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Research Article

Academic Self-Efficacy of College Freshmen in Relation to English Language Competency

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ABSTRACT

This study is conducted to determine if academic self-efficacy and English language competency are correlated. Survey instruments on academic self-efficacy and English language competencies were administered to 221 college freshmen. Academic self-efficacy and English language competencies composed of vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension were determined using the mean, while the Kruskal Wallis test was used for differences and the Chi-square Test for relationships. Significant differences were evident in the level of academic self-efficacy and the level of English language competencies when grouped according to program enrolled and academic self-efficacy is significantly related to the English language competency of college freshmen. Future research will be conducted.

Keywords: *Academic self-efficacy, comprehension, English language competency, grammar, vocabulary*

Background

According to the British Council (2013), English is the most commonly used language of the 21st century. It is being used by a lot of people around the globe. It is used in different fields and has increasingly become the operating system for global conversation.

Leyaley (2016) stated that some studies revealed that the English Proficiency of Filipinos has decreased over time. Unfortunately, after all the research done, focusing on the English language proficiency of learners, the problem still remains unsolved.

The most recent report by Leonen (2018), the study of Hopkins International Partners revealed that Filipino graduates' English proficiency is only average based on the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) and that was lower compared to the proficiency level required for taxi drives in Dubai.

Furthermore, it was observed by the researcher that students are not confident in using the English language and are sometimes hesitant to respond and participate when asked to speak in English as the medium of instruction in college. These premises urge the

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researcher to take into account the students' self-efficacy.

Thus, the current study sought to find out whether academic self-efficacy and the English language competency of the freshmen students are correlated.

Literature Review

Academic Self-Efficacy

According to Yokoyama (2019), the concept of self-efficacy was originally proposed by Bandura in his social cognitive theory. Self-efficacy may be defined as an individual's belief in his or her ability to succeed in a specific situation or accomplish a specific task.

Academic Self-Efficacy and Vocabulary

According to Deng (2020), there was an increase in the self-efficacy of the students when they are utilizing morphological analysis and dictionary use which are strategies to improve vocabulary when reading, and an increase in self-efficacy in seeking help when learning for academic purposes.

Academic Self-Efficacy and Grammar

Present research indicated that self-efficacy in language literacy has influenced learners' accomplishment in getting language skills according to Linnenbrink & Pintrich (2003) et al., as cited by Mustapha and Mustapha (2017).

The study of Mustapha and Mustapha (2017) showed that good efficacy in language syntax results in good skills in sentence creation. Nevertheless, the objective of language learning is to be able to create grammatical sentences. Moreover, their study proved the importance of self-efficacy. By integrating this self-concept in grammar instruction, teachers could develop students' confidence, thus enhancing language development.

Academic Self-Efficacy and Comprehension

According to Alharbi (2021), there are some factors that affect the effectiveness of various self-efficacy sources on reading comprehension, such as the role of teachers, the com-

petitive environment, confidence, time constraints, etc. Research indicates that readers persist with reading tasks if they have faith in their capability to comprehend texts effectively (Unrau et al., 2018 cited in Alharbi, 2021).

Methods

This study sought to determine the academic self-efficacy of college freshmen of La Carlota Community College to be correlated to their competence in English. A Descriptive Research Design was utilized. According to Manuel and Medel (2014), Descriptive Research involves the description, recording, analysis, and interpretation of the present nature, composition, or processes of phenomena. The focus is on prevailing conditions, or how a person, group, or thing behaves or functions in the present. The stratified Random Sampling technique was employed. Two hundred twenty-one (221) first-year college students of La Carlota City College who were officially enrolled in various programs in Education offered such as BSED English, BSED Math, BSED Filipino, BEED EC, and BEED Gen.Ed., Bachelor of Physical Education, and Bachelor of Secondary Education, Academic Year 2018-2019 have surveyed.

The survey questionnaire used in this study was composed of four parts. In determining the level of students' academic self-efficacy, the researcher adapted Abdul Gafoor & P. Muhammed Ashraf Academic Self-Efficacy Scale of 2006. It is made to determine the academic self-efficacy of students based on the Self-efficacy theory of Albert Bandura (1977). In determining the level of students' English language competency, the researcher adopted the questionnaire of Cerbo (2015) on vocabulary and grammar and Vibal (2017) on Comprehension. The results of the surveys and subsequent analysis are intended to support a better understanding of the objectives of the study. Survey questionnaires on self-efficacy and English language competency particularly in terms of vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension were administered. Data were gathered and analyzed using appropriate statistical tools.

Results and Discussion

Level of academic self-efficacy

Table 1. Level of Academic Self-Efficacy of First-Year College Students as a Whole and when Grouped According to Program Enrolled

Program Enrolled	f	Mean	Interpretation
BSED Math	15	3.79	High
BEED Gen Ed	19	3.46	High
BSED English	43	3.43	High
BPED	43	3.37	Moderate
BSED Filipino	50	3.31	Moderate
BSED	41	3.47	High
BEED EC	10	3.21	Moderate
As a whole	221	3.07	Moderate

Table 1 presents that those students enrolled in the BSED Math program got the highest level of academic self-efficacy with a mean of 3.79 interpreted as high while respondents from the BEED EC obtain the lowest academic self-efficacy with a mean of 3.21 interpreted as moderate. This result implies that as a whole, the academic self-efficacy of the students is moderate with a mean of 3.07. This suggests that the first-year college students' academic

self-efficacy is average which implies that their belief in their capacity and capability to accomplish tasks is neither too much nor too little.

The result showcases the idea that in school, the beliefs that students develop about their academic capabilities help determine what they do with the knowledge and skills they have learned (Pavani1 and Agrawal, 2015).

Level of English language competency in terms of vocabulary

Table 2. Level of Vocabulary Competence of First-Year College Students

Program Enrolled	f	Mean	Interpretation
BSED Math	15	17.33	Very satisfactory
BEED Gen Ed	19	13.84	Satisfactory
BSED English	43	14.47	Satisfactory
BPED	43	12.95	Satisfactory
BSED Filipino	50	14.16	Satisfactory
BSED	41	17.37	Very satisfactory
BEED EC	10	15.2	Satisfactory
As a whole	221	14.81	Satisfactory

Table 2 reveals that the BSED program obtains the highest level of vocabulary with a mean of 17.37 interpreted as very satisfactory where most of the respondents have more experience and are much older compared to respondents from other programs. On the other hand, the BPED program receives the lowest level of vocabulary with a mean of 12.95 interpreted as satisfactory. With a mean score of 14.81, the level of language competency of freshmen is satisfactory. This implies that the vocabulary of the freshmen students is neither strong nor weak, which means that there is still

room for improvement and students could still be able to enhance their knowledge of the English language since the result shows that their vocabulary competence is good but not outstanding.

The result supports the statement of Udir (2016) that as the person gets older, the number of difficult words, concepts, and phrases increases which is further fortified by the fact that the language the students meet in texts in school often has little in common with everyday language.

Level of English language competency in terms of grammar**Table 3. Level of Grammar Competence of First-Year College Student**

Program Enrolled	f	Mean	Interpretation
BSED Math	15	16.07	Satisfactory
BEED Gen Ed	19	13.05	Satisfactory
BSED English	43	13.35	Satisfactory
BPED	43	10.93	Fair
BSED Filipino	50	11.5	Fair
BSED	41	14.15	Satisfactory
BEED EC	10	12.6	Satisfactory
As a whole	221	12.73	Satisfactory

Table 3 reveals that those respondents from the BSED Math program obtained the highest level of grammar competence with a mean of 16.07 which is higher than the students majoring in English with a mean of 13.35. On the other hand, the BPED program obtains a low level of grammar competence with a mean of 10.93 interpreted as fair where the medium of instruction and content does not focus on English language and grammar. With a mean score of 12.73, college freshmen' competence in grammar is satisfactory. This means that college freshmen's grammar competence is

acceptable and good enough which could imply that they are competent yet still needs to be improved.

The result is relative to Sioco and De Vera's (2018) statement saying that one of the main problems of the students when it comes to grammar is their functional grasp of subject-verb agreement. ESL students' problematic difficulties in their use of subject-verb agreement are becoming more obvious and rampant, and it cuts across the different grade levels where students belong.

Level of English language competency in terms of comprehension**Table 4. Level of Comprehension Competence of First-Year College Students as a Whole and when Grouped According to Program Enrolled**

Program Enrolled	F	Mean	Interpretation
BSED Math	15	18.2	Very satisfactory
BEED Gen Ed	19	15.42	Satisfactory
BSED English	43	15.91	Satisfactory
BPED	43	13.84	Satisfactory
BSED Filipino	50	12.94	Satisfactory
BSED	41	16.1	Satisfactory
BEED EC	10	15.1	Satisfactory
As a whole	221	14.95	Satisfactory

It can be observed that respondents from the BSED Math program obtained the highest level of comprehension with a mean of 18.20 which is consistent in terms of vocabulary and grammar. This supports the idea that good vocabulary and grammar skills result in better comprehension skills. However, respondents from the BSED Filipino program obtain the lowest level of comprehension with a mean of 12.94 which is also consistent in terms of

grammar competence. This also implies that poor grammatical skills might affect the ability of the students to comprehend. With a mean score of 14.95, the English language competency of first-year college students is satisfactory. This means that the students are competent and good enough to construct grammatically correct and acceptable sentences in English however it also suggests that students can

still make improvements and enhance their comprehension skills.

The result is congruent to the study of Bilbao et al. (2016) which revealed that the overall reading comprehension of the Education

students is satisfactory with a descriptive level of moderate. This means that the students can understand difficult reading texts under literal, interpretive, evaluative, and creative levels with less supervision.

The difference in the level of academic self-efficacy, when grouped according to program, enrolled

Table 5. The difference in the Level of Academic Self-efficacy when Grouped According to Program Enrolled.

Program Enrolled	N	Mean of Ranks	Df	χ^2	p
BSED Math	15	167.53			
BEED Gen.Ed	19	121.55			
BSED English	43	115.35			
BPED	43	107.35	6	20.594	0.002*
BSED Filipino	50	90.22			
BSED	41	117.49			
BEED EC	10	80.45			

* $p < 0.05$ significant

Table 5 reveals that the level of academic self-efficacy among college freshmen significantly varies when grouped in terms of the program taken. With data showing the BSED Math program obtaining the highest mean and BEED EC obtaining the lowest mean in terms of vocabulary (see Table 1), this implies that

different programs taken to result in different levels of academic self-efficacy.

The result is congruent to the study of Wernersbach et al. (2014) that the educational context of the courses taken by the students also impacts students' academic self-efficacy.

Difference in the level of English language competency in terms of vocabulary

Table 6. The difference in the Level of English Language Competency in terms of Vocabulary

Program Enrolled	N	Mean of Ranks	Df	χ^2	P
BSED Math	15	152.77			
BEED Gen.Ed	19	94.05			
BSED English	43	104.55			
BPED	43	80.20	6	35.679	0.000*
BSED Filipino	50	102.66			
BSED	41	151.43			
BEED EC	10	116.70			

* $p < 0.05$ significant

Table 6 that there is a significant difference in the level of English language competency in terms of vocabulary among freshmen college students when grouped according to program enrolled such as BEED-Gen. Ed, BECEd, BSED English, BSED Math, BSED Filipino, BPED, and BSED. Data show that when grouped according to program enrolled, the level of vocabulary competence of the students varies. As observed

in the table (see Table 2), most of the respondents from BSED Math, English, Filipino, and EC obtain a very satisfactory level while most of the BEED Gen.Ed and BPED obtain a poor and fair level of vocabulary. Moreover, most of the respondents from the BSED program obtain a very satisfactory level. This suggests that respondents from the BSED program obtain a higher level of vocabulary

than the rest of the group as most of them are second courser and of more experience than respondents from other programs. Furthermore, it is observed that most secondary programs obtain a satisfactory level of vocabulary which might be affected by the instruction and curriculum content. This

implies that the vocabulary competence of the students varies depending on the program enrolled by the students.

The result is supported by the study of Golkar and Yamini (2007) which revealed that there was a statistically significant difference in vocabulary knowledge among different majors.

Difference in the level of English language competency in terms of grammar

Table 7. The difference in the Level of English Language Competency in terms of Grammar

Program Enrolled	N	Mean of Ranks	df	χ^2	p
BSED Math	15	169.63			
BEED Gen.Ed	19	113.76			
BSED English	43	121.64			
BPED	43	80.29	6	33.425	0.000*
BSED Filipino	50	91.54			
BSED	41	132.89			
BEED EC	10	111.65			

* $p < 0.05$ significant

Table 7 reveals that students hold different levels of grammatical competence. Based on the table, it can be observed that most of the respondents from BSED Math, BSED English, BEED Gen.Ed, BSED, and BEED EC obtain a satisfactory level of grammar competence (see Table 3) where English is the medium of instruction while respondents from BSED Filipino and BPED obtain a fair level of grammar competence where instructions are do not mostly involve English grammar. The table also shows that there is a significant difference in the level of English language competency in terms of grammar among freshmen college students

when grouped according to program enrolled such as BEED-Gen. Ed, BECED, BSED English, BSED Math, BSED Filipino, BPED, and BSED. This suggests that the program taken by the students might influence the level of their grammar competence.

The result is congruent to the study of Martinez (2015) which stated that there is a significant difference in the performance of students in terms of grammar. He revealed that one program outperformed other programs in one of the measurements of grammatical complexity.

Difference in the level of English language competency in terms of comprehension

Table 8. The difference in the Level of English Language Competency in terms of Comprehension when Grouped According to Program

Program Enrolled	N	Mean of Ranks	df	χ^2	p
BSED Math	15	158.27			
BEED Gen.Ed	19	116.97			
BSED English	43	125.05			
BPED	43	94.09	6	24.826	0.000*
BSED Filipino	50	84.24			
BSED	41	126.82			
BEED EC	10	110.00			

* $p < 0.05$ significant

Table 8 reveals that there is a significant difference in the level of English language competency in terms of comprehension among freshmen college students when grouped according to program enrolled such as BEED-Gen. Ed, BECED, BSED English, BSED Math, BSED Filipino, BPEd, and BSED. This suggests that the same with the previous results, the language competence of the students in terms of comprehension varies depending on the program enrolled by the students. This also implies that

students from different programs have different levels of language competency may it be in vocabulary, grammar, or comprehension.

The result agrees with the study of Giang (2017) which stated that course is a factor in the variability in the level of competence of the students in terms of their reading comprehension which means that students' individual choice of fields of specialization requires different extent of needs for reading comprehension.

Relationship Between Academic Self-Efficacy and Language Competency in terms of Vocabulary

Table 9. Relationship Between Academic Self-Efficacy and Level of English Language Competency in terms of Vocabulary

Variable	df	(χ^2) Computed	(χ^2) Critical	
Academic Self-Efficacy Vocabulary	20	41.85	20.48	* Significant

Table 9 reveals that the academic self-efficacy of college freshmen is related significantly to their vocabulary. This suggests that the greater the belief of students in themselves academically, the better their vocabulary is. Furthermore, this implies that a high level of academic self-efficacy results in better vocabulary. This is affected by the psychological aspects and strategies of the students where learners' self-efficacy as one of the motivational constructs affects the implementation of strategies in all academic tasks.

The result is congruent to the findings of Mizumoto (2013) in exploring the effects of integrating a self-regulated learning approach on self-efficacy with vocabulary learning. His findings suggested that through a self-regulated learning approach, it would be possible, for teachers and learners alike, to enhance self-efficacy, which in turn may contribute to the development of vocabulary knowledge. The pedagogical implication of the results of his study relates to the importance of measuring self-efficacy as a measure of mastery in vocabulary learning.

Relationship between academic self-efficacy and language competency in terms of grammar

Table 10. Relationship Between Academic Self-Efficacy and Level of English Language Competency in terms of Grammar

Variable	df	(χ^2) Computed	(χ^2) Critical	
Academic Self-Efficacy Grammar	20	60.09	20.48	* Significant

Table 10 revealed that students' trust and belief in their capacity significantly affect their grammar competence. It can also be observed that as academic self-efficacy decreases, grammar competence also decreases. Data suggests that the higher the belief of students in themselves towards accomplishing academic

tasks, the more confident they become to create grammatical sentences This suggests that the academic self-efficacy of College Freshmen influences their grammatical competence which implies that a high level of self-efficacy results in high competence in grammar.

The result is congruent to the study of Collins and Bissell (2004) as cited by Mustapha and Mustapha (2017) whose findings posted a

weak yet positive correlation between self-efficacy and grammar performance.

Relationship Between Academic Self-Efficacy and Language Competency in terms of Comprehension

Table 11. Relationship Between Academic Self-Efficacy and Level of English Language Competency in terms of Grammar

Variable	df	(χ^2) Computed	(χ^2) Critical	
Academic Self-Efficacy Grammar	20	69.41	17.43	* Significant

A computed (χ^2) value of 69.41 was obtained which is above the critical tabular value of 117.53. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between academic self-efficacy and English language competency in terms of comprehension of college freshmen of La Carlota City College. This implies that the competence of the students in terms of comprehension might vary depending on the level of academic self-efficacy. This also suggests that better academic self-efficacy results in better English language competence in terms of comprehension and/ or the lower the academic self-efficacy, the poorer the comprehension. This means that, if language learners make more effort to learn the language by doing extra practice, it would benefit them and it would enhance their self-efficacy.

The result is supported by Multon, Brown, & Lent (1991) as cited by Byrd (2017) stating that a student with a high reading self-efficacy persists longer on rigorous reading tasks than students with low reading self-efficacies.

Conclusion

Based on the foregoing findings of this study, conclusions were drawn. Students' academic self-efficacy or their belief in their capacity to accomplish academic tasks is neither too much nor too little. College freshmen have good vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension skills. When grouped according to program enrolled, the BSED program has the highest level of vocabulary while the BPED program obtains the lowest. In terms of grammar, the BSED Math program obtains the highest level while

BPED obtains the lowest. In terms of comprehension, the BSED Math program obtains the highest and BSED Filipino obtains the lowest level of comprehension. Students have different levels of academic self-efficacy depending on the program enrolled. Vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension competence of college freshmen differ depending on the program they enrolled in the higher education. The level of students' academic self-efficacy affects their English language competency in terms of vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension.

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