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## ACQUIRED COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS OF GRADUATES: INPUT TO DESIGNING LANGUAGE INSTRUCTIONAL PORTFOLIO

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### ABSTRACT

Language acquisition takes a long process as it requires initiatives upon having set good attitudes and positive learning behavior. It is said that learning the language particularly English would not be automatic or innate, even born native speakers should have to learn the basic rules through varied skills and strategies to be communicative competent. This descriptive research aimed to improve a language instructional portfolio which includes a Purposive Communication course syllabus with specifications and module outline/course outline for higher education curricula. A self-constructed survey questionnaire was used to gather the data from 223 respondents considering the conflict of interests and ethical considerations. Results show that the graduates have moderately acquired communicative skills primarily in speaking and writing; they highly acquired reading, listening, and presentation/multimedia skills. It implies that graduates are more likely to perform their work in the company when they have learned the communicative skills based on the given tasks or work, but they are more likely to apply good attitudes and positive working behavior to integrate new things for productive, innovative, and transformative, and sustainable outcomes and output which are beneficial to the company's targets and accomplishments. Based on the results, an action plan and strategies to create a language instructional portfolio have been proposed. Since this study concentrated on acquired communicative skills of BSBA and BSHRM graduates, future studies may consider other degree graduates of internal and external higher educational institutions in the Philippines.

### INTRODUCTION

Communication is an integral part of business, and it plays a major role in ensuring a successful career. The importance of communication in business

explains why people in this field should work to improve their communication skills. The simple fact is that whatever position in business, the performance will be judged largely by the ability to communicate. With today's technology growing more advanced day by day, we are more inclined to communicate with people around us and all over the world. Hence, communication skill is essential for a workforce to survive in a competitive global environment.

Sapungan et al. (2018) explain that "communication is what connects people as human beings, and it is also one of the most important concerns in life. People can express their feelings and thoughts with the help of communication; it is also a way of sharing beliefs and culture with one another. In today's life, good communication skills are vital all over the world and having it can lead someone to success in any career." As "skills and competencies are highly regarded in today's global market", different companies have considered them as chief components for possible employment (Gequinto, 2019).

As global markets demand more competent and proficient university graduates, equipped with knowledge and skills, the researchers are more driven to pursue this study as they truly understand that this research will contribute to the sphere of research knowledge dealing with the importance of communicative skill among higher education graduates in the context of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Based on the current change in basic education curriculum, and from the pressing academic challenges posed on universities and colleges, curriculum planners, educators and language instructors are expected to produce graduates who are communicatively and linguistically competent, and to ensure that the curricula, learning outcomes, and activities among others meet the workplace communication needs. Hence, gathering employers' perspectives of university graduates on communicative competence and communication skill deficiencies in the workplace is deemed significant.

Equally important reason of conducting this research is the result of EF EPI English Proficiency Index, as cited in its website, revealing that "Philippines ranks 15<sup>th</sup> among the 80 countries with EP proficiency mark of 60.59 behind Malaysia (61.07) and Singapore (65.83) rank 13<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> respectively". However, "the result is far better compared to neighboring countries in Asia like South Korea (55.32, rank 30<sup>th</sup>), Japan (52.34, rank 37<sup>th</sup>) and Laos with very low proficiency of 37.56 placing last both in the region and Asia."

The English Proficiency ranking may be attributed to the following facts: "(1) The Philippines is globally-known as one of the largest English-speaking nations with majority of its population having at least some degree of fluency in the language"; (2) "English has always been one of the official languages of the Philippines and is spoken by more than 14 million Filipinos"; and (3) "English is the language of commerce and law, as well as the primary medium of instruction in education" (Cabigon, 2018). The study conducted by Hopkins International Partners in 2017, as cited by ABS-CBN Online News, the average score of 10,000 graduating college students from Luzon who took the English

Proficiency Test is just equivalent to the target passing score for Thai and Vietnamese high school graduates.

Enlightened by this scenario, the researchers would focus on what other employers may say, using more than one data compilation, to corroborate the findings. Moreover, for the benefit of conciseness and simplicity, the researchers utilized semi-structured interview or focused group discussion to draw from participants who would be chosen for they have considerable knowledge and wealthy experience, and were able to articulate their ideas and honest views about the study.

In the university's quest to produce competent and proficient graduates, the researchers would consider the results of the study as an essential input to Purposive Communication, one of the general courses in the new curriculum for tertiary education. The inputs will help to restructure or redesign a better instructional language portfolio including the course syllabus with CHED-required competence. The improved instructional materials will provide students with skills that will make them competent enough for the modern era of globalization and cut-throat competition. It is also redesigned to give students a comprehensive view of communication, its scope, and importance in business, and the role of business communication media are covered. The course will also develop an awareness of the importance of brief and concise written expression to modern business communication utilizing the available technology. This also underscores the development of four (4) C's of learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century among college students, namely: (1) "critical thinking," (2) "communication," (3) "collaboration," and (4) "creativity." Thus, the obtained perceptions and brilliant views of the respondents will be the primary input in formulating action plan and strategies to re-design or improve a more adaptable course which includes theory-based, model-based, process-based, task-based, and research-based Purposive Communication Course syllabus with specifications, and OBE-compliant instructional materials (Module Outline/Course Outline to be utilized in higher education institutions.

The main *objective* of this research is to propose an action and strategies to design a language instructional portfolio that includes a Purposive Communication course syllabus with specifications and Module Outline/Course Outline for higher education curricula based on the assessed communicative skills of Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) and Bachelor of Science in Hospitality and Restaurant Management (BSHRM) graduates or newly hired working in the workplace as assessed by their immediate supervisors or managers. Specifically, this research project aimed to achieve the following objectives: To gather pertinent data from middle-level managers or employer representatives of company/organization/institution where the BSBA and BSHRM graduates or newly hired are working and sector; To validate data findings through individual interviews and focused group discussions with middle level managers or employer representatives of company/organization/institution and with university administrators, curriculum planners, seasoned language university/college professors, and researchers; To determine the communicative skills acquired from the

university as demonstrated by graduates in the workplace; To test if there is a significant difference in the communicative skills in the workplace when employers are classified as to the “type of company” and “sector”; To propose an action plan and strategies to design quality course specifications to be utilized by Language instructors and to be used as a model by other departments and other colleges and universities, and to create an Outcomes-Based Education-CHED compliant and research-based Module Outline/Course Outline (for Purposive Communication) to be evaluated and utilized by language experts across BaStateU campuses and other universities and colleges in the country.

### ***Research Hypothesis***

Based on the aforementioned problems, this null hypothesis was crafted: There is no significant difference in communicative skills in the workplace when employers are classified as to the “type of company/organization/ institution” and “sector.”

## **CONCEPTS AND THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### ***Theoretical Perspective***

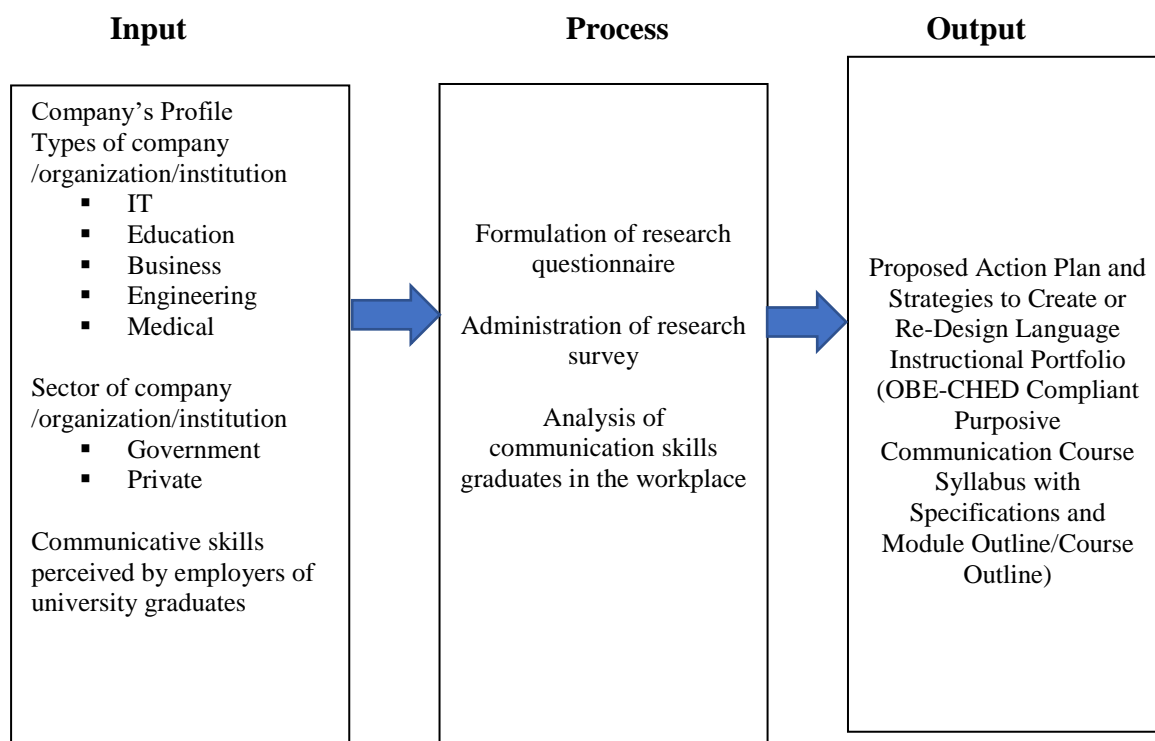
The present study is anchored on the *Skill Acquisition Theory* presented and discussed by Robert DeKeyser from the University of Maryland in the book *Theories in Second Language Acquisition: An Introduction* which is written and compiled by Bill VanPatten and Jessica Williams and published by Routledge on 22 December 2014.

According to DeKeyser, Skill Acquisition Theory explains how individuals progress in learning a variety of skills, from basic learning to advanced proficiency. These skills include both cognitive and psychomotor skills, in various domains that manifest from the classroom to application in sports, social functions, and the business industry. Learning and developing skills start from quite theoretical to quite applied. Moreover, the author believed that the scientific roots of skill acquisition theory are found in various branches of psychology, but the research area has proven to be remarkably resilient through various development in psychology from behaviorism to cognitivism to connectionism.

The skill acquisition theory basically claims, according to DeKeyser (2007) that “the learning of a wide variety of skills shows a remarkable similarity in development from the initial representation of knowledge through initial changes in behavior to eventual fluent, spontaneous, largely effortless, and highly skilled behavior, and that this set of phenomena can be accounted for by a set of basic principles common to the acquisition of all skills” (p. 97). The terms here were considered to be nontechnical and theory-neutral which means that a theory that has been applied to so many domains over such a long time has seen its share of technical terms, which have varied with the area of psychology researchers have worked in and the types of skills they have studied.

### *Research Paradigm*

This part of the study exhibits the conceptual framework of the study using the Input-Process-Output Model or IPO. It visually represents and interprets the underlying theory, the communicative skills of the university graduate as perceived by the employers, and the proposed/ designed course specification and instructional materials.



**Figure 1.** Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 shows the Conceptual Framework of the study using the Input-Process-Output Model. The **Input** box contains the “type of company/organization/institution” and “the sector where the university graduates or newly hired are working”. It also includes the communicative skills perceived by employers of university graduates or newly hired employees. The **Process** contains the conduct of research survey, focused group discussion or FGD, and the analysis of communication skills and competence in the workplace. Finally, the **Output** contains Proposed Action Plan and Strategies to create/re-design OBE-CHED Compliant Language Instructional Portfolio (OBE-CHED Compliant Purposive Communication Syllabus with Course Specification and Module Outline/Course Outline).

## **METHODS AND MATERIALS**

### *Research Design*

The descriptive type of research was utilized to determine the communicative skills acquired from the university as demonstrated by graduates in the

workplace as perceived by their immediate supervisors and to test if there is a significant difference in the communicative skills in the workplace when employers are classified as to the type of company/organization/ institution and sector. As quantitative research, it utilized an adapted “Communication Skills in the Workplace” questionnaire by Koncz (2012), modified accordingly to fit to the present study and to obtain empirical data for communication skills deficiency. The modified version had gone through a content validation from research experts, language gurus, and members of the academe.

### ***Respondents of the Study***

This study was conducted during the First Semester of the Academic Year 2018-2019. The empirical data were obtained from survey questionnaires, which were distributed among the 223 middle-level managers or employer representatives of companies/institutions/ organizations where the university or newly hired (from SY 2010-2015) were working. Purposive sampling was used in this study. This sample enabled the researchers to bring people together of similar work backgrounds and experiences and helped them simplify analysis and facilitate group interviewing.

### ***Research Instruments and Statistical Treatment***

This descriptive research utilized an adapted “Communication Skills in the Workplace” questionnaire by Koncz (2012) to obtain empirical data. It was modified to meet the purpose and the objectives of the study. The researchers’ questionnaire was reviewed and validated by research experts, panel of evaluators, and language gurus. The research survey, which was distributed personally and through email and social media messengers, has two essential parts. For the profile, there are two parameters: Employment Sector and Type of the Company. As to acquired skills of the graduates, there are five, namely: Speaking, writing, speaking, listening, and presenting and multimedia. A survey was substantiated by unsolicited conversation with the respondents during their visit to the university when some of them come for securing employment requirements.

The following statistical measurements were used by the researchers. Frequency and Percentage were used to determine the profile of the respondents in terms of sector and type of company/organization/institution where the BSBA and BSHRM graduates or newly hired are working. A Mean was used to determine the respondents’ assessment with regard to communicative skills that university or newly hired demonstrate in the workplace. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)/T-Test was used to analyze if there is a significant difference in the responses of the respondents on the communicative skills deficiency in the workplace when employers are classified as to “the type of company/organization/ institution (IT, education, business, engineering, and medical) and sector (government or private).”

### *Research Procedure*

After seeking approval from the university administration, the researchers communicated with the middle level managers, HR Managers or employer representatives from company/organization/institution where the university graduates or newly hired (from SY 2010-2015) are working asking permission to conduct a survey and interviews.

**Data Analysis.** The Data Gathered Were Analyzed and Interpreted Using the Following Scale, Range, And Verbal Interpretation.

Scale	Range	Verbal Interpretation
4	3.50 - 4.00	Highly Acquired
3	2.50 – 3.49	Moderately Acquired
2	1.50 – 2.49	Less Experienced
1	1.00 – 1.49	Not Acquired

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This section discusses the results of the data retrieved and tallied from the investigation relative to the objectives of the study.

#### *Acquired Skills of the Graduates*

This part discusses the data retrieved with regard to the assessment of the employers on the graduates' communication skills acquired primarily on speaking, writing, reading, listening, presenting/multi-media. Table 1 presents the communicative skills of graduates as to speaking.

**Table 1.** Communicative Skills of Graduates as to Speaking

Statements	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Utilizing proper gestures and facial expressions when communicating orally during (job) interviews and other face-to-face communication	<b>3.11</b>	Moderately Acquired
Facing employers/clients with confidence and communicate with them with ease	<b>3.36</b>	Moderately Acquired
Comprehending verbal work instructions from supervisors and co-workers	<b>3.24</b>	Moderately Acquired
Discussing problems with others and offering solutions and feedback	<b>3.22</b>	Moderately Acquired
Negotiating, bargaining, persuading, and debating issues without being unpleasant or abrasive to co-workers	<b>2.56</b>	Moderately Acquired

Participating in meetings and using interviewing skills to gather information or feedback	<b>2.43</b>	Less Acquired
Speaking English clearly, fluently, and accurately	<b>3.12</b>	Moderately Acquired
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.00</b>	<b>Moderately Acquired</b>

**Legend:** 3.49-4.00 Highly Acquired; 2.5-3.49 Moderately Acquired; 1.50-2.49 Less Acquired; 1.00-1.49 Not Acquired

It can be gleaned in the table that when the respondents are facing the employers and clients they communicate with ease and confidence with a mean of 3.36 as moderately acquired. They are said to transact and negotiate their thoughts relating to the purpose and needs of the work description and tasks. They are found to be competent in their communication as they are probably trained by the academic institution, they graduated with a poll of language experts in the college. DeKay (2012) and Gilardi and Gugliemetti (2011) affirmed the results stating the faculty members are considered the powerful influence on interpersonal communication skills of their students.

Seemingly, they believed that the graduates employed in the company can comprehend the verbal work instructions within the company, with the supervisors and co-workers with a mean of 3.24 as moderately acquired. The respondents believed that the graduates have a quick response and actions to their instructions and directives about the work to do. Warner (1995) perceived that the communication teachers became fully aware of the strategies to implement interpersonal communication skills and comprehension into the classroom, and they could adapt it into the workplace.

In an interview and discussion with the employers, they said that before hiring the said graduates, they conducted an interview where some of their collected data from the graduate applicants were the practical communicative skills and the outcomes-based approach implemented by the school that made the graduates ready to communicate and negotiate thoughts and meaning. With these, the employers also believed that the graduates were able to discuss problems and offer solutions from the feedback they received with a mean of 3.22 as competent, which are relevant to the protocols and procedures of the company. This statement explains that the problem-solving skills of the graduates are evident as they observed that the graduates employed were able to carry on the situations within the premises of their work. DeKeyser explicates that the knowledge and its use are reflected in various forms such as introspection, verbalization, and, most importantly, various aspects of behavior, especially under demanding conditions at work.

However, the employers believed that the graduates have less acquired the skill when they participate in the meetings and use interviewing skills to gather information or feedback which were rated as the least with a mean of 2.43. It



can be explained that graduates usually interact in a controlled vent where supervisors, heads, or managers of the companies spearheaded the meetings or discuss some agenda which probably limits their talks. This result aligns with DeKeyser's ideas that "a student, learner, apprentice, or trainee may acquire quite a bit of knowledge about a skill without ever even trying to use it."

Noticeably, the employers believed that graduates moderately acquired the skill when they negotiate, bargain, persuade, and debate issues with co-workers professionally which obtained a mean of 2.56. This statement means that the graduates employed in the company possess the skills comfortably when they are with co-workers, and might be one of their strategies to learn acceptance and rejections from their interactions and moves. It can also be claimed that graduates employed in the company working with the same group, level, and department can easily communicate and adjust to their work environment rather than working as laymen with experts. They are somehow struggling when they are pressured by the demands of the experts. Martić (2020) affirmed that "proper workplace communication has many benefits....it enables organizations to become more agile and achieve better workplace alignment; it also improves some of the most important KPIs around employee retention, engagement, motivation, and talent attraction." She further explained that "a good communication strategy can also go a long way in driving innovations in the workplace." Very relevant to note that prior to the graduates' employment, the employers proved that during the job interviews, they were able to communicate their thoughts and feelings with proper gestures and facial expressions vis-a-vis with a mean of 3.11 as moderately acquired. In most occasions of job hunting and application, undergoing an interview is more likely considered as communication and reasoning skills are measured by the human resource management staff or the recruiting coordinators. Since the fundamentals of all the transactions are oral communications of the work instructions, individual workers relay their ideas and feelings during the work hours for targets and products. Djigunović (2016) disclosed that between "two speaking tasks, a picture description, and an oral interview, it was suggested that oral fluency was a relatively stable feature of the participants' speech, regardless of task types." Compared to their task achievement, vocabulary, and accuracy, the participants' global fluency showed the most consistent and steady developmental pattern over time. The composite means of 3.00 reveals that the graduates *moderately acquired* the communicative speaking skill. Based on the statements enumerated above, the employers claimed that the graduates speak the language in the average level. The result of the study implies that communicative speaking skills are important in the workplaces as manifested in workers' attitudes and behavior towards the given tasks or jobs. McKay (2016) proved that the "oral language is the essence of adult learners' language learning and central to the language ability of EFL learners to communicate."

Table 2 shows the communicative skills of graduates as to writing. It can be found that employers believed that the graduates Moderately Acquired the skill when they take notes from oral discourse with a mean of 3.44.

**Table 2.** Communicative Skills of Graduates as to Writing

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Verbal Interpretation</b>
Demonstrating the ability to take notes and listen attentively	3.44	Moderately Acquired
Completing pertinent office forms, reports sheets, tender documentation, work plans and specifications, incident report forms and notes	3.41	Moderately Acquired
Demonstrating skills in the use of language, grammar, and punctuation	3.32	Moderately Acquired
Reporting factual issues or incidents to the supervisor	3.31	Moderately Acquired
Writing appropriate forms of business communication such as letter, memorandum, report, minutes of the meeting, plans etc.	3.35	Moderately Acquired
Conducting research by gathering information, interpreting data, and presenting/reporting the results	3.12	Moderately Acquired
Writing technical reports, business analysis and project proposals	3.10	Moderately Acquired
<b>Composite Mean</b>	3.29	<b>Moderately Acquired</b>

**Legend:** 3.49-4.00 Highly Acquired; 2.5-3.49 Moderately Acquired; 1.50-2.49 Less Acquired; 1.00-1.49 Not Acquired

It means that when individuals have acquired enough knowledge and skills on the language, they can easily grasp the words, or even phrases and sentences in any form of talks or conversations primarily when their heads or supervisors speak out or discuss things related to the work or tasks. It is also evident in most studies that enough acquisition of language may lead to self-language accuracy and proficiency towards language discovery and exploration in the workplaces. Allan and Driscoll, 2014; Arum and Roska, and Kelly-Riley (2015) claimed that student writing remains of great importance and those within higher education need to better prepare students to write effectively. Seemingly, graduates moderately Acquired the skill on office paper works and documentation with a mean of 3.41. This means that graduates have acquired the skills primarily on understanding and following instructions or descriptions in any forms or documents that are needed in the office work for clients and employees themselves. Acquiring this skill may be from their activities in Business Communication, Technical Communication, and Technical Writing courses (old curriculum) in the program they enrolled in. From then, they were required to fill out forms for purposes, make application letters, and make a resume. In the same manner, graduates moderately Acquired the skill when they make

business letters, memorandum letter, minutes of a meeting, plans, and other reports with a mean of 3.35. This result can be because of the courses and activities provided by their instructors and professors. Roberts, J., Nardone, C.F., and Bridges Bill (2017) affirmed that “in order to make the changes that are necessary to improve student written communication, faculty, staff, and administrators must have the necessary data to make those changes. They added that in doing so the readers may be inspired to engage in their own local assessments of student writing.”

Although lowest from item statements, the graduates moderately acquired competent in terms of technical reports, business analysis, and project proposals with a mean of 3.10; data gathering, data analysis, and reporting results with a mean of 3.12; and reporting facts and incidents to the supervisor with a mean of 3.31. These mean that the graduates have acquired the knowledge, skills, and competence before they have been employed by different companies. Another reason may be the OBE implementation of the language instructors and other professors who have fully implemented and integrated OBE in their course syllabi and specifications.

The composite means of 3.29 reveals that the graduates *moderately acquired* the writing skill as indicated to positive mean results. This means that the writing competence of the graduates is observed based on their quality performance and outputs in the company. In an interview and focus group discussion, employers and representatives discussed that they really appreciate the performance of the graduates employed in their companies as they are able to communicate their ideas and understanding through preparing, writing, reporting data and results from the work or job ordered. However, the finding was contrary to the study conducted by Akuegwu, B. A. and Nwi-ue, F. D. (2018) stating that graduate students have low writing skills particularly in research acquisition yet “the graduates acquire the highest skills in reading, oral presentation/communication and information gathering and least skill in analysis. The study recommended that graduate students should be made to participate in more research-oriented activities, so as to enhance their research skill acquisition for development of the total person.” Furthermore, a report from the US Employment Policy Forum (as cited by Bonilla, 2008) indicates that “70 percent of students applying for work are short of simple business and writing skills.” Moreover, in an article by Maslen, (2008), “it was stipulated that Australian universities were noted to have allowed students whose first language is not English receive diplomas even without proficient communication skills. In so doing, the said graduates suffer from unemployment.”

Table 3 presents the communicative skills of graduates as to reading. It can be found that the graduates are highly acquired when they read and understand work instructions and standard operating procedure (SOP) with a mean of 3.56. It means that when they are given tasks, they easily understand the work instructions relevant to the needs or criteria and processes.

**Table 3.** Communicative Skills of Graduates as to Reading

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Verbal Interpretation</b>
Reading and understanding work instructions and standard operating procedure (SOP)	<b>3.56</b>	Highly Acquired
Reading and comprehending letter, notes, electronic data, and e-mails	<b>3.51</b>	Highly Acquired
Understanding business, computing, medical or engineering lingo used in the workplace	<b>3.44</b>	Moderately Acquired
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>Highly Acquired</b>

**Legend:** 3.49-4.00 Highly Acquired; 2.5-3.49 Moderately Acquired; 1.50-2.49 Less Acquired; 1.00-1.49 Not Acquired

In this situation, workers tend to read and understand what have been given particularly the written order or instructions, and they sometimes ask their colleague or supervisors if they are not sure of what they read to perform better. O'Sullivan and Dallas (2010) attested that the activities crafted by college instructors improve skills that relate to reading comprehension, research, and writing.

Similarly, the graduates highly acquired the skill when they read and comprehend letters, notes, electronic data, and emails with a mean of 3.51. This indicates that graduates employed are able to communicate well using both the manual and technology platforms. McCoy (2010) supported the results indicating that "the use of a computer at home is related to enhanced computer skills and respondents with a computer at home had increased self-efficacy. The study stressed that the students in the 18-25 age group reported higher levels of technological proficiency and Self-Efficacy. Surprisingly, the graduates moderately acquired the skill as they are more likely to understand business, computing, medical, and engineering lingo used in the workplace with a mean of 3.44. This means that the graduates are equipped with the skills and competence for their works in the companies they belong. For the employers and company representatives, the graduates employed possess the ability, skills, and competence as they can easily perform the given instructions appropriately. Cuarteros, Sapungan, Manalo, and Talattad (2016) considered the skills and competence graduates are attributed to the multimedia technology and e-learning facilities utilized in the classroom to have an effect on the acquisition of language for communication. They found that there was a significant relationship between the extent of integration and utilization and the level of effectiveness of multimedia and e-learning resources for business communication.

The composite means of 3.50 reveals that graduates are *highly acquired* in reading. They are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and competence that are needed in the company to they belong. This result implies that when the graduates have acquired the appropriate knowledge, skills, and competence, employment waits for them and they can easily adapt and adjust to the work, duties, and obligations in the company. However, the National Endowment for the Arts (as cited by Bonilla, 2008) disclosed that “executives rated reading and writing as the top deficiency in new hires. They were also unable to read analytically, write effective business communication, to compose without errors in grammar and spelling, and solve problems.”

Table 4 presents the communicative skills of graduates as to listening. It can be found that the graduates highly acquired the skill as they entertain queries and concerns of clients and customers with a mean of 3.51.

**Table 4.** Communicative Skills of Graduates as to Listening

Statements	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Entertaining queries and concerns of clients and customers regarding the products and services provided by the company	3.51	Highly Acquired
Giving feedback or response when given chance after the talk within the group, members, supervisors or clients	3.43	Moderately Acquired
Getting turns when expressing ideas about the topic discussed	3.43	Moderately Acquired
Clarifying points in the talks in the group of meeting	3.40	Moderately Acquired
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.44</b>	<b>Moderately Acquired</b>

**Legend:** 3.49-4.00 Highly Acquired; 2.5-3.49 Moderately Acquired; 1.50-2.49 Less Acquired; 1.00-1.49 Not Acquired

It means that the graduates can respond positively to the customers on the products and services provided by the company. In addition, they learned upon entry the products and services offered by the company for accuracy and responsiveness. They highly acquired as they give feedback or response during the talk within the group, members, supervisors, or clients with a mean of 3.45; moderately acquired as they get turns to express ideas about the topic discussed with a mean of 3.42; and moderately acquired when they clarify points in the talks in the group of meeting with a mean of 3.40 respectively. Noticeably, that the graduates are equipped with the skills along with their attitudes and behavior towards people in the workplace.

The composite means of 3.44 reveals that the graduates *moderately acquired* the listening skill. This means that the graduates perform to the level of their performance as they entertain queries, give feedback, get turns, and clarify points in talks. This further signifies that listening skill is an important factor in the graduates' success. The study of Eggenberger (2019) indicates that “active

listening is a significant predictor of academic achievement”, and college students claimed that listening is an essential factor in their success.

The result of the study implies that a good habit and positive attitudes and behavior towards listening in talks may easily transact and negotiate meaning and ideas that tend to quality work and performance in the company. That training of listening skills may be one way to job opportunities especially when they are on the job interview process, where listening and comprehension skills are very important to be considered in the roles.

Table 5 presents the communicative skills of graduates as to presenting/multimedia. It can be found that the graduates highly acquired the skill as indicated by how they make use of “pictures, diagrams, tables, charts, and other visual” aids in reports with a mean of 3.55. In the same manner, they highly acquired the skill as indicated to how they recognize the value of mobile messaging, proper phone etiquette, social networking, and websites in business with a mean of 3.55, along with how they organize the and present or report ideas in both formal and spontaneous speeches using PowerPoint slides and other media tools as highly acquired with a mean of 3.50. These highest statements mean that the graduates possess the skill in their work as they are able to utilize multimedia in their office and business work or transactions. In an online article published by Sunway University Press, Muthusamy (2019) considered presentation skills as “one of the essential skill sets for students in institutions of higher learning.” The author asserts that students should be encouraged to use systematic methods to facilitate their presentations ...to help them improve their presentation skills and their career.”

**Table 5.** Communicative Skills of Graduates as to Presentation and Multimedia

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Verbal Interpretation</b>
Recognizing the importance of mobile messaging, proper phone messages/etiquette, social networking and websites in business	3.54	Highly Acquired
Utilizing personal computer, multimedia facilities, video, computer graphics, projectors, devices, and gadgets in communicating with internal and external audiences	3.49	Moderately Acquired
Recognizing the benefits and applications of memos, faxes, e-mails, SMS, internet to assist free flowing communication channels outside and inside the organization	3.44	Moderately Acquired
Making use of pictures, diagrams, tables, charts, and other visual aids in reports	3.55	Highly Acquired
Organizing and presenting/reporting ideas effectively for both formal and spontaneous speeches, utilizing MS PowerPoint & other media	3.50	Highly Acquired
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>Highly Acquired</b>

**Legend:** 3.49-4.00 Highly Acquired; 2.5-3.49 Moderately Acquired; 1.50-2.49 Less Acquired; 1.00-1.49 Not Acquired

On the other hand, the graduates moderately acquired the skill as to their use of a personal computer, multi-media facilities, video, computer graphics, projectors, devices, and gadgets in communicating with internal and external audiences with a mean of 3.49, and they moderately acquired the recognition of the benefits and applications of memos, faxes, e-mails, SMS, internet to assist free-flowing communication channels outside and inside the organization with a mean of 3.44. These statements reveal that they have the skill but it can be explained that they can be on the exploration stage as to technology, applications, hardware, and software continuously upgrades in time. Muthusamy (2019) explained that “in this era of technological advancement, students can enhance their presentation skills using high-tech equipment, thus improving their ability to present information in a professional manner.”

The composite means of 3.50 reveals that the graduates *highly acquired* presentation and multimedia skills. This means that before they graduated, they have already acquired the skills in their level, through various activities provided by the course facilitators, and probably partially acquired from their family at home, friends, and early employment. The result of the study implies that when individual graduates possess presentation and multimedia skills, it would be easy for them to do office and business works. The results conform with the study of Al-Nouh, Abdul, and Taqi (2015) stating that college students were believed to be knowledgeable. The first author claimed further those students have good technological skills.

#### ***Significant Difference of Communicative Skills of Graduates when grouped according to profile***

Table 6 presents the difference analysis of communication skills of graduates according to profile. It can be found that both the sector and type of company have no significant difference to acquired communication skills of the graduates. It means that the graduates have already acquired the skills before they entered the companies. This can also be meant that the graduates applied for a job which they believe that they can and able to perform the job and other miscellaneous works or tasks that can be provided by individual company or employer.

**Table 6.** Difference Analysis of Communication Skills of Graduates when Grouped according to profile

Variables	Computed F-values	p-values	Decision	Interpretation
Type of Company	1.601	.184	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Sector	.225	.592	Failed to Reject	Not Significant

It means that the graduates have already acquired the skills before they entered the companies. This can also be meant that the graduates applied for a job which they believe that they can and able to perform the job and other miscellaneous works or tasks that can be provided by individual company or employer. The study of Sapungan, R. et al. (2019) on communicative skills of graduates proved that there were highly observed communicative skills demonstrated in hotels and restaurants where university graduates are employed and work as trainees. On the same note, the study of Robles (2012) reveals that companies or employers expect more from the recruits apart from the communication skills. The study further claims that soft skills are also expected, and the company heads considered courtesy, responsibility, integrity, communication, social skills professionalism, work ethics, teamwork, positive attitude, and flexibility as the top ten most important soft skills of employees. Furthermore, the study of Labor Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA) in the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Employment Research Institute (ERI), Edinburgh Napier University, Scotland, in cooperation with Tamkeen, revealed that “the graduates’ employability skills needed by the industry comprised the ability to communicate, to participate in a team, to use their initiatives, to solve problems, and to think critically” (Narzoles, 2016; Employability Skills Seminar, 2012). These all confirm that “communication skills are unswervingly regarded as the most essential attributes for workplace success.”

### ***Proposed Action Plan and Strategies to Create a Learner-centered and CHED-and-OBE compliant Language Instructional Portfolio***

The main subject of the research output is Purposive Communication as one of the general courses in the new curriculum for tertiary education. It also highlights the Action Plan and Strategies to create or re-design a course syllabus and the instructional material (Module Outline/Course Outline) for language instructors. Based on the results of this investigation, the researchers considered redesigning or improving the Purposive Communication instructional portfolio. A proposed Action Plan in Matrix format (Proposed Action Plan and Strategies below) from which the improvement of the course syllabus and course outline were derived. This contains the key area results, objectives, strategies, persons involved, expected outcome, and target indication/action. The improved or redesigned course syllabus and instructional material (Module Outline/Course Outline) will provide language instructors instructional infrastructure that can help them improve, strengthen, and sustain their teaching performance and students’ communicative skills and competence and make them prepared in this modern era of globalization and cut-throat business competition. The findings of the study will manifest in the following instructional infrastructures as indicated in the Target Indication and Action of the Proposed Action Plan and Strategies: A more adaptable course with OBE-CHED-required competence which includes theory-based, model-based, process-based, task-based, and research-based Purposive Communication Course Syllabus with Specifications; and OBE-compliant instructional material (Module Outline/Course Outline) to be utilized in higher education institutions. The redesigned and restructured course syllabus and module/course outline will be subjected to Evaluation of by pool of language instructions and select external language experts utilizing the



ESP Language Teaching Syllabus Design Framework (Bell 1981, as cited in Dincay, 2010, p.10 and Tenedero and Orias, 2016, p.11) and Outcomes-Based Education [Driscoll and Wood, 2007 and Spady (1994, cited in Killen, 2000).

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of the study, a quantitative analysis concludes that the employers from different companies believed that the graduates possess a high level of communication skills as acquired from educational institution. An Action Plan and Strategies to create/design a language instructional portfolio has been prepared.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

In light of the findings and conclusions, the proposed Action Plan and Strategies to create/design a language instructional portfolio is imperative to discussion and presentation in the university fora and academic training and seminars or webinars as part of the faculty development plan.

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