

## Grammatical Ability of Sophomore Education Students in the 21<sup>st</sup>-Century

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### ABSTRACT

Globally, Filipinos were known to be English-speaking, as manifested by the ability of the majority of the people to speak this language with fluency. Hence, in the field of teacher education, competence in English grammar is considered very important. Therefore, this study assessed the grammar ability of the second-year education students of a University to determine their deficiency and eventually enhance instruction and the quality of students' learning.

Utilizing the descriptive correlation method of research, the researchers assessed the students' grammatical ability using a modified questionnaire to identify their difficulties in English grammar. A 90-item multiple-choice test, which evaluated knowledge of the three areas, was explicitly used. With the use of the purposive sampling technique, there were 66 participants in this investigation. Data analysis applied percentage and Pearson R.

The results revealed that the participants have difficulty in the three specific areas of grammar. Also, most students showed a deficiency in their grammatical ability. There is no significant relationship between the students' scores in verb-tenses and punctuation as well as in subject-verb agreement and tenses. However, there was a significant relationship between subject-verb agreement and punctuation. Moreover, sophomore teacher education students performed poorly in grammar. Hence, such low performance can be remedied by improving instruction quality and introducing grammar tutorials focusing on activities on grammar lessons to reinforce the students' learning. Hence, there should be an emphasis on teaching and learning grammar in all the succeeding English subjects. Furthermore, it is recommended that teachers of English language subjects should include activities like journal writing and reflection writing to enhance the students' grammatical proficiency further. Finally, the school should strictly implement the English-only policy, especially in English, as an instruction medium.

**KEYWORDS:** English language, students grammar ability, Philippines

### I. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, communication has become the heart and soul of human life. The process of communication chiefly deals with speaking, listening, reading, and writing. No one learns grammar. It has become natural for people to start speaking what everybody speaks around them. They gradually develop a better sense of understanding over time. They do not study the grammar of their mother tongue to use it for daily speaking, but when they need to polish their mother tongue or want to learn a foreign dialect, they have to study its grammar, and we usually do that. When they come to learn a new language like the English language, they need to study its grammar; the importance of grammar cannot be ignored or neglected; before they do that, they need to understand what grammar is (Debata, 2013).

The Philippines is globally recognized as one of the largest English-speaking countries, with the majority of its population having at least some degree of fluency in the language. English has always been one of the official languages of the Philippines and is spoken by more than 14 million Filipinos. It is the language of

commerce and law and the primary medium of instruction in education (Cabigon, n.d). Filipinos have stood apart from their contemporaries from other parts of the world because they read, write, listen and speak the lingua franca of the global arena. This may have been the scenario long ago, and sadly, the same cannot be said for the present.

Countries like China and Korea have been trying to establish themselves as global key players. Therefore, they have aggressively promoted bilingualism and invested heavily in their citizens' grasp of the English language (Suarez et al., 2016). As a result, many Koreans and Chinese would visit the Philippines to study English in the various ESL centers in the country.

In the Philippines, English has long been a part of the curricula of varied academic programs. The curriculum has changed drastically, but learning English remains intact in the essentials of any curriculum. With K to 2 coming to the fore, English is offered in both the Junior and the Senior High School curricula. It is also the medium of instruction in teaching other subjects, such as Mathematics and Science. Filipinos are regarded to be among the more fluent speakers of the English language. This is one of the reasons that fellow Asians from other ASEAN countries have chosen to study here in the Philippines or resort to learning English from Filipino mentors (Sioco & De Vera, 2018).

Macasinag (2011) posits that Filipinos' proficiency in English has suffered a massive decline. As a result, the Filipinos have lost the competitive edge they have been known for worldwide. This deterioration is manifested in several ways- incorrect grammar, lack of fluency in the language, poor reading comprehension skills, and poor writing skills, among others. Thus, their claim that they are the third-largest English-speaking country in the world does not live up to its rank. However, the most alarming is the SWS survey commissioned by Promoting English Proficiency (PEP) in March 2006. The most significant deterioration was in the self-assessment of the ability to speak in English, which fell from 54% in September 2000 to 32% in March 2006, a deterioration of 22% in six years.

The two-year study by Hopkins International Partners revealed that Filipino university graduates average 630 in English proficiency based on the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC). Furthermore, the study said business process outsourcing (BPO) agents were expected to score 850 in the TOIEC. Moreover, the resolution noted that the average was lower than the competency requirement for taxi drivers in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Filipino graduates also averaged a Common European Framework of Reference of Language (CEFR) grade of B1, lower than the CEFR B2 proficiency target set for high school graduates in Thailand and Vietnam. That same report indicated that the Filipino university graduates' median score was comparable to the proficiency of fifth and 6th-grade students in native English-speaking countries such as the US and the United Kingdom. In addition, a study conducted by the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines said that 75% of more than 400,000 Filipinos who graduated from college have inadequate proficiency in grammar (Leonen, 2018).

Proficiency in grammar is also a competency that Filipinos should have to be globally competitive. Therefore, the Senate inquired into the declining English proficiency of Filipino students expected to pose problems for the country's labor force competing in global markets. The inquiry, conducted by the Senate Committee on Education, was prompted by Resolution 622 filed by Sen. Grace Poe, who expressed alarm over the weakening English proficiency of Filipino college graduates (Romero, 2018).

The researchers of this study are college English teachers in the university with more than a decade of teaching experience. Their professional circle activities have expressed their frustrations and disappointments regarding their college student's ability in the English language, specifically in grammar. They lamented the simple grammar errors that students would commit in their academic writing papers or even in their exchange of thoughts.

Educators and researchers have been trying to find solutions to prevent this decline in English ability with all these warning signs. With this present circumstance in mind, the researchers conceived this study. This study is relevant because it helped teachers identify students' difficulties in grammar while helping students realize their errors in terms of grammar rules. Thus, a tailored tutorial program that fits their needs may help the students develop their ability in grammar.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

This study is anchored on Noam Chomsky's Universal Grammar (UG) theory, which states that grammar knowledge depends on two components, the principles and properties shared by all languages, and the parameters, of how all languages share these properties vary. He explained how all-natural languages are similar in some respects and how humans can learn their first language and other languages. UG simplifies the ideas about learning a second language by claiming that learning the grammar of a second language is not so much learning completely new structures, rules, and others as discovering how to set the parameters for the new language. Although UG has left untouched several areas central to speakers' understanding of the second

language learning process, it has also explained and established some facts about second language acquisition (Brown, 2000).

In Chomsky's view, the language faculty contains innate knowledge of various linguistic rules, constraints, and principles; this innate knowledge constitutes the language faculty's 'initial state.' In interaction with one's language experiences during childhood — that is, with one's exposure to what Chomsky calls the 'primary linguistic data. It gives rise to a new body of linguistic knowledge, namely, knowledge of a specific language (like Chinese or English). This 'attained' or 'final' state of the language faculty constitutes one's 'linguistic competence' and includes knowledge of the grammar of one's language. According to Chomsky, this knowledge is essential to one's ability to speak and understand a language. Although, of course, it is insufficient for this ability: much additional knowledge is brought to bear in 'linguistic performance, that is, actual language use (Adolphs, 1999).

Moreover, Selinker's Interlanguage Theory explains that interlanguage is a term that describes the language learner's journey from his native language (L1) to the acquisition of the target language (L2). Larry Selinker, credited with first proposing the interlanguage theory, was inspired by Corder's error analysis, which attempted to examine and classify language learners' errors. Interlanguage theory tried to determine if there was a continuum in the internal grammar of learning additional languages and, through research, resolved if learners acquired L2 in much of the same fashion as L1. Ultimately, there would be similarities, but not the same. Interlanguage viewed language development as a combination of several factors, including the nature of input, environment, internal processing of the learner, and influence between L1 and L2. Thus, began an explosion of research into understanding how language and internal grammar in second-language learners evolved (Tarone, 2006).

A wide range of research has investigated interlanguage with various levels, ages, and languages. The results have led to the understanding of interlanguage embodying systematic, dynamic, and variable characteristics. It is systematic because the learner forms an internal construct of grammatical rules and structures. These grammatical rules may or may not mirror the proper rules of the L2 being learned. Educators can extrapolate what rules the learner has formed by analyzing errors and correctly using the language. In other words, the language learner does not use language haphazardly but uses a system of internal rules that can differ from the target language. The following characteristic is dynamic. Although the internal rules are systematic, the rules are not static and can be altered through various means. Then variable, the context may determine the language and rules the learner acquires. There are numerous factors involved with language and rule acquisition that vary from person to person, such as the nature of input (instruction, TV, among others), the environment (classroom), and exposure (foreign language, second language) to language (Selinker & Douglas, 1985).

The significance of interlanguage theory lies in the fact that it is the first attempt to consider the possibility of learner-conscious attempts to control their learning. This view initiated an expansion of research into psychological processes in interlanguage development, aiming to determine what learners do to help facilitate their learning, i.e., which learning strategies they employ (Griffiths & Parr, 2001).

Stephen Krashen's Theory of Second Language Acquisition. Krashen believes there is no fundamental difference between how we acquire our first language and our subsequent languages. He claims that humans have an innate ability that guides the language-learning process. Infants learn their mother tongue simply by listening attentively to spoken language (made) meaningful to them. Foreign languages are acquired similarly (Gass & Selinker, 2008).

Krashen (1982) synthesized his second language learning theories in what is usually referred to as the Monitor Model. The Monitor Model has five components; the first is the Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis. There are two ways of developing language ability: acquisition and learning. The acquisition is a subconscious process, as in a child learning a language or an adult 'picking up a second language simply by living and working in a foreign country. Learning is the conscious process of developing a foreign language through language lessons and focusing on the grammatical features of that language. According to Krashen, a learned language cannot be turned into an acquisition. Spending much time learning grammar rules is pointless since this will not help us become better language users in authentic situations. At most, the knowledge we gain about the language will help us directly test that knowledge or situations when we have time to self-correct, such as editing a piece of writing. The second component is the Natural Order Hypothesis, which states that all learners acquire language in a predictable order. This order does not depend on the apparent simplicity or complexity of the grammatical features. The natural order of acquisition cannot be influenced by direct teaching of features the learner is not yet ready to acquire. Then comes the Monitor Hypothesis of Krashen, which states that it is often difficult to use the monitor correctly since language rules can be extremely complex. Two examples from English are the rules about the articles (a/the) and the future "tense."

Even assuming the learner knows the rule in question, it is difficult to focus on grammar while simultaneously conveying meaning (and possibly feeling). Most normal conversation does not provide enough time to do so. The next component is the Input Hypothesis which claims that learners acquire language in one

way only when they are exposed to input (written or spoken language) that is comprehensible to them. Comprehensible input is a necessary but also a sufficient condition for language acquisition to take place. It requires no effort on the part of the learner. This theory has clear implications for language teachers, namely, that their language instruction should be full of rich input (both spoken and written language) that is roughly tuned at the appropriate level for the learners in the class. The Affective Filter Hypothesis asserts that comprehensible input will not result in language acquisition if filtered out before reaching the brain's language processing faculties. The filtering may occur because of anxiety, poor self-esteem, or low motivation (Krashen, 1982).

The word grammar means different things to different people. To the ordinary citizen, it connotes the correctness or incorrectness of the language he or she speaks. To a school student, it means an analytical and terminological study of sentences. Knowledge of grammar helps the student in the correction of mistakes and improvement of written work. A person cannot learn a foreign language accurately only through unconscious assimilation. Grammar is a sure ground of reference when linguistic habits fail. So grammar is indispensable for the student (Dabata, 2013).

Thus, teachers make their classroom instruction comprehensible. Then, the ESL students will learn the subject content, but they will be acquiring English at the same time. Therefore, all teachers of non-native English students should regard themselves as teachers of language too.

Grammar is one of the three interrelated dimensions of language. Based on the usage of the grammar structures, it does not only mean that using the form accurately means using them meaningfully (semantics) and appropriately (pragmatic) (Larsen-Freeman, 2003).

Larsen-Freeman (2015) further opined that only a little second language acquisition or applied linguistics research on grammar had made its way into the classroom. Research should be applied to teaching in an unmediated manner. This is not to say that research should have no impact on pedagogy.

Proficiency is the state or quality of being proficient, skilled, or competent. Being proficient is being competent in a specific field. English has been the lingua franca and is widely used up to now. Doors of opportunity and success are open to those proficient in speaking the language. Some people even enroll in particular classes to improve their English proficiency (Jimenez, 2018).

On the other hand, grammatical proficiency is the explicit awareness of how language works. The expression 'proficiency' is chosen over 'competence' to avoid confusion caused by the competence/performance distinction. Taylor (1988) defines proficiency as the "ability to use competence." This is not quite a performance which is when "proficiency is put to use. Moreover, proficiency is a 'dynamic concept,' which is the type of concept people deal with in second-language acquisition. At the same time, the understanding seems to fall in with Canale's distinction between knowledge and skill concerning communicative competence.

Linguistic competencies are related to the use of language through the expression and interpretation of concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts, and opinions to perform oral and written discussions. Such interactions may occur in diverse social and cultural contexts, which will determine the characteristics of the language, written or spoken, such as grammar, pragmatics, and sociolinguistic characteristics. Linguistic competencies are highly related to communication competencies and are even seen as equal. Within scientific production and communication, linguistic competencies are related to the acceptable use of language, primarily written, and they are characterized by: (1) the adequate use of written language and structuring of content; (2) reading and writing of scientific documents in the reader's native language; and (3) reading, writing, and translation of documents to other non-native languages, particularly in the most used (e.g., English), translation may not indicate a complete proficiency of another language, but it must be good enough to allow it is reading and interpretation (Tarango & Machin-Mastromatteo, 2017).

Suzuki and Itagaki (2009) conducted a study to examine the potential interactions among languaging types, the type of discrete grammar exercises, and learners' level of L2 proficiency. One hundred and 41 low-intermediate and high-intermediate Japanese learners of English were asked to reflect, in writing, on how they solved one of two grammar exercises: comprehension-oriented and production-oriented. Both the type of tasks completed and the level of L2 proficiency were the determinants of the languaging.

Abushihab et al. (2011) investigated and classified the grammatical errors in the writing of 62 Department of English Literature and Translation students at Alzaytoonah Private University of Jordan. The students enrolled in a paragraph writing course in the first semester of 2009-2010. These errors were classified into six significant categories and then divided into subcategories. The division that included the most significant number of errors was the prepositions, which comprised 26% of the total errors observed. Furthermore, the following most problematic areas were, respectively: morphological errors, articles, verbs, active and passive, and tenses. The researchers have included pedagogical implications for teachers, syllabus designers, textbook writers, and text developers in identifying the students' results.

Moreover, Rajan (2011) determined the English grammar proficiency of secondary level student teachers in the Puducherry region. Specifically, he wanted to determine English grammar proficiency based on



the sub-variables gender; Medium studied, and parental education. An English grammar proficiency tool was created and standardized, covering various aspects of English grammar. The study was administered to 300 samples of secondary level student teachers randomly selected from various colleges using simple random sampling. The findings revealed that the English grammar proficiency of secondary level student teachers is low. It was also disclosed that there is no significant difference between the sexes of secondary level student teachers and parental education below and above high school in English grammar proficiency. It is also found that there is a significant difference between English and Tamil medium secondary level student teachers in English grammar proficiency.

Barraquio (2015) also assessed the grammar proficiency of Colegio de San Juan de Letran Calamba college students to determine their difficulties and eventually improve teaching and the quality of learning of students. The study utilized a descriptive method of research. To assess the college students' grammar proficiency, the researcher used a teacher-made questionnaire to identify the specific grammar difficulties. A 50-item multiple-choice test, which evaluated knowledge of the ten areas of grammar, was explicitly used. Students' demographic profiles and perceptions of grammar's importance to correct English use were considered. Proportional stratified random sampling was also used. Results showed that the college students received fair ratings in speech, possessive nouns, and verb mood and tense. Areas of plural nouns, pronoun usage, adjective, adverb usage, and pronoun-antecedent agreement needed improvement. The students failed in sentence structure, subject-verb agreement, and sentence construction. Furthermore, the respondents perceived grammar as essential to correctly using English. However, no significant relationship was established between the overall perceived importance of the study of grammar to the correct use of English and students' overall grammar proficiency. Moreover, the respondents perceived that grammar was essential in writing and speaking. The research findings showed that grammar was crucial in developing identified English competencies among Letran Calamba college students. Hence, the researcher recommended that schools consider making all first-year students enroll in English 101 or Remedial English.

Further, Suarez et al. (2016) determined the factors that primarily affect students' grammar proficiency for educators to consider those indicators in designing strategies for use in the English classroom. Results revealed that the said factors have no significant influence on the level of grammar proficiency among the respondents. Therefore, the researchers recommended that teachers of English language subjects clarify to their students the differences in sentence structure in the English language with that of commonly spoken languages or dialects in order for their students to take this knowledge into account when they are transferring their thoughts and ideas from their mother tongue to English.

### **III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This study determined the grammatical ability of second-year education students in terms of subject-verb agreement, tenses, and punctuation with the end view of devising a proposed English Grammar Tutorial Program.

### **IV. MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This study utilized the descriptive correlational design in determining the grammatical ability of second-year education students using a modified test questionnaire as the main instrument in gathering data. It assessed the grammatical competence of the second-year education students of UC-Banilad regarding subject-verb agreement, verb tenses, and punctuation.

This study was conducted at the College of Teacher Education (CTE) of the University of Cebu-Banilad Campus, which offers both the Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED) and Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSED) programs.

At the time of the study, the total population of CTE was four hundred thirty (430) based on the enrolment record. Moreover, using the purposive sampling technique, the research participants of this study were the sixty-six (66) second-year education students who enrolled in the school year 2016-2017

The researchers utilized a modified test questionnaire to gather information about grammatical ability. The objective test consisted of ninety (90) items with three (3) parts. The first portion of the text pertains to the subject-verb agreement that contains thirty (30) items. The second portion of the test pertains to verb tenses comprising thirty (30) items and the third one relates the punctuation, which consists of thirty (30) items.

A dry run procedure was conducted to test the reliability of the modified questionnaire at Camp Lapu-Lapu National High School with thirty-seven (37) participants. The participants were asked to answer their questionnaire to measure their grammatical ability in subject-verb agreement, verb tense, and punctuation. The Kuder-Richardson computed value of 0.992 indicates that the modified questionnaire was excellent and showed high consistency. It further signifies the contents' accuracy, stability, and precision therein.

Before the conduct of the study, permission from the authorities of the university was sought. This investigation ensures that the research participants will benefit from the study outcome. Further, the conduct of

the investigation ensures that the research participants' participation is out of their free will, as evidenced by the consent form to which they affix their signatures. There was also no discrimination on the choice of study participation as to socio-economic status, religion, and others. Confidentiality of the data was also observed, wherein there was no identification between the participants and the test results.

## V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This part presents the data relating to the grammatical competence of the research participants on subject-verb agreement, verb tenses, and punctuation.

**Table 1. Grammatical Ability of the Participants on Subject-Verb Agreement (n=66)**

Scores	Remarks	Frequency	Percent
1-10	Very poor	3	4.50
11-20	Poor	63	95.50

Table 1 reveals the second-year education students' ability in grammar in terms of subject-verb agreement. Three (3) of sixty-six (66) students, or equivalent to 4.50%, performed poorly in the examination, while sixty-three, or 95.5% of the research participants, performed poorly in the said test. Thus, the data revealed that a significant proportion of the second-year education students had poor performance on the test, implying their very low grammar ability in subject-verb agreement.

Lock states that mastering the functions of subject and finite from the beginning is essential for second language learners. Without such mastery, they are likely to have many problems with basic sentence structure, forming questions and negatives, and marking tense and number agreement (Eastwood, 1994). It means that subject-verb agreement is a basic sentence structure that second language learners should master.

**Table 2. Grammatical Ability of the Participants on Verb Tenses (n= 66)**

Scores	Remarks	Frequency	Percent
7-10	Very poor	2	3.00
11-20	Poor	37	56.10
21	Passing	7	10.60
22	Fair	4	6.1
23-26	Good	16	24.20

Table 2 shows the data relating to the ability of sophomore education students in terms of grammar, specifically on verb tenses. Sixteen (16), or equivalent to 24.20%, showed good performance in the test about tenses. On the other hand, four (4) or six, or 6.10%, obtained a score of 22. This result implies that their performance on the said test was fair. Moreover, the results also disclosed that thirty-nine (39), or 62.10% failed the test, whose performance can be categorized as poor to very poor. Moreover, 40.91% passed the test, while 59.1% failed. This result signifies that most research participants had very low grammar ability in verb tenses.

Widianingsih and Gulo (2016) explained that grammatical rule is among other difficulties in learning other languages. This truth also applies to those studying English at different levels of education. For example, second language learners usually make mistakes in specific grammatical rules.

**Table 3. Grammatical Ability of the Students on Punctuation (n=66)**

Scores	Remarks	Frequency	Percent
7-10	Very poor	1	1.52
11-20	Poor	58	87.88
21	Passing	1	1.52
22	Fair	1	1.52
23-26	Good	5	7.58

Table 3 shows the grammatical ability of the participants in the area of punctuation. The data in the table signifies that fifty-eight (58), or equivalent to 87.88 %, failed the test on proper punctuation since their performance can be categorized from poor to very poor. On the other hand, seven (7) or 10.62% passed the test, with a passing rating of good. This result indicates that most of the participants performed poorly in tests on grammar in the area of punctuation. This further signified that they had a low ability to use punctuation properly. However, Daffern et al. (2017) said that writing provides a means for personal reflection, thinking, creativity,

meaning-making, and sharing, as well as complementing other modes of communication in a world of multimodal texts. Their study about the predictors of writing success and its importance to spelling, grammar, and punctuation revealed that spelling, grammar, and punctuation jointly predict written composition achievement with spelling as the primary predictor.

**Table 4. Overall Grammatical Ability of the Participants (n= 66)**

Scores	Percent/Equivalent	Remarks	Frequency	Percent
0-72	65-74 [4.0-3.1]	Poor	52	100.00

Table 4 shows the data relating to the overall grammatical ability of the participants. In this study, sixty-six (66) sophomore participants took the 90-item test in the areas of subject-verb agreement, tenses, and punctuation. The result indicates that most participants performed homogeneously in the grammar ability test. However, their performance is poor. Meaning most of them had low grammatical ability.

Macasinag (2011) claimed that the state of English in the Philippines is not what it was in the past. However, since grammar is only one of the aspects of language proficiency, this finding still supports that the English proficiency of the respondents was low. This warrants further studies to look at the student's overall proficiency to see if all aspects of proficiency will yield the same result as the finding of this study. This part shows the results of the test of the significant relationship between the participants' scores on grammatical ability, using Pearson's R.

**Table 5. Results on the Test of Significant Relationship of the Participants' Scores on Grammatical Ability**

Paired Competencies	Pearson R Computed	P-values	Decision on H <sub>0</sub>	Interpretation
	Value			
Subject-Verb Agreement & Tenses	0.162	0.192	Accept H <sub>0</sub>	No Significant Relationship
Subject-Verb Agreement & Punctuation	0.382	0.002	Reject H <sub>0</sub>	Significant Relationship
Tenses & Punctuation	0.056	0.065	Accept H <sub>0</sub>	No Significant Relationship

The findings showed that most of the second-year education students were lacking in grammar competence in the areas of subject-verb agreement, verb tenses, and punctuation. In determining each term of competency, the results show that students experienced difficulty in the test because most of them did not get a passing score. In addition, students are unfamiliar with the grammar rules, especially in subject-verb agreement, verb tenses, and punctuation.

The results revealed that the student's level of competency in the subject-verb agreement has a significant relationship with their punctuation competency. This data signifies that learners' language would be reduced to blurred sentences, miscommunications, and incomprehensible ideas without mechanics. The meaning of a text is greatly affected by the mechanics required to format writing. Mechanics are called grammar, the system of structuring a language to optimize comprehension. Within grammar, syntax focuses on how words and phrases are arranged to create sentences, and punctuation, which marks are used to separate sentences or clauses from clarifying meaning.

The findings further revealed no significant relationship between the scores of the students on tenses and punctuation and subject-verb agreement and tenses where the null hypotheses were accepted. Further, there is a significant relationship between the scores of the students on subject-verb agreement and punctuation. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

This result relates to Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis, which claims that learners acquire language in one way only when they are exposed to input, either written or spoken language, that is comprehensible to them. Comprehensible input is necessary but also a sufficient condition for language acquisition. It requires no effort on the part of the learner. This theory has clear implications for language teachers, namely, that their language instruction should be full of rich input (both spoken and written language) that is roughly tuned at the appropriate level for the learners in the class.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

The grammar ability of the second-year education students was generally poor. Hence, college students had problems applying language's syntactic and semantic properties. Moreover, they cannot naturally use

English as a natural English since it is not their first spoken language or mother tongue.

Thus, English teachers should address the student's learning gaps, especially their incompetence with English grammar rules. Furthermore, since the respondents were non-native speakers of English, the importance of meaning-oriented instruction should be emphasized.

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