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English Grammar Performance of Freshman Students in the College of Arts of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines: Implications for Effective English Instruction A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of the College of Languages and Linguistics Polytechnic University of the Philippines Sta. Mesa, Manila In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Bachelor of Arts in English by Andrade, Jamaica M. Andres, Donita R. Cardenas, Jonalyn B. Maranan, Ann Jenina B.

September 2010 CERTIFICATION OF ORIGINALITY This is to certify that the research work presented in this thesis entitled “ English Grammar Performance of First Year Students in the College of Arts of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines: Implications for Effective English Instruction” for the degree Bachelor of Arts in English at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines embodies the result of original and scholarly work carried out by the researchers.

This thesis does not contain words or ideas taken from published sources or written works that have been accepted as basis for the award of degree from any higher education institution, except where proper referencing and acknowledgements were made. Andrade, Jamaica M. Andres, Donita R. Cardenas, Jonalyn B. Maranan, Ann Jenina B. The Researchers September 2010 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS “ Alone we can do little; together we can do so much”. Completing this research took a lot of effort and time.

Patience, concentration, hard work, dedication, expert ideas, and words of wisdom are the keys to produce such work. With this, the researchers would like to extend their sincerest thanks and deepest gratitude to certain

individuals who have given their generous support and assistance for the successful completion of this undertaking. To Dr. Valentino B. Jasul, thesis adviser, for his concern, encouragement, and enthusiasm in sharing his expertise to the researchers, they could never have embarked and started all this without his teachings.

To the members of the panel, for sharing their knowledge, words of wisdom, and constructive criticisms that served as a guide for the researchers to be persistent in completing this study. To Dr. Renato E. Apa-ap, for sharing his expertise in work's statistical treatment of data. To Dr. Nenita F. Buan, dean of the College of Arts, for her motherly support and for allowing the researchers to conduct a survey to her students in the said college. To the respondents of this study, freshman students of the College of Arts, for their wholehearted cooperation in answering the questionnaire form.

To Jerome N. Tuazon, for his kindness, concern, time, and willingness to share his bright thoughts and ideas for the researchers to finish this research work. To the ABE senior students, most specially to the researchers' friends, for their support, friendly pieces of advice, and continuous encouragement, those have been a source of deep friendship and collaboration. To the family of the researchers, for their financial support, patience, endless words of inspiration, understanding, and love that led the researchers to pursue this study. Finally, to our Almighty God, Who helped, guided and never ailed the researchers all throughout the conduct of this study. Without Him, the researchers can do nothing. J. M. A. D. R. A. J. B. C. A. J. B. M. ABSTRACT

Title : English Grammar Performance of Freshman Students in the College of Arts of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines: Implications to Effective

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**The Problem** The main objective of the study was to determine the grammar performance of freshman students in the College of Arts of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines. The research also aimed to answer the following questions: What is the profile of the college freshman students in terms of gender, course, year and section, and type of high school attended? What is the respondents' level of performance in terms of mean distribution along the following grammar skills: Asking Questions, Responding to Questions, Combining Sentences, and Expanding Sentences?

What is the respondents' level of performance in each of the above mentioned grammar skills when grouped according to the following variables: gender, course, year and section, and type of high school attended? Is there a significant difference in the respondents' performance ratings on each of the above mentioned grammar skills when grouped according to section? Is there a significant difference in the respondents' performance ratings on each of the above mentioned grammar skills when grouped according to degree program? **Research Methodology**

The study utilized the descriptive method of educational research. The respondents were 407 students from the College of Arts of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines during the school year 2010-2011. The instrument used was a grammar test. Data were gathered by the

researchers personally after permission had been granted by the Dean of the College of Arts. Frequency and percentage distribution were used to determine the profile of the respondents. Mean was used to determine the grammar performance of the respondents in terms of the different aspects.

T-test for two independent samples was used to determine the significant difference on the grammar performance of the respondents with respect to gender and type of high school attended. Summary of Findings 1.

**Respondents' Profile** The sample size is composed of 283 female and 124 male respondents. Among all the sections tested, the largest number of respondents was from BSS 1-1 with 48 students. Both ABH 1-1 and ABP 1-1 obtained the frequency of 47. ABTA 1-1, BSCP 1-1, and 1-2 obtained the frequency of 45. BLIS 1-1 has a frequency of 44, while BSIOP 1-1 and 1-2 are considered the lowest source of respondents, obtaining a frequency of 43.

The findings revealed that a large proportion of the respondents attended public high schools, obtaining a frequency of 306 of the total number of respondents, while the respondents who attended private high schools accounted for a frequency of 101. 2. Respondents' Level of Performance According to Skills: The researchers found out that BSIOP and BSCP got a "proficient" performance in grammar skill Test I (asking questions). On the same type of test, ABH obtained the lowest mean with a "moderately proficient" level of performance.

However, in the second grammar skill Test II (responding to questions), BSS got a "proficient" level of performance while ABH obtained a performance level "fairly proficient." The third grammar skill, Test III (combining

sentences), shows that only BSIOP reached the performance rating “ proficient” while sections ABH and ABP got a “ moderately proficient” performance. In the last grammar test, Test IV (expanding sentences) the findings show that a “ proficient” performance was obtained only by BSIOP and ABH. 3. Respondents’ Level of Performance when Grouped According to:

### 3. 1 Gender

The grand mean on the level of performance when grouped according to gender in Test I (asking questions), shows that more than 50% of the male and female respondents got a “ fairly proficient” mark. The grand mean obtained by the male respondents in Test II (responding to questions) got a performance level that corresponds to “ fairly proficient” while the female respondents obtained a “ proficient” level of performance as a result of their acquired rating. The male respondents’ obtained grand mean in Test III (combining sentences) revealed that they got a performance level “ fairly proficient” same as with the female respondents.

In the last grammar skill Test IV (expanding sentences) the male respondents obtained a grand mean performance “ moderately proficient” unlike the female respondents who obtained a grand mean performance “ fairly proficient”. 3. 2 Course, Year and Section Findings revealed that BSCP 1-1 obtained a “ proficient” level performance in Test I (asking questions), BSIOP 1-1 got the same performance in Tests II (responding to questions) and III (combining sentences) same as with the last grammar skill Test IV (expanding sentences) and BSIOP 1-2 obtained a “ proficient” level of performance.

On the other hand, ABH 1-1 had a “moderately proficient” performance in Test I (asking questions). The same section obtained a “fairly proficient” performance in Test II (responding to questions) and a “moderately proficient” performance in Test III (combining sentences) together with ABP 1-1. The same performance in Test IV (expanding sentences) was also recorded.

### 3. 3 Type of High School Attended

The respondents’ level of performance when grouped according to type of high school attended recorded the following data: “fairly proficient” for the respondents who graduated from different public and private high schools; “fairly proficient” for the students who graduated from public high schools and “proficient” for the students who graduated from private high schools in Test II (Responding to Questions); “fairly proficient” in Test III (Combining Sentences) for both respondents who graduated from public and private high schools; and, “fairly proficient” in Test IV (Expanding Sentences) for the respondents who graduated from different public and private high schools.

### 4.

#### Difference Among the Performance Ratings in the Grammar Skills when Grouped according to Section 4. 1 Gender

There was no significant difference among the performance ratings of the male and female respondents in all the sections except for BSS 1-1 in Test I (asking questions); in all other sections except for BLIS 1-1 in Test II (responding to questions); in sections BSS 1-1, BSIOP 1-1, BSCP 1-1, ABH 1-1, ABTA 1-1, BSCP 1-2, BSIOP 1-2, and BLIS 1-1 in Test III (combining sentences); and, in sections ABH 1-1, BSCP 1-2, BSIOP 1-2, and BLIS 1-1 in the last grammar skill Test IV (expanding sentences), as shown by the obtained P-values which are all greater than the level of significance which is 0.05.

This indicates the acceptance of the null hypothesis which states that, “ There is no significant difference among the respondents’ performance ratings in the different grammar skills when grouped according to gender. ” However, there was a significant difference among the performance ratings of the male and female respondents in BSS 1-1 in Test I (asking questions), in BLIS 1-1 in Test II (responding to questions), in ABP 1-1 in Test III (combining sentences), and in BSS 1-1, BSIOP 1-1, BSCP 1-1, ABTA 1-1, and ABP 1-1 in Test IV (expanding sentences) because their obtained values are lesser than the standard level of significance at 0. 5 indicating that the null hypothesis which states that, “ There is no significant difference among the respondents’ performance ratings in the different grammar skills when grouped according to gender,” is rejected.

4. 2 Section There was no significant difference among the performance ratings of the respondents from all sections in all the four grammar skills (asking questions, responding to questions, combining sentences, and expanding sentences) as shown by their obtained values which are all greater than the standard level of significance at 0. 05 indicating that the null hypothesis which states that, “ There is no significant difference among the respondents’ performance ratings in the different grammar skills when grouped according to section,” is then accepted.

4. 3 Type of High School Attended

There was no significant difference in the performance ratings of the respondents who graduated from different public and private high school in sections BSIOP 1-1, BSCP 1-1, ABH 1-1, BSCP 1-2, BSIOP 1-2, and BLIS 1-1 in Test I (asking questions), in sections BSS 1-1, BSIOP 1-1, BSCP 1-1, ABTA 1-1, BSCP 1-2, BSIOP 1-2, and BLIS 1-1 in Test II (responding to questions), in



sections BSS 1-1, BSIOP 1-1, BSCP 1-1, ABH 1-1, ABTA 1-1, BSCP 1-2, BSIOP 1-2, and BLIS 1-1 in Test III (combining sentences), and all the sections in Test IV (expanding sentences) as revealed by their obtained values which are all greater than the level of significance at 0. 5 indicating that the null hypothesis which states that, “ There is no significant difference among the respondents’ performance ratings in the different grammar skills when grouped according to type of high school attended,” is accepted. On the other hand, there was a significant difference among the performance ratings of sections BSS 1-1, ABTA 1-1, and ABP 1-1 in Test I (asking questions), sections ABH 1-1 and ABP 1-1 in Test II (responding to questions), and ABP 1-1 in Test III (combining sentences) as shown by the values generated which are all lesser than the level of significance at 0. 05 which indicates that the null hypothesis, “ There is no significant difference among the respondents’ performance ratings in the different grammar skills when grouped according to type of high school attended,” is therefore rejected. 5.

Difference Among the Respondents’ Performance Ratings on the Different Grammar Skills when Grouped According to Degree Program

5. 1 Gender

There was a significant difference among the performance ratings of the male and female respondents from the College of Arts as shown by their obtained values in Test I (asking question), Test II (responding to questions), Test III (combining sentences), and Test IV (expanding sentences) which are all lesser than the standard level of significance at 0. 05 indicating that the null hypothesis which states that, “ There is no significant difference among the respondents’ performance ratings in the different grammar skills when grouped according to gender,” is rejected.

5. 2 Degree Program

There was a significant difference among the performance ratings of the respondents from all sections as shown by their obtained values in Test I (asking question), Test II (responding to questions), Test III (combining sentences), and Test IV (expanding sentences) which are all lesser than the standard level of significance at 0. 05 indicating that the null hypothesis which states that, “ There is no significant difference among the respondents’ performance ratings in the different grammar skills when grouped according to degree program,” is rejected.

5. 3 Type of High School Attended

There was a significant difference among the performance ratings of the respondents who graduated from different public and private high schools as shown by their obtained values in Test I (asking question), Test II (responding to questions), and Test III (combining sentences) which are all lesser than the standard level of significance at 0. 5 indicating that the null hypothesis which states that, “ There is no significant difference among the respondents’ performance ratings in the different grammar skills when grouped according to type of high school attended,” is rejected. On the other hand, there was no significant difference among the performance ratings of the respondents in Test IV (expanding sentences) in the same variable. Their obtained P-value is greater than the standard level of significance at 0. 05 indicating that the null hypothesis which states that, “ There is no significant difference among the respondents’ performance ratings in the different grammar skills when grouped according to type of high school attended,” is therefore accepted.

Conclusions

After conducting the present investigation, the researchers have drawn the following conclusions: 1. The respondents were mostly female. Of which,

most of them graduated from different public high schools. 2. The respondents' level of performance in terms of Asking Questions, Responding to Questions, Combining Sentences, and Expanding Sentences was described as "fairly proficient". 3. When grouped according to gender, female respondents got a "fairly proficient" performance while male respondents got a "moderately proficient" ranking. When grouped according to course, year and section, all of the respondents were generally marked as "fairly proficient" performance rating.

When grouped according to type of high school attended, respondents from public high schools were categorized as "proficient" while respondents from the private high schools were classified with a "fairly proficient" level of performance. 4. There is no significant difference among the respondents' performance ratings on the different grammar skills when grouped according to section. 5. There is no significant difference among the respondents' performance ratings on the different grammar skills when grouped according to degree program. Recommendations Based on the findings and conclusions drawn in this research, the researchers are therefore submitting the following recommendations: 1.

Since the students' level of performance in terms of Asking Questions, Responding to Questions, Combining Sentences and Expanding Sentences was described as "fairly proficient," there should be an allotment of at least 30 minutes every English class for group discussions, open forums, and conversations that will make students ask questions, respond to questions, combine and expand sentences. 2. Since the respondents' level of performance when grouped according to gender, course, year and section,

and type of high school attended vary depending on the course and gender in which they belong to, English teachers should be efficient in addressing individual differences in all language classes. Identifying the needs and interests of each student that may help in intensifying the focus of the subject matter and that is, to develop proficiency in the use of the English language among all students. 3.

Since there is no significance difference among the respondents' performance rating on the different grammar skills when grouped according to degree program, adding subjects that focus on communication using English language, could also help students attain a certain level of grammatical competence and familiarity with the language. 4. Since this study is just an attempt to investigate whether gender, course, year and section, and type of high school attended affects the grammar skills performance of the students in the College of Arts of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines, similar studies using different variables that will affect the learning of students from other schools and colleges should also be made to broaden the knowledge of English professors regarding the English grammar performance of their students.

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1. Figure The Conceptual Paradigm Chapter 1 THE PROBLEM AND ITS BACKGROUND Introduction Viewed against the history of a world rapidly changing, no subject has received more attention in the recent years than language communication. The human urge to communicate with other fellow beings is basic to be able to function effectively in the modern world. It is so vital that personal success, national survival, peace on earth, and even the conquest of space depend on it. This is where the grammar teacher comes in.

The teachers help his students communicate by providing them the basic tool; and that is – language. Perhaps, the most widely-used language employed by man to exist and to function well in the changing and progressing world is the English language. English language is important to be universally competitive. Since it is considered to be the second language of Filipinos and presumed that all educated Filipino is able to speak English fluently, the need for every student, whether he or she is an English major or not, to have focus on studying the English language and its grammar more seriously, is very much needed. No one can learn a certain language without knowing its grammar, so it is with the English language.

Grammar provides a framework to check whether one's language is within the limit of correct form and use or not. It involves rules in the formation and correct use of words, sentences, and paragraphs. When a person knows the structure of a language he is inclined in, then it will be easier for him to recognize mistakes in that particular language committed by other people or even by the person himself. In order for people to communicate effectively, it is important that the fundamentals of English grammar be mastered.

Regarded as the third largest country in the world with the most number of people who can speak English, it seems that the Philippines may not be that good in English after all.

Filipinos' self-assessed proficiency in the English language has declined over the past twelve years, according to the March 2006 Social Weather Survey compared to earlier SWS surveys in December 1993 and September 2000.

The significant decline can be seen with the professors lamenting on the ability of their students to speak straight English, comprehend, or even



follow the rules of grammar. Within this framework, the researcher aimed to study the problem on the deterioration of the students' performance in the English language and where the need for improvement is. As a college student, freshmen are bound to take a number of English subjects.

The persistent cooperation between professors and students is very much required, that if English will be taught in school, it must be taught effectively so that students will not simply know how to speak the language but also, to describe its structure. Knowing about grammar, says David Crystal in The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language, "[is] being able to talk about what it is we are able to do when we construct sentences—to describe what the rules are, and what happens when they fail to apply. " Indeed, grammar is essential in learning the English Language. Faced with these facts, the researchers were moved to conduct the study on the English grammar performance of freshman students in the College of Arts of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines and its implications to effective English instruction.

It sought to find answers to the queries regarding the relationship of gender, course, and type of high school attended of the respondents in the English grammar performance test and how these variables affect the four grammar skills which are: asking questions, responding to questions, combining sentences, and expanding sentences. Background of the Study Every course of communication in English or any other language is related to grammar. Every profession requires good communication. This means that a knowledgeable person should at least have functional knowledge of language. In the Polytechnic University of the Philippines, the College of

Languages and Linguistics, Department of English and Foreign Languages is in charge of all the English subjects in the University. One of the colleges that it caters is the College of Arts.

College of Arts is divided into five departments; these are the Department of History, Department of Sociology, Department of Library and Information Science, Department of Philosophy, and Department of Humanities. The courses offered by these departments include English and grammar subjects. Through the researchers' observation while studying the students from the College of Arts, it shows that some of the students lack interest in studying English grammar and thinks that studying it has no connection to their chosen course. Most of the students find studying grammar boring and uninteresting, while others take it for granted. Some professors have difficulty in teaching English because the students show no interest in learning it.

Philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein said, " Like everything metaphysical the harmony between thought and reality is to be found in the grammar of the language. " William Langland in his 14th century poem The Vision of Piers Plowman said, " Grammar, the ground of all. " Indeed, we need to study grammar because it is that makes it possible for us to talk comprehensively. Language showcases man's intelligence – something that separates man from animals. Almost all high-paying jobs require the ability to talk and speak well especially that of the English language. It is the foremost reason why it is one of the most important subjects students have to learn in school.

Grammar determines the types of words and word groups that make up sentences not only in English but in any language. Human beings have the capacity to put sentences together even as children. Knowing about grammar offers a window into the human mind and into man's amazingly complex mental capacity. People associate grammar with errors and correctness. Knowing about grammar also helps man understand what makes sentences and paragraphs clear, interesting and precise. Grammar can be part of literature discussions, when people read sentences in poetry and stories. Grammar can be the way to extend our knowledge to others and the key, if not all, but most of a profession's success.

Therefore, there is no question on the need to study grammar and its significance to be included in every college's curriculum. The researchers find it necessary to examine the grammar skills of the first year students of the University because the Polytechnic University of the Philippines College Entrance Test (PUPCET) results showed that the ratings obtained by the incoming freshmen for School Year 2010-2011 were generally considered "below average." It is hoped that this study can further help teachers to identify students' strengths and weaknesses in using the English grammar so that effective methodologies and techniques can be implemented for the improvement of the English grammar instruction within the University.

#### Theoretical Framework

Linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogeneous speech-communication, who know its (the speech community's) language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention

and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of this language in actual performance. (Chomsky, 1965) Chomsky defines ‘competence’ as an idealized capacity that is located as a psychological or mental property or function and ‘performance’ as the production of actual utterances. In a much simpler meaning, competence involves “knowing” the language and performance involves “doing” something with the language. (informationplease. com). To add to this competence, being ideal is identified as a psychological or mental property or function (Lyons, 1996).

This is in contrast to performance, which refers to an actual event.

Competence and performance involve “knowing” and “doing.” In the recent past, many language instruction programs have focused more on the “knowing” (competence) part of learning a language wherein words and sentences are presented and practiced in a way to best help learners internalize the forms. The assumption here is that once the learners have ‘learned’ the information they will be able to use it through reading, writing, listening, and speaking. In order to focus learners more on the “doing” part of learning, which allows a more accurate measure of learners’ language proficiency, a more communicative approach to teaching can be used.

By encouraging students to eventually “learn through the language” as opposed to strictly learning the language there is a more balanced focus on both competence and performance. (www2. education. ualberta. ca)

Conceptual Framework Figure 1 presents the framework that the researchers followed in the course of this study. The first frame presents the input, which is classified into two categories: grammar test and personal variables.

Personal variables include gender, course, year and section, and type of high

school attended. The second frame presents the process; the conduct of the grammar performance test and the statistical analysis of data.

The third frame contains the output, the identified weaknesses and strengths of the College of Arts students in English grammar that will serve as baseline data for effective instruction of the English Language in tertiary English classes. The line and arrows connecting the frames means that there is a continuous process, which indicates that if somehow the result is not successful, another process will be tried to get the expected outcome.

**Statement of the Problem** This study was undertaken to determine the grammar performance of freshman students of the College of Arts of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines during the School Year 2010-2011. It specifically attempted to answer the following questions: 1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of the following variables: 1. Gender 1. 2 Course, Year and Section 1. 3 Type of High School Attended 2. What is the respondents' level of performance in terms of the following grammar skills: 2. 1 Asking Questions 2. 2 Responding to Questions 2. 3 Combining Sentences 2. 4 Expanding Sentences 3. What is the respondents' level of performance in each of the above mentioned grammar skills when grouped according to the following variables: 3. 1 Gender 3. 2 Course, Year and Section 3. 3 Type of High School Attended 4. Is there a significant difference among the respondents' performance ratings on each of the above mentioned grammar skills when grouped according to section? 5.

Is there a significant difference in the respondents' performance ratings on each of the above mentioned grammar skills when grouped according to degree program? Hypotheses 1. There is no significant difference among the

respondents' performance ratings on the different grammar skills when grouped according to section. 2. There is no significant difference among the respondents' performance ratings on the different grammar skills when grouped according to degree program. Scope and Limitations of the Study This study was made to assess the English grammar performance of freshman students in the College of Arts of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines during the school year 2010-2011.

The focus was on different variables, namely, the gender of the students, course, year and section, and from which high school they graduated from. The instrument for gathering data was the Grammar Performance Test in English that was administered to the students in the College of Arts of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines. The choice of freshman college students as respondents proceeded from the idea that the first year in the tertiary level is the right stage to identify students' strengths and weaknesses since ample time can be devoted by teachers to implement effective approaches in improving the grammatical competence of students as they move on to their senior years. Such time will give them adequate preparation for meeting the needs of their professional lives.

To prevent an unwieldy conduct of the investigation, the grammar skills tested were limited to asking questions, responding to questions, combining sentences, and expanding sentences. Other grammar skills like verb-subject agreement, sentence patterns, tense sequence, and others were excluded from the study. The four grammar skills were chosen because, generally speaking, mastery over these skills reflects a person's use, rather than usage, of the language as means of communication. A person normally asks

answers, combines or expands sentences as he interacts with other people. It can be argued, therefore, that when a person is competent in asking questions, giving answers, and combining or expanding sentences, he is most likely also competent in the other grammar skills. Significance of the Study

The result of this study will help English teachers find ways to make their students learn to like studying grammar and motivate them to achieve success in valid spoken and writing exercises. This is also helpful not only for the teachers of English but for the administrators, members as well that compose a department to enhance more of their knowledge about grammar and to better understand which part of it will they focus when it comes to dealing with students. Furthermore, the results of this study may be a good source of information for every student who wants to have deeper knowledge regarding grammar. Finally, the results of this study may inspire other researchers to conduct further studies involving variables not considered in this study. Definition of Terms Grammar.

This refers to a system of rules that specifies the class of phonetically possible utterances that are well formed in the language in question, and that assigns to each well-formed sentence (whether or not it has ever actually been produced, or ever will be produced) a structural description that incorporates and expresses just the information about the sentence that is available to the person who understands it (Roberts ix). Language Competence. This refers to an idealized capacity that is located as a psychological or mental property or function. (Chomsky, 1965) Language

Performance. The production of actual utterances. (Chomsky, 1965). Chapter 2

**REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES** This chapter presents the literature and research studies that provided the researchers with insights related to the present investigation. It is divided into four categories: (1) Foreign Literature; (2) Local Literature; (3) Foreign Studies; and (4) Local Studies. The literature and research studies taken from published, unpublished materials and other sources served as background information in conducting this study and helped the researchers to focus in identifying the problems and in verifying and interpreting the data. Foreign Literature The English language is a medium used for oral and written communication.

It is considered a universal language for unity and understanding; thus, it is important for students to learn and be trained in the proficient use of the English language. According to Rudolf Verderver, in his book, *Communicate*, for the students to be able to use English effectively, one must know his grammar. The language system, consists of words (vocabulary) arranged in certain learned ways (grammar). It follows that if an individual has sufficient vocabulary and understanding of English grammar then he has the full command on the language and can communicate with other speakers of English (qtd. in Abunas 14). Macrory, in *Learning to Teach Grammar in the Modern Foreign languages Classroom*, Research in Education, no. 4 on November 2000, stresses that knowledge of Grammar rules will allow the students to manipulate the language and will allow them to produce authentic communicative language. It will allow them to express exactly what they feel or what they want to say. This makes grammar rules essential



for future communication (4). Likewise, Dykstra, in one of his selected articles in *Language Learning*, Series 1, claimed that learning grammar is a vital part of learning a second language. Indeed, it can safely be assured that no one speaks any language without having learned the grammar of that language (qtd. in David 11). In addition, Wilkins stated that those languages have grammatical system to be able to express meanings and that grammar is the pillar of communication competency among individuals.

Fieldman added that the basic structure of language rests on grammar. Thus, Gleason asserted that, “ grammar is the key” in understanding verbal and written communication (qtd. in Pulmones 23). Hence, Holler, in his book, *Let’s Teach Grammar More Sensibly*, stated that, if the Filipinos are to learn English, it must be taught in the school so effectively that it develops a strong and solid base. After a student has learned to speak and use a language quite well, he should know how to describe the structure and how to clarify the words that he uses into parts of speech of English besides knowing the reason why a particular word is used instead of another. In other words, he should know something about its grammar, for the language that one’s learn becomes a part of his personality and he usually uses the language to express the nuances of his thoughts and feelings (qtd. in Ruaya 10). Most people, according to Myers, encounter grammar in connection with the study of their own or of a second language in school. When people are said to have good or bad grammar, the influence is that they obey or ignore the rules of accepted usage associated with the language they speak. The languages of grammar are important for two reasons: knowledge of grammar will help teachers assess and remediate the errors and error

pattern of second language learners; and, the points of grammar can be used as a basis for teaching sentence structure and vocabulary (qtd. in Forbes 20).

In the book *Linguistics and English Grammar*, it is said that the success of grammar teaching could be measured on the assumption that a major purpose of English instruction was to teach “good” and “error-free” language. Grammar might be justified if it could help in preventing “errors” in writing. Tests were devised to measure the effectiveness of grammar teaching (Gleason 13). As cited by Ruaya in the book, *Principles and Methods of Teaching Foreign Language* of Gregory, language is the instrument by which the student employs in thinking and reasoning, it follows that his deficiencies in the use of the English language will greatly affect the learning process of the language. Likewise, the student’s difficulty in expressing himself in English is a roadblock; hence, it makes teaching the English language difficult (4).

Allen asserts that since English is the medium of instruction in the Philippines, it should be given emphasis in schools and must be used in speech and writing to achieve the desired level of proficiency in the language. Detailed knowledge in English language is a necessity for English teachers (qtd. in Abunas 21). Local Literature Since English is considered a universal language for unity and understanding, Antonio Isidro, in his book, *Principles of Education Applied in the Philippines*, suggests that students should be provided with a sound foundation of language. The arts of reading, writing, speaking, and listening play an important part in the total life of the school. They are the instruments of learning (65). In the article of Michael

Lim Ubac in the Philippine Daily Inquirer entitled, “ RP Education has Sunk to its Lowest Level,” he pointed out and that teachers were [not] proficient in English because it’s mostly used for writing but seldom spoken. He also said that the defect is oral so we should plan to put speech laboratories because students (as well as teachers) won’t learn to speak English unless the speaker hear and speak it. According to Rionda in his Handbook of Reading in Language Education, an evaluation of English Proficiency of the college freshmen is of prime importance in the sense that, English Language teachers will become aware of the degree of English Proficiency of the freshman students and be guided as to what approaches are to be undertaken in the classroom for maximum learning (102).

On the other hand, Juan Miguel Luz in his article in the, “ Daily Inquirer entitled English First Policy Will Hurt Learning,” says that the key to better English is better implementation, that the teachers should be trained more in grammar, composition, vocabulary, more mechanisms to expand English usage in schools, such as campus journalism, campus radio, assigned days for English and Filipino communication and the like, more bilingual reading books and elocution contests and spelling bees. In another newspaper article, Bulletin Today, Villa deplores on the use of the English language in technology and allied schools. This is supported by college graduates’ dismal failures in various board examinations (qtd. in Abunas 21). Emeterio Barcelon, in his article “ Filipino-English”, Manila Bulletin, says that we use the English language not only as common language among Filipinos but also as a tool to access the literature and technology of the rest of the world.

For a good number of Filipino English speakers some grammar and pronunciation usage caused problems which if corrected will improve accuracy. Soriano, however, stated in “ Education and Culture Journal,” the factors affecting English language learning in the Philippines, that comparisons are often made between the kind of English used in the past and that employed today. One often hears comments about high school graduates of yesteryears having a better command of the English Language than the college of graduates of today. This deterioration is manifested with the incorrect grammar and the inability to use English in connected discourse or the lack of fluency in the language (22).

Lejate, likewise, as cited by Ruaya in Proficiency in Oral English, pointed out in her book, that knowledge of grammar is essential to an understanding of the language, and an understanding of the language is basic to successful speaking and writing (11). According to Fernando, since communication is defined as the art of transmitting information, ideas, and attitudes from one person to another, it is vital to a person’s success with other fellow beings is basic for functioning effectively in the modern world. Communication requires language. Language involves the study of grammar; this is where the grammar teacher comes in. He helps the students to communicate by providing them the basic tool; language, for communicating (3).

Meanwhile, in the book, “ Principles and Methods of Teaching”, Gregorio contends that it is generally accepted that good English habits can only be developed through constant practice. He further explains that in dealing with answers to questions, the pupils should be made to observe correct English usage. The educational values of good and expression is beyond doubt.

Modern educators insist that knowledge of correct grammatical form or correct English usage is a matter of habit formation. The teacher should require his students to form their answers in good English (331). Foreign Studies Coates and Smith, made a study of language and its relation to gender. According to them, the claims that in some societies men and women spoke completely different languages, is an overstatement.

They stressed that what tends to happen to varying degrees in various societies is that the gender of a speaker will determine or increase the likelihood of choices of certain phonological, morphological, syntactic, and lexical forms of a language. Their study shows that in all styles women tend to use fewer stigmatized forms than men, in formal contexts women seem to be more sensitive to prestige patterns than men, and the use of non-standard forms seems to be associated with men. Evidence of this kind seems to show that females are more sensitive to linguistic norms than males (35). A similar study was also done by Trudgill Norwich who handled a self-evaluation test. The test revealed that the women respondents over-reported while the men respondents under-reported.

This manifests that for men, non-standard forms are prestigious and for women standard forms are prestigious (65). The Coleman Report conducted by Coleman and his associates concluded that schools have little impact on students, independent of the characteristics students bring to school with them. Specifically, the finding was that the most significant determinants of educational achievements were more on the social and economic backgrounds of the individual students (qtd. in Ruaya 36). Kelly maintains that investigations have revealed that boys seem to be more superior in

mathematical and scientific subjects, which girls excel in language, arts, spelling and penmanship (qtd. n Abunas 22). Local Studies There have been several researches conducted in the Philippines which tried to identify the language performance of first year college students. Ballentos investigated, during the year 1998, the freshman students' English proficiency of a specific university in one province. As what she had found, the respondents' English proficiency has a significant difference according to gender and type of high school attended. Based on the findings, the researcher came up with conclusions that the freshman students' English proficiency has difference with regards to respondents' gender and the type of high school they attended (93).

Since English grammar has become the subject of various studies in the Philippines, David, in 2004, conducted a study about the English proficiency of 188 high school students in a high school located in Metro Manila. The researcher, after the survey, found that there were more female respondents than male. With the use of statistical treatment, data revealed that female respondents of grammar ranked highest with "to a very great extent" description which is apparently much better compared with the male respondents. The findings also stated that almost all the respondents were products of public schools. Based on the findings of the research, conclusions were presented which include: there were more female respondents being 107 against 79 male respondents. Another conclusion stated that ninety-five point seventy-four percent (95. 4%) came from public schools and only seven (7) among the respondents studied in private schools. The study further shows that there is no significant difference in the responses

connected to variables gender and type of high school attended (65). In 1993, Caturza conducted a study about the English proficiency of English majors, and whether a correlation exists between English proficiency and selected student-related variables. The study established that the respondents' English proficiency is not significantly related to the type of high school attended. The English majors' proficiency in English is average. Their weaknesses in English lie mostly in grammar such as the subject-verb agreement and tenses (44).

Villacencio, in 1999, made a study of language using aptitude of freshman college students of the University of San Agustin taken as a whole and grouped according to gender and other variables. It also attempted to classify and tally errors in the Language Usage Test in order to discover students' weaknesses in language usage. As a whole, the participants manifested a poor language aptitude and a higher degree of heterogeneity in language performance regardless of gender, participants' language performance was poor. Lat, in 2008, examined the variables affecting the proficiency in grammar and correct usage in English compositions of students of a national high school in a certain province.

Her findings show that 100 percent who graduated from public elementary school students obtained a "satisfactory" description with an average mean of 82.34. She also found that students' proficiency in grammar in English was interpreted as "poor." These findings revealed different conclusions by the researcher. One of these conclusions is that students find greater difficulty in subject-verb agreement among the other indicators of grammar proficiency in her study. Another is the significant effect of student variables

such as the type of school attended on students' proficiency in grammar (74). In Dizon's study in 1997, she studied the English grammar difficulties among freshman students in Meycauayan College.

She had found out in her research that among the aspects of grammar, verb forms ranked first in which most of the respondents failed. It was also stated in her findings that most of her respondents use the Filipino language at home that's why when they needed to express themselves in English they think in first in Filipino which does not have the same basis sentence pattern in English. With regards to the researcher's findings, she concluded that majority of the freshman students failed when it comes to the use of verb forms. Another is that there is no significant difference among college students' difficulties in English grammar with regard to language spoken at home and type of school attended.

After she had conducted her study, she recommended that English teachers should give more emphasis in the teaching of verb forms in their lessons in communication arts and students immediately are corrected whenever they commit mistakes in using verb forms (52). Synthesis and Relevance of Reviewed Literature and Studies The perspective presented by both the related literature and studies provided the researchers with insights onto what findings to expect in undertaking a study on the grammar performance of the freshman students in the College of Arts. The reviewed materials cited in this chapter are likewise connected to the present study, wherein, the variables involve correspond to one another. In foreign literature, the articles presented deals with grammar and how it is associated with language.



Rudolf Verdervet talks about knowing and understanding grammar to have a full command on the language being spoken. Macrory emphasizes that acquiring the grammar rules is same with manipulating the language.

Dykstra and Holler impart that to be able to know a certain language, one must know his grammar first. In addition, Wilkins and Gleason assert that grammar is the pillar of communication and the key in understanding verbal and written communication. Fieldman testifies that the basic structure of language rests on grammar. Thus, Ruaya, Myers, and Allen affirms that to be able to assess the grammar proficiency, teachers must remediate their language, and must have full knowledge of grammar first.

Local literature undertakings also discusses the connection and importance of grammar to a language and its implementation to various educational institutions and to the society. Rionda, accordingly, says that an evaluation of English proficiency of college freshmen is important for the teachers be fully aware of their students' performance. Juan Miguel Luz, added that the key to better English is better implementation. Conversely, Villa, deplores the use of English language in certain schools due to some dismal failures in various board examinations. Alternatively, Emeterion Barcelon cites the importance of English language to its second language speakers. Soriano, however, states the comparisons between the kind of English used in past and that employed today.

Lejate and Fernando, likewise, points out that the knowledge of grammar is essential to the understanding of a language, and the understanding of a language is basic to successful speaking and writing. Communication therefore requires language and language requires grammar. At last,

Gregorio, contends that modern educators insist that knowledge of correct grammatical form or correct English usage is a matter of habit formation, so one must develop his English habits through constant practice. In foreign studies, Coleman and his associates made a study using one of the variables of this study which is the type of school graduated from and concluded that schools have little impact on students' performance. Coates and Smith, Trudgill Norwich, and Kelly, however, conducted a study regarding grammar and language and its relation to gender.

Their study shows that women are more sensitive to linguistic norms than men. It implies that for men, non-standard forms are prestigious and for women standard forms are prestigious. Boys seem to be better than girls when it comes to mathematical and scientific subjects, while girls stand out over boys in language, arts, spelling and penmanship. Local studies presented in this chapter engage on the grammar skills and the three variables, namely: age, gender, and type of high school attended, to determine the significance of this study. Capuno, David, and Ballentos conduct studies regarding grammar and linguistic competence and grouped it according to gender and type of schools respondents attended.

Generally, the findings show that the female respondents achieved better grades than the male ones and those respondents who came from public schools excel than those who came from private schools. It further shows that there is no significant difference in respondents' competence when grouped according to the said variables. Caturza, however, conducted a study about the English proficiency of English majors and found out that the respondents' English proficiency is not significantly related the variable, type

of high school attended. Similar result was also acquired by Dizon using the same variable in his study, English Grammar Difficulties Among Freshman Students in Meycauayan College.

Opposing the results of the previous study was one made by Lat, regarding grammar proficiency, whereas, it proves that the type of high school attended affects the proficiency of the respondents. Meanwhile, Villacencio also used the gender in his study and came up with a conclusion that it does not have any significance to the participants' language performance. The information gathered from these articles helped the researchers in formulating the conceptual framework and setting the direction for this study. The ideas mentioned can also serve as foundation of a good grammar program for the different colleges at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines.

Moreover, the studies reviewed here support the implications of Chomsky's Theory of Linguistic Competence and Linguistic Performance which is used as the theoretical framework of this research work. Finally, the studies and literature presented are significant to the present study because the procedure in which some of these studies were conducted is similar to the one followed in this study.

### Chapter 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the method of research utilized in the study, the population and sample size, sampling technique, research instrumentation, data-gathering procedure, and statistical treatment used for data analysis.

#### Research Method Used

The descriptive method was used in the study to gather information about the present condition and to describe the nature of situation that existed at the time of the study. This study was a descriptive survey covering 407 college freshman students enrolled in the Polytechnic University of the Philippines, specifically under the College of Arts – Department of History, Department of Sociology, and Department of Library and Information Science. The researchers used the questionnaire which is the Grammar Performance Test, a questionnaire that seeks to determine the grammar proficiency of students, to gather the data necessary for this study. `

#### Population and Sample Size

The study aimed to investigate whether variables such as gender, course, year and section and type high school attended from influence students' grammar performance. The respondents of the study were the (407) four hundred seven Fresman students in the College of Arts of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines during the school year 2010-2011. The researchers used university freshman students as respondents of the study since the researchers believed that it is the right stage for teachers to know their students' strengths and weaknesses in terms of grammar performance. This will allow teachers to hold remedial grammar classes if needed. It is also the stage when performance skills can still be improved in preparation for higher levels of study. Table 1

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Population and Sample									
COURSE	POPULATION SIZE	SAMPLE SIZE	PERCENTAGE						
BSS 1-1	55	48	87. 27						
BSIOP 1-1	54	43	79. 63						
BSCP 1-1	57	45	78. 95						
ABH 1-1	53	47	88. 68						
ABTA 1-1	51	45	88. 24						
BSCP 1-2	59	45							

76. 27 | | BSIOP 1-2 | 56 | 43 | 76. 9 | | ABP 1-1 | 53 | 47 | 88. 68 | | BLIS 1-1 | 49 | 44 | 89. 80 | | TOTAL | 487 | 407 | 83. 57 | As shown in Table 1, 407 out of 487 freshmen in the College of Arts were included in the study. The sample size was determined using the Slovin's formula. 48 came from BSS 1-1; 43 came from BSIOP 1-1; 45 came from BSCP 1-1; 47 came from ABH 1-1; 45 came from ABTA 1-1; 45 came from BSCP 1-2; 43 came from BSIOP 1-2; 47 came from ABP 1-1; and 44 came from BLIS 1-1. Sampling Technique

Simple random sampling was used to determine the representatives of the freshmen population from the College of Arts. To give the population of each department an equal chance of participation, names of all students were assigned with numbers. These numbers were written on small sheets of paper then rolled, and placed in a box. The number of the pieces of paper picked out (by lottery) from the box equaled the number of sample size for each department. Research Instrumentation The main tool used in gathering the primary data for this study was the questionnaire called " Proficiency Test in English Grammar for First Year College Students. " This is a forty-item questionnaire developed by Felix V. Ruaya for his master's thesis.

With the assistance of their thesis adviser, the researchers made some modifications on Ruaya's questionnaire to suit the needs of the present study. Among the changes made were substituting original items with new items which the researchers thought were more timely or relevant. This instrument assesses four grammar skills, namely: asking questions, responding to questions, combining sentences, and expanding sentences. For the purpose of this investigation, the researchers utilized a constructed grammar test, tested and validated by the master teachers of the College of

Languages and Linguistics in the Polytechnic University of the Philippines during the school year 2010 – 2011. The researchers prepared the test for chosen freshman students in the College of Arts.

The researchers included appropriate grammar skills, such as asking questions, responding to questions, combining sentences and expanding sentences. The instrument consisted of forty questions and sentences that tested the above mentioned grammar skills. Likert's Scale Category 8. 20