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RESEARCH ARTICLE

LEVEL OF COMPETENCIES OF COLLEGE STUDENTS IN GRAMMAR AND LITERATURE

Archer C.Campoy, Jd

1. College of Arts and Sciences, Jose Rizal Memorial State University, Sta. Cruz, Dapitan City 7101, Zamboanga del Norte, Philippines.

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Abstract

This study examined the level of competencies in grammar and literature among college students at Jose Rizal Memorial State University, Main Campus, during the first semester of Academic Year 2024-2025. Utilizing a descriptive survey design, the research drew data from 300 students through a combination of a researcher-developed questionnaire, documentary analysis (Form-138), and two standardized tests. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, and the chi-square test for independence. Findings revealed a generally moderate level of proficiency across the assessed components, with mean scores in grammar domains such as mechanics ($M = 2.80$), correct usage ($M = 2.91$), sentence structure ($M = 2.93$), and vocabulary ($M = 2.71$). In literature, students demonstrated similar levels of competence in figures of speech ($M = 2.70$), reading comprehension ($M = 2.74$), literary appreciation ($M = 2.68$), and fluency of ideas ($M = 2.72$). The analysis further identified significant correlations between students' competency levels and key demographic and academic variables, including type of high school attended, academic strand or course enrolled in, general average in high school, verbal ability (based on SRA), and frequency of exposure to mass media. These results highlight critical predictors of language and literary performance and underscore the need to align curriculum interventions with learners' linguistic backgrounds and media engagement. The study contributes to ongoing discourse on language proficiency and offers pedagogical insights for enhancing integrative instruction in grammar and literature at the tertiary level.

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Introduction:-

In the multilingual landscape of the Philippines, teaching and learning English presents unique pedagogical challenges. English instructors across state universities and colleges grapple with fostering proficiency in grammar and literature among students who are not native speakers and who often navigate three or more languages in daily life. Given that English in the Philippines is a second language shaped by a postcolonial history and sociolinguistic hybridity, issues of competence in both written and oral English persist across educational levels.

The Philippines is home to 171 documented languages (Ethnologue, 16th ed., 2009), with 168 still actively spoken and three now extinct. According to the National Statistics Office (2000), millions speak regional languages such as Tagalog (22M), Cebuano (18.5M), Ilokano (7.7M), and several others—forming a linguistically diverse population. As observed by Dayag (as cited by Campoy, 2014), most Filipinos are at least trilingual, speaking a mother tongue at home, Filipino as the national language, and English in academic and professional domains. This triadic linguistic experience corresponds to three sociocultural demands: ethnicity (through the mother tongue), national identity (through Filipino), and global communication (through English), as discussed by Bautista (corroborated by Campoy, 2014).

In this complex setting, the development of competence in grammar and literature becomes both essential and problematic. Article XIV, Sections 6 and 7 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution reaffirm the functional roles of Filipino and English as official languages, with English continuing to serve as a medium for instruction, scholarship, and international discourse. However, the success of English instruction depends not only on policy but also on how students acquire and apply core competencies—particularly in grammar and literature.

Grammar, as the structural foundation of communication, includes the study of syntax, morphology, usage, and mechanics—critical for clear and correct language use. Literature, on the other hand, is both artistic and pedagogical: it introduces learners to linguistic nuance, rhetorical forms, and cultural meaning, while deepening interpretive and communicative skills. When taught integratively, grammar and literature reinforce one another: grammar provides structure; literature enriches expression.

In the multilingual and postcolonial educational context of the Philippines, teaching English—particularly grammar and literature—requires a nuanced, culturally responsive approach that acknowledges the complex linguistic repertoire of Filipino learners. Scopus-indexed research supports the claim that multilingual learners who operate across multiple languages (e.g., mother tongue, Filipino, and English) face both cognitive advantages and instructional challenges, particularly in the acquisition of academic English (Tupas, 2015). Martin (2014) emphasizes that English in the Philippines functions as a second language intricately shaped by historical, political, and social forces, resulting in a unique linguistic ecology that cannot be addressed by monolingual or native-speaker models of instruction. This multilingual complexity often leads to inconsistent grammatical performance and limited literary engagement, especially in rural or resource-constrained regions. As noted by Bernardo (2008), English teaching must be reoriented toward multilingual realities, utilizing students' linguistic backgrounds as pedagogical assets rather than deficits.

The study aligned with these perspectives, as it evaluated how grammar and literature competencies were influenced by students' language histories and exposure within an educational system still negotiating the legacy of colonial language policies and the demands of global English.

Thus, the study was undertaken to assess the competency levels of college students in both grammar and literature at Jose Rizal Memorial State University, Main Campus, during the first semester of Academic Year 2024–2025. By analyzing student performance across specific linguistic and literary domains, the study aims to identify patterns of proficiency, inform instructional practice, and contribute to the ongoing discourse on multilingual education and English language pedagogy in the Philippines.

Objectives of the Study:-

The study aimed to examine the competency levels of college students in English grammar and literature at Jose Rizal Memorial State University, Main Campus, during the first semester of Academic Year 2024–2025. Anchored on the context of multilingual education and tertiary language instruction in the Philippines, the research specifically seeks to:

1. **Assess the students' level of competency in English grammar** across five core domains:
 - Mechanics
 - Correct usage
 - Sentence structure
 - Figures of speech, and
 - Vocabulary acquisition;
2. **Evaluate the students' level of competency in English literature** in terms of:
 - Reading comprehension,

- Literary appreciation, and
- Fluency of ideas;
- 3. **Examine the relationship between students' demographic and academic profiles**—including prior academic performance, type of secondary education, verbal ability, and media exposure—and their performance in grammar and literature;
- 4. **Propose evidence-based instructional strategies and policy directions** to enhance English language and literature education in higher education institutions, particularly in state universities and colleges in the Philippines, with broader applicability to other multilingual and postcolonial education systems globally.

Methods:-

This study employed a quantitative-descriptive survey design to assess the levels of competencies in English grammar and literature among college students at *Jose Rizal Memorial State University – Main Campus*. The design enabled the systematic collection of quantifiable data to describe prevailing conditions and determine relationships among variables relevant to language proficiency.

Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

Data were gathered through a combination of a researcher-developed questionnaire (validated by experts), standardized English proficiency tests, documentary analysis (i.e., Form 138 records), participant observation, and informal interviews with selected students.

The researcher developed the instrument based on observable instructional challenges and empirical indicators of students' proficiency in classroom contexts. Both oral and written examinations revealed persistent grammatical and literary difficulties, motivating the construction of a tool that captures competencies across mechanics, usage, sentence structure, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and literary interpretation.

Sampling Techniques

The target population comprised 1,200 students from various colleges of the university. Using Slovin's Formula with a 5% margin of error, a sample size of 300 respondents was determined. To ensure representation across all colleges:

- Stratified proportionate sampling was employed,
- Followed by simple random sampling via the lottery method within each stratum (college),
- Yielding a proportion of 0.25, which was applied to the population size of each college to determine its sample contribution.

To supplement the random sampling, non-probability snowball sampling was utilized during follow-up for verification and qualitative triangulation. This was particularly useful in identifying respondents who fit the profile for in-depth observation and interview, especially those with irregular class attendance or low assessment performance.

Rationale and Ethical Considerations

This methodological framework was anchored on the researcher's reflective practice and prior classroom experience, where observable deficiencies in students' English proficiency, particularly in syntax and oral communication, provided impetus for systematic inquiry. Ethical guidelines were strictly followed, including informed consent, voluntary participation, and anonymity of student data.

Data Analysis:-

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency counts, means, and percentages) to determine general competency levels. To examine relationships between demographic variables and competency outcomes, Chi-square tests of independence were conducted using SPSS.

Table 1 Summary of Competencies of College Students in English Grammar in Terms of Mechanics, Correct Usage, Sentence Structure, Figure of Speech, and Vocabulary

College	Students' Competency in English Grammar										Mean	D
	Mechanics		Correct Usage		Sentence Structure		Vocabul ary		Figure of Speech			
	AWV	D	AWV	D	AWV	D	AWV	D	AWV	D		
CAS	2.64	C	2.75	C	2.69	C	2.62	C	2.71	C	2.68	C
CBA	2.77	C	2.84	C	2.93	C	2.73	C	2.78	C	2.81	C
CED	3.27	C	3.53	MC	3.60	MC	3.06	MC	2.93	C	3.27	MC
COE	2.93	C	3.07	C	2.87	C	2.67	C	2.60	LC	2.82	C
CME	2.38	LC	2.43	LC	2.57	LC	2.42	LC	2.40	LC	2.44	LC
CNAHS	2.83	C	2.88	C	2.97	C	2.78	C	2.79	LC	2.85	C
Mean	Overall										2.81	C

Table 1 presents the comparative summary of English grammar competencies among college students across various academic units of Jose Rizal Memorial State University – Main Campus. The results provide key insights into the grammatical proficiency of students in five major subdomains: mechanics, correct usage, sentence structure, figures of speech, and vocabulary.

The College of Education (CED) emerged as the top-performing unit, with an average weighted mean of 3.27, indicating a higher level of competence in grammar than students from the other colleges. This performance may be attributed to the curricular structure and pedagogical focus of the college, which places a premium on language development and instructional literacy as essential foundations for future educators.

In contrast, students from the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), College of Business and Accountancy (CBA), College of Engineering (COEng'g), and College of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences (CNAHS) posted comparable performance levels, with average means ranging between 2.68 and 2.85. These scores fall within the "competent" category and suggest moderate mastery of grammatical structures. The slight variations among these colleges may reflect differences in curricular emphasis on language proficiency, particularly in disciplines where English serves a functional rather than a disciplinary tool.

However, the College of Maritime Education (CME) posted the lowest average score of 2.44, indicating a comparatively lower grammatical competency. This finding warrants further investigation, especially in the context of global maritime communication where English is the lingua franca. The result signals a critical need for targeted language interventions within maritime education programs to bolster technical and operational communication competencies.

When aggregated, the overall mean across all colleges was computed at 2.81, classifying students as generally competent in English grammar. While this denotes acceptable proficiency, the modest mean score underscores the necessity of intensifying instructional interventions that support syntactic accuracy, lexical range, and grammatical control across all disciplines. Moreover, the observed performance gaps highlight the importance of discipline-specific English enhancement programs, aligned with the communicative demands of each academic domain.

These results serve as a compelling foundation for the development of differentiated grammar instruction models and language enrichment initiatives responsive to the varied needs and linguistic contexts of the university's student population.

The comparative results on English grammar competencies among the academic units of Jose Rizal Memorial State University – Main Campus reflect broader trends in grammar proficiency across disciplines, which align with recent empirical studies on discipline-based language instruction. As emphasized by Salazar and San Jose (2022), students from teacher education programs often outperform peers in grammar-related assessments due to the intensive language and literacy training embedded in their curricula.

Conversely, students in technical and professional courses, such as engineering and maritime education, tend to exhibit lower proficiency levels, a gap attributed to the peripheral role of grammar instruction in such programs (Almaden, 2021). This disparity calls for the integration of contextualized grammar instruction tailored to each discipline's communicative functions. Moreover, Tagalog and Cebuano-speaking learners in Philippine state universities demonstrate variable grammatical competence depending on exposure to academic English and the extent of institutional support for language development (Flores & Balane, 2023). Hence, the findings of this study substantiate the need for differentiated, domain-sensitive grammar interventions to enhance linguistic competence across higher education contexts in the Philippines.

Table 2 Summary of Competencies of College Students in English Literature in Terms of Reading Comprehension, Literary Appreciation, Fluency of Ideas

College	Summary of Competencies in English Literature						Mean	D
	Reading Comprehension		Literary Appreciation		Fluency of Ideas			
	AWV	D	AWD	D	AWV	D		
CAS	2.70	C	2.66	C	2.47	LC	2.61	C
CBA	2.77	C	2.71	C	2.68	C	2.72	C
CED	3.02	C	2.95	C	3.30	MC	3.09	C
COE	2.79	LC	2.70	C	2.59	C	2.69	C
CME	2.40	LC	2.37	LC	2.47	LC	2.41	LC
CNAHS	2.78	C	2.71	C	2.81	C	2.76	C
Over-all Mean							2.71	C

Table 2 presents a consolidated overview of students' competencies in English literature, specifically focusing on reading comprehension, literary appreciation, and fluency of ideas. The data reveal insightful patterns across the academic units of Jose Rizal Memorial State University – Main Campus.

Among the different colleges, students from the College of Education (CED) consistently demonstrated the highest level of literary competence, with an average weighted mean of 3.09, affirming their comparatively enhanced skills in textual analysis, interpretative reading, and reflective thinking. This result may be attributed to the curricular integration of literary studies within the teacher education framework and sustained exposure to literary genres.

Following CED, students from the College of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences (CNAHS), College of Engineering (COEng'g), College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), and College of Business and Accountancy (CBA) also reflected competent-level performance, with average weighted means ranging from 2.61 to 2.76. Although not

as high as CED, these scores suggest that students are generally capable of interpreting textual meaning, engaging with literary content, and organizing their ideas coherently in academic contexts.

In contrast, the College of Maritime Education (CME) registered the lowest scores, with weighted means of 2.44 and 2.41, indicating a lower competency level in the domains of reading comprehension, literary appreciation, and ideational fluency. This finding suggests that maritime students may benefit from more targeted literary instruction and enrichment programs to enhance their critical reading and expressive capabilities—especially in relation to multicultural and global texts, which are increasingly relevant in maritime discourse. The overall computed mean of 2.71, classified under “competent,” indicates that the university-wide student body possesses moderate proficiency in literary engagement. This suggests a satisfactory ability to comprehend complex texts, appreciate literary devices and genres, and generate coherent, well-reasoned ideas in written and spoken form.

The findings imply that students’ literary competency is significantly shaped by intersections between grammar mastery and textual interpretation skills, as evidenced by their performance on reading comprehension and syntactic assessments (e.g., subject–verb agreement, correct usage, and verbal ability measured via SRA tools). These insights advocate for integrative pedagogy that merges grammar and literature instruction, equipping learners with a comprehensive command of language for both critical and creative purposes.

The observed trends in English literature competencies among students across academic units of Jose Rizal Memorial State University – Main Campus align with findings from Scopus-indexed studies emphasizing the interplay between literary exposure, disciplinary focus, and language proficiency. According to Almerico et al. (2020), pre-service education students tend to demonstrate higher levels of literary competence due to structured engagement with interpretive reading, reflective writing, and genre-based instruction within their curriculum. This echoes the performance of CED students, who posted the highest mean in literary competencies.

Tarrayo and Medina (2021) assert, literary appreciation and ideational fluency are significantly enhanced when literary texts are integrated into content-area teaching, fostering both critical and expressive skills. The lower performance among maritime students may reflect limited curricular emphasis on literary and humanistic content, an issue highlighted in Cruz and Morillos’s (2019) research, which underscores the need for genre-sensitive reading interventions in technical programs.

These studies collectively affirm that embedding literature instruction within discipline-specific contexts enhances students’ reading comprehension and fluency of ideas—core competencies essential for holistic academic development in higher education.

Table 3 Test of Relationship between the Students’ Profile in Terms of SRA Verbal Ability and Level of Competency in English Grammar and Literature

SRA Verbal Ability	Level of Competency			X ²
	Highly Competent	Less Competent	Total	
High	35	21	56	84.565*
Low	22	222	244	
Total	57	243	300	

ns = not significant* = significant

Table 3 presents the statistical test of association between students’ verbal reasoning skills—as measured by the Science Research Associates (SRA) Verbal Ability Test—and their competency levels in English grammar and literature. The computed chi-square value of 84.565 markedly exceeds the critical value of 3.84 at the 0.05 level of significance, indicating a statistically significant relationship between these two variables.

This result suggests that students with higher verbal reasoning abilities are more likely to demonstrate stronger competencies in English language domains, including grammatical accuracy, syntactic fluency, vocabulary usage,

reading comprehension, and literary interpretation. The SRA verbal ability test, which assesses students' capabilities in analogical reasoning, word relationships, and verbal logic, appears to be a robust predictor of linguistic and literary proficiency.

This finding reinforces the premise that cognitive-linguistic skills, such as the ability to reason, infer, and articulate abstract concepts, play a pivotal role in language learning outcomes. Students who exhibit higher verbal reasoning are more adept at understanding linguistic structures, navigating semantic nuances, and interpreting figurative language—skills essential to both grammar mastery and literary engagement.

These findings align with the conclusions of Pausal (2011), who, in her work “Grammatical Errors of Freshmen High School Students: A Proposed Workbook in Grammar”, argued for a strong foundational emphasis on oral communication competency as a basis for mastering formal grammar instruction. Her study emphasized that learners who are trained to reason and speak with clarity tend to demonstrate stronger grammatical performance in both written and oral discourse.

The study also supports pedagogical frameworks advocating for the integration of grammar instruction within authentic, communicative contexts, enabling students to apply language rules meaningfully rather than in isolation. When students engage in tasks that demand logical reasoning, persuasive expression, and interpretative judgment—often measured through instruments like the SRA—they simultaneously enhance their command of language mechanics and their ability to decode and appreciate literary texts.

The significant relationship observed affirms the interdependence of reasoning ability and language proficiency, and signals the importance of incorporating critical thinking tasks and verbal reasoning development into English language curricula in higher education. Such alignment ensures that instruction not only builds structural accuracy but also empowers learners with the discursive competence needed for both academic and real-world communication.

The statistically significant association between students' verbal reasoning skills, as measured by the SRA Verbal Ability Test, and their competencies in English grammar and literature aligns with growing scholarly consensus that cognitive-linguistic aptitude underpins language proficiency. Research by Ilieva and Farahani (2019) underscores that verbal reasoning—encompassing analogical thinking, inferencing, and abstract linguistic manipulation—predicts learners' capacity to comprehend complex texts and construct grammatically sound discourse. Similarly, Huang and Han (2021) assert that verbal cognitive skills facilitate syntactic awareness and semantic interpretation, both of which are essential for grammar mastery and literary analysis.

The findings of the current study affirm that students with higher verbal reasoning scores possess enhanced metalinguistic awareness, enabling them to internalize grammatical structures and appreciate literary elements more effectively. These results support pedagogical approaches that integrate critical thinking and reasoning-based tasks into English instruction, as advocated by Wu et al. (2020), who emphasize that such strategies enrich both functional and academic literacy.

Indeed, embedding verbal reasoning development into language curricula can significantly improve student outcomes across multiple domains of English proficiency.

Table 4 Test of Relationship between the Students' Profile in terms of Exposure to Media and the Level of Competency in English Grammar and Literature

Exposure to Mass media	Level of Competency			X ²
	Highly Competent	Less Competent	Total	
High	37	37	74	61.338*
Low	20	206	226	
Total	57	243	300	

ns = not significant* = significant

Table 4 presents the results of the statistical test examining the relationship between students' media exposure and their competency levels in English grammar and literature. The computed chi-square value of 61.338 notably surpasses the critical value of 3.84 at a 0.05 level of significance, signifying a statistically significant relationship between the two variables. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected.

This finding suggests that media exposure plays a consequential role in shaping students' linguistic competence—particularly in the acquisition and application of grammatical conventions, syntactic structures, lexical breadth, and literary comprehension. The data supports the assertion that students who engage more frequently with media—whether through newspapers, television, radio broadcasts, films, or digital platforms such as blogs, podcasts, and social media—tend to demonstrate higher levels of language proficiency.

This association is corroborated by Sanchez (as cited in Campoy, 2014), whose study emphasized that mass media serve as informal yet potent platforms for language learning, particularly in the domains of oral and written communication. Exposure to authentic language use in media contexts not only models standard grammatical patterns but also fosters contextual understanding of vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, rhetorical devices, and discourse strategies. These are crucial components in both grammar instruction and literary analysis.

The data affirms the sociolinguistic theory that input frequency and contextual richness are critical to language acquisition (Krashen, 1982). Media, by virtue of its dynamic and immersive nature, provides continuous exposure to contextualized English, thereby facilitating subconscious language absorption and reinforcing formal instruction. In this sense, media becomes an unstructured extension of the classroom, providing learners with diverse registers, discourse types, and cultural references that are otherwise difficult to simulate in academic settings.

The implications of this relationship extend to curriculum development and instructional design. English programs in higher education institutions may benefit from the strategic integration of media-based content—such as news analysis, film critique, podcast discussions, and social media engagement—into grammar and literature syllabi. By aligning instructional delivery with students' existing media consumption habits, educators can create more engaging, relevant, and impactful learning experiences.

The strong statistical linkage between media exposure and language competency highlights the importance of media literacy as a pedagogical tool. It also underscores the need for educators to guide students in critically engaging with diverse media sources to foster not only linguistic accuracy but also communicative fluency, cultural awareness, and interpretive depth in both grammar and literature.

According to Yang and Li (2020), sustained engagement with multimodal media—ranging from digital platforms and films to podcasts and news outlets—contributes meaningfully to learners' grammatical development, lexical acquisition, and interpretive skills by providing abundant authentic language input. Similarly, Wasik and Hindman (2020) emphasize that exposure to rich linguistic environments through media enhances both receptive and productive language functions, particularly among learners in higher education. These insights resonate with Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1982), which posits that language is best acquired through comprehensible input in meaningful contexts—conditions naturally met by media interaction. Moreover, findings by Pegrum et al. (2018) demonstrate that students who critically interact with English-language media content display improved syntactic fluency, discourse awareness, and analytical reasoning in literary tasks. As such, the significant chi-square value found in the present study supports the theoretical and empirical assertion that media serve not merely as a supplemental tool but as a vital conduit for enhancing language and literature proficiency in tertiary education.

Conclusion:-

The present study yielded compelling insights into the proficiency levels of college students in grammar and literature, revealing moderate yet parallel competencies across both domains. Specifically, students exhibited average performance in grammar components—mechanics ($M = 2.80$), correct usage ($M = 2.91$), sentence structure ($M = 2.93$), and vocabulary ($M = 2.71$)—as well as in literary dimensions such as figures of speech ($M = 2.70$), reading comprehension ($M = 2.74$), literary appreciation ($M = 2.68$), and fluency of ideas ($M = 2.72$). These results underscore a balanced but improvable level of linguistic competence, suggesting room for both pedagogical reinforcement and curricular innovation.

The study identified statistically significant relationships between students' performance and several demographic and academic variables: type of high school graduated from, course or strand enrolled in, general average in high school, SRA verbal ability, and exposure to mass media. These findings not only highlight the **sociocultural and educational antecedents** of language learning but also validate the importance of early literacy exposure and continued language engagement across multiple platforms.

Therefore, it is recommended that higher education institutions, particularly State Universities and Colleges (SUCs), develop differentiated and modularized instructional materials tailored to students' linguistic backgrounds and competency levels. Grammar and literature learning modules should feature contextualized tasks, authentic texts, and practice-based activities that hone accuracy, creativity, and critical thinking. More importantly, instruction must align with the principles of outcomes-based education (OBE), where learning materials are not only academically rigorous but also personally meaningful, culturally grounded, and intellectually stimulating.

Equally vital is the integration of media and technology-enhanced instruction, given the documented impact of media exposure on language acquisition. Incorporating digital literacies, multimedia resources, and socially relevant content into English instruction can reinforce both formal and informal modes of learning.

This study advances the ongoing discourse on tertiary-level language education in multilingual settings. It contributes evidence that language competency is shaped by both academic scaffolds and lived sociolinguistic experiences. By addressing these dual influences, language educators can more effectively enhance students' communicative competencies and prepare them for the demands of professional, academic, and global communication.

Pedagogical Context

In light of the study's findings revealing moderate but varied levels of English grammar and literature competencies among tertiary students at Jose Rizal Memorial State University (JRMSU)—with significant influence from factors such as SRA verbal ability, media exposure, and prior academic background—there is a pressing need for transformative, evidence-based instructional and policy innovations.

These must align with the linguistic realities of multilingual, postcolonial education systems such as the Philippines, while remaining adaptable to similar global contexts, to wit:

I. Instructional Strategies

1. Contextualized Grammar-Integrated Literature Instruction (CGILI)

Given that learners demonstrated parallel competency levels in grammar and literature, instruction should move beyond the dichotomy of teaching them separately. Teachers should use literary texts to contextualize grammar instruction—for instance, exploring sentence structures, idiomatic expressions, and rhetorical figures directly from literary selections. This promotes syntactic sensitivity and semantic depth.

2. Multimodal Language Exposure through Media Literacy Integration

The study established a positive correlation between media exposure and language proficiency. Instructors should systematically integrate media-based learning tasks, such as analyzing political discourse on television or interpreting literary tropes in film adaptations, to extend formal instruction into real-world communicative contexts. This supports Critical Media Literacy and strengthens both comprehension and production skills.

3. Differentiated Instruction and Remedial Scaffolding Based on Diagnostic Profiles

Using instruments such as the SRA and formative grammar assessments, students may be grouped into competency bands (e.g., foundational, developing, proficient). Each band should receive tiered tasks and remediation tailored to linguistic strengths and weaknesses. This reduces instructional mismatch and maximizes learning outcomes.

4. Trilingual Competency Framework (TCF) in Course Design

Drawing from Bautista's (2007) language orientation model, courses should intentionally align instruction with the trilingual reality of Filipino learners—acknowledging the mother tongue, Filipino, and English. Modules should build contrastive awareness to reduce language interference and support the transfer of cognitive-linguistic skills across languages.

5. Task-Based Instruction and Genre-Based Writing Pedagogies

Implementing task-based learning (TBLT) and genre-based writing instruction allows learners to internalize grammar rules through authentic tasks—such as composing advocacy essays or analyzing political manifestos. This enables functional literacy aligned with both academic and civic communication purposes.

II. Policy Directions

1. Institutionalization of a Language and Literacy Development Office (LLDO)

All HEIs, particularly State Universities and Colleges (SUCs), should institutionalize a Language and Literacy Development Office tasked to:

- Conduct regular language proficiency diagnostics
- Offer faculty and student literacy workshops
- Develop contextualized instructional materials
- Monitor policy implementation on English instruction

2. Formulation of a National Grammar and Literature Competency Roadmap (NGLCR)

The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) may consider formulating a national roadmap that clearly defines milestone competencies in grammar and literature across college levels. This must be aligned with 21st-century literacies, including digital, intercultural, and information literacy.

3. Mandatory English Across the Curriculum (EAC) Implementation

Policies must mandate the English Across the Curriculum framework in SUCs, ensuring that English grammar and academic writing are reinforced in non-language subjects such as Political Science, Engineering, and Business. Faculty from all disciplines must be trained to integrate English language support within their domains.

4. Creation of a National Repository of Multilingual Literary Texts

To support literature teaching in a postcolonial multilingual context, SUCs should collaborate to create a national digital repository of curated literary texts—ranging from canonical works to regional literature in translation—to promote inclusivity, critical thinking, and cross-cultural awareness.

5. Leveraging International Consortia for Professional Development

Finally, SUCs must proactively forge partnerships with international consortia, such as the ASEAN Language Education Forum or the Global Language Justice Network, to engage faculty in continuous development programs, exposure to global best practices, and collaborative research in English education.

Global Implications

The instructional and policy directions proposed herein, though anchored in the Philippine context, offer transferable frameworks for other postcolonial multilingual nations (e.g., India, Nigeria, South Africa). The integration of multilingual pedagogy, evidence-based remediation, and media-supported instruction addresses the shared challenges of linguistic diversity, postcolonial identity, and English hegemony.

Moreover, as global higher education transitions toward decolonial, inclusive pedagogies, the emphasis on trilingualism, learner diagnostics, and media literacy in this model contributes to a context-sensitive, globally responsive English language and literature curriculum.

To cultivate literate, critically aware graduates capable of navigating academic and professional spheres, HEIs must evolve beyond traditional grammar drills and rote literary analysis. By aligning instruction with cognitive, linguistic, and sociocultural dimensions—guided by robust policy and institutional support—a sustainable, inclusive, and globally relevant English education can be realized for learners in the Philippines and beyond.

The moderate yet varied levels of English grammar and literature competencies among tertiary students at Jose Rizal Memorial State University (JRMSU), influenced by SRA verbal ability, media exposure, and prior academic background, reflect a broader pedagogical challenge in multilingual, postcolonial educational settings. As Canagarajah (2013) emphasizes, English instruction in such contexts must transcend standardized models and embrace context-responsive pedagogies that recognize learners' diverse linguistic repertoires and sociocultural realities. Research by Tupas and Renandya (2020) further supports the need for transformative approaches that integrate critical language awareness, differentiated instruction, and multimodal literacy practices tailored to students' cognitive and experiential diversity. Moreover, Kirkpatrick (2017) argues for policy frameworks that situate English education within the realities of World Englishes, ensuring that instructional models are inclusive,

equitable, and globally relevant. The findings from JRMSU affirm these scholarly insights, underscoring the urgency for localized, evidence-based reforms that bridge language competence gaps while empowering learners as multilingual communicators in both academic and real-world contexts.

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