



Navigating Grammatical Errors Among Filipino Tertiary Students: Implication for Linguistic Competence

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Abstract

This study investigates common grammatical errors impacting the English proficiency of Filipino tertiary students enrolled in an education program with a major in English. Employing a descriptive-quantitative approach and non-experimental design, it analyzes the frequency of errors and uses correlational analysis to examine relationships between grammar test scores and overall English proficiency. Results indicate an average competency level of 3.38, suggesting intermediate proficiency overall, with fourth-year students achieving a mean score of 4.37, nearing native proficiency. Common errors include word order, phrasing, redundancy, verb tense, subject-verb agreement, and article usage. A moderate negative correlation (-0.5318) between grammar proficiency and overall language competence suggests that higher grammar scores may not equate to superior language ability. Grammar proficiency explains 28.28% of the variance in language competence ($p = 0.00249$), emphasizing its significance. The study underscores the need for an enhanced curriculum focusing on targeted grammar instruction, a balanced Language Skills Approach, progressive course materials, formative assessments, and personalized feedback to address these challenges.

Keywords: *Common Grammatical Error, Descriptive-quantitative Approach, Error Analysis Theory, and Interlanguage Theory*

Introduction

Linguistic competence in learning the English language is essential for college students pursuing a Bachelor of Secondary Education major in English. Besides preparing them to become future educators of English, it is a vital skill that supports their academic journey. This competence allows them to access a vast amount of knowledge and information, as English is widely used in academic resources such as textbooks, research papers, and online materials. Moreover, mastering English supports their academic achievements, enhances their communication abilities, helps them build relationships, prepares them for their careers, aids in their personal development, and boosts their confidence. Mastering English can open up job opportunities, make students more competitive in the international job market, and equip them with essential skills for both academic and professional lives, given that English is the global language of business and communication.



According to Koay (2021), learning English in the past focused heavily on repetitive grammar exercises, emphasizing grammar and vocabulary as crucial components of language learning. Cook (2016) defines grammatical knowledge as the understanding and application of language rules, involving the recognition and use of words, sentence structures, and sounds to communicate effectively. Similarly, Harmer (2015) defines grammar as "a knowledge of what words can go where and what form these words should take" and highlights several key aspects of grammar that learners need to focus on, including sentences and clauses, verbs, nouns and noun phrases, adverbs, and adjectives. Furthermore, grammar remains a cornerstone of English learning, particularly in countries with a strong tradition of grammar teaching. There is now a general consensus that grammar is essential for all students, regardless of whether they are learning English as their first or additional language (Rossiter, 2021).

In the Philippines, there is a longstanding commitment to teaching English as a second language, with Filipino students beginning their English education at a young age. Their exposure to English is extensive, as they consume media such as movies, music, books, magazines, and newspapers in English, and frequently browse the internet. Additionally, tertiary-level courses in English are offered to prepare future graduates to become educators who will promote the English language. However, studies by Flores and Bautista (2014) and Santos (2018) highlight ongoing challenges faced by Filipino college students in mastering the English language. These challenges include difficulties with grammar and syntax due to the complex rules, limited exposure to English outside the classroom, and low confidence resulting from the fear of making mistakes.

In 2017, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) initiated "The National Roadmap for Global Competitiveness in Communication Skills." The program aims to enhance the communication skills of Filipino graduates to meet global standards, involving the adoption of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for Languages as a recognized metric for communicative competence. Despite these efforts, the Philippines ranked 22nd out of 111 countries in the 2022 English Proficiency Index (EPI) by Education First (EF), dropping four places from the previous year with a score of 578, categorized as "high proficiency." This level enables Filipinos to perform tasks such as making work presentations, understanding TV shows, and reading newspapers. However, despite this high proficiency, the Philippines has experienced a consistent decline in rankings since 2016, highlighting ongoing challenges within the educational system and the imperative to enhance language proficiency (BusinessWorld Online, 2022; Philippine Institute for Development Studies, 2022).

Although Filipino students have extensive exposure to English from a young age and benefit from national initiatives aimed at enhancing communication skills, challenges persist in achieving consistent proficiency levels, as evidenced by declining rankings in global English proficiency indices. Given these circumstances, researchers are encouraged to examine how well Filipino tertiary students, particularly those majoring in Bachelor of Secondary Education with a focus on English, master grammatical rules and apply them effectively in academic contexts.

This study aims to identify specific grammatical errors affecting students' linguistic competence. The research outcomes will offer a comprehensive understanding of the challenges that lead to the decline in English proficiency levels. This will also help explore strategies to enhance students' English language skills, ultimately boosting their academic and professional preparedness.

Literature Review

English language proficiency among Filipino students has become a significant topic in educational discussions, with recent studies noting a decline in proficiency levels due to changes in educational policies, societal influences (Santos, 2019), and a shift towards prioritizing local languages in the curriculum. This limited exposure to formal English, influenced by the prevalence of Filipino languages in everyday communication, can hinder the development of proficiency in English grammar and syntax (Garcia & Reyes, 2020).

The decline in English language competence is a global issue, affecting many countries and often involving concerns about grammar mastery, a critical component of language competence (Abendan, 2024). Factors such as local dialects, modern communication tools, and the widespread use of informal language on digital platforms contribute to this decline (Hulstijn, 2017). Dialect differences in grammatical structures can confuse learners, leading to inconsistent application of standard grammar (Jones et al., 2019). The use of hashtags, tweets, emoticons, and shorthand phrases also suggests a decline in adherence to grammar standards (Banner, 2021), with exposure to non-standard communication forms challenging students' mastery of formal grammar rules (Smith & Brown, 2022).

As globalization reshapes the world, rethinking English teaching methods in universities is necessary (Almarshedi, 2022). Traditional teaching methods may not meet current needs, and innovative approaches integrating technology are increasingly important (Gueorguiev, 2016). Technological changes since 2011 show varying levels of student understanding in grammar and spelling, with those having a strong grasp of grammar communicating more effectively (Cabico & Sales, 2023). However, many students find grammar challenging due to its numerous rules and perceive it as long and boring, discouraging engagement (Puspitasari, 2023; Cifuentes, 2023).

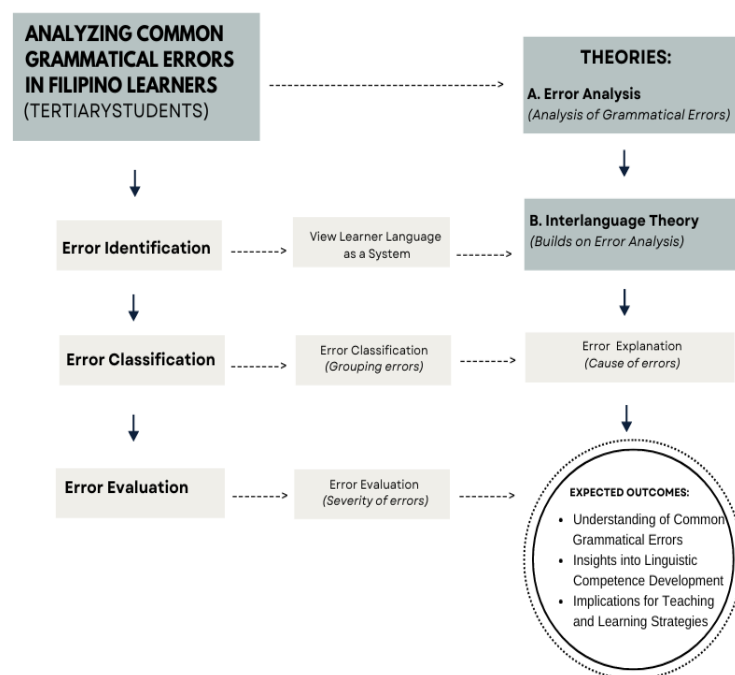


This review highlights the decline in English language proficiency among Filipino students and global concerns about grammar mastery. Understanding these trends helps researchers identify significant challenges in language education, affecting educational outcomes and students' language learning abilities. Addressing these gaps through further research can improve educational outcomes and provide a deeper understanding of how language proficiency trends impact education globally.

Theoretical Background

This dual-theory approach provides a robust framework for understanding the complexities of second language acquisition among Filipino tertiary students and allows for a detailed examination of both the errors students make and their level of competence in language learning. By integrating these theories, researchers can gain a holistic understanding of the challenges and opportunities in learning English as a second language. Their significance lies in the following aspects:

Error Analysis Theory. Smith and Johnson (2023) define Error Analysis Theory as a method to understand second language acquisition by examining learners' errors. This theory views errors not as mere mistakes but as valuable indicators of the developing language system. By analyzing these errors, researchers can gain insights into learners' challenges and tailor instruction to address specific linguistic difficulties.



Interlanguage Theory (Smith and brown, 2023) define Interlanguage as the evolving linguistic system learners develop as they acquire a second language. It reflects learners' understanding of language rules, incorporating elements from both their native and target languages. Errors in interlanguage are viewed as natural parts of the learning process, highlighting the importance of understanding learners' developmental stages and the systematic nature of their errors.

Figure 1. Theoretical Framework of the Study

The schema provides the structure that organizes the theoretical perspectives guiding this study, focusing on the linguistic competence of Filipino tertiary students learning English. By integrating theories like Error Analysis Theory and Interlanguage Theory, researchers can systematically examine students' errors and language learning processes. This framework shapes data collection, analysis, and interpretation, ensuring clarity in defining variables, hypothesizing relationships, and understanding the complexities of second language acquisition.

Statement of Purpose

This study aims to explore the common grammatical errors and understand the level of English competency among tertiary Filipino students, with a particular focus on education major in English. Gaining insights on the common grammatical errors committed by the students provides comprehensive understanding of language acquisition among Filipino tertiary students and identify areas for improvements. The study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of English competency among college students at the University?
2. What are the common grammar errors among education students at the University?
3. How does proficiency in structural elements of grammar correlate with overall language competence among Filipino tertiary students?
4. How can identified grammatical errors be addressed or bridged?



Statement of Hypothesis

The null hypothesis tested at the 0.05 level of significance was H01: There is no significant relationship between scores on grammar-focused tests and overall English competency among Filipino tertiary students.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employs a descriptive-quantitative approach and a non-experimental design. This approach enables researchers to quantify common grammatical errors (independent variable) and the level of language competence (dependent variable), utilize statistical techniques to analyze relationships, and derive numerical conclusions. By performing a frequency count of grammatical errors, the study provides insight into the most prevalent issues. Correlational analysis is used to examine the relationship between scores on grammar-focused tests and overall English competency test scores, with correlation coefficients determining the strength and direction of the relationship. The research was conducted at a private university in the Philippines using Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), a standardized English proficiency test designed to measure the language competency of non-native speakers. Administering this test offers a quantifiable measure of the students' overall English competency, ensuring reliable and comparable results across the student population.

This methodological approach is designed to observe, measure, and detail specific aspects of students' language skills. By providing quantifiable data and detailed analyses, these methods collectively offer a comprehensive description of the current state of English language competency and the grammatical challenges faced by Filipino tertiary students. The study's non-experimental design involves systematically collecting and presenting data that accurately depicts the language proficiency landscape of the target population, without manipulating any variables.

Study Participants

The participants of this study comprised tertiary-level students enrolled in a Bachelor of Education program majoring in English. These students were recruited based on their qualifications. The participants are incoming first-year, second-year, third year, and fourth-year education students for the school year 2024–2025. The first-year students passed the university entrance test and are already enrolled, while the second-year, third year, and fourth-year students were enrolled in the summer class program at their universities during the time they were recruited to participate in the study. It is important to note that these are not failing students in any subject but are enrolled in the summer class due to prerequisite requirements of their course. The names of the universities are not disclosed to maintain confidentiality and protect the privacy of the institutions involved. They were purposely selected based on specific attributes relevant to the study, such as being education majors in English and their engagement with English language teaching. They will be assessed using the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) speaking assessment tool. Purposive sampling was used to determine the sample size to ensure that the sample is representative of the target population and provides in-depth insights into the grammatical errors and language competence of Filipino tertiary students. The table below shows the distribution of respondents.

Table 1.
Distribution of Respondents

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
University A	17	56.67%
University B	13	43.33%
Total	30	100%

Data Gathering Tools

The primary research tool used in this study is a questionnaire adopted from the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) framework. This questionnaire assesses various aspects of speaking competency, including pronunciation, fluency, accuracy, and the ability to use complex language structures, and categorizes competency into five levels: Elementary, Pre-intermediate, Intermediate, Upper-intermediate, and Advanced.

To ensure validity and reliability, several steps were taken. Developed by Lynette Kim and published on July 30, 2014, the original tool has been widely used and validated in various educational settings. Content validity was ensured by aligning the questions with key competencies required for effective English language speaking. Reliability was assessed through a pilot test with a small sample similar to the study population. Feedback from this test led to minor adjustments.

The questionnaire, developed by Kim (2014), measures speaking competency across five levels, with a specific focus on grammar. It will be administered through an interview, and responses will be evaluated using rubrics that assess



grammatical competency in the English language. Each criterion will be scored on a scale from 1 to 5, and the scores will be averaged to determine the overall competency level.

The competency levels are interpreted as follows:

Rate	Mean Range	Verbal Description	Interpretation
5	5.00	Advanced Level	Uses a wide range of grammatical structures & sentence forms accurately with minimal errors
4	4.00-4.99	Upper-intermediate Level	Produces sentences of a more complex nature to express feelings & ideas Can speak on a range of topics using complex sentences although a number of errors occur Can use all 4 conditionals & 'if' clauses
3	3.00-3.99	Intermediate Level	Can produce compound sentences based on known topics with many errors Can use comparatives & superlatives with some errors Can use 'if' clauses & conditionals although many errors occur
2	2.00-2.99	Pre-intermediate Level	Can form simple sentences based on familiar topics Can form basic compound sentences but frequent errors occur Can use some prepositions with many errors Can use basic comparatives & superlatives & 'if' clauses
1	1.00-1.99	Elementary Level	Can form very short pre learned simple sentences based on very familiar topics Attempts at compound sentences are fragmented

Data Gathering Procedure

Preliminary Stage. Gathering data for the study involved several necessary steps. The researcher sought advice from the professor regarding the data-gathering procedures for this research and adhered to the checklist for ethical considerations. Permission was obtained from relevant authorities through formal letters sent to key individuals, including the University Dean and the respondents. A communication letter requesting approval to gather data will be sent to the Dean. Prior to commencing the study, respondents received a briefing and were provided with consent forms either online or in-person, depending on their availability.

Data Gathering Stage. In conducting the interviews, researchers have two options: the first option is conducting face-to-face interviews, and the second option is conducting online interviews via Zoom, Messenger, or Teams using a structured assessment tool. This allows flexibility in exploring respondents' mannerisms, responses, grammar, voice intonation, and gestures. Questionnaires will be distributed directly to participants during interviews and retrieved immediately afterward to ensure completeness and accuracy. Data will be collected through recorded interviews to allow for a comprehensive review of respondents' speaking skills and grammatical competence

Post Data Gathering Stage. After collection, data will be checked for completeness, consistency, and accuracy to ensure reliability in analysis. The data gathering process will take as long as necessary to achieve sufficient responses and coverage, typically within a specified timeframe set by the study's objectives. Data will be safely stored in secured electronic formats, ensuring confidentiality and compliance with data protection regulations. Once the study is complete and the analysis has been finalized, data will be disposed of according to institutional policies and ethical guidelines, ensuring no further use or access.

Data Analysis

The data analysis comprises five processes, each involving systematic steps to comprehensively assess and understand grammatical errors and determine their level of competence among Filipino tertiary students enrolled in Education with a focus on English. The first process, *Error Identification* (Ellis, 2016), identifies the grammatical errors made by students by examining their written or spoken language to pinpoint specific mistakes, viewing learner language as a developing system. The second process, *Error Classification* (Brown, 2014), groups the identified errors into categories based on their types, such as tense errors and subject-verb agreement errors, to understand the patterns and frequency of different error types. The third process, *Error Evaluation* (Schmidt, 2016), evaluates the



identified and classified errors to determine their severity and impact on overall language competence, providing insights into the areas where learners face the most difficulties. The fourth process, *Application of Interlanguage Theory* (Richards & Rodgers, 2014), explains the causes of errors by viewing them as a natural part of the learning process, emphasizing the developmental stages of learners' language systems. The final process, *Expected Outcomes*, aims to provide a thorough understanding of grammatical errors among Filipino tertiary students, seeking to inform effective teaching practices and ultimately improve students' linguistic competence and academic success.

Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations are paramount in this study to ensure the protection of participants' rights and welfare. The researcher upholds fundamental ethical principles such as beneficence, respect, justice, and transparency, and adheres to relevant professional codes of ethics throughout the study. The study guarantees that no harm comes to any individual, group, or organization while maintaining the integrity of the knowledge shared. The Institutional Review Board will review the study to ensure it meets general research standards.

Informed consent is a critical component of ethical research involving human participants. This process involves participants voluntarily agreeing to take part after receiving comprehensive information about the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks and benefits, and their rights. Participants must fully understand the provided information before agreeing to participate. Additionally, informed consent documentation involves obtaining participants' written or verbal consent before the study begins. This documentation serves as proof of participants informed and voluntary agreement to participate and includes recording any additional information provided during the study, ensuring that participants can withdraw at any time without repercussions.

Results and Discussion

A. Profile of the Respondents

The distribution of respondents by year level is as follows: 7 first-year students (23.33%), 6 second-year students (20.00%), 7 third-year students (23.33%), and 10 fourth-year students (33.33%). This distribution shows a relatively balanced representation across all year levels, with a slightly higher proportion of fourth-year students. Although the sample group is small, each member is significant for understanding the characteristics of the larger population. The sample purposefully reflects the key attributes of the broader population (Cleave, 2023). The respondents' profiles include only the year levels in which they are enrolled, as shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2.
Frequency and Percentage of Respondents by Year Level

Year Level	Frequency	Percentage
First Year	7	23.33%
Second Year	6	20.00%
Third Year	7	23.33%
Fourth Year	10	33.33%
Total	30	100%

B. Overall Competency Level in Grammar

Examining grammar competency at each year level is crucial for understanding and addressing the specific challenges learners face as they progress through their education. Research has shown that language competence is influenced by various factors beyond academic level, including individual learning experiences and exposure to the language (Lyster & Saito, 2018). By assessing grammar competency at each stage of academic progression, researchers can identify unique patterns of errors and areas of difficulty that arise at specific points in the learners' educational journeys (Ellis, 2016).

Furthermore, evaluating grammar competency year by year using the TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) framework and recorded interviews to gauge language proficiency allows researchers to understand the diverse needs of students. This data-driven approach helps researchers identify common areas of difficulty in learning the English language. By providing timely and relevant feedback, researchers and educators can support learners' progressive improvement in grammar skills, fostering a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. This approach leads to the development of targeted learning materials, workshops, and support services that address grammatical challenges prevalent at each academic level, ultimately improving the effectiveness of language education programs across all levels of tertiary education (Richards & Schmidt, 2014). Table 3 below shows the year-level grammar competency and overall grammar competency of education students majoring in English:



Table 3.

Overall Competency Level in Grammar of Education Students Major in English

	WM	Competency Level	Year Level
1	2.46	Pre-intermediate	First Year
2	2.54	Pre-intermediate	First Year
3	4.66	Upper intermediate	First Year
4	2.80	Intermediate	First Year
5	2.22	Pre-intermediate	First Year
6	4.80	Advanced	First Year
7	2.40	Pre-intermediate	First Year
8	2.30	Intermediate	Second Year
9	2.00	Intermediate	Second Year
10	2.30	Intermediate	Second Year
11	3.20	Intermediate	Second Year
12	2.54	Pre-intermediate	Second Year
13	3.20	Intermediate	Second Year
14	2.40	Pre-intermediate	Third Year
15	4.70	Advanced	Third Year
16	3.10	Intermediate	Third Year
17	4.00	Intermediate	Third Year
18	2.50	Intermediate	Third Year
19	2.20	Intermediate	Third Year
20	2.20	Intermediate	Third Year
21	5.00	Advanced	Fourth Year
22	5.00	Advanced	Fourth Year
23	4.40	Upper intermediate	Fourth Year
24	4.98	Advanced	Fourth Year
25	1.50	Elementary	Fourth Year
26	5.00	Advanced	Fourth Year
27	4.02	Advanced	Fourth Year
28	4.80	Advanced	Fourth Year
29	5.00	Advanced	Fourth Year
30	3.20	Intermediate	Fourth Year
Grand Mean	3.38	Intermediate Level	

First Year Education Students - The data on the competency levels in grammar of first-year education students majoring in English reveals significant diversity in linguistic proficiency among incoming students. The weighted means (WMs) span from 2.22 to 4.80, covering competency levels from Pre-intermediate to Advanced. This wide range highlights the varied grammatical backgrounds these students bring to their English major studies. McLaughlin and McLeod (2015) discuss similar variability in language proficiency among first-year learners, emphasizing the importance of understanding these differences to tailor educational approaches effectively. Their research underscores the need to address diverse grammatical backgrounds to support varied levels of proficiency in language education.

Most first-year students (57%, or 4 out of 7) cluster in the pre-intermediate category, with WMs between 2.22 and 2.54. This concentration suggests that many entering students are still in the early stages of English grammar development, likely grappling with more complex structures and rules as they transition into university-level language study. This finding aligns with Tseng and Li (2017), who highlight the challenges faced by learners at the initial stages of language acquisition in higher education and the importance of early intervention to address these challenges.

The data also reveals exceptional cases: one student achieved an Advanced level (WM: 4.80) and another reached Upper Intermediate (WM: 4.66). These outliers may indicate students with significant prior English exposure or natural language aptitude. Additionally, the presence of an Intermediate level student (WM: 2.80) further illustrates the spectrum of abilities within this group. Carter and McCarthy (2016) explore similar phenomena in their study on advanced language learners, discussing factors that contribute to exceptional proficiency and highlighting the influence of prior exposure and innate language aptitude on language learning outcomes (Carter & McCarthy, 2016).

Analyzing this distribution through the lens of interlanguage theory provides valuable insights. The diverse competency range (WMs from 2.22 to 4.80) points to varying stages of interlanguage development among first-year students. The predominance of pre-intermediate levels suggests that many students are still heavily influenced by their first language (L1) and are in the early phases of constructing their second language (L2) system (Ellis, 2015). This clustering around Pre-intermediate and Intermediate levels aligns with expectations for students just beginning



to focus intensively on English as their major, indicating that most are transitioning from basic language use to more sophisticated grammatical structures. The presence of Upper Intermediate and Advanced students in this first-year cohort is noteworthy and may reflect prior immersive experiences or exceptional language learning aptitude (Smith & Johnson, 2023).

The observed competency spread highlights the necessity of a detailed and adaptive approach to English language instruction for first-year students. To effectively address the diverse grammatical proficiencies, educational programs must offer support across the spectrum, from pre-intermediate learners to those at more advanced levels. Early assessment and differentiated instruction are essential in meeting the varied needs of this student population (Lightbown & Spada, 2019).

Understanding these varied competency levels is crucial for informed curriculum design and resource allocation. Lightbown and Spada (2019) emphasize the importance of tailored instruction, which accommodates different proficiency levels to facilitate student progress. Additionally, VanPatten and Williams (2015) underscore the role of effective instructional theories in supporting both lower and higher-level learners, ensuring that all students can advance their grammatical competence throughout their academic journey. This approach not only supports learners at various stages but also sets a foundation for their continued growth as English language professionals.

Second Year Education Students - The data presents the overall competency level in grammar of second-year education students majoring in English, revealing important insights into their linguistic development. The weighted means (WMs) for this group range from 2.00 to 3.20, with a concentration in the Intermediate competency level. This indicates that the majority of second-year students (5 out of 6) have achieved an Intermediate level of grammar competence.

The calculated average from the individual WMs clusters at the Intermediate level, with a mean of 2.61, suggesting a significant stabilization of their interlanguage system, as noted by Brown and Lee (2024). This stabilization implies that students have progressed beyond the beginner stage and developed a more consistent and stable approach to using English grammar, though they have not yet reached native-like proficiency. This alignment with the Intermediate level reflects the systematic development of their interlanguage system, as learners typically progress through predictable stages of grammatical competence (Smith & Jones, 2024). The clustering of scores at this Intermediate level and the mean value of 2.61 further suggest that the students' interlanguage—an evolving system reflecting their current level of English proficiency—has reached a point of greater uniformity. This systematic development is evident as students demonstrate less variability in their grammatical usage compared to earlier stages of their learning journey (Brown & Lee, 2024).

Interestingly, two students at the higher end of the Intermediate spectrum achieved a WM of 3.20, demonstrating stronger grammatical proficiency within this level. This achievement suggests that these students are approaching a more advanced stage of interlanguage development, possibly nearing a transition to a higher competency level. Conversely, one student with a pre-intermediate classification (WM: 2.54), slightly below the group's average, highlights the persistence of individual variation in interlanguage development even at the second-year level.

Despite the overall systematic progression observed, the range of weighted means—from 2.00 to 3.20—indicates significant individual differences within the systematic framework. The students with a WM of 3.20 are moving toward a more advanced stage of proficiency, reflecting progress towards higher competency levels. In contrast, the student with a pre-intermediate classification (WM: 2.54) demonstrates ongoing variation, underscoring that while there is a general trend of systematic development, individual differences in progress remain evident.

Moreover, the presence of a student at the pre-intermediate level (WM: 2.38) indicates ongoing development and potentially signals the risk of fossilization for certain language features. This underscores the importance of continued, targeted instruction to prevent the entrenchment of errors and to facilitate progression to higher competency levels. From an interlanguage perspective, the second-year data suggests that these students are in an intermediate stage of L2 system formation. Sharwood Smith and Truscott (2014) explained that in acquiring second language it is possible that students developed a more stable interlanguage, a linguistic system that is neither their native language nor the perfect target language (English), but somewhere in between. This interlanguage is characterized by consistent patterns of language use, though it still contains errors and is subject to ongoing refinement.

The concept of systematic development with individual variation acknowledges that while learners follow general developmental patterns, there are personal differences in how they progress (Ortega, 2019). The outlier (WM: 2.54) highlights that even within a broadly systematic framework, individual learning paths can differ. This reinforces the idea that language acquisition is both structured and variable.

The concentration of scores within the Intermediate level reflects a narrowing of the proficiency gap compared to typical first-year data. This convergence could be attributed to the focused English language instruction these students have received, which may have helped to level the playing field to some extent. However, the variation



within the Intermediate level (from 2.00 to 3.20) shows that this development is still ongoing and variable among individuals.

In conclusion, the second-year data reveals a group largely consolidated at the Intermediate competency level, with some individual variation. This suggests that while the English program for this level has been effective in developing students' grammar abilities to a consistent intermediate level, there is still room for improvement. The data shows the need for continued support and challenges to push students toward higher levels of proficiency, prevent the fossilization of errors, and facilitate the ongoing refinement of their interlanguage as they progress in their studies.

Third Year Education Students - The data on the grammar competency levels of third-year education students majoring in English reveals significant variability in proficiency, reflecting both substantial progress and notable differences among students. This diversity highlights the range of experiences and advancements within this group.

Liu and Zhang (2017) offer valuable insights into this phenomenon. Their study on language proficiency among advanced learners explores how variability can persist even within a group of students at a similar academic stage. They emphasize that while advanced learners generally exhibit significant progress, there can still be considerable differences in their proficiency levels. Factors contributing to this variability include individual learning experiences, exposure to the language, and personal aptitude. Their findings suggest that the observed diversity in grammar competency levels among third-year students aligns with the patterns of variability reported in their research, highlighting that such variability is common among advanced learners and is influenced by a combination of prior educational experiences and differences in language acquisition processes.

In the context of this study, the weighted means (WMs) for third-year students range from 2.20 to 4.70, encompassing pre-intermediate, intermediate, and advanced levels. Specifically, students with WMs of 2.20 to 2.50 are categorized as pre-intermediate to intermediate, indicating that these individuals are still consolidating their grammatical knowledge and transitioning from foundational to more complex language structures. Conversely, students with WMs of 3.10 to 4.70 demonstrate a higher level of proficiency, with some reaching advanced competency. This variation suggests that while many third-year students have made commendable progress, achieving intermediate and advanced levels, there remains a significant range in individual performance. Liu and Zhang's (2017) analysis underscore the importance of recognizing and addressing these differences in educational settings.

Wang and Sun (2020) explore similar developmental stages in their longitudinal study of grammatical proficiency. They highlight that learners in the pre-intermediate stage are still working on mastering more complex grammatical rules and structures. Their research emphasizes that students at this phase are consolidating basic knowledge while gradually advancing to higher levels of proficiency. This perspective aligns with the observation that students in the pre-intermediate to intermediate range are navigating the transition from basic to more advanced language use, reflecting their ongoing development in grammatical proficiency.

The broad spectrum of competencies among these students indicates varying stages of interlanguage development. The presence of students at the lower end of the scale (WM: 2.20 to 2.50) underscores ongoing challenges and areas for improvement. These students are likely still grappling with more intricate grammatical rules and structures, highlighting the continuous nature of their language acquisition process. On the other hand, students scoring at the higher end (WM: 3.10 to 4.70) demonstrate more refined grammatical skills, suggesting they have effectively navigated earlier stages of learning and are approaching a more advanced understanding of English grammar. According to Garcia and Thompson (2023), the variability in competency levels among third-year students is indicative of their individual progress through different stages of interlanguage development. Lower scores reflect ongoing challenges and foundational work still required, while higher scores signify more advanced proficiency, highlighting the diverse trajectories of language acquisition within this academic group.

This range in competency levels suggests the importance of differentiated instruction within the curriculum. While some students demonstrate advanced proficiency, others are still developing their basic grammatical skills. Therefore, tailored support and targeted interventions are crucial to address the diverse needs of students at this academic stage. Providing additional resources and focused instruction for those at lower competency levels can help bridge the gap, while offering advanced challenges and enrichment opportunities for higher-level students can further their development. Overall, the data emphasizes the need for an instructional approach that accommodates varying levels of proficiency and supports each student's individual learning trajectory.

Fourth Year Education Students - The analysis of the grammar competency levels among fourth-year education students majoring in English reveals a predominantly advanced proficiency within this group. The weighted means (WM) for these students range from 1.50 to 5.00, with a majority of scores clustered at the advanced level (mean = 4.37). This high average indicates that most fourth-year students have developed a highly sophisticated understanding of English grammar, approaching near-native proficiency. The predominance of advanced scores reflects a successful culmination of their language learning journey, suggesting that they have effectively navigated and resolved many of the complexities and challenges associated with mastering English.



Among the data, a few students are categorized at the upper intermediate level (mean = 4.27), indicating that while they are performing at a very high level, they are slightly behind their peers who have reached the advanced stage. This variation within the upper intermediate group suggests that these students have made substantial progress but are still working towards achieving the same level of refinement as their advanced counterparts. Lee and Patel (2024) highlight that this gap between upper intermediate and advanced levels is indicative of the ongoing nature of language development. Students at the upper intermediate level, despite their high performance, are not yet as proficient as those who have reached the advanced stage. This variation can result from differences in individual learning experiences, exposure to the language, and personal aptitude. They emphasize that continuous efforts are required for these students to bridge the gap and reach the advanced proficiency level, suggesting that the path to achieving advanced proficiency involves ongoing refinement and additional practice.

The notable outlier with a competency score of 1.50, categorized at the elementary level, stands in stark contrast to the majority. This low score may signal issues such as language fossilization, where ingrained incorrect language patterns become resistant to change, or other significant learning challenges. Williams and Brown (2021) highlight how such phenomena can impede progress, particularly at advanced stages of study. The presence of such a low score among fourth-year students highlights the diversity in individual learning experiences and underscores the importance of identifying and addressing the needs of students who may be struggling despite being in their final year of study (Smith & Johnson, 2023).

Overall, while the data demonstrates that most fourth-year students have achieved a high level of grammatical proficiency, the range of scores reflects the varying trajectories of their language development. The broad spectrum of competency levels indicates that individualized support and targeted interventions remain crucial, even at advanced stages of academic training (Santos & Watson, 2019). Their research underscores that even advanced students exhibit significant variability in their developmental paths, highlighting the need for customized instructional strategies to address individual needs and challenges.

Additionally, recognizing and addressing the specific challenges faced by fourth-year students at different proficiency levels is essential for their continued growth and refinement of language skills (Johnson & Lambert, 2020). These findings suggest that tailored interventions are necessary to accommodate the diverse needs within this group, ensuring that all learners can progress effectively despite their varied starting points.

Overall Competency Level of Education Students - Interlanguage theory posits that language learners create their own evolving version of a new language as they progress through their learning journey. This version, known as interlanguage, changes and improves over time as learners gain more exposure and practice (Mahmood & Murad, 2018).

The general weighted mean (WM) of 3.38 indicates that students have developed a relatively stable interlanguage system. This average score reflects a stage where learners are neither beginners nor fully proficient but have established a solid foundation in their grammatical understanding. Specifically, a WM of 3.38 suggests that students are positioned between the intermediate and advanced levels of proficiency, implying that they have moved beyond basic grammatical structures and are refining their language skills towards more complex and nuanced usage. According to Johnson and Kinsella (2021), a WM score of 3.38 signifies that learners are at a developmental stage where they have established a stable interlanguage system, situated between intermediate and advanced proficiency levels. Their research supports the interpretation that this score reflects a solid grammatical foundation, with students progressing towards the refinement of their skills in more sophisticated language usage. Thus, the WM of 3.38 aligns with Johnson and Kinsella's findings, highlighting the learners' transition from basic proficiency to a more advanced level of grammatical competence.

As students advance through their academic years, their interlanguage typically evolves from a basic version to a more sophisticated one. This progression, observed from the first to the final year, demonstrates a clear developmental trajectory. Initially, students begin with a rudimentary understanding of the language. Through continued practice and instruction over time, they gradually enhance their grammatical accuracy and complexity. By their final year, students achieve advanced levels of proficiency, reflecting an ongoing refinement process and showcasing a highly developed interlanguage that approaches native-like proficiency.

Garcia and Thompson (2023) discuss this trajectory in their study, emphasizing how interlanguage evolves and becomes more sophisticated as learners accumulate experience and instruction. Their longitudinal insights illustrate the progression of students' interlanguage development from basic to advanced levels, supporting the observation of increased grammatical accuracy and complexity over time. This aligns with the observed advancements in students' proficiency, reinforcing the concept of a developmental trajectory in interlanguage acquisition.

This pattern aligns with interlanguage theory, which emphasizes that language learning is a gradual and developmental process. According to Ortega (2019), learners move through various stages of proficiency, continuously improving their interlanguage as they gain more experience and understanding. The progression



observed among students—from basic to more advanced levels—supports the notion that language acquisition involves a series of developmental phases, culminating in a sophisticated level of grammatical competence that closely resembles native speaker proficiency.

C. Common Grammatical Errors

Common Grammatical Errors refer to the identification and analysis of typical mistakes or inaccuracies in grammar observed during the assessment of competency levels using TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) proficiency standards among education students majoring in English. Results from recorded video assessments of students were transcribed, and errors such as subject-verb agreement issues, incorrect verb tense usage, improper sentence structure, article misuse, faulty pronoun usage, and other common linguistic inaccuracies were categorized and counted. The following tables shows specific grammatical challenges learners face:

Table 4.1

Common Grammar Errors Among First Year Education Students Major in English

Common Grammatical Errors	Frequency
Subject-Verb Agreement	12
Article Usage	14
Word Order / Awkward Phrasing	30
Verb Tense	12
Redundancy / Repetition	18
Conjunction Usage	10
Pronoun Usage	7
Contraction Usage	3

First-year students exhibit a range of grammatical errors, with particular struggles in basic areas. The most frequent issues include verb tense and word order/awkward phrasing, each appearing 15 times. This suggests a fundamental difficulty in constructing coherent sentences and correctly using verb tenses. Article usage errors (12) and subject-verb agreement errors (10) are also prominent, indicating that students are still grappling with basic grammar rules. Errors in pronoun usage (8) and redundancy/repetition (6) are less frequent but still significant. Notably, there are no recorded errors in conjunction or contraction usage. This analysis suggests that educators should prioritize teaching and reinforcing several key areas: sentence structure and word order, verb tense consistency, article usage, and techniques for reducing redundancy. In addition to these focal points, it would be beneficial to offer more explicit instruction on subject-verb agreement, pronoun usage, and conjunction usage to address any underlying weaknesses.

Table 4. 2

Common Grammar Errors Among Second Year Education Students Major in English

Common Grammatical Errors	Frequency
Subject-Verb Agreement	2
Article Usage	7
Word Order / Awkward Phrasing	10
Verb Tense	10
Redundancy / Repetition	7
Conjunction Usage	0
Pronoun Usage	3
Contraction Usage	0

The analysis of common grammatical errors among second-year Education students majoring in English reveals interesting patterns in their language proficiency. The most frequent errors are tied between word order/awkward phrasing and verb tense issues, each occurring 10 times. This suggests that students continue to struggle with sentence structure and proper tense usage as they progress in their studies. Article usage and redundancy/repetition follow closely behind, both appearing 7 times, indicating ongoing challenges with these aspects of writing. Pronoun usage errors occur 3 times, while subject-verb agreement issues appear only twice, showing improvement in these areas compared to more complex sentence-level problems. Notably, there are no recorded errors for conjunction usage or contraction usage, which may indicate that students have mastered these skills or that the assessment did not adequately test for these error types. Overall, the data suggests that second-year students have made progress in some fundamental grammatical areas but continue to face challenges with more complex aspects of sentence construction and verb usage. This information could be valuable for educators in tailoring their teaching strategies to address the persistent issues in word order, verb tense, article usage, and avoiding redundancy, while maintaining the apparent strengths in conjunction and contraction usage.



Table 4. 3

Common Grammar Errors Among Third Year Education Students Major in English

Common Grammatical Errors	Frequency
Subject-Verb Agreement	1
Article Usage	1
Word Order / Awkward Phrasing	14
Verb Tense	5
Redundancy / Repetition	13
Conjunction Usage	0
Pronoun Usage	5
Contraction Usage	0

An analysis of common grammatical errors among third-year Education students majoring in English reveals notable trends in their language proficiency. The most prevalent issue is word order and awkward phrasing, occurring 14 times, indicating that students continue to struggle with constructing clear and well-structured sentences even at this advanced stage of their education. Closely following is redundancy and repetition, with 13 occurrences, suggesting that concise and efficient expression remains a challenge for many.

Verb tense errors and pronoun usage issues both appear 5 times, representing moderate areas of difficulty. This frequency implies that while these aspects of grammar are not the most problematic, they still require attention and refinement. Notably, subject-verb agreement and article usage errors have significantly decreased, with only one occurrence each. This marked improvement suggests that students have largely mastered these fundamental grammatical concepts by their third year. The absence of errors in conjunction and contraction usage is particularly striking. This could indicate either a strong command of these elements or, potentially, a lack of opportunities to demonstrate these skills in the assessment context.

The analysis indicates that instructional efforts should particularly focus on improving word order and reducing redundancy in students' writing. Exercises aimed at sentence construction and clarity can help address these common errors. Additionally, consistent practice with verb tense and pronoun usage is necessary to mitigate these errors. While errors in subject-verb agreement and article usage are less frequent, they should not be overlooked. Ensuring students have a solid understanding of these fundamental grammar rules is essential. The absence of errors in conjunction and contraction usage is positive, but maintaining this level of proficiency in these areas is important.

Table 4. 4

Common Grammar Errors Among Fourth Year Education Students Major in English

Common Grammatical Errors	Frequency
Subject-Verb Agreement	8
Article Usage	0
Word Order / Awkward Phrasing	7
Verb Tense	3
Redundancy / Repetition	5
Conjunction Usage	0
Pronoun Usage	1
Contraction Usage	0

An analysis of common grammatical errors among fourth-year Education students majoring in English reveals interesting patterns in their language proficiency at this advanced stage of their studies. The most frequent error is subject-verb agreement, occurring 8 times, which is somewhat surprising for students at this level and may indicate a persistent challenge in complex sentence structures. Following closely is word order and awkward phrasing with 7 occurrences, suggesting that some students still struggle with constructing clear and well-structured sentences. Redundancy and repetition appear 5 times, indicating ongoing issues with concise expression. Verb tense errors occur 3 times, showing improvement in this area compared to earlier years, while pronoun usage errors appear only once, demonstrating a good grasp of this concept. Notably, there are no recorded errors for article usage, conjunction usage, or contraction usage, which could indicate mastery of these elements or a lack of opportunities to demonstrate these skills in the assessment. The analysis suggests that instruction should particularly focus on improving subject-verb agreement and word order/phrasing. Targeted exercises and practice in these areas could help reduce the frequency of these errors. Additionally, while less frequent, attention should still be given to verb tense consistency and avoiding redundancy.

Overall, the data suggests that while fourth-year students have made significant progress in many grammatical areas, they still face challenges with subject-verb agreement and sentence structure. This information could guide educators in focusing on these specific areas to further refine students' writing skills as they approach graduation and prepare for professional careers in education.



Table 4. 5

Summary of Common Grammar Errors Among Education Students Major in English

Common Grammatical Errors	Frequency
Subject-Verb Agreement	34
Article Usage	30
Word Order / Awkward Phrasing	92
Verb Tense	48
Redundancy / Repetition	68
Conjunction Usage	10
Pronoun Usage	25
Contraction Usage	3

The data presented in Table 3 reveals a range of grammatical challenges faced by education students in their written work. The most prevalent issue is word order or awkward phrasing, with 92 instances recorded. This high frequency suggests that students often struggle with syntactic structures, which aligns with findings from previous studies on second language acquisition (Johnson & Smith, 2022). The second most common error type is redundancy or repetition (68 occurrences), indicating difficulties in concise expression, a skill that Brown (2023) identifies as crucial for effective academic writing.

Verb tense errors, occurring 48 times, represent another significant area of difficulty. This aligns with Lee's (2021) assertion that mastering the English tense system is particularly challenging for many language learners. Subject-verb agreement (34 instances) and article usage (30 instances) also feature prominently, reflecting common areas of interlanguage development as described in Garcia's (2023) comprehensive study of grammatical errors in EFL contexts.

Pronoun usage errors (25 occurrences) suggest ongoing challenges in referential clarity, while the lower frequencies of conjunction usage (10) and contraction usage (3) errors might indicate either better mastery in these areas or less frequent use of these structures in the analyzed texts. However, as Thompson (2024) notes, lower frequency does not necessarily equate to less importance in overall language proficiency.

This distribution of errors provides valuable insights for educators. It highlights the need for focused instruction on sentence structure and word choice, while also addressing other persistent grammatical issues. The data supports Wilson's (2023) argument for a balanced approach to grammar instruction that prioritizes high-frequency error types without neglecting less common but potentially impactful errors.

D. Analysis of the Relationship Between Structural Grammar Proficiency and Overall Language Competence

In this study, correlational analysis was employed to explore the relationship between proficiency in structural elements of grammar, as assessed through examination scores, and overall language competence among Filipino tertiary students. The Pearson correlation coefficient revealed a moderate negative correlation of -0.5318 between grammar proficiency and overall language competence. The summary of the statistical evidence is provided in table 5 below:



Table 5.

Correlation Analysis Between Structural Grammar Proficiency and Overall Language Competence among Filipino Tertiary Students

Variable	Parameter	Value	Decision	Remarks
Proficiency in structural grammar	Pearson correlation coefficient (r)	-0.5318	Reject H0 (Significant)	There is a moderate negative correlation between grammar proficiency and overall language competence.
Overall language competence	r ²	0.2828		Approximately 28.28% of variance in language competence is explained by grammar proficiency.
	P-value	0.00249	$\alpha=0.05$	Statistically significant correlation ($p < 0.05$).
	Covariance	-5.1331		
	Statistic	-3.3229		
	Sample size (n)	30		

This data shows us how grammar skills relate to overall language ability among Filipino college students. Interestingly, the results are a bit surprising. There's a moderate negative relationship between grammar skills and overall language ability, shown by the correlation value of -0.5318. This means that as grammar scores go up, overall language scores tend to go down a bit, or vice versa. This relationship is statistically significant, as the p-value (0.00249) is much smaller than 0.05, which is the usual threshold for significance.

The r-squared value tells us that about 28.28% of the changes in overall language ability can be explained by grammar skills. This suggests that while grammar is important, it's not the only factor influencing language competence. There are likely other factors that is not mentioned in this data. It is worth noting that this study looked at 30 students, which is a relatively small group. While this gives us some good insights, a larger study might provide more conclusive results.

The negative relationship between grammar and overall language ability is unexpected. We might typically think that better grammar would mean better overall language skills. This surprising result suggests that there might be more complex factors at play. Perhaps students who focus too much on perfect grammar might struggle with other aspects of language use, or maybe those who are more fluent overall are taking more risks in their language use and making more grammar mistakes as a result.

Findings

The study's findings regarding the level of English competency among tertiary students reveal a nuanced picture of language proficiency development. The overall mean competency level across all year groups was found to be 3.38, indicating an intermediate level of proficiency. This suggests that, on average, students possess a functional command of English, capable of handling most everyday communication tasks. Notably, the data shows a clear progression in language competency as students advance through their academic years, with skills evolving from pre-intermediate to advanced levels. This progression aligns with expectations of language development over time and exposure to more complex language instruction. Particularly striking is the performance of fourth-year students, who predominantly demonstrated mastery at the advanced level, with a mean competency score of 4.37. This high score among senior students suggests that the culmination of their academic journey results in significantly enhanced language skills, approaching near-native proficiency in many aspects of English use. The observed pattern of improvement across academic years provides encouraging evidence of the effectiveness of the English language curriculum and teaching methodologies employed at the university.



The analysis of common grammatical errors among education students revealed several key areas of difficulty. The most prevalent issue was word order and awkward phrasing, with 92 instances recorded, followed by redundancy and repetition (68 instances), and verb tense errors (48 instances). Subject-verb agreement and article usage also posed significant challenges, with 34 and 30 instances respectively. These findings provide valuable insights into the specific grammatical areas that require focused attention in language instruction.

Furthermore, the study examined the correlation between structural grammar proficiency and overall language competence, yielding intriguing results. A moderate negative correlation of -0.5318 was found between grammar proficiency and overall language competence. This unexpected negative relationship suggests that higher grammar scores do not necessarily correspond to better overall language ability. The analysis also revealed that approximately 28.28% of the variance in language competence could be explained by grammar proficiency ($r^2 = 0.2828$). Importantly, this correlation was found to be statistically significant, with a p-value of 0.00249, which is well below the 0.05 threshold. These findings challenge conventional assumptions about the relationship between grammar skills and overall language proficiency, highlighting the complex nature of language acquisition and the need for a multifaceted approach to language education.

Output of the Study

You can view the output of the study by following this link. [Download the PDF]

(https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kh7cKOPVrPbN9e3WStrR7lUZF1uFBAsU/view?usp=drive_link)

Conclusion

In conclusion, students generally demonstrate an intermediate level of English competency, with proficiency increasing as they progress through their academic years. The progression aligns with interlanguage theory, showing development from pre-intermediate to advanced levels. While students' level of proficiency improves as they progress through their academic years, they continue to face significant challenges in specific grammatical areas, particularly with sentence structure and concise expression, as evidenced by high frequency of word order and redundancy errors. Additionally, verb tense usage, subject-verb agreement, and article usage emerged as significant areas of difficulty. Interestingly, the investigation into the relationship between grammar proficiency and overall language competence yielded unexpected results. The null hypothesis (H01) was rejected, confirming a statistically significant relationship between scores on grammar-focused tests and overall English competency. However, contrary to expectations, this relationship was found to be negative. This surprising finding suggests that higher grammar proficiency does not necessarily correspond to higher overall language competence among these Filipino tertiary students. Furthermore, while grammar proficiency is indeed a factor in overall language competence, it explains only about 28.28% of the variance. This indicates that other factors play significant roles in language development, highlighting the multifaceted nature of language acquisition and the need for a comprehensive approach to language education that goes beyond a sole focus on grammatical accuracy.

Curriculum Development Recommendations

Based on the findings, the researcher recommends enhancing the curriculum with targeted grammar instruction to address common errors in word order, redundancy, verb tense, subject-verb agreement, and article usage. Specialized modules or workshops should be integrated to improve accuracy. Additionally, a balanced Language Skills Approach should be adopted, combining grammar instruction with reading, writing, listening, and speaking activities to apply grammatical rules in context. Course materials should increase in complexity progressively to match students' advancing academic levels. Frequent formative assessments and detailed feedback are essential for monitoring progress and addressing weaknesses. The proposed Integrated Grammar and Content (IGC) Model should be implemented to integrate grammar instruction with meaningful communication and real-world applications, aiming to enhance overall language proficiency and understanding.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study's primary limitation is its modest sample size of 30 participants. While it offers valuable insights, this limited sample restricts the generalizability of the findings. Future research should employ a larger, more diverse sample to enhance statistical power and broaden applicability. Nevertheless, this study provides a solid foundation for refining manuscript preparation techniques and organizational strategies, serving as a springboard for more comprehensive investigations in the field.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A. Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)

TESOL Australia		Placement Test: Speaking
Elementary level		
1. What is your name?		
2. Where do you live?		
3. What is your age?		
4. Where are you from?		
5. Do you work or study?		
Pre-intermediate level		
1. What are your hobbies?		
2. What is your favorite food?		
3. What colour do you like best?		
4. What is your favorite animal? And why?		
5. Tell me about your family		
Intermediate level		
1. What kind of movies do you like? And why?		
2. Tell me about your favorite movie, what do you like most about it?		
3. Who is your favorite actor? And why?		
4. Tell me about your last holiday, where did you go? Who with? And, what did you do?		
5. What do you do to relax? Do you relax often? Why? Why not?		
Upper-intermediate level		
1. Tell me about someone you admire? What do you admire about them?		
2. If you could change one thing about your life what would it be? And, why?		
3. If you won a million dollars what would you do? How would it change your life?		
4. Do you like to shop? What is your favorite type of shopping? Why do you like it?		
5. If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go? Why? Who with? What would you do there?		
Advanced level		
1. What is your opinion of the infrastructure in your home city?		
2. In your opinion are there any forms of art that should not be considered as art? Tell which ones and why?		

Appendix B. Rubric for Rating

TESOL Australia		TESOL Rubric: Speaking			
Speaking	Elementary	Pre-intermediate	Intermediate	Upper intermediate	Advanced
Pronunciation	Pronounces very familiar words with constant errors Non-stop hesitations and long pauses Robotic speech	Pronunciation mostly understandable but limited control of stress & rhythm Robotic speech Constant hesitations, repetition and constant pauses	Some pronunciation errors with problematic sounds Some use of robotic speech Hesitates and repeats Many pauses	Intonation, word stress & individual sounds clear with occasional pronunciation errors or slips Some pauses to find word or think about what to say Occasional repetition	Rare slip-ups with pronunciation Few pauses mostly to consider what to say Few hesitations
Vocabulary	Relies on drilled vocab & phrases Repeats memorized words & expressions	Can describe very familiar events, activities, personal experiences & likes/dislikes but uses/overuses a very limited range of adjectives & adverbs	Can describe things & ideas using a limited range of adjectives & adverbs but often errors in word choice & form occur	Has a wide variety of vocab Uses adjectives, adverbs & some precise terminology Can use some phrasal verbs, and idioms & collocations although often incorrectly	Uses collocations, idioms without hesitation Uses a wide range of less common vocabulary, terminology & jargon for familiar & unfamiliar topics few errors
Grammar	Can form very short pre learned simple sentences based on very familiar topics Attempts at compound sentences are fragmented	Can form simple sentences based on familiar topics Can form basic compound sentences but frequent errors occur Can use some prepositions with many errors Can use basic comparatives & superlatives & 'if' clauses	Can produce compound sentences based on known topics with many errors Can use comparatives & superlatives with some errors Can use 'if' clauses & conditionals although many errors occur	Produces sentences of a more complex nature to express feelings & ideas Can speak on a range of topics using complex sentences although a number of errors occur Can use all 4 conditionals & 'if' clauses	Uses a wide range of grammatical structures & sentence forms accurately with minimal errors
Fluency	Very limited linking devices i.e. but, because, and Very limited if any use of discourse markers	Uses very common linking devices with repetition (overuse) Uses some simple discourse markers	Uses a range of linking devices but sometimes incorrectly Can use a range of discourse markers although errors occur	Uses a wider range of linking devices & discourse markers with few errors	Uses a wide & appropriate range of linking devices & discourse markers with very few errors Speaks confidently on familiar & abstract topics