GRAMMAR ERRORS AND ISSUES OF THE STUDENT TEACHERS OF GUIMARAS STATE COLLEGE: BASES FOR INSTRUCTIONAL ENHANCEMENT

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ABSTRACT

With the advent of technology in the whole world, many learners have become dependents on the gadgets in terms of entertainment, business, information, communication, and etc. including spelling, meaning, and usage of words to be used; wherein it would be easy for them to learn a lot and to enhance their competencies. The government had/had spent much for the enhancement of the country's educational system for a long period of times. It had spent much in learning materials and physical facilities in different levels in schools. Yet, there are still learners especially the students who are taking education courses who are poor in using the language specifically in English. In their part, they are expected to be role models in the way they act, do, say and write. They are expected more to be adept in grammatical competencies by using the English language,which they are going to use in their future profession as to be teachers.

That's the reason why this study was conducted in order to identify the grammar errors and issues in writing of the student teachers of the Guimaras State College, Academic Year 2014-2015, and will serve as bases for instructional enhancement. Total population of the student teachers for Academic Year 2014-2015, served as respondents of the study, however there were four who were absent. Out of eighty five, there were eighty one student teachers served as respondents of the study.

Result showed that the respondents' majority sex were female of 71 with the percentage of 67.65%. Most of the respondents were BEEd, total of 56, with 69.14%. Most of the respondents have the age bracket between 20-21 years old, total of 39 with percentage of 48.15%. Result revealed that the grammar score of the respondents, only ten were considered as outstanding in their score and almost one-half of the respondents described as satisfactory, while others were described as fair and poor which has a negative result. The major grammar errors and issues reflected most in the spelling correction as rank number one, and using of determiners in grammar as rank number two committed by the respondents in writing essays. There were identified specific writing issues committed by the respondents in their write-ups according to their rank. Data were obtained using the researcher-made questionnaire. This study recommends serious pedagogical considerations for the improvement and enhancement of instruction in the academe.

Keywords: grammar, student teachers, grammar competencies, errors and issues, instructional enhancement, BEEd, English language

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The Filipino learners and educators have the instinct personalities to be above among others in terms of educational qualifications. One of these is to possess the grammatical competence by using the English language. The personnel of the educational system of the country have exerted much effort to possess it through learners in school. However, the system has still that kind of problem which has less improvement in the part of the Filipino learners, specifically the students who are taking the course of Teacher Education for they will be teachers in the future.

Every English language teacher aspires to develop the students' communicative skills in speaking and in writing so that they can communicate adequately through these media. However, more often, after years of struggle in language teaching, teachers still complain that students especially some of the college students produce poorly verbal and nonverbal outputs; that the language they have in is wrong grammar, wrong way of producing the sound

and wrong choose of words. The usage of words I not appropriate and the ideas and thought express are inadequate. How much more in the part of the student teachers who have undergone their practice teaching for their training. They are expected to be models in everything and to be adept in using the English language for it will serve as one of the media of instruction for their teaching, specifically in their practice teaching. What they have to do, say and write in their class would be adapted and followed by their pupils and students. In this case, the student teachers as to be professionals must excel in the grammatical competence both in speaking and writing for they will serve as role models for young learners in elementary and high school levels.

Grammar is from the latin "gram", which means" what is written". Originally, the term grammar, grammatical, referred to the art of writing, as compared to rhetoric, rettorica, the art of speaking.

In Linguistic, grammar is the set of structural rules governing the composition of clauses, phrases, and words in any given natural language. It includes morphology, syntax, and phonology, often complemented by phonetics, semantics, and pragmatics. The study of grammar all by itself won't necessarily make a person to be a better writer. But by gaining a clearer understanding of how the language works, a person should also gain greater control over the way he/she shapes the words into sentences and sentences into paragraphs. In short, studying grammar may help a student become a more effective writer.

Grammar is the structural foundation of one's ability to express him. The more the person is aware of how it works, the more the person can monitor the meaning and effectiveness of the way he and others use the language. It can help foster precision, detect ambiguity, and exploit the richness of expression available in English. And it can help everyone-not only teachers of English, but teachers of everything, for all teaching is ultimately a matter of getting to gripping with meanings. (D. Crystal
2004).

Grammatical competence focuses on command of the language code, including such things as the rules of word and sentence formation, meanings, spelling and pronunciation (Gao, 2001). The goal is to acquire knowledge of, and ability to use, forms of expression that are grammatically correct and accurate (Diaz-Rico & Weed, 2010; Gao, 2001). Grammatical competence acts to promote accuracy and fluency in second language production (Gao, 2001), and increases in importance as the learneradvances in proficiency (Diaz-Rico & Weed, 2010).
Teachers need to realize that grammatical forms need to be explicitly taught for students to reach higher levels of academic language proficiency. However, grammar needs to be taught in context. As Larsen-Freeman (2001) points out, we need to pay attention to the three dimensions of grammar: form, meaning and use. Simply teaching grammar rules and/or having student memorize verb conjugations will not help students acquire grammatical competence.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Chomsky's Universal Grammar

For Chomsky, acquiring language cannot be reduced to simply developing an inventory of responses to stimuli, because every sentence that anyone produces can be a totally new combination of words. When we speak, we combine a finite number of elements—the words of our language—to create an infinite number of larger structures—sentences.

In Chomsky's view, the reason that children so easily master the complex operations of language is that they have innate knowledge of certain principles that guide them in developing the grammar of their language. In other words, Chomsky's theory is that language learning is facilitated bya predisposition that our brains have for certain structures of language. For Chomsky's theory to hold true, all of the languages in the world must share certain structural properties. And indeed, Chomskyand other generative linguists like him have shown that the 5000 to 6000 languages in the world, despite their very different grammars, do share a set of syntactic rules and principles. These linguists believe that this "universal grammar" is innate

and is embedded somewhere in the neuronal circuitryof the human brain. And that would be why children can select, from all the sentences that come totheir minds, only those that conform to a "deep structure" encoded in the brain's circuits.

Universal grammar

Universal grammar, then, consists of a set of unconscious constraints that let user decide whether a sentence is correctly formed. This mental grammar is not necessarily the same for all languages. But according to Chomskyian theorists, the process by which, in any given language, certain sentences are perceived as correct while others are not, is universal and independent of meaning.

Thus, the sentence is "Robert book reads the" is not correct English, even though there'sprettily good idea of what it means. Conversely, the sentence such as "Colorless green ideas sleep furiously." is grammatically correct English, even though it is nonsense. http://thebrain.mcgill.ca/flash/capsules/outil_rouge06.html

Statement of the problem

This study was conducted in order to determine the grammar errors and issues committed by the student teachers of Guimaras State College as bases for instructional enhancement.

Specifically it answered the following questions;

1. What are the scores obtained by the student teachers in writing essay when they are categorized by group?
2. What are the major grammar errors and issues committed by the student teachers in terms of
a.) Grammar, b.)Spelling correction, c.)Punctuation, d.)Sentence structure, e.) Enhancement suggestion, and f.) Style check?
3. What are the specific issues and errors committed in writing essays?
4. What are the recommendations for the instructional enhancement based on the grammar errors and issues findings committed by the student teachers?

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Literature

In linguistic concepts, there are scopes of linguistic studies which have been studied since then such as: phonology that studies the combination of sounds into organized units of speech, the rules that govern pronunciation. It is the component of a grammar made up of the elements and principles that determine sound patterns in a language. Phonetics studies how sounds are articulated by the human speech mechanism and received by the auditory mechanism on how sounds can be distinguished and characterized by the manner in which they are produced. Morphology deals with the rules of combining morphemes to form words. It deals more with the internal structure of words and the changes that take place in it. Syntax deals with how words combine to form phrases, phrases combine to form clauses, and clauses join to form sentences. It also attempts to describe how these elements function in the sentence. Semantics views with the leveling of meaning by analyzing the structure of meaning in a language. Pragmatics is the study of how language is used in real communication. Discourse is the study of chunks of language which is bigger than a single sentence. And Etymology gives the origin of a certain English word.

The English language in the Philippines Schools during the American regime in the Philippines, English, and the colonizers' language is as more popularly used in the archipelago than tagalong. It was not until cultural nationalism found its stalwart exponent in President Manuel L. Quezon that tagalong as provided in the Commonwealth Constitution in 1935 was declared as the national language of the Philippines (Rasul, 1990).

Rasul claimed that Filipinos at present have English and Filipino as the two pillars of their linguistic tradition while holding still to their ethnic tradition and language, providing that Filipinos can be proficient in the two languages and still remain comfortably Filipino.

UNESCO report resonates with urgency to take into account the pivotal role of languages in achieving the learning. It is imperative that education policy makers and language planners adopt the MTB MLE approach isto provide quality education to all. MTBMLE has additive value and therefore children should start learning in the mother tongue or first language (L1) and later after mastery is attained, learn other languages.

It is not true that learning additional language - the mother tongue- is taking away the learning time that should be spent in mastering the languages of wider communication, Filipino and English in the Philippine setting. It is not true as studies have proven that learning the mother tongue or first language delays access and mastery of science and technology and school language/s and international language.

Any policy on the use of a language as medium of instruction entails developing certain standards of competency in the language. Thus, if English is to be used as medium for educating the
Filipino students formally in schools, the question that arises is what degree of competency the teachers have in using the language. If a non-native language is to be used as medium of instruction, as in the case of English in the Philippine schools, it arises the need to developing competence in the non-native language among the students and the teachers. Thus, a policy on the use of a language in education has an effect on the English subjects in using the language since there is a need to find efficient ways to develop competence in that language. This means, in concrete term, the need to consider the methodology and materials for teaching the language.

One of the salient features of the NSEC is its promotion of the Bilingual Policy. The foundation of the English language program of the NSEC is set forth in two very important documents - 1087 Constitution of the Philippines and DECS Order No. 52, series of 1987 (The Bilingual Education Policy).
The Constitution basis is found in section 7 article XIV; official languages of the Philippines are Filipino, and until otherwise provided by law, English. It should be noted that this section established the official status of English both for purposes in interaction among the citizenry and as a language of schooling.

DECS Order No. 52, series of 1987, states that Bilingual Education aims at the achievement of competence in both Filipino and English at the national level through the teaching of both languagesand their use as media of instruction at all levels. (DECS Order N. 52, series, 1987)

Since competence in the use of both Filipino and English is one of the goals of the Bilingual Education Policy, continuing improvement in the teaching of both languages, their use as media of instruction, and specification of their functions in the Philippine schooling shall be the responsibility of the whole educational system.

Through the SEDIP, since 1990, new trends in language teaching for secondary schools in the Philippines have been introduced and employed. Thus, the birth of the communication way of teaching English by which the subject matter is taught in life-like situations where the learners can interact in their most natural way. The learners are encouraged to perform the basic skills such as in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in their own levels without being so attached to the rules of grammar that sometimes hinder their enthusiasm to act and say accordingly. However, in the implementation of the rules of grammar is not an excuse for the college level specifically the student teachers who are about to be teachers for their profession.

Related studies

Ali Gurata; "The Grammar Learning Strategies Employed By Turkish University Preparatory School EFL Students" July 2008, his study mainly investigated (a) learning strategies Turkish EFL learners used when

learning and using grammar structures, and (b) the difference in learning strategy use by several variables, such as gender, proficiency level, and achievement on grammar tests. The analysis of the quantitative data revealed that Turkish EFL learners think learning English grammar is important, and that these learners use a variety of learning strategies when they learn and use grammar structures. The findings of his study also indicated that there is a difference in learning strategy use among different proficiency levels. Similarly, a significant difference was found between males and females in terms of their strategy use. The study showed that using grammar learning strategies is influential in grammar achievement.

Charita B. Lasal," Communicative Competence of Secondary Senior Students: Language Instructional Pocket" Jun 2014... Measuring grammatical competence and discourse competence of fifty students at the University of Santo Tomas. Master's Thesis. In her research, findings showed that the level of communicative competence in oral and writing skills of the students is both acceptable; however, they differ in their numerical values. In terms of grammatical competence in oral skill, the average rate is 3.10 while the respondents obtained an average rate of 2.91 in their writing skill. In terms of discourse competence in oral skill, the average rate is 3.10, while the respondents obtained an average rate of 2.68 in their writing skill. In sociolinguistic competence in their oral skill, the respondents obtained an average rate of 3.29 and 3.01 in their speaking skill. For the strategic competence, the respondents got an average rate of 3.12 in their oral skill and an average rate of 2.73 in their writing skill. Based on the findings of the study, it can be disclosed that the communicative competence of the students both in speaking and writing skills is acceptable, having an average rate of 3.15 and 2.84 respectively.

MOHAMMAD ALI FATEMI, 2008," The Relationship Between Writing Competence, Language Proficiency And Grammar Errors in the Writing of Iranian TEFL Sophomores" UNIVERSITI SAINSMALAYSIA. His study investigated the relationship between writing competence, language proficiency and grammatical errors in the writing of Iranian. TEFL sophomores wascarried out in two phases. In the first phase, the objectives were to: 1) asses the writing competence of the iranian TEFL sophomores; 2) measure their language proficiency, and 3) examine the relationship between their writing competence and language proficiency and its sub-skills including listening, reading, and grammatical competence. The second phase was mainly descriptive and an error analysis of the subjects' writing was done to achieve the following objectives: 1) find out the most frequently occurring categories of grammatical errors; 2) establish a rank order of these errors; 3) investigate if their L1 (Persian language) was the source of their grammatical errors; and 4) establish the probable interference of grammatical errors with communicative purposes of their writing. The data consisted of 97 essays of a given topic and the results of a paper-based TOEFL test of language proficiency from all the subjects of the study.

A quantitative approach was used to analyze the data collected from the first phase of thestudy so that measures of writing competence, language proficiency and correlation between these variables could be established reliably through the SPSS analytical procedures.

A qualitative approach was employed for the second phase of the study as an error analysis of the subjects' written essays was carried out. The analysis of the data revealed that errors arising frommis-selection ranked highest, accounting for a total 42% of the total number of grammatical errors in the writing of Iranian TEFL sophomores. Over-inclusion was the major cause of inter-lingual grammatical errors. Also, it was found out that among different modifications, in mis-selection, the categories of "verb form" and "part of speech"; in over-inclusion, the category of "preposition"; and in omission, the categories of "Article", "-s Plural", "-s Singular", "Auxiliary", were the most common grammatical errors in the writing of Iranian learners. The findings also indicated that their L1 was a source of grammatical errors and in general grammatical errors interfered with communicative purposes among which errors of mis-selection accounted for the major source of communicative failure in their writing and that the majority of grammatical errors which were rooted in their L1 (the Persian language) led to communicative failure (i.e. 66%). However, the overall majority of errors were intra-lingual, i.e., they were caused by the L2 itself rather than inter-lingual errors though it was also found that the level of language proficiency of learners directly related to the incidence of grammatical errors, inter-lingual errors, and communicative failure. Conclusions drawn from the findings

of this study imply that serious pedagogical considerations have to be given to the teaching of grammar to improve the writing competence of Iranian TEFL sophomores. The findings of this study can provide syllabus designers withthe selection, gradation, and sequencing the material for teaching grammatical items. Also, test developers can take advantage of the most frequent grammatical errors for developing their test item.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Descriptive design was used in this study by frequency count and percentage.

Respondents of the study

The respondents of this study are the total population of the Student Teachers of the Guimaras State College for Academic Year 2014-2015.

The table shows the specific number of students according to their course, specialization and sex.

Course	Specialization	Sex	Total
Bachelor in Secondary Education (BSED)	English – 16 Filipino – 7 Mathematics - 5	Male - 3 Female - 25	28
Bachelor in Elementary Education (BEEd)	General Education - 57	Male - 4 Female - 53	57

Research Instrument

Planning the questionnaire

The proponent planned the type of questionnaire to be prepared together with its contents that would jibe to the grammar competence in writing of the student teachers of the Guimaras State College.

Writing and editing the questionnaire

After planning, the proponent drafted her own questionnaire in many ways and consolidated them. After the consolidated draft, it was presented to experts for correction and suggestion for its improvement.

Reproducing the questionnaire

The questionnaire materials were reproduced as clearly as possible to prevent any misinterpretation by the respondents. Each contained general information and instructions about it. Enough copies were prepared to provide every respondent with one complete set of the questionnaire.
Administering the questionnaire

The total number of student teachers served as the respondents by asking all of them to answer the questionnaire provided for them. It was done in a simultaneous manner and in sitting apart to avoid crowd problem and have concentration in their part. After answering the questionnaire, it was gathered right away to avoid duplication of copies among them.

Data gathering procedure

The data was utilized in this study was taken from survey by answering the questionnaire of the respondents. The pertinent data were gathered through the use of the survey-questionnaire. They weretallied and computed by using the frequency counts. The international online website grammarly system was used in order to find out the scores, major grammar errors and issues and specific writing issues. The simple fre-

quency was used to establish the grammar errors and issues in writing of thestudent teachers. To summarize the data on a single category, the number of tally works or frequency was used. The list of categories and frequencies for the entire study was presented through a frequency distribution. Percentage with reference to the entire group was also used as the formula. After the statistical computation, the proponent analyzed, discussed and interpreted for the data. Appropriate conclusion and recommendation were given and be used as framework for the enhancement and improvement of the grammar competence in writing of the student teachers.

Statistical tools used

Frequency count and percent was used in this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The graph indicates the age's bracket of the respondents. There are fourteen respondents' ages from 18- 19 with the percentage of 17.28%. There are thirty nine respondents who belong to the age bracket of 20-21 with the percentage of 48.15%. There are fourteen respondents' ages from 22-23 with the percentage of 17.28%. The age bracket of 24-25, there are 5 respondents with the percentage of 6.18%, and nine respondents are under the age bracket of 26 and above with the percentage of 11.11%. There many respondents who belong to the age bracket of 20-21 years old. The least respondents are those who belong in the age bracket of 24-225 years old.

a. Profile of the Respondents
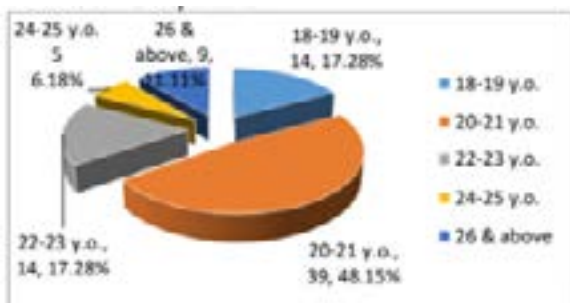
Fig. 1. Age of the respondents

The graph indicates the number and percentage of the respondents. There are 71 female respondentswith the percentage of 87.65. While the male sex, it has the total of ten, with the percentage of 12.35%. There are many female respondents than male.
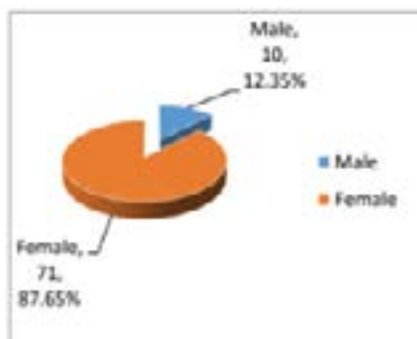
Fig. 2. Sex of the respondents

It shows the number and percentage of the respondents in relation to their course and specialization. Bachelor in Elementary Education (BEEd) has 56 with the percentage of 69.14%. Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd) has 25 with the percentage of 30.86%. There are many BEEd respondents compared to BSEd.

Fig. 3. Course/specialization of the respondents

b. Grammar Errors and Issues

b.1 GrammarScores of the students

Table 1 shows the frequency count of respondents according to their score. It shows that there were 10 respondents got the score between 100-80 out of 100 items with 12.35%. 41 respondents got the raw score between 79-50 items with 50.61%. There were 24 respondents got the score between 49-20 items, with the 229.63%. Only 6 respondents got the score between 19 and below with the 7.41%. It implies that almost fifty percent of the respondents were considered satisfactory in relation to grammar score. However there are respondents have something wrong in their grammar score who are considered as fair and poor.

Table 1. Grammar Scores

Raw Score	f	%
100-80 (Outstanding)	10	12.35
79-50 (Satisfactory)	41	50.61
49-20 (Fair)	24	29.63
19-below (Poor)	6	7.41
TOTAL	**81**	**100**

b.2 Major Errors and Issues

The table 2 shows the major grammar errors and issues committed by the student teachers in writing essays. Spelling correction ranks number one, with the total of 175, followed of the grammar as rank number two, with the total of 165. Rank number three is the style check with the total of 78. Sentence structure errors and issues are rank number four with the total of 77. Enhancement suggestion ranks number five 5 with the total of 66 and punctuation errors rank number six with the total of 35.It means that the respondents have something wrong with their grammar especially in correct spelling, basic grammar and the way of writing and constructing sentences to paragraphs.

Table 2. Major errors/ issues in essay writing of the student teachers

Major Issues/Errors	f	Rank
Grammar	*165	2
=use of determiners	68	
=use of adjectives and adverbs	5	
=verb form use	16	
=modal verbs	9	
=use of nouns	11	
=verb agreement	2	
=passive voice use	5	
=subject & verb agreement	17	
=pronoun agreement	25	
=incorrect use of prepositions	6	
=use of qualifiers and quantifiers	1	
Spelling Correction	*175	1
=spelling	101	
=accidentally confused words	64	
=commonly confused words	10	
Punctuation	*35	6
=punctuation between clauses	25	
=punctuation within clauses	9	
=closing punctuation	1	
Sentence Structure	*77	4
=sentence fragment	59	
=word order	16	
=faculty parallelism	2	
Enhancement Suggestion	66	5
=word choice	66	
Style Check	*78	3
=wordiness	48	
=improper formatting	14	
=usage of colloquial speech	16	

b.3 Specific Writing Issues

There are more than twenty in rank of the specific errors and issues committed in writing essays by the respondents. However the table shows the top fifteen only. It implies that the respondents have common and many grammar errors and issues in writing essays such as; general, rank number one, sentence fragment , rank number two, confused prepositions, rank number three, vague and redundant phrase, rank number four, repeated, missing articles, numerals instead of words as ranked number five. Misspelled words and long sentences rank number six. Wrong preposition ranks number seven. No comma with compound complement and overused words rank number eight. Confused words to write ranks number nine. Rank number ten is about, no comma with intransitive phrase. It means that these specific writing issues committed by the respondents are part of studying basic grammar in school which is not seriously given emphasis by the people in authority especially under basic education.

Table 3. Writing issues committed by the student teachers

Issues	Frequency	Rank
General	76	1
Sentence Fragment	60	2
Confused preposition	56	3
Redundant phrase, Vague	50	4
Repeated, missing article, numerals instead of words	46	5
Long sentence, misspelled words	21	6
Wrong preposition	20	7
No comma with CC, overused words	18	8
Confused words	17	9
No comma with intransitive phrase	14	10
"Which" restrictive	13	11
The VsA, confused words, wordiness	10	12
Miswritten words	9	13
Preposition at the end of sentence	8	14
Possessive vs Plural	7	15

CONCLUSIONS

1. The grammarly raw score of the respondents varies according to how they were grouped through scale. Out of eighty one, only ten respondents got the score between 100 to 80 who are considered as outstanding. Forty one respondents got the score between 79 to 50 and are described as satisfactory. Twenty four respondents got the score between 49 to 20 and who are described as fair, and six respondents got the score between 19 and below who are considered as poor. Although almost one half got the passing score but there are still identified problems in relation to grammar errors and issues committed by the student teachers in writing essays.

2. The major grammar errors and issues committed by the respondents were ranked accordingly from one to six. Spelling is the number one in rank of errors and issues, which means that most of the respondents could not master the correct spelling of words used in the paragraphs. The use of determiners as part of grammar has the biggest number of errors committed by the respondents in their write-up. In this case the respondents are not sure what might be the correct determiners to be used. The wrong choices of words are other issues and problems and they were not properly written in way of structuring sentences with the use also of appropriate punctuation marks. These are considered as major grammar errors and issues committed by the respondents in writing essays.

3. There are many identified specific writing issues committed by the respondents in writing essays. They are ranked from one to fifteen only. The specific issues indicate that the respondents haveproblems towards basic grammar by using the English language in general which were ignored and not given focus during their school days from elementary and onward.

RECOMMENDATIONS

After the result and findings, the researcher would like to recommend for serious pedagogical consideration for the improvement and enhancement of the English language in terms of grammar.

1. The GSC -VP, Academic Affairs will have a strategic plan for the academic enhancement for the institution in relation to English language subjects for the students.

2. The Dean of the College of Teacher Education will require the students under the college to take written examination before they proceed to the next year level through instructional module and material intended for the grammar subject and topic only which will be prepared by the GSC English professors and instructors.

3. The GSC -Guidance Counselor will review the entrance examination in English subject.

4. This study will be tried to another group of students and courses specifically a bigger one, including teachers whose specialization is not English.

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