, review and critique, concept paper, and position paper	Discussion through Oral Presentation
EPP (English for Professional Purposes)	In-Service Teacher	1. Production of Teacher’s Guide on Purposeful Writing in Various Disciplines	Seminar and Workshop
		2. Production of adapted Teaching Materials for Vocational-Technical Courses	Seminar and Workshop
		3. Production of Supplemental Guides to Facilitate Writing of Reports, Surveys, Critiques, Reaction Paper, and others	Seminar type and Workshop
		4. Evaluation of Instructional Materials	Formulation of Criteria for Evaluation and Revision of Outputs

CONCLUSION

As professionals, the teachers assess themselves as “very good” in their language skills and functions particularly in oral presentations, giving lectures, listening and general writing.

The language priorities vary as to the choices of the participants’ however, updates on EPP, expanded professional vocabulary, and accuracy on speaking are still underscored by them for their enhancement course.

It is the current event reading material that prevails as the highly rated priorities of the participants on reading. Oral presentation leads the choices among the participants’ priorities on speaking. As to writing, the participants choose as to its highest level of importance, research paper and reports as their lacks and needs in their profession.

Relatively, their listening choices - presentation, reports, and instructions -- correspond to their writing, speaking, and reading priorities eventually.

As potential teachers of the EAP and EPP in the K-12 Curriculum, the participants show interest and enthusiasm to undertake an EPP – based course for their professional growth. This positive altitude is revealed by their common ratings of “very important” to all their responses in the survey.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Implementation of the proposed program through extension service in the form of seminar type as faculty development program for the potential senior high teachers;
2. Conduct of a relative study to determine effects and implications of this study to the participants;
3. Preparation and production of related instructional materials with the collaborative efforts among writers, curriculum planners, and administration.
4. Team teaching between a language teacher and a subject specialist of Voc-tech, Business, Humanities, and other strands of K-12 program to strengthen the development of communication skills in English within the workplace of the students;
5. Curriculum modification is expected in the language programs institutionally.

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