Development and Evaluation of a Module for the Teaching of Beginning Filipino to Foreign Students

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The study aims to develop a module for the teaching of Filipino to beginning level foreign students. It seeks to answer the following: What are the processes involved in the development and evaluation of Beginner module for basic Filipino teaching of foreign students? What are the methods, techniques, tasks and materials suitable to the development of modules for Beginner? What are the parameters for the evaluation of the module?

Conceptual Framework

The Beginner module follows Tyler and Taba model on curriculum: needs assessment, formulation of objectives and content, syllabus design and organization of learning/skills or methodology and evaluation. With regard to needs assessment, Mackay and Bosquet test/questionnaire model, among other models, provided the basic framework.

As to syllabus design, an Integrated Approach is used. All the elements such as grammar, notions-functions, content areas, and tasks (target tasks and pedagogical tasks) are part of the design.

The module adapts an integrated language lesson (integrating all the four macro skills). This Integrated skill lesson sequence follows seven design principles such as

Authenticity – springboard activity/motivation based on the macro-skill in focus

Task continuity – an activity builds up may lead to discussion

Real-world focus – the materials make an explicit link to practical experiences/situations outside the classroom

Language focus – discovery learning

Learning focus – application of skill learned/other skill is integrated or a certain language rule is further discussed for
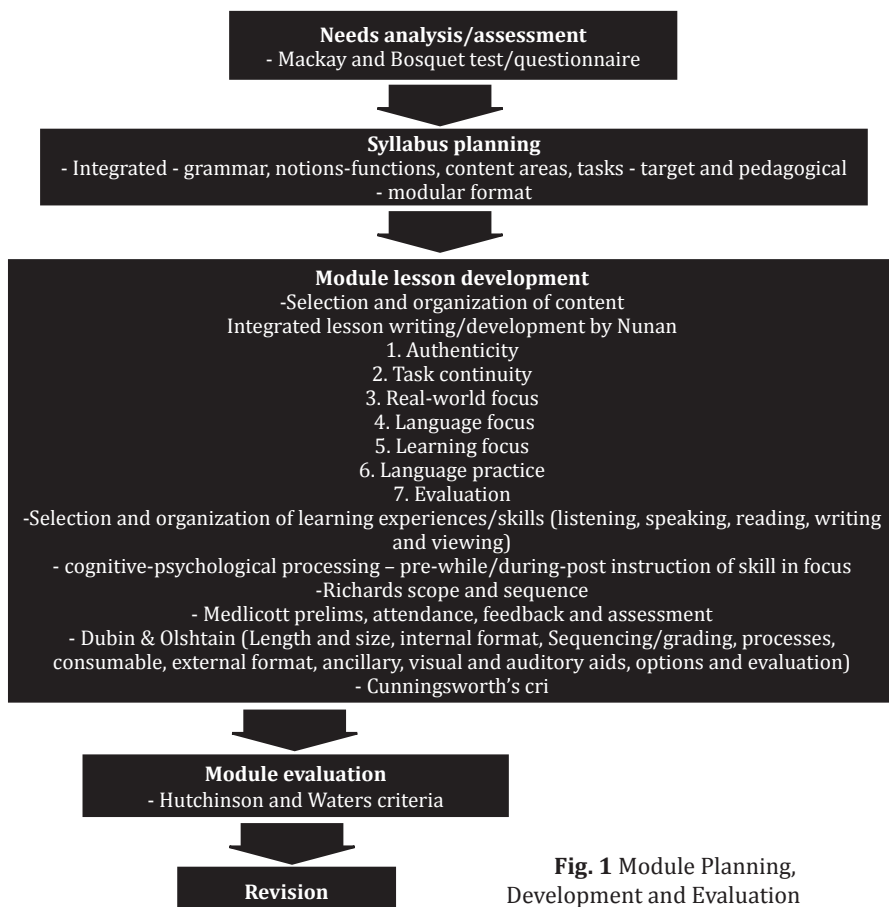
emphasis

Language practice – drill/oral exercises and

Evaluation (instead of Problem solving) – individual/pairs/ group work. This serves as the model for the lesson sequence of the module. There are modifications, however, employing the cognitive-psychological processing (bottom up and top-down) in pre-, while-, and post- instruction of the skill in focus.

The format, shape and design adapt Dubin and Olshtain pointers.

As regards module evaluation, the bases are taken from Hutchinson and Waters' criteria.

The following diagram shows how these approaches in second language teaching, syllabus design and lesson development are used in module planning, development and evaluation.

Needs analysis/assessment
- Mackay and Bosquet test/questionnaire

Syllabus planning
- Integrated - grammar, notions-functions, content areas, tasks - target and pedagogical
- modular format

Module lesson development
-Selection and organization of content
Integrated lesson writing/development by Nunan
1. Authenticity
2. Task continuity
3. Real-world focus
4. Language focus
5. Learning focus
6. Language practice
7. Evaluation
-Selection and organization of learning experiences/skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing and viewing)
- cognitive-psychological processing – pre-while/during-post instruction of skill in focus
-Richards scope and sequence
- Medlicott prelims, attendance, feedback and assessment
- Dubin & Olshtain (Length and size, internal format, Sequencing/grading, processes, consumable, external format, ancillary, visual and auditory aids, options and evaluation)
- Cunningsworth's cri

Module evaluation
- Hutchinson and Waters criteria

Revision

Fig. 1 Module Planning, Development and Evaluation

Foreign/Second Language Acquisition Concepts

Sandra Savignon defines a foreign language as a language situated outside one's own country; primarily in international contexts (26). Further, Rebecca Oxford states that a foreign language is language studied in an environment where it is not the primary vehicle for daily interaction (359). Second language, on the other hand, is an additional, intranational language of communication as opposed to a native language which is a primary language of a speaker. Oxford states that a second language is a language studied in the setting where that language is commonly used even though it is not the lingua franca of the country (359). In the context of Philippine education, the Filipino language is either a foreign or second language of a student whose country of birth/origin is another country outside of the Philippines.

Language for Specific Purposes

Language for Specific Purposes (LSP)" is based on the proposition that all language teaching should be tailored to the specific learning and language uses/needs of identified groups of students – and also should be sensitive to the socio-cultural contexts in which these students will be using (Johns and Price-Machado 43). Likewise, the Filipino language can be taught tailored to the specific needs of foreign students for their social and curriculum survival because Filipino courses are part of the general curriculum of Philippine educational system. Moreover, language teaching in LSP is centered on the language appropriate to activities in syntax, lexis, discourse, semantics of everyday setting where the foreign students are exposed. In this study, a module is designed to teach Basic Filipino, the language appropriate for foreign students to survive in their daily social encounter.

Integrated Approach

Marianne Celce-Murcia introduces an Integrated Approach which include attention to rule formation, affect, comprehension and communication. In general, an approach will depend on the following:

1. language needs assessment – For what purpose should the target users be learning the language
2. instructional constraints – time (hours per week); class size; materials; equipment
3. attitudes and learning styles – of individual students, and activities and materials should be developed consistent with the findings
4. specified activities and texts – so that the teacher can incorporate them into materials and learning activities and
5. language learning evaluation of foreign students (10).

An integrated approach would include the different approaches as appropriate to the language needs of the target students. There are four general approaches. Cognitive Approach, Affective-Humanistic Approach, Comprehension Approach, and Communicative Approach. Cognitive Approach adheres to the principle that language is rule-governed cognitive behavior (not habit formation). Affective-Humanistic Approach, on one hand, posits that learning a foreign language is a process of self-realization and of relating to other people. Comprehension Approach, on the other hand, takes that language acquisition occurs if the learner comprehends meaningful input. Finally, Communicative Approach believes that the purpose of language is communication (Celce-Murcia 8-9).

Celce-Murcia introduces an Integrated Approach to language teaching which employ different methodologies and techniques where appropriate to develop the skills of the learners. Thus, second/foreign language teaching concepts, methodologies and procedures are used, one way or another in the module.

Macro-skills Development

There are basically four macro-skills of communication, namely, listening, speaking, reading and writing. Viewing is added as a skill. "Viewing is a process that supports oracy and literacy, and is a part of an integrated arts program….Critical viewing; just as in reading, writing and speaking; entails giving attention to facts, relationships, inferences, and to critical analysis." The module for beginning level foreign students aims to develop these

macro-skills in the use of Filipino as a medium of communication. The module follows the integrated skill scheme. The sequence of the lessons adapt the pre-, while-, and post- instruction of the skill in focus, e.g. pre-listening, during listening and post-listening activities or other macro-skill in focus. This kind of module is yet to be developed.

In some instances, the four macro-skills can be taught in an integrated way in the classroom (McDonough & Shaw 173-178; Cunningsworth 46-49). According to Richards, Platt and Weber, integrated skill-scheme "is the teaching of the language skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking in conjunction with each other as when a lesson involves activities that relate listening and speaking to reading and writing" (qtd. in McDonough & Shaw 173). In some cases this would involve a focus on listening and speaking first, followed by reading and writing, as this would provide a convenient class-plus-homework pattern (McDonough & Shaw 176). David Nunan suggests seven design principles for 'the integrated language lesson.'

Needs Analysis of the Target Learners

Tom Hutchinson & Alan Waters say that any course should be based on an analysis of learner need. "'What do we mean by needs?'It is 'the ability to comprehend and/or produce the linguistic features of the target situation'. …basic distinction between target needs (i.e. what the learner needs to do in the target situation) and learning needs (i.e. what the learner needs to do in order to learn (54).

Diana Medlicott states that…teaching and learning can be effective only if they are appropriate for a student body that is immensely diverse in terms of age, qualification, educational experience, social class, familial background, culture, attitude, race, ethnicity and motivation. This justifies the conduct of needs analysis. The starting point, before beginning the design and planning of the module structure, is to ask the following fundamental questions: Who are the students? What do they need in order to succeed? (11).This pertains to Student Profile. This can be answered by creating focus groups to gather qualitative data. This can be conducted in an informal interview style

designed for small groups, and the goal was to discover through semi-structured discussions the conscious and semi-conscious attitudes and feelings of students (16).

Mackay and Bosquet provide a pattern for Student Needs questionnaire which was modified by the researcher to suit the target users.

Syllabus Specifications

Syllabus design is the selection, sequencing, and justification of the content of the curriculum ("Syllabus Design" Nunan 55).

The format for the proposed syllabus is modular. This integrates thematic or situational language content with skills orientation regarding the course outcomes (Dubin & Olshtain 53).

Module Development

Module development refers to the working plan and actual writing of the modules (Silva 11). Morley defines module as a self-study packet. Richards specifies that module is a self-contained and independent learning sequence with its own objectives (165). Morley expounds on the importance of a module in which the individual learner has complete personal control over the materials. She stated that it is essential that students be able to control the source of input so that they can "pace it – stop it, start it, replay it" – at will (Aural Comprehension Instruction: Principles and Practices 82).

Hutchinson & Waters identifies some principles which will serve as guide in the actual writing of the module. Materials should:

- provide a stimulus for learning. Good materials will contain interesting texts, enjoyable activities and opportunities for learners to use their existing knowledge and skills.
- provide a clear and coherent unit structure which will guide in the conduct of activities.
- appeal to the interest of the learner as provided by need assessment.
- try to create a balanced outlook which both reflects the

complexity of the task, yet makes it appear manageable.
- be open for new techniques in teaching.
- provide models of correct and appropriate language use (107-108).

Hutchinson and Waters point out that both the content and the text that enable the learner to perform are important aspects of the materials. When selecting texts (spoken or written), think about the content of the text and the task that the learner should be able to perform as a result of working with this text. Then identify the language skills that are needed to perform the task and that are reflected in the text (108-9; Schleppegrell 241).

Johnson enumerates some of the best practices in program planning in the academe. Course designs must be based on organized body of knowledge such as:

a. the essential functions of language;
b. specific competencies such as the 'four skills' of listening, speaking, reading and writing;
c. social activities and problems for the target learners to cope with social and economic demands of everyday life;
d. feelings and attitudes; and
e. needs and interests of the learner (49-50).

Mackay and Bosquet state that materials development includes deciding on the kinds of exercises, teaching strategies, classroom organizations and auxiliary materials or equipment to be employed. What is possible, practical and acceptable to both learner and instructor must be considered.

Richards emphasizes that scope and sequence must also be part of the specifications of content. Scope is concerned with the breadth and depth of coverage items in the course. Therefore, the following questions should be addressed:

a. What range of content will be covered?
b. To what extent should each topic be studied?

Sequencing may be based by difficulty level (simple to complex), chronology, need, for example, for social survival curriculum;

prerequisite learning and organization and spiral sequencing which involves recycling of items to ensure that learners have repeated opportunities to learn them (149-151).

The module follows an integrated lesson sequence by Nunan (in McDonough & Shaw 178) taking into consideration other principles mentioned above as to the content and methodology putting the Filipino language and culture in context.

Module Evaluation

Module evaluation refers to the assessment procedure which would test the modules acceptability with respect to the statement of objectives, content, manner of presentation and usefulness (Silva 11-12). All the principles enumerated in the characteristics of a module, syllabus specifications as to formulation of objectives, content and methodology, scope and sequence are included in the evaluation criteria.

Hutchinson and Waters present a checklist of criteria for objective and subjective analyses. Module evaluation adapts the objective analysis criteria based on needs assessment of the learners, goals and objectives and content and methodology of the modules (99-104).

Cunningsworth suggests principles for materials selection which are used for module evaluation:

1) Instructional materials should match the students' learning objectives: Does the course book teach the sort of communicative abilities, in the sort of situations, that we want? Is what the writer considers interesting actually going to be comprehensible and acceptable to our students?

2) Materials must help equip students to use language effectively for their purposes.

3) Students' learning needs should be kept in mind – whether the course book caters to the interests and involves the students.

4) There should be a balance between the needs of the learner on the one hand, and on the other, the constraints imposed by the necessity of learning the structures and vocabulary learning. It is acknowledged, though, that useful functions cannot be expressed without a good working knowledge of the grammar and vocabulary (8-14).
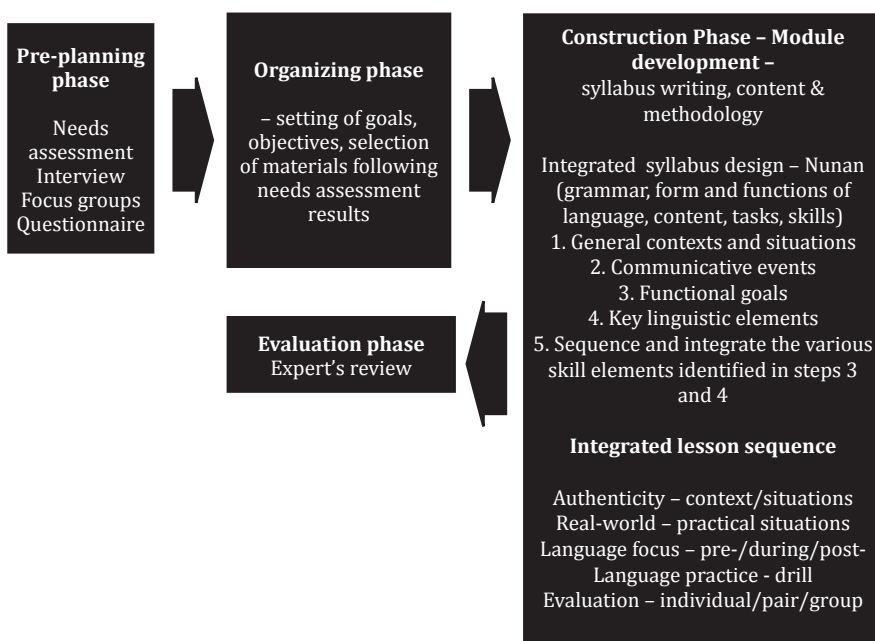
METHODOLOGY

The study is descriptive and experimental. The phases are: pre-planning and organizing, construction and evaluation.

In the pre-planning, needs analysis of learners through interview, focus groups, questionnaire administration are conducted. The samples are the foreign students enrolled in San Beda College. In the organizing phase, goals and objectives are set based on needs analysis results and selection of materials based on Integrated Approach and integrated skill/lesson sequence.

Module lesson development, syllabus writing and content and teaching methodology employing integrated approaches cover the construction phase. Nunan's integrated lesson format serves as the model for the lesson sequence of the module. In addition, there is cultural integration in every lesson where appropriate.

There is initial evaluation by language specialists in Filipino. Hence the following diagram:

Pre-planning phase

Needs assessment
Interview
Focus groups
Questionnaire

Organizing phase

– setting of goals, objectives, selection of materials following needs assessment results

Construction Phase – Module development –
syllabus writing, content & methodology

Integrated syllabus design – Nunan (grammar, form and functions of language, content, tasks, skills)
1. General contexts and situations
2. Communicative events
3. Functional goals
4. Key linguistic elements
5. Sequence and integrate the various skill elements identified in steps 3 and 4

Integrated lesson sequence

Authenticity – context/situations
Real-world – practical situations
Language focus – pre-/during/post-
Language practice - drill
Evaluation – individual/pair/group

Evaluation phase
Expert's review

Fig. 2 Module development and evaluation processes

Presentation of the Module

The module aims to serve as a self-help packet for the students prior to classroom learning. Thus, each lesson is designed for individual language learning, however, there are activities for interaction with pairs or groups which will be initiated by the learner himself/herself.

For a start, there is an introductory unit, i. e. a video on the brief history of the Filipino language (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BKxwFhhmH2A&feature=youtube_gdata) as a preliminary to lesson proper. This traces back the cultural and foreign influences to the evolution of the Philippine national language. It further explores the distinction of Tagalog as a language and as a dialect, and Pilipino and Filipino.

The module is divided into five units, as follows:

I.   - The Filipino Sounds and Letters (Ang mga Tunog at Titik sa Filipino)
II. - Close-knit Filipino Families (Matibay na Bugkos ng Pamilyang Pilipino)
III. - t's More Fun in the Philippines! (Halina't Magsaya sa Pilipinas!)
IV. - Filipino Well-Being (Pagkatao ng mga Pilipino/ Pagpapahalagang Pilipino)
V.   - Mabuhay! Welcome to the Philippines! (Maligayang Pagdating sa Pilipinas)

Each unit highlights the uniqueness of the Filipino language and people's values such as being family-oriented, fun-loving, free-spirited, industrious, courteous, nationalistic, hospitable among other world-renowned traits.

Unit objectives enumerate the essential functions of the language and the specific competencies to be developed. These are stated in cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains.

Lesson Title states the specific language usage for development. In the sample lesson, the approach used is Natural Approach. This explains the levels of language learning: pre-production, early production, speech emergence and intermediate fluency. Natural

Approach states that second language can be easily learned if the order is similar in the first language. Direct approach and Total Physical Response method are also employed. Direct Approach is concerned more on the ability of the learner to use the language rather than to analyze it. Total Physical Response, on the other hand, is a method that combines information and skills through actual demonstration of words and action. Student's understanding of the spoken language should be developed before speaking. The approaches were made possible with the use of the video, thus developing viewing skill.

Skill in Focus specify the particular competency to be developed in the lesson, however, the integrated lesson sequence provides that other skills can be employed as auxiliaries to language learning. Viewing as an added skill is integrated in all lessons. This provides, somewhat, an authentic experience to foreign students, who have limited social interaction.

Lesson sequence is patterned after Nunan's principles.

Authenticity/PAGLINANG
The student is asked to play the video on YouTube. This serves as springboard to Skill in Focus (Speaking).

Task/ GAWAIN
The interpersonal function of language is being developed here and communicative competence where word formation and sentence formation is applied to actual communicative situations.

Real-World/PAG-UUGNAY:
The making of self- video of the learner and other activities such as response and substitution provide for practical and actual situations for the learners. The student would learn how to respond to actual communicative settings.

Language Focus/ KAALAMANG PANGWIKA:
The appropriate respectful expressions were discussed here. The video also provides the language rules and their translation in the second language.

Learning Focus/PAGLALAPAT:

Grammatical points are emphasized in here to be given particular attention by the learner for self-monitoring and evaluation.

Language Practice/PAGSASANAY:

Different drills such as cumulative drill, response drill and translation drill further enhance student understanding of the lesson for language acquisition. In the classroom setting, there will be group dynamics and paper and pencil seatwork for other skill integration.

Evaluation/PAGTATAYA:

This part integrates a skill other than what is in focus, such as writing.

Cultural Integration/KULTURA:

Other common expressions in the second language are enumerated with cultural notes and corresponding translation in the first language of the learner.

CONCLUSION

Modular approach is based on the principle that every student has his own rate and pace in learning. Module is a self-contained and independent unit of instruction focused primarily on some well-defined objectives. Self-instructional materials like modules are of help to both teachers and students, more so, in the case of foreign students who have different orientation and culture from the locals.

There are basically four macro-skills of communication, namely, listening, speaking, reading and writing. Another skill, viewing, is added. The module for beginning level foreign students aims to develop these macro-skills in the use of Filipino as a medium of communication. The module follows the integrated skill scheme.

The validation of the module will prove that an integrated skill scheme in a modular format is effective in second language teaching and learning.

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