

COMMUNICATIVE PROFICIENCY AMONG STUDENTS IN PANGASINAN STATE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES

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ABSTRACT

English, as an international language, is used by most people all over the world. It is, in truth, the most important language in the world today. In the Philippines, English speaking and writing skills are things that are given priority by employers in the choice of job applicants. This study intended to determine the level of communicative proficiency of 346 students in Pangasinan State University who were randomly selected through a stratified random sampling. Communicative proficiency was measured by an instrument which was researcher-made. The communication areas covered in this study were vocabulary, subject-verb agreement, tense, spelling, sentence structure, and comprehension. Findings showed that the students are generally weakest in sentence structure. They are lowly proficient in determining the order or proper arrangement of words in a sentence. All students from the different curricular programs are either low or very low in proficiency in this particular area of communication. Those enrolled in Engineering programs dominated those who are enrolled in non-Engineering programs. Chi-square correlation test results show that communicative proficiency of the respondents was significantly related to their year level. Therefore, more intensive training in sentence structure, comprehension, tenses, and even spelling is needed, especially to non-engineering students.

Key Terms: *communicative proficiency, communication, chi-square*

Objectives of the Study

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of sex, type of high school graduated from, age, curricular program and year level?
2. What is the communicative proficiency level of the students along vocabulary, subject-verb agreement, tense, spelling, sentence structure and comprehension?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the communicative proficiency of the respondents and their profile?

Methodology

Descriptive method was used in this study. It is designed to gather information about present existing conditions. This method describes the nature of a situation as it exists at the time of the study and explores the causes of particular phenomena. The respondents of this study were the 346 out of 2,486 students who were selected through stratified random sampling.

This study used a questionnaire as the main data gathering instrument. This instrument was validated by faculty members from other campuses who are teaching English. The data were tallied, categorized, analyzed and subjected to normative measures by the use of frequency counts, percentage distribution, mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis.

FINDINGS

Profile of the Respondents

Majority of the respondents were male while the remaining 166 or 48% female. Majority or 319 or 92.20 percent of the total respondents completed their secondary education from public high schools. Two hundred fourteen or 61.85 percent of them belonged to 18 years old and below with 94 or 27.17 percent of them were 17 years of age. One-hundred sixty (160) or 46.20 percent of them were enrolled in Non-Engineering courses, dominated by students enrolled in ICT (Information and Communications Technology). On one hand, 186 or 53.78 percent were enrolled in Engineering Courses, with students of BS Civil Engineering getting the most number and BS Architecture getting the least number. Notwithstanding, the greatest bulk of the respondents were freshmen.

Communicative Proficiency of the Respondents

The respondents were generally found to be **moderately** proficient in comprehension. There were found to be **highly** proficient in vocabulary and in subject-verb agreement. However, they got **very low** proficiency in sentence structure.

The AB in English (ABE), Elementary Education (Elem. Educ), Civil Engineering (CE), Computer Engineering (COE), Electrical Engineering (EE), Information and Communications Technology (ICT), and Mechanical Engineering (ME) students had high proficiency in **Vocabulary**. Conversely, the Architecture (Archi), BS Mathematics (MATH), and Secondary Education (Sec Educ) students were moderately proficient.

In **subject-verb agreement**, the ABE, Archi, CE, Elem. Educ, EE, Math, and ME students were found to be highly proficient. In **Tenses**, ABE, Elem. Educ, CE, Math, and ME students were highly proficient, while Archi, COE, Sec Educ, EE, and ICT students were moderately proficient. In **Spelling**, the students enrolled in ABE, Archi, CE, EE, and ME programs were highly proficient, but overall, the PSU Urdaneta students were moderate in their level of spelling proficiency. In terms of **Comprehension**, the ABE and ME students were highly proficient, while the rest of the students were moderately proficient.

The students are generally weakest in **Sentence Structure**. They are lowly proficient in determining the order or proper arrangement of words in a sentence. All students from the different curricular programs are either low or very low in proficiency in this particular area of communication.

Overall Relationship between the Proficiency and their Profile

| Profile | Significance |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| Sex | 42.094 |
| Type of High School Graduated From | 59.405 |
| Age | 495.500 |
| Curricular Program | 6.107 |
| Year Level | 244.700** |

** - Correlation is significant at the 0.01

level (2-tailed)

Conclusions

In the light of the findings of the study, the following conclusions were formulated:

1. The greatest bulk of the student populace of Pangasinan State University-Urdaneta Campus consists of freshman males, graduates of general public high schools, and engineering students with ages 18 years old and below.
2. There is still a wide room for improving the communicative proficiency of students, particularly in sentence structure, comprehension, tenses, and even spelling. While their communicative proficiency, level significantly improves as they go higher in age and year level, such is not enough to attain the level of communicative proficiency required for successful students and effective future professionals.

Recommendations

1. A more intensive training in English communication, particularly in spelling, tenses, comprehension, and sentence structure should be given to the PSU Urdaneta students. This should be a cooperative endeavor to be undertaken by all instructors teaching English subjects. A remedial course should likewise be concluded for those who need such.
2. In view of the open admission policy of the University, it is recommended that freshman applicants should undergo an oral interview to determine who among them need to take a remedial course in English. The students would find it very difficult to proceed with their college work if they are poor in comprehension.