

The Perception of ABEL Students on the Inclusion of Foreign Language as Part of their Curriculum in Pangasinan State University- First Semester A.Y 2020-2021

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Abstract -In the Philippines, learning a language aside from the vernacular is widely supported. It was all evident from the phase of implementing the Bilingual Education Policy in 1974, appointing English as one of the media of instruction, to DepEd establishing in 2009 a Special Program in Foreign Language (SPFL). In addition to this, CHED also issued a Memorandum Order No. 24 Series of 2017, which is the Policies, Standards, and Guidelines for the Bachelor of Arts in English Language (ABEL) students, a memorandum implementing the inclusion of foreign languages into their program. Learning a foreign language is an interesting academic endeavor for some people. Aside from how it leads people to become multilingual, it also brings people benefits. To name one, according to the World Economic Forum (2017), studying a foreign language makes people tolerant or flexible when it comes to recognizing the diversity of world views. There are factors, however, such as anxiety, that can interfere with learning foreign languages, according to Stephen Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis. Using a descriptive research design and stratified random sampling, the researchers sought to understand the perceptions of Bachelor of Arts in English Language (ABEL) students regarding the inclusion of foreign languages in their curriculum.

Keywords- foreign language, Bachelor of Arts in English Language, anxiety, tolerance, multilingualism, cultural awareness

INTRODUCTION

Going out of your comfort zone seemed to be the trend in the 21st century. It includes doing something that can hone your skills or learn something that can equip you for your future career. Language, as an important key for socialization, when utilized wisely could provide you with vast opportunities both in and out of the country. Studying a foreign language then opens doors for people, achieving the "ultimate 21st century social skill" and maximizing it as a tool for global competency.

For most people, learning a foreign language is an interesting academic endeavor. Aside from how it

leads people to become multilingual, it also has a beneficial or negative impact on them.

According to the World Economic Forum (2017), studying foreign language makes people tolerant or to have the ability of being flexible when it comes to recognizing diversity of world views. Hence, aside from learning the foreign language, people are given a chance to understand and study its culture at the same time.

Affective factors however, specifically anxiety, can interfere in acquiring a language, according to Stephen Krashen's *Affective Filter Hypothesis*. When a learner has a high-level anxiety in the process of

language learning, he/she may find it more difficult to learn it than those who have low level of anxiety. As stated in the study by Hao- Chiang Koong Lin, et. al (2015), anxiety occurs in the language learning process.

In the Philippines, studying language aside from the vernacular is comprehensively supported. From Bilingual Education Policy in 1974 appointing English as one of the media of instruction, to DepEd establishing in 2009 a Special Program in Foreign Language (SPFL). Similarly, CHED issued a Memorandum Order No. 24 Series of 2017 which is the *Policies, Standards and Guidelines for the Bachelor of Arts in English Language (ABEL)* students. In ABEL's curriculum, studying foreign languages is included, accounting to four (4) courses in total. Moreover, Nihongo, Spanish, Hangul, and German are said to be the feasible languages that could be learned exclusively by the students.

With the potential benefits and drawbacks of studying a language on hand, the researchers aim to seek the perception of ABEL students on the inclusion of foreign languages as part of their curriculum in Pangasinan State University- Lingayen Campus for the first semester, school year 2020-2021.

METHODOLOGY

Descriptive research design is the method that will be used by the researchers in terms of data collection, interpretation, and analysis. According to Saunders et al. (2012), descriptive research design's purpose is to acquire an accurate profile of people and situations, hence will help the researchers further understand the perceptions of the students towards learning foreign languages, as well as the possible problems ABEL students encounter during the language acquisition process using questionnaire.

Research Instruments

Using Google form, the researchers will conduct a survey and administer the questionnaire to the target respondents. The questionnaire will serve as the instrument of the research to gather data, consisting of a series of questions regarding the perception of the target

respondents on the inclusion of foreign languages as part of their curriculum.

The first part of the questionnaire will consist of the identification of the profile of the respondents; particularly their name, which is optional, age, year level and section, and the number of languages they think they are proficient in.

For the second part, the extent to which respondents perceive studying foreign languages as a strength in terms of cultural awareness, tolerance, multilingualism, and future career readiness, will be included.

Likewise, for the final part of the questionnaire, there will be the extent to which respondents perceive studying foreign languages as a weakness in terms of anxiety, mode of instruction and additional language learning.

Data Gathering Procedure

After the validation and approval of the instrument, the researchers will administer the questionnaire using Google form. The purpose of the study, which is to gather the perception of ABEL students on studying foreign languages, is stated in the questionnaire. Similarly, a letter for the respondents with the statement of confidentiality for their responses, is hereby attached. Instructions are also stated to guide the respondents when answering the said questionnaire.

Data Treatment

To measure the perception of ABEL students on the inclusion of foreign language as part of their curriculum, descriptive statistics such as percentage, frequency and mean will be utilized to statistically treat the data.

A. For problem number one which is about the profile of the respondents, percentage and frequency will be used.

$$\text{Percentage : \%} = \frac{x}{n} \times 100$$

The percentage formula:

Where:

% is the percentage

X is the frequency

N is the total number of respondents

100 is the constant value

B. For solving problem number 2 and 3 which answers the extent how ABEL students perceive studying foreign languages as strengths and weaknesses, the descriptive statistical mean will be used.

The formula of the mean:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum fd}{N}$$

Where:

$\bar{x}$ is the mean

$\sum fd$ is the sum of frequency distribution

fd is frequency distribution

N is the total number of case(s)

C. Finally, to test the significant difference between the strengths and weaknesses of studying foreign language as perceived by the ABEL students, the researchers will make use of the t-test.

The formula of the t-test:

$$t = \frac{\bar{d} - \mu_0}{Sd / \sqrt{n}}$$

Mean:

$$\bar{d} = \frac{\sum d}{n}$$

Standard Deviation:

$$Sd = \frac{\sum d^2 - \frac{1}{n} (\sum d)^2}{n - 1}$$

Where:

$\bar{d}$ is the Mean of Difference

Sd is the Standard Deviation

μ is the Population Mean

t is the Computed t-value

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This part presents, analyzes, and interprets the data gathered in this study. It is divided into four parts: (1) the profile of the ABEL students, (2) the extent to which they perceive studying foreign languages as strength, (3) the extent to which they perceive studying foreign languages as weakness, and (4) the significant difference between the strengths and weaknesses of studying foreign languages as perceive by the ABEL students.

I. Profile Of The Respondents

a) Age

Figure 1 shows that most of the respondents, 89 in total, are under the age of 21. Six of them are between 22 to 24, and five are over the age of 25.

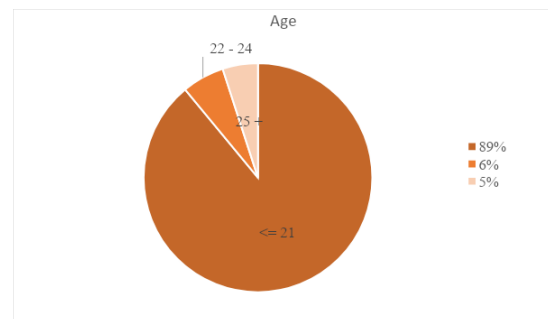


Figure 1

Table 1

Age	Number of Respondents	Percentage
<= 21	89	89
22-24	6	6
25+	5	5

b) Year Level and Section

Figure 2 demonstrates that 26 respondents came from the second year ABEL A. With the same number, 26 respondents also came from section B. Moreover, each section in third year level has 24 respondents. As a result, a total of 100 respondents responded to the survey.

Figure 2

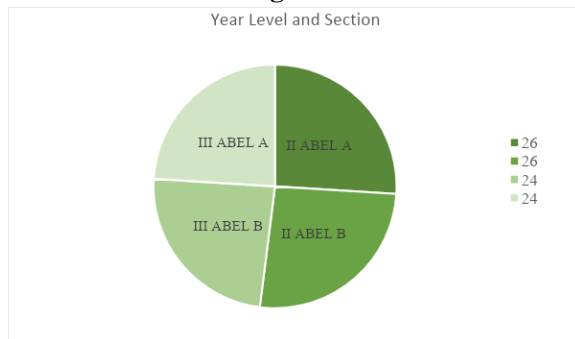


Table 2

Year Level and Section	Number of ABEL Students	Percentage
II- ABEL A	26	26
II- ABEL B	26	26
III- ABEL A	24	24
III- ABEL B	24	24

c) Number of Languages the ABEL students are Proficient in

Figure 3 shows that most respondents, with a percentage of 68, believe that they are proficient in three to four languages. Twenty-six of them have also stated that they are fluent in one to two. And six of them are proficient in five to six languages.

Figure 3

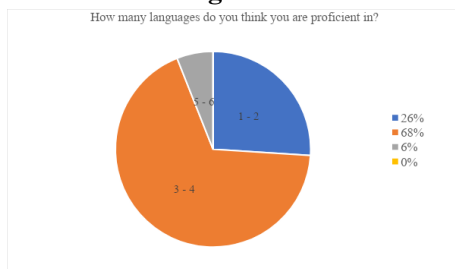


Table 3

Number of Languages	Number of ABEL Students	Percentage
1-2	26	26
3-4	68	68
5-6	6	6

II. The extent to which the ABEL students perceive studying foreign languages as strength

a. Cultural Awareness

Table 4 shows the extent to which the respondents perceive studying foreign language as a strength in terms of cultural awareness.

One hundred (100) ABEL students were asked, and they “agree” that learning foreign languages affects the way they view other cultures, with the mean value of 4.08. They also “strongly agree” that it makes them become aware of a variety of cultures (4.39); helps them to understand other people with different cultures (4.41); and it helps them to recognize cultural differences (4.39).

In the same way, ABEL students “strongly agree” that they have learned to appreciate and respect the language that they are learning along with the culture that comes with it, with a mean of 4.40, because of learning foreign languages.

Table 4. Cultural Awareness

Indicators	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	DE
1. I think learning foreign languages affects the way I view other cultures.	33	50	9	8	0	4.08	Agree
2. I think learning foreign languages make me become aware to variety of cultures.	44	51	5	0	0	4.39	Strongly Agree

3. I believe learning foreign languages help me to understand other people with different culture.	46	50	3	1	0	4.41	Strongly Agree
4. I believe learning foreign languages help me to recognize cultural differences.	44	52	3	1	0	4.39	Strongly Agree
5. In my foreign language class, I learned to appreciate and respect the language that I am learning along with the culture that comes with it.	45	51	3	1	0	4.40	Strongly Agree

Legend:

SA	=	Strongly Agree
A	=	Agree
N	=	Neither Agree nor Disagree
D	=	Disagree
SD	=	Strongly Disagree
DE	=	Descriptive Equivalent

b. Tolerance

Table 5 shows the extent to which the respondents perceive studying foreign language as a strength in terms of tolerance.

The respondents "strongly agree" that because of studying foreign languages, they learned to respect and consider other people's perspective, with a mean of 4.36. Likewise, they "strongly agree" they also became appreciative to learning new languages (4.40),

understanding different world views (4.29) and believe that it is possible to communicate with other people who have a different language from them (4.38).

Lastly, the respondents "strongly agree" that they have become more open-minded to diverse cultures and beliefs because of studying foreign languages, with a mean of 4.36

Table 5. Tolerance

Indicators	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	DE
1. Because of studying a foreign language, I respect and consider other people's perspective.	38	60	2	0	0	4.36	Strongly Agree
2. Because of studying a foreign language, I became appreciative to learning a new language.	42	56	2	0	0	4.40	Strongly Agree
3. Because of studying a foreign language, I became understanding to different world views.	35	59	6	0	0	4.29	Strongly Agree
4. Because of studying a foreign language, I believe it is possible to communicate with other people who has different language from mine.	41	56	3	0	0	4.38	Strongly Agree
5. Because of studying foreign language, I have become more open-minded to diverse cultures and beliefs.	39	58	3	0	0	4.36	Strongly Agree

Legend:

SA	=	Strongly Agree
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- A = Agree
N = Neither Agree nor Disagree
D = Disagree
SD = Strongly Disagree
DE = Descriptive Equivalent

c. Multilingualism

Table 6 demonstrates the extent to which the respondents perceive studying foreign language as a strength in terms of multilingualism.

The ABEL students "strongly agree", with a mean of 4.30, that proficiency in foreign languages improves their communication skill, and promotes diversity in education (4.26).

In addition, they also "agree" that their proficiency in foreign languages gives them an edge over others (3.93) and makes them become confident when speaking to a native speaker of a certain language (4.13).

Lastly, ABEL students "strongly agree that proficiency in foreign language improves their memory and enhances their vocabulary, with a mean of 4.30.

Table 6. Multilingualism

Indicators	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	DE
1. I believe proficiency in foreign language improves my communication skill.	39	52	9	0	0	4.30	Strongly Agree
2. I believe proficiency in foreign language promotes diversity in education.	31	64	5	0	0	4.26	Strongly Agree
3. I believe proficiency in foreign language gives me an edge over others.	22	56	16	5	1	3.93	Agree
4. I believe proficiency in foreign language makes me become confident when speaking to a native speaker of that language.	27	60	12	1	0	4.13	Agree
5. I believe proficiency in foreign language improves my memory and enhances my vocabulary.	35	60	5	0	0	4.30	Strongly Agree

Legend:

- SA = Strongly Agree
A = Agree
N = Neither Agree nor Disagree
D = Disagree
SD = Strongly Disagree
DE = Descriptive Equivalent

d. Future Career Readiness

Table 7 shows the extent to which the respondents perceive studying foreign language as a strength in terms of future career readiness.

The ABEL students "strongly agree" that learning foreign languages equips them to become

globally competent individuals, with a mean value of 4.22.

Additionally, they also "strongly agree" that it increases their chance of getting hired internationally (4.34), serves one of their assets for their future career

(4.41), and prepares them for communicating effectively in the future (4.32).

Furthermore, the ABEL students "agree", having means of 4.05, that learning foreign language hints to them what career they should pursue in the future.

Table 7. Future Career Readiness

Indicators	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	DE
1. Learning a foreign language equips me to become globally competent individual.	33	55	11	0	0	4.22	Strongly Agree
2. Learning a foreign language increases my chance of getting hired internationally.	39	56	5	0	0	4.34	Strongly Agree
3. Learning a foreign language serves as one of my assets for future career.	46	49	5	0	0	4.41	Strongly Agree
4. Learning a foreign language hint me what career should I pursue in the future.	26	57	14	2	1	4.05	Agree
5. Learning a foreign language prepares me for communicating effectively in the future.	37	58	5	0	0	4.32	Strongly Agree

Legend:

SA	=	Strongly Agree
A	=	Agree
N	=	Neither Agree nor Disagree
D	=	Disagree
SD	=	Strongly Disagree
DE	=	Descriptive Equi

III. The extent to which the ABEL students perceive studying foreign languages as weakness

a. Anxiety

Table 8 shows the extent to which the respondents perceive studying foreign language as a weakness in terms of anxiety.

Most ABEL students "agree", with a mean value of 3.64, that sometimes they feel embarrassed participating in their foreign language class because they fear they might mispronounce some words in the process. Likewise, they often hesitate reciting because sometimes, they are scared to be corrected by their teacher or classmates, with a mean of 3.48.

ABEL students answered neutral or "neither agree or disagree" however, when they were asked if they ever feel that their classmates are better in speaking the foreign language than themselves, with a mean value of 3.37.

But they "agree" that sometimes in their foreign language class, they feel self-conscious whenever they are asked to speak the foreign language (3.75). Unfortunately, most of them believe and "agree" that they can't converse the foreign language well when they are asked to do so, having means of 3.47, respectively.

Table 8. Anxiety

Indicators	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	DE
1. In our foreign language class, I feel embarrassed participating because I'm afraid I might mispronounce some words in the process.	18	47	17	17	1	3.64	Agree
2. In our foreign language class, I often hesitate reciting because I'm scared to be corrected by my teacher or classmates.	12	44	24	20	0	3.48	Agree
3. In our foreign language class, I keep thinking that my classmates are better at speaking the foreign language than me.	14	37	24	22	3	3.37	Neutral
4. In our foreign language class, I feel self-conscious whenever I am asked to speak the foreign language.	15	56	19	9	1	3.75	Agree
5. In our foreign language class, I believe I can't converse in a foreign language well when asked to do so.	10	43	32	14	1	3.47	Agree

Legend:

SA-Strongly Agree

A-Agree

N- Neither Agree nor Disagree

D-Disagree

SD- Strongly Disagree

DE- Descriptive Equivalent

Mode of Instruction

Table 9 shows the extent of how the ABEL students perceive studying foreign language as a weakness in terms of mode of instruction.

One hundred (100) respondents were asked whether their foreign language teachers often encourage them to speak their minds and ask questions if they have any. The ABEL students "agree" that their teacher does tell them to speak and ask questions more often when in class, with a mean value of 3.87.

They also "agree" that the assessments given by their teachers indeed align with the course objective of their foreign language class, with a total mean of 3.98.

In addition to that, the table also shows that the students "strongly agree" that they would appreciate it if the discussion were clearly presented to them to better understand the lesson, having the total mean of 4.34.

Furthermore, the ABEL students also "agree" that they are mostly passive and prefers to listen rather than to participate during class, with the mean value of 3.63.

However, the students say that they "neither agree nor disagree" when asked if they prefer oral activities rather than written tasks, having the mean value of 3

Table 9
Mode of Instruction

Indicators	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	DE
1. Whenever I am in class, our foreign language teacher often tells us to just speak what's on our mind and ask questions if we have any.	14	66	15	3	2	3.87	Agree
2. Whenever I am in class, I think the assessment tasks that are given by our foreign language are aligned with the course objectives of our subject.	15	72	10	2	1	3.98	Agree
3. Whenever I am in class, I would appreciate it if the discussion is presented clearly for me to understand the lesson.	42	53	3	1	1	4.34	Strongly Agree
4. Whenever I am in class, I am a passive student who only listens and rarely participates.	15	48	24	11	2	3.63	Agree
5. Whenever I am in class, I prefer oral activities rather than written tasks.	11	29	46	13	1	3.36	Neutral

Legend:

- SA = Strongly Agree
- A = Agree
- N = Neither Agree nor Disagree
- D = Disagree
- SD = Strongly Disagree
- DE = Descriptive Equivalent

b. Additional Language Learning

Table 10 shows the extent of how ABEL students perceive studying foreign language as a weakness in terms of additional language learning.

One hundred ABEL students were asked if learning foreign languages are a waste of time and effort with which the students “disagree” on, with a total mean value of 2.07.

It's also shown in the table that the students “disagree” when asked if they think learning foreign language is not a necessity, therefore making it unimportant, having the mean value of 2.24.

Moreover, the students also “disagree” when asked if learning foreign language is only an act of completion and passing of grades for them, with the total means of 2.17.

In addition, the student “disagrees” when asked if learning a foreign language would not be of help in improving their communication skills, with a mean value of 2.11.

And lastly, the table shows that the students “disagree” to foreign languages not helping develop their macro-skills, with a total mean value of 2.20

Table 10. Additional Language Learning

Indicators	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	DE
1. I feel that learning a foreign language is a waste of time and effort.	7	8	9	37	39	2.07	Disagree

2. I think that learning a foreign language is not a necessity, so it is not important.	5	11	13	45	26	2.24	Disagree
3. I believe that learning a foreign language is only for completion and passing grades.	4	14	10	39	33	2.17	Disagree
4. I believe that learning a foreign language would not improve my communication skills.	5	12	8	39	36	2.11	Disagree
5. I believe that learning a foreign language would not develop my macro-skills.	6	10	9	48	27	2.20	Disagree

Legend:

SA	=	Strongly Agree
A	=	Agree
N	=	Neither Agree nor Disagree
D	=	Disagree
SD	=	Strongly Disagree
DE	=	Descriptive Equivalent

IV. The significant difference between strengths and weaknesses of studying foreign languages as perceived by the ABEL students

There is a significant difference between strengths and weaknesses of studying foreign languages as perceived by the ABEL students. The null hypothesis then, is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Table 11. Paired Sample Statistics

	Mean	N	Standard Deviation	Standard Error Mean
Strength	4.2840	100	.40824	.04082
Weakness	3.1787	100	.57387	.05739

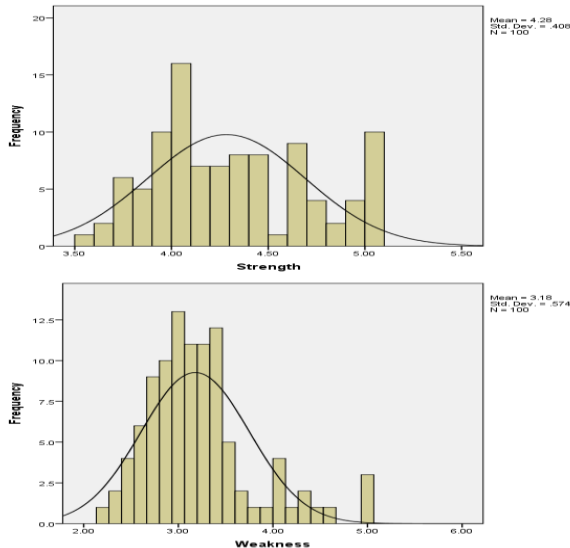
Table 12. Paired Sample Correlations

	N	n	Sig.
Strength and Weakness	100	.025	.802

**Table 13
Paired Sample Test**

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval (Lower)	95% Confidence Interval (Upper)	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Strength and Weakness	1.10533	.69576	.06958	.96728	1.24339	15.887	99	.000

Figure 4. Bell Curve of The Difference between the Strengths and Weaknesses of Studying Foreign Language



CONCLUSIONS

From the summary of findings presented, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. The ages of the second- and third-year ABEL students range from 19-27, and most of the respondents are under the age of 21.
2. Most of the respondents believe that they are proficient in 3-4 languages.
3. The ABEL students agree that learning foreign languages affects the way they view other cultures. Also, they strongly agree that it makes them become aware of a variety of cultures, helps them to understand people with different cultures and recognize cultural differences, and learns to appreciate and respect the language that they are learning along with the culture that comes with it.
4. The ABEL students also strongly agree that because of studying foreign languages, they have learned to respect and consider other people's perspective, became open to the idea of learning a new language and understanding the different world views, believed that it is possible to communicate with other people who has different language from them, and became more open-minded to diverse culture and beliefs.
5. The ABEL students strongly agree that proficiency in foreign language improves their communication skill and memory, enhances their vocabulary, and promotes diversity in education. In addition, they also agree that it gives them an edge over others and makes them become confident when speaking to a native speaker of a certain language.
6. The ABEL students strongly agree that learning a foreign language equips them to become globally competent individuals, increases their chance of getting hired internationally, serves as one of their assets for their future career, and prepares them for communicating effectively in the future. They furtherly agree that learning it hints at what career they should pursue in the future.
7. Most of the ABEL students agree that sometimes they feel embarrassed participating in their foreign language class because they fear they might mispronounce some words in the process, scared to be corrected by their teachers and classmates, feel self-conscious and, believe that they can't converse the language well when they are asked to do so. When they were asked if they ever feel that their classmates are better at speaking the foreign language, they answered neutral or neither agree nor disagree.
8. Most of the ABEL students strongly agree that they would appreciate it if the discussion was clearly presented to them. Moreover, they also agree that the assessments given by their teachers are indeed aligned with the course objectives and their teachers frequently tell them to just speak what's on their mind. Most of them, however, agree that they are passive and neither agree nor disagree when they are asked if they prefer oral activities rather than written tasks.
9. Most of the ABEL students were asked if learning foreign languages is a waste of time, unnecessary, only for completion, and would not improve neither their communication skills nor develop

their macro skills. The respondents disagree with these statements.

10. Studying foreign language not only teaches students to be good communicators but it is also an ideal mechanism that helps students be more culturally aware.
11. The ABEL students perceive learning foreign languages more of a strength than a weakness.
12. There is a significant difference between the strengths and weaknesses of studying foreign languages as perceived by the ABEL students. Thus, rejecting the hypothesis.

LIMITATIONS

As stated in the curriculum program of Bachelor of Arts in English Language, foreign languages are being taught to ABEL students on their

second, third and fourth year; to which the languages that are being offered are Nihongo, Spanish, Korean and Mandarin. In this research however, second- and third-year ABEL students will only be the target respondents of the study because there are no fourth-year students who are currently enrolled in the course. To ensure that then the number of students are drawn from each level proportionally, the researchers employed stratified random sampling. With the total population of 2nd and 3rd year ABEL students of 174, the total population is divided to the number of students per level and then multiplied by 100 which is the desired sample size. The respondents of the research then will be 52 from 2nd years, and 48 from 3rd years. Below is Table 14 indicating the number of target respondents according to their year level and section.

Table 14. Distribution of Respondents

Year Level and Section of ABEL Students	Number of Target Respondents
Second Year	52
Section A	26
B	26
Third Year	48
Section A	24
B	24
Total Respondents	100

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