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**| RESEARCH ARTICLE**

## **English Writing Performance and Syntactic Errors: The Case of Southern Palawan ESL Learners**

**Yna G. Matusalem<sup>1</sup>, Jamila S. Jilhanu<sup>2</sup>, Prences Mae M. Langga<sup>3</sup>, Jake B. Doloricon<sup>4</sup>, Ella L. Sala<sup>5</sup>,  
Sittie Aina T. Pandapatan<sup>6</sup>✉**

<sup>1</sup>*Mindanao State University-Main Campus Bataraza Extension, Bataraza, Palawan, Philippines*

<sup>2</sup>*Mindanao State University-Main Campus Bataraza Extension, Bataraza, Palawan, Philippines*

<sup>3</sup>*Faculty, Mindanao State University-Main Campus Bataraza Extension, Bataraza, Palawan, Philippines*

<sup>4</sup>*Faculty, Mindanao State University-Main Campus Bataraza Extension, Bataraza, Palawan, Philippines*

<sup>5</sup>*Faculty, Mindanao State University-Main Campus Bataraza Extension, Bataraza, Palawan, Philippines*

<sup>6</sup>*Mindanao State University-Main Campus, Marawi City, Philippines*

**Corresponding Author:** Sittie Aina T. Pandapatan **E-mail:** [sittieaina.pandapatan@msumain.edu.ph](mailto:sittieaina.pandapatan@msumain.edu.ph)

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**| ABSTRACT**

Writing is a crucial skill in English language learning, enabling learners to articulate ideas effectively and clearly. Writing is inherently complex, as it integrates content mastery, logical organization, grammar, mechanics, and stylistic choices. At the heart of this process is syntax—the rules governing sentence structure and word order, which are essential for producing clear and coherent written communication. Thus, this study examines the common syntactic errors in the English writing of Grade 10 ESL learners in Southern Palawan to identify error patterns, contributing factors, and their implications for language instruction. Using Dulay et al. (1982) Surface Strategy Taxonomy, the analysis categorized errors into omission (e.g., articles, prepositions, pronouns), addition (e.g., repetition of prepositions, singular/plural mismatches), misformation, and misordering. Data were gathered through essay evaluations and semi-structured interviews. The findings revealed that students have a satisfactory level of English writing performance. Therefore, students are still exhibiting syntactic errors, as a result, the study found out that the students are still challenged to write a clear coherent text with one of the factors including psychological condition, limited grammatical understanding, technologies specifically gadgets, and lack of exposure to structured writing that significantly contributes to these errors. Other major factors that contribute to the syntactic errors are affective, linguistic, and external factors. Findings highlight the need for tailored interventions, including explicit grammar instruction, contextualized writing exercises, vocabulary-enrichment programs or activities, and digital literacy interventions. This study offers actionable insights to enhance English language pedagogy and support ESL learners in overcoming syntactic challenges, thereby fostering improved academic and professional communication skills.

**| KEYWORDS**

Writing Performance, Error Analysis, Syntax, Surface Strategy Taxonomy, Southern Palawan, ESL learners

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### **1. Introduction**

Writing is a fundamental skill in English language learning, which requires knowledge of vocabulary and grammar and the ability to organize ideas coherently and communicate them effectively. Among the core language skills, writing is regarded as the most challenging, particularly for English as a Second Language (ESL) learners, due to its demand for grammatical accuracy, syntactic complexity, and structural coherence. Thus, syntax, the arrangement of words and phrases to form meaningful sentences, is a

critical component of effective writing, and difficulties in this area often hinder learners from producing clear and grammatically sound texts.

Bakr Al-Sofi (2022) defined writing as an indispensable skill in learning English, enabling learners to effectively convey their ideas. Consequently, it is a complex process that involves mastering content, organization, grammar, mechanics, and style (Belkhir & Benyelles, 2017). Beyond understanding the linguistic process, writing requires organizing language systematically to communicate meaningfully with readers (Oguan & Del Valle, 2022). English is a dominant global language that serves as a lingua franca, connecting people across various fields, including science, education, and social media (Mustafa & Kirana 2017). In academic settings, English has always been a core subject, with students expected to develop proficiency in both written and oral communication (Bakr Al-Sofi, 2022). In a multilingual country like the Philippines, its mastery has been linked to its critical role in academic and professional advancement.

In the Philippines, English has been an official language since the time of American colonization and continues to play a vital role in education and professional communication (Fontanilla et al., 2024). However, recent trends indicate a decline in English proficiency among Filipinos (Education First, 2023). According to the 2023 English Proficiency Index by Education First, the Philippines dropped from 20th to 27th place globally, indicating a need to address challenges in English language learning. According to Zhou (2020), grammar is one of the most challenging aspects of language learning and is crucial for both academic and professional success.

On the other hand, research on ESL often overlooks the specific writing challenges faced by learners, particularly syntactic errors, despite their significant impact (Belkhir & Benyelles, 2017). Consequently, first-language interference contributes to these errors, hindering clarity and coherence. According to Labicane and Oliva (2021) and Salman and Hazem (2022), Filipino ESL learners commonly encounter difficulties in writing, including punctuation, capitalization, subject-verb agreement, preposition usage, tense, modal verbs, and verb forms. Thus, Dema (2020) stated that these syntactic errors, the incorrect arrangement of words and phrases to form grammatically sound sentences, provide valuable insights into students' progress and areas needing improvement.

This study explored the common syntactic errors in written work produced by ESL learners in Southern Palawan, a region known for its diverse linguistic landscape that uniquely influences English syntax. Identifying these errors will inform effective teaching strategies, enhancing grammar instruction and improving students' writing skills for academic and professional success. This is guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the English writing performance of the ESL learners in Southern Palawan?
2. What common syntactic errors are found in their written outputs?
3. What are the perceived factors affecting common syntactic errors?
4. What pedagogical implications can be drawn from the data?

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 English Writing Performance**

Effective writing requires grammatical accuracy, coherent structure, and appropriate vocabulary. However, student performance in writing is influenced by various cognitive factors, particularly self-efficacy and the assessment methods used. One key cognitive factor is self-efficacy, or the belief in one's ability to succeed, which has a significant impact on writing performance. According to Li's (2022) study of Chinese college students, a positive correlation was found between writing self-efficacy and positive writing outcomes. Since students with high self-efficacy are less likely to encounter anxiety, which can hinder performance.

Another crucial factor in improving writing performance is performance-based assessment (PBA). PBA has an important role in improving the writing performance of the learners. It focuses on evaluating students' actual writing abilities, allowing them to exhibit their skills in real-world tasks. According to Suastra and Menggo (2020), using PBAs led to significant improvements in students' descriptive writing skills, particularly in the areas of vocabulary, organization, and grammar.

### **2.2 The Significance of Grammar and Its Relation to Syntax**

Grammar and syntax are foundational to clear and effective writing. While grammar refers to the rules governing sentence structure, syntax, on the other hand, deals with the arrangement of words to form meaningful sentences; both are essential in creating writing that is not only technically accurate but also clear and coherent.

Grammar instruction is vital for improving the learners' writing, as it offers the structure that guides the use of language. Students who learned grammar through writing activities demonstrate greater improvement in their skills in writing compared to those who learned grammar through traditional, isolated exercises (Park & Jung, 2020). Furthermore, Movahedi and Aghajanzadeh Kiasi (2021) emphasized the significance of grammatical proficiency for intermediate EFL learners, demonstrating that those who had mastered grammatical structures were more likely to write with clarity and coherence. Additionally, syntactic complexity, or the variety and sophistication of sentence structures, plays a crucial role in writing performance.

### **2.3 Error Analysis**

Corder (1967), often regarded as the father of Error Analysis, argued that language errors are valuable in their own right. They can reveal areas where learners need more support, making EA an effective way to identify and address students' language challenges, particularly in using simple present and simple past tenses. This method allows researchers to draw meaningful conclusions from students' written work. According to Abdullah (2013), as cited by Zulfiah (2022) in a study analyzing syntax errors in descriptive essays, misformation caused by regularization is the most common type of mistake. Nearly 96% of students made this kind of error when using the simple present tense, and 81% did so with the simple past tense. Many students struggle with grammar, especially in subject-verb agreement, tense vocabulary, and parts of speech. Factors contributing to these difficulties include the influence of the learners' first language, limited knowledge of English grammar, the impact of "loan words," overgeneralization of rules, and minimal exposure to the English language.

Introduced by Dulay et al. (1982), Surface Strategy Taxonomy is a framework used to classify the types of errors that language learners typically make in their speech and writing. The taxonomy focuses on errors that occur in the "surface" level of language, specifically in grammar and syntax, which do not necessarily reflect a learner's deeper understanding of language rules but rather point to issues with applying these rules correctly. In Dulay et al.'s (1982) original work, they categorized errors into four main types: omission, addition, misformation, and misordering.

### **2.4 Error Vs. Mistake**

Corder (1967) provides two types of errors: systematic errors and nonsystematic errors. Systematic errors reflect a learner's current level of language knowledge and usually result from gaps in understanding or skills. These errors are consistent and reveal areas where learners struggle, indicating issues in their overall language competence. Meanwhile, non-systematic errors, also known as mistakes, are temporary slips that occur due to factors such as fatigue, distraction, or memory lapses. Unlike systematic errors, these mistakes do not indicate a lack of language knowledge; they are momentary lapses that learners can typically recognize and correct on their own (Corder, 1967). Additionally, James (1998) explained that errors cannot be self-corrected when the speaker's attention is drawn to them. This distinction is supported by Brown and Knight (1994, as cited in Akhter, 2011), who noted that while errors stem from insufficient language knowledge, mistakes are caused by other temporary circumstances and are not signs of incompetence.

In language learning, syntax errors often reflect understanding of learners of the target language's structure. Syntax errors often arise from the learner's attempt to apply native language or the L1 structures to the L2, leading to incorrect word orders or the omission of certain sentence elements (Dulay et al., 1982). According to Ellis (2008), syntax errors provide a critical insight into the second language acquisition process. In addition, Strunk and White (2000) examined how syntactic transfer from a learner's native language affects their L2 syntax, resulting in frequent mistakes in word order or the omission of syntactic elements.

### **2.5 Previous studies on English Writing Performance, Grammar, and Syntax**

Belmekki (2023) examined the relationship between grammar competence and writing skill first-year students at Ibn Tofail University in Morocco. By administering grammar and writing tests to 37 students of similar language proficiency, the study found a modest correlation (14.7%) between grammar knowledge and writing performance. The findings underscored the importance of incorporating grammar reinforcement into writing instruction to enhance students' overall writing skills. Similarly, Al Badi (2015) emphasized that a solid understanding of grammar, vocabulary, and academic conventions significantly contributes to effective writing. In their study on the academic writing difficulties faced by ESL learners, they recommended that the EFL context should prioritize these aspects to enhance students' written communication.

On a related note, Salman and Hazem (2022) investigated the impact of grammatical competence on the writing performance of Iraqi EFL university students. The study identified that the most frequent grammatical errors included subject-verb agreement mistakes, omission, and misformation, particularly due to confusion over verb tenses. These mistakes were attributed to factors such as inadequate knowledge of grammar, the influence of the learners' native language, and challenges in differentiating between singular and plural subjects. According to Dhanya and Alamelu (2019), a supportive learning environment, constructive teacher-student relationships, positive feedback, and ongoing motivation are crucial for improving writing skills. Psychological factors, such as confidence and anxiety, also play a role in writing performance.

Meanwhile, Huy (2015) found that many high school students in Vietnam struggle with writing due to a lack of motivation, inadequate vocabulary, and a limited understanding of grammar. Limited access to diverse learning materials and minimal opportunities for feedback also contribute to these difficulties. In the context of syntax errors, Al-Dubib (2018) examined subject-verb agreement mistakes among Saudi EFL learners at Prince Noura University. The study found that students had difficulty applying grammar rules accurately, with errors primarily stemming from a lack of knowledge of English syntax. The results revealed that 63% of the errors were related to a lack of understanding of English grammar.

In the local context, Pablo and Lasaten (2018) concluded that Grade 11 students in Laoag City experienced difficulties in writing academic essays, particularly in organizing ideas, using vocabulary effectively, constructing sentences, and referencing properly. Labicane and Oliva (2022) examined the common writing errors of college students at Marinduque State College. The study revealed that most errors involved the misuse of commas, incorrect use of verbs and prepositions, and subject-verb agreement mistakes. The researchers attributed these errors to limited emphasis on grammar instruction in the students' second language learning and the influence of their native language. Pandapatan (2022) conducted a case study on the errors of Filipino ESL students in their journal texts. It was found that the most prevalent errors of these students are categorized as misformation. She discovered simpler sub-types of Surface Strategy Taxonomy which include adding suffixes and other suffixes, omitting the main verb, auxiliary verb, and other kinds of verb, misforming the singularity, plurality, and tense of verbs and spelling, contraction of some words, which do not appear in other studies.

While several studies have explored writing performance across different contexts (Belmekki, 2023; Salman & Hazem, 2022; Al Badi, 2015), a noticeable gap remains in studies that specifically address syntactic errors in student written outputs. In the Philippines, some research (e.g., Pablo & Lasaten, 2018; Labicane & Oliva, 2022) has examined grammatical errors and writing difficulties; however, these studies have not extensively focused on syntactic error categorization. Although Pandapatan (2022) applied Dulay et al. (1982), Surface Strategy Taxonomy as a framework to analyze student journal texts, there obviously remains a lack of research that applies this framework to academic student writing, such as essays or narratives, in a way that directly unveils classroom practice. Most importantly, there is currently no existing research that focuses on ESL learners in Southern Palawan. This contextual gap highlights the need for a localized, in-depth examination of syntactic errors and writing performance among learners in the specified region.

Hence, this study seeks to address these gaps by evaluating the English writing performance of ESL learners, identifying common syntactic errors in their written outputs, exploring their perceptions of the factors contributing to errors, and drawing pedagogical implications that can guide grammar instruction and writing development.

### 3. Research Methodology

The current study employed expository essays and semi-structured interviews, utilizing a mixed-methods research design. A quantitative research design was used to identify the writing performance of the respondents. To assess their writing performance, the researchers adopted a rubric developed by the Department of Education (DepEd) and collaborated with experts to score the outputs, ensuring accuracy and minimizing bias. Subsequently, a qualitative research design was used to examine the syntactic errors in the written composition of the respondents. Similarly, factors affecting committed errors were assessed through semi-structured interviews; the researchers used thematic analysis to code themes based on the respondents' responses. The pedagogical implication of this study was also addressed qualitatively.

This study utilized purposive sampling to select 34 Grade 10 students from Bataraza National High School (BNHS) during the 2024-2025 academic year. Grade 10 learners were chosen for two primary reasons: (1) they are in a critical period of language acquisition, expected to possess fundamental skills in English, and (2) as they approach senior high school, this stage represents a crucial transition in their academic journey. The study aimed to assess their writing performance to gauge their exposure to grammar from Grade 7 to Grade 10.

Three instruments were utilized in this study: an essay task, a DepEd writing performance rubric, and a semi-structured interview guide. A mixed-method approach was utilized for data analysis. Experts assessed the essays using the Department of Education (DepEd) rubric. The statistician applied frequency and percentage distribution to determine the respondents' English writing performance. Consequently, the researchers classified syntactic errors based on Dulay, et al. (1982) Surface Strategy Taxonomy (1982): omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. Additionally, a thematic analysis was conducted to identify patterns and themes in the interview responses, providing valuable insights into factors contributing to syntactic errors.

Furthermore, this study adhered to ethical considerations for research involving human respondents. Informed consent was obtained from the respondents and their guardians. The researchers clearly explained to them the purpose of the study, procedures involved, and the voluntary nature of their participation in the study. They were also assured of the anonymity and

confidentiality of their responses. Further, they were informed of their right to withdraw from the study. With the approval of the school administration of BNHS, the researchers followed the guidelines in data collection.

#### 4. Results and Discussion

##### 4.1 English Writing Performance of Grade 10 ESL Learners

Table 1. English Writing Performance of Grade 10 ESL Learners

Criteria	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Key Question, Problem, or Issue	3.24	Satisfactory
The Purpose and Thesis Statement	2.97	Satisfactory
Information to Support Thesis Statement	3.21	Satisfactory
Organization	2.53	Satisfactory
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.99</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>

Legend: 1.00-1.75 (Unsatisfactory); 1.76-2.50 (Below Satisfactory); 2.51-3.25 (Satisfactory); 3.26-4.00 (Exemplary)

Table 1 illustrates the English writing performance of the respondents. As revealed, the respondents demonstrated satisfactory performance in their writing based on key criteria, with an overall weighted mean of 2.99%. Formulating the key question, problem, or issue scored the highest (3.24), indicating a generally clear focus, which aligns with the findings of Brown and Knight (1994) on the importance of well-defined problems in improving comprehension and engagement. Hence, clear problem formulation in writing tasks enhances the learners' understanding and engagement, enabling them to focus more effectively on their arguments and evidence (Casinto, 2023).

Additionally, in providing supporting information for their thesis statements, respondents scored 3.21, signaling an ability to include relevant evidence (Swales & Feak, 2012). This finding is consistent with the results of Cui et al. (2021), who observed that EFL learners who engaged in peer feedback were more likely to improve the quality and relevance of their writing evidence. Thus, allowing students to refine their argument and align it more closely with their thesis statements, promoting stronger overall coherence in their writing.

Nevertheless, the thesis statement's clarity and purpose received a slightly lower score (2.97), indicating a moderate challenge in cohesively connecting central ideas. This was consistent with Hyland's (2004) emphasis on the importance of well-articulated theses in guiding readers. Research by Qutaishat and Bataineh (2014) found that ESL learners often struggle with maintaining clarity with the thesis, particularly when the thesis lacks sufficient detail to guide the reader through the argument, mirroring the challenges noted in the current study.

With a score of 2.23, the organization highlights significant struggles in maintaining logical structure and clarity, a challenge commonly faced in ESL writing research (Murray, 2013). According to Suastra and Menggo (2020), ESL learners often struggle to organize their ideas clearly, particularly in longer and more complex writing tasks. Thus, peer feedback has been shown to aid in addressing this issue, as it encourages students to reassess their organizational strategies and restructure their writing for greater coherence (Cui et al., 2021).

##### 4.2. English Writing Performance of Grade 10 ESL Learners

Table 2. Omission Errors

Types of Omission Errors	Identification of Errors	Error Correction
1. Omission of article	<b>R7</b> "...because i was born In poor family..." <b>R22</b> "...this is amazing experience because..."	"...because I was born in <b>a</b> poor family..." "...this is <b>an</b> amazing experience because..."
2. Omission of preposition	<b>R11</b> "...since i was grade 7 i started to join some of the activities..." <b>R27</b> "I was 10th grade..."	"...since I was <b>in</b> grade 7 I started joining some activities..." "I was <b>in</b> 10th grade..."

3. Omission of Pronoun	<b>R34</b> "...she lectured me but every word comes out from mouth..."	"...she lectures me but, in every word, comes out from <b>her</b> mouth..."
4. Omission of punctuation	<b>R11</b> "As a student of Bataraza National High School i have..." "Now I really miss them..." <b>R7</b> "...because Im weak in making..."	"As a student of Bataraza National High School, I have..." "Now, I really miss them..." "...because I'm weak in making..."

The table shown above is a sample analysis of omission errors. As reflected in the table, these errors include the omission of nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, articles, pronouns, propositions, determiners, and conjunctions. Omission errors occur when learners fail to include necessary grammatical elements, such as nouns, pronouns, articles, or auxiliary verbs, that are required for a grammatically correct sentence. For instance, R7 commits this error, the omission of "**a**" before "*poor family*" ignores the requirement for an indefinite article when referring to a singular, countable noun (*family*) that is non-specific (i.e., one of many possible families).

Similarly, in R22 "...this is amazing experience because..." here, "**an**" is missing before "*amazing experience*". The adjective "*amazing*" begins with a vowel sound, necessitating *an* instead of *a*, but the main error lies in failing to mark indefiniteness for a singular noun (*experience*) that is not uniquely identifiable. Derkach and Alexopoulou (2024) attribute such errors to learners' difficulty in distinguishing between definiteness (whether a noun is uniquely identifiable to the listener) and specificity (whether a noun refers to a particular entity, regardless of the listener's knowledge).

Additionally, R11 omitted the preposition "**in**" before the word "*grade 7*" which disrupts grammaticality, as "*grade 7*" functions as a noun phrase requiring a preposition to denote a temporal or positional relationship (*in Grade 7*= during the specific academic year). Likewise, the missing "**in**" before "*10<sup>th</sup> grade*" obscures clarity, as prepositions like *in* signal participation within a structured system (e.g., in school, in Grade 10).

These errors reflect a broader pattern in which learners omit prepositions critical for marking temporal, spatial, or institutional relationships (e.g., in, on, at). As pointed out by Crosthwaite (2016), learners whose L1 lacks an equivalent prepositional system (e.g., Chinese or Filipino) often struggle to internalize English prepositional rules when faced with crosslinguistic influence. Filipinos use the multipurpose preposition *sa* to approximate English *at*, *in*, and *on* (Paz, 2020), leading to overgeneralization or avoidance in English. Similarly, Mandarin Chinese lacks direct equivalents for English prepositions, instead relying on word order or verbs to encode spatial and temporal relationships (Le Bryun & Paqout, 2021). These omissions often reflect learners' attempts to simplify language structures as they strive to construct meaning in their target language.

Table 3. Addition Errors

Types of Addition Errors	Error identification	Error Correction
1. Addition of Preposition	<b>R25</b> "I have a lot of experiences <b>in</b> joining in bench yell."  <b>R29</b> "...because the people <b>in of</b> showed and gave me the genuine happiness i could ever had..."	"I have a lot of experience joining in the bench yell"  "...because people showed and gave me the genuine happiness I could ever have"
2. Addition of singular-plural	<b>R32</b> "I thought having <b>a new friends</b> is hard" "... <b>she's</b> been my very special best <b>friends</b> for almost two years"	"I thought having a new friend is hard..." "...she's been my very special best <b>friend</b> for almost two years".
3. Addition of article	<b>R 31</b> "...the camping in <b>the</b> Bataraza National high School..."  <b>R4</b> "...being a student of <b>the</b> BNHS" "...we decided to go on <b>the</b> Agali beach"	"...camping in Bataraza National High School..."  "...being a student of BNHS" "...we decided to go to Agali beach..."

4. Addition of verb to be	R3 "...and we <b>were was</b> so close with each other."  R16 "...I always pray <b>is</b> that.."	"...and we <b>were</b> so close to each other."  "...I always pray that"
5. Addition of verb	R2 "...everyone expected <b>me to be doing</b> things I don't even wanna do..."  "Sir weng teach me <b>have</b> to become a responsible child"	"...everyone expects <b>me to do</b> things I don't even want to do..."  "Sir Weng teaches me to become a responsible child."
6. Addition of adverb	R18 "I am very <b>very</b> blessed that I've met someone like her"  R11 "...we bond together i <b>really really</b> miss that, even were at the grade 10 level"	"I am <b>very</b> blessed that I've met someone like her"  "... we bond together I <b>really</b> miss that, even we're at the grade 10 level"
7. Addition of pronoun	R9 "...she's like <b>my</b> mother to me"  R6 "... <b>we</b> jumped, <b>we</b> shouted, <b>we</b> hugged each other..."	"...she's like a mother to me"  "...we jumped, shouted, and hugged each other..."
8. Addition of punctuation	R2 "... <b>being</b> close to a teacher. <b>going.out</b> with some friends."  R9 "...I got a gold medal in. playing taekwondo..."	"...being close to a teacher and going out with some friends."  "...I got a gold medal in taekwondo..."

The table shown above is additional errors. As reflected in the table are the additions of unnecessary prepositions, articles, the verb "to be", the adjective, the conjunction, and the modal. Addition errors occur when learners insert elements that are unnecessary or incorrect according to the grammatical rules of the target language. These elements might include redundant prepositions, extra articles, or additional morphemes (e.g., adding an extra plural "s" when not needed). For instance, R25 committed the addition of the preposition "in" likewise R29 also committed an addition error of the preposition "of" which revealed an incorrect use of the preposition and redundancy of it.

Furthermore, in R29, there is an incorrect combination of preposition "in,of" in which preposition "of" indicates origin. In contrast "in" indicates location. Moreover, the sentence does not require the combination of the preposition "in and of". Therefore, R25 and R29 are grammatically incorrect and confusing, disrupting clarity. As supported by Tulabut et al. (2018), learners were often perplexed by the intricate aspects of the functions performed by prepositions.

Moreover, the findings indicate that the students demonstrate a greater frequency of errors and encounter significant challenges when using directional prepositions. Furthermore, it has been verified that the students frequently utilize inappropriate prepositions that do not align with the given context. The research also showed that students are confused by the multifaceted roles that prepositions fulfill. According to Musdalifah's (2017) research findings, the written outputs of the respondents demonstrated a notable presence of place preposition errors, which were identified as the most arduous macro skill. The researchers verified the efficacy of the error analysis approach in gauging the respondents' errors. Hence, additional errors often occur due to the overgeneralization of rules they have learned or the transfer of structure from their native language (Ellis, 2008).

Table 4. Misformation Errors

Types of Misformation Errors	Identification of Errors	Correction of Errors
1. Misformation of Adjectives	R29 "...when you cannot even solve a basic <b>mathematic</b> equation..."	"...when you cannot even solve a basic <b>mathematical</b> equation..."
2. Misformation of Article	R2 "As <b>I</b> student and a consistent honor student..." R22 "Bataraza National High School is <b>a</b> amazing school..." R10 "...the BNHS have <b>a</b> aquientance party..."	"As <b>a</b> student and a consistent honor student..." "Bataraza National High School was <b>an</b> amazing school..." "...the BNHS have <b>an</b> acquaintance party..."

3. Misformation of Capitalization	<p><b>R19</b> "...i've gained many unforgettable memories and experiences."</p> <p><b>R11</b> "...i have a lot of experiences and memories..."</p> <p><b>R23</b> "In the <b>Morning We All</b> took a bath together..."</p>	<p>"...I've gained many unforgettable memories and experiences."</p> <p>"...I have a lot of experiences and memories..."</p> <p>"In the <b>morning, we all</b> took a bath together..."</p>
4. Misspelling	<p><b>R30</b> "And also <b>taught</b> me to be a better person...Our bond and <b>unforgettable</b> moments...my dream <b>posible</b>."</p> <p><b>R10</b> "...we <b>perform</b> in <b>maskdemo</b>..."</p> <p><b>R16</b> "...I feel <b>happe</b> because..."</p>	<p>"And also <b>taught</b> me to be a better person...Our bond and <b>unforgettable</b> moments...my dream <b>possible</b>."</p> <p>"...we <b>perform</b> in <b>mass demo</b>..."</p> <p>"...I feel <b>happy</b> because..."</p>
5. Misformation of Preposition	<p><b>R32</b> "Since I was a transferee when i was <b>on</b> 8<sup>th</sup> grade..."</p>	<p>"Since I was a transferee <b>in</b> 8<sup>th</sup> grade..."</p>
6. Misformation of Pronoun	<p><b>R2</b> "...even though I was the one <b>in</b> fault..."</p> <p><b>R15</b> "...ma'am <b>palmes</b> and other teacher are so <b>proud to</b> us."</p>	<p>"...even though I was the one <b>at</b> fault..."</p> <p>"...ma'am <b>Palmes</b> and other teachers are so <b>proud of</b> us."</p>
	<p><b>R23</b> "we began putting toothpaste in <b>there</b> <b>mouth</b>..."</p> <p><b>R20</b> "...I hope <b>me</b> and <b>her</b> will get married someday."</p> <p><b>R15</b> "...<b>Me</b> and <b>my friends</b> we joined the cheer dance..."</p>	<p>"we began putting toothpaste in <b>their mouths</b>..."</p> <p>"...I hope <b>she</b> and <b>I</b> will get married someday."</p> <p>"...<b>my friends</b> and I joined cheer dance..."</p>
	<p><b>R29</b> "...my most unforgettable <b>experience's</b> are those random <b>loveteam's</b>..."</p> <p>"Those open <b>forum's</b> that made us cry..."</p> <p><b>R13</b> "...my first time joining a <b>publication</b>, which is the <b>nikel</b> journos i don't have any experiences but..."</p>	<p>"...my most unforgettable <b>experiences</b> are those random <b>loveteams</b>..."</p> <p>"Those open <b>forums</b> that made us cried..."</p> <p>"...my first time joining a <b>publication</b> which is the 'Nikel <b>Journos</b>', I don't have any experiences but..."</p>
8. Misformation of SubjectVerb-Agreement	<p><b>R27</b> "I was 10<sup>th</sup> grade I Join in Maramihang tinig day of buwan ng wika"</p> <p><b>R31</b> "<b>she have meet</b> a gentleman then she <b>treat a snacks</b> and <b>the two is to be a good friends</b> every time before lunch time <b>the two is meet</b> in the garden"</p> <p><b>R8</b> "<b>When I first went</b> to highschool, <b>my first dream is</b> to join the volleyball club of 'D'spikers..."</p>	<p>"I was in 10<sup>th</sup> grade <b>when I Joined</b> the Maramihang Tinig during <b>Buwan ng Wika</b>" "<b>she had met</b> a gentleman, then <b>she treated him to snacks</b>, and <b>they became good friends</b>. <b>Every day</b> before lunch, <b>they met</b> in the garden"</p> <p>"<b>When I first went</b> to high school, <b>my first dream was</b> to join the volleyball club of 'D'spikers..."</p>
9. Misformation of Verb Tenses	<p><b>R5</b> "...i miss our <b>memories</b> in our room like we <b>are watching</b> horror movies..." <b>R15</b> "My 4<sup>th</sup> experience <b>is Joining</b> Cheer dance..."</p>	<p>"...I <b>have missed</b> our memories in our room like we <b>were</b> watching horror movies..."</p> <p>"My 4<sup>th</sup> experience <b>was joining</b> Cheer dance..."</p>
10. Misformation of Verb	<p><b>R16</b> "...because he always <b>teaching</b> good manners of all students..."</p> <p><b>R20</b> "...I <b>did recressly stepping</b> on the stage and <b>performing our performance tasks</b>"</p>	<p>"...because he always <b>teaches</b> good manners to all students..."</p> <p>"...I <b>recklessly stepped</b> onto the stage and <b>performed our</b> tasks."Legend</p>

The table shown above reflects the misformation of words, incorrect forms of conjunctions, and adjectives. These errors often happen with tenses, agreement, or word choice. A learner may use an incorrect verb tense or an incorrect word form due to a lack of knowledge of the correct form, and these errors often occur due to confusion between word classes (e.g., using a verb instead of a noun) or incorrect morphological endings. For instance, R30 misspelled the words "*thought*" instead of "taught," "*unforgettable*" instead of "unforgettable," and "*posible*" instead of "possible". Similarly, R10's "*performe*" instead of "perform" and "*maskdemo*" instead of "mass demo", and R16's "*happe*" instead of "happy". These errors reflect both phonetic interference (e.g., *taught* mirroring the pronunciation of *taught*) and morphological oversights (e.g., omitting double consonants in *unforgettable*) (Wanna, 2021).



In relation, Al-Shorman and Al-Sohbani (2012) categorized such errors as mis-selection, where learners substitute incorrect letters due to insufficient orthographic awareness (e.g., “performe” for *perform*). They argued that L2 writers prioritize lexical retrieval and syntactic coherence over mechanical accuracy during drafting, a cognitive trade-off encapsulated in their observation that learners “concentrate on finding the right words [...] instead of editing” (p.247). This aligns with Krashen’s (1982) Monitor Hypothesis, which posits that learners under time constraints focus on meaning production rather than form. Therefore, Misformation errors are a common issue in second language acquisition. They can often be attributed to the learner’s attempts to apply familiar rules, such as regular verb conjugation, to irregular forms (Dulay et al., 1982).

Table 5. *Misordering Error*

Types of Disordering errors	Identification of errors	Error correction
Misordering	<b>R 21</b> “...when i jump my feet is twist...” <b>R 25</b> “...I learned about <b>he how</b> being confident.	“I twisted my feet when I jumped.” “...I learned about <b>how he</b> became confident.”

Misordering is an error where words or phrases are incorrectly arranged. The table above shows the incorrect arrangement of the word order, modifier misplacement, and phrase misplacement (Islam & Mufidah, 2022). For instance, in the sentence of respondent 21 “...when i jump my feet is **twist**...” instead of “I **twisted** my feet, when I jumped.” or “when I jumped, my feet twisted”. The structure of the original sentence contains a misplaced modifier, where the incorrect placement of the adverbs “twisted” and “when I jump” incorrectly modifies “my feet”. Additionally, the phrase “feet” requires the plural form “are” instead of “is,” and the inconsistency of tenses is evident, with “jumped” instead of “jump,” and “twisted” instead of “twist.” These errors disrupt the clarity and correctness of the sentences.

As supported by Dulay et al. (1982), misordering errors are characterized by the incorrect placement of one or more morphemes in an utterance. These errors can occur when learners do not yet fully understand the syntactic rules of sentence structure in the target language and often reflect a learner’s attempt to apply familiar syntactic patterns from their native language to the English language. Therefore, these errors are particularly common in learners whose first language has a different syntactic structure from the target language.

#### 4.3 Perceived factors affecting the common syntactic errors

This section presents the factors that contribute to the syntactic errors committed by the respondents in writing English. These factors are categorized into three major themes namely affective, linguistic, and external which provide a foundation in drawing pedagogical strategies to support ESL learners in overcoming their writing difficulties with regard to syntax.

##### 4.3.1 Affective Factors

The respondents of this study revealed the emotional and psychological influences that affect their attitudes and behaviors toward writing. This includes the sub-factors such as anxiety and fear of social judgment, absence of motivation and laziness, and lack of training and practices.

##### 4.3.1.1 Anxiety and Fear of Social Judgment

The respondents below shared how they become overly self-conscious when writing which led them to overthink and feel hesitant.

**R9:** “Nahirapan po ako kasi po...baka po mali, ma-judge ‘yong essay ko...”

**English Translation:** .... I’m having a hard time because my essay might be wrong, and I might be judged by it.

**R10:** “...I nervous po, like ano in past past years po before uhhh, when I writing, my experience for ahh essay po someone judge my uhhh, my ‘yong ano po ‘yong capabilities ko...”

**English Translation:** ...When I am writing I always feel nervous, because in my past experience when writing an essay, someone judged me and my capabilities...

**R6:** “For me po, ‘yong, uhm...‘pag ano po, pag...minsan kasi ma’am, pag magsulat ako ng essay, nandoon po ‘yong mindset ko na kaagad na, baka mali-mali ‘yong po ‘yong masulat kong grammar...overthink po...”

**English Translation:** For me, sometimes whenever I write an essay, I instantly think about my grammar, I overthink too much, especially of the errors I might have committed.

The above respondents (9, 10, and 6) highlighted social judgment and a fear of committing mistakes when it comes to writing an essay that involves grammar. They further stated that having a fear of social judgment leads to anxiety, wherein they think that

everything they write might be incorrect. This reveals that criticism and writing anxiety affect the writing performance of the respondents. According to Cheng et al. (1999), writing anxiety is a "language skills-specific anxiety" (p.417).

#### 4.3.1.2 Absence of Motivation and Laziness

Having a lack of intrinsic motivation in learning English and being disinterested are another affective barriers identified by the respondents.

**R4:** *"Kasi po, ano, uh, siguro hindi po ako mahilig sa-uh, English, gano'n."*

**English Translation:** Because I am not that interested when it comes to English, that's why.

**R12:** *"...ano po minsan ano tinatamad po ako kaya parang binabasa ko nalang po, hindi ko na siya naiintindihan..."*

**English Translation:** Sometimes, when I am too lazy, I just read it without comprehension.

The above statements highlight the absence of motivation and laziness when it comes to English in general. The respondents reported a lack of motivation, which led to a decline in reading and comprehension. According to Dwinata (2017), indirect factors are due to the students' low motivation in learning the L2. Learners have low motivation to learn because their parents provide them with little support, which ultimately leads to a lack of interest in studying. Furthermore, Dwinata (2017) revealed that some parents do not provide their children with sufficient support to study at home, and the practice of reinforcement was not observed, as well as extracurricular English lessons, such as private lessons. Contrary to Dacwag's (2014) study, which suggests that "students generally employ preparation, positive thinking, and relaxation as their coping strategies for the anxiety they feel or experience in writing English" (p. 469).

#### 4.3.1.2 Lack of Training and Practices

Consistent writing practice is essential for improvement. The absence of structured writing exercises leads to recurring errors, as students struggle to internalize correct grammar and sentence structures.

**R1:** *"...nakaka-apekto po sa akin is 'yong, ano po, lack of practice na rin po sa pagsusulat..."*

**English Translation:** "...what affects me is the lack of practice in writing..."

**R5:** *"di po ako-uh, minsan makatanda ng isang grammar po, kung, halimbawa, may mga kulang po kong minsan, tapos isa din po sa reason, 'pag ano po, 'pag nagkakamali po ako sa grammar, 'pag naga, nag conduct na po ako ng grammar, tapos, hindi ko na po siya ulit ginabasa...kaya po minsan hindi ko po na chi-check yung, mali ko po..."*

**English Translation:** sometimes I tend to forget some of the grammar, especially in spelling, so whenever I write something, I just focus on writing without checking it thoroughly...

One of the factors that the informants cite is the lack of training and practice in writing and exposure to the English language. As highlighted, R5 highlighted that whenever he commits an error or makes a mistakes in grammar, he does not re-check, leading to poor performance in writing. However, constant practice of writing is a natural way to ingest and experiment with a growing knowledge of letters and their function in symbolizing the sounds we speak. Encouraging students to write, even before they are familiar with all the rules, fosters a deeper understanding of how reading works. In kindergarten, the inventive spelling students employ to compose early writings allows children to represent what they hear in the world on the page. Children more clearly understand the letter/sound relationship as they compose thoughts and stories in writing. Recent research has revealed that students who are given latitude to use inventive spelling become better readers (Oulette & Senechall, 2017).

#### 4.3.2 Linguistic Factors

The findings reveal that many learners have difficulties in the basic components of language which are necessary in constructing grammatically correct written texts. These include lack of basic knowledge of grammar rules, limited vocabulary knoweldge, and weak compréhension skills.

##### 4.3.2.1 Lack of Basic Knowledge of Grammar Rules

It was found that the respondents revealed a lack of basic knowledge of grammar rules which leads them to commit frequent errors when writing English texts.

**R7:** *"...kasi ma'am ano, mahirap mag construct ng sentence...feeling ko,ano, mali 'yong magagamit kong past tense tapos 'yong mga meaning..."*

**English Translation:** "I feel so challenged whenever I construct sentences, I feel like the tenses that I am using are not right, and the meaning might be incorrect."

**R4:** *"...usually po, sa mga ano po sa mga tenses gano'n, kasi parang 'yong, parang 'di napapansin na past tense pala siya...gano'n po"*

**English Translation:** "I usually commit errors when it comes to tenses, I feel like the tenses that I am using might not be appropriate to the grammar."

**R12:** *"... ay 'yong mga rules po ng grammar at saka punctuation din po, tapos sa mga pronoun at sa mga tenses, at medjo nahihirapan din po ako sa verbs, at mahirap din po ang conjunction..."*

**English Translation:** "I am not confident when it comes to grammar rules and punctuations, especially on pronouns and tenses, I also struggle with verbs and conjunctions"

Despite the importance of the English language all over the world, as it represents the language of the age, development, and economy; students still suffer from difficulties in learning the English language, especially its grammar, and they suffer from weakness in the grammatical, semantic and pragmatic levels that appear in their spoken or written language. For instance, *"I am not confident when it comes to grammar rules and punctuations, especially on pronouns and tenses, I also struggle with verbs and conjunctions"* and *"I usually commit errors when it comes to tenses, I feel like the tenses that I am using might not be appropriate to the grammar."* The informants stated that they often make mistakes because they are not familiar with or unaware of the rules of grammar, particularly sentence structure. Grammar is defined as a set of rules that control sentences, so that it is not possible to form a sentence, no matter how simple, without adhering to them. Larsen-Freeman (2001: 70) emphasized that learning the grammar of the English language helps one understand the sentence and its composition, including the ability to define the verbs, adjectives, and adverbs used to form a useful sentence. Furthermore, Azar and Hagen (2022: 4) clarified that grammar enhances the student's skills in reading and writing, as it is not possible to achieve the results of learning the English language without learning its grammar. Grammar is considered a crucial aspect of learning the English language, and without mastering the grammar, the language cannot be practiced effectively.

#### **4.3.2.2 Limited Vocabulary Knowledge**

Insufficient vocabulary restricts students' ability to articulate thoughts clearly. Difficulty in selecting appropriate words results in vague or imprecise writing.

**R7:** *"...kasi ma'am ano po, alam ko sa sarili ko na ano, na hindi talaga ako marunong sa English, saka po ano, uhm, marami parin po akong mga unfamiliar words na hindi alam.....kasi ano talaga e, mababa pa taalaga 'yung vocabulary ko 'pag dating sa English...."*

**English Translation:** Because I know to myself that I am not that good when it comes to English, and there are still unfamiliar vocabularies that I do not know.

**R10:** *"....and then kasi, 'yong vocabularies ko po kasi ay hindi po siya gano'n kalawak, hindi po siya gano'n ka broad so, uhm, medjo nahihirapan po ako mag compose po in English words po, then nahirapan po ako na i-ano 'yong thoughts 'yong gusto ko pong sabihin, uh, parang nag m-mix-mix na po siya kasi nga po hindi ko po siya gano'n ka-alam or hindi po gano'n ka-rami, 'pag ano, kasi English kung paano ko siya i-construct ng maayos..."*

**English Translation:** My vocabulary is still not broad enough so I'm still having a hard time writing sentences using English language, that is why I struggle composing my thoughts, I feel like everything is mixed up and I do not know how to construct it properly.

The above respondents highlighted the lack of vocabulary when writing an essay. They stated that they are having difficulty composing sentences or words in English. According to Fauziati (2005), a lack of vocabulary hinders one's ability to convey their message effectively or express their views and ideas in both written and oral forms. One significant determinant is the number of lexical items a person possesses and can remember. In the sentence *"My vocabulary is still not broad enough so I'm still having a hard time writing sentences using English language, that is why I struggle composing my thoughts, I feel like everything is mixed up and I do not know how to construct it properly."* This confirms that learners' limited vocabulary knowledge contributes to difficulties in learning a second language (L2). As informant 7 said *"Because I know to myself that I am not that good when it comes to English, and there are still unfamiliar vocabularies that I do not know"* Undoubtedly, language acquisition cannot take place without knowledge of the words of the language in question. A large vocabulary store is the key to improving all language skills, such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Thus, having a good knowledge of vocabulary shapes a significant part of any language (Atasheneh & Naeimi, 2015).

#### **4.3.2.3 Weak Comprehension Skills**

Students who struggle with reading comprehension find it difficult to apply grammar rules correctly. Poor comprehension skills hinder their ability to construct coherent and grammatically accurate sentences.

**R3:** *"...sa sarili ko ay hindi po gano'n ka-hundred percent 'yong ano, comprehension ko, so, syempre 'yong sa comprehension kapag hindi po gano'n kalawak 'yong comprehension sa pagbabasa, so feel ko na mas nahihirapan akong maintindihan 'yong tamang grammar do'n palang po sa pagbabasa..."*

**English Translation:** I am still struggling when it comes to my comprehension, of course if you cannot comprehend well, it will have a huge impact with correct use of grammar.

**R12:** *"...minsan po kasi 'pag nagbabasa po ng novel kulang po sa pag intindi sa mga binabasa at saka parang nagbabasa nalang po ako parang hindi ko na ini-intindi 'yong binabasa ko parang gano'n po..."*

**English Translation:** "...sometimes when I'm reading a novel, I'm just reading it, and I don't understand what I'm reading..."

The respondents highlighted a lack of comprehension, reflecting a poor understanding of the text they are reading, which leads them to be confused and disregard vocabulary they do not know. For instance, *"...sometimes when I'm reading a novel, I'm just reading it, and I don't understand what I'm reading,"* the ability to comprehend written text is closely tied to the vocabulary knowledge of both adults and children. It is evident that a proper understanding of individual words is essential for accurately interpreting a text (Cain & Oakhill, 2014, as cited in Carroll, 1993). As educators strive to enhance student learning and incorporate more writing within the same time constraints, it is essential to revisit Graham and Hebert's (2010) work, which provides strong evidence that writing, a fundamental skill in itself, also improves reading comprehension. For decades, researchers have emphasized the strong connection between reading and writing, both in theory and in practice. Numerous studies have shown that writing can enhance comprehension.

### 4.3.3 External Factors

Aside from the internal challenges that the learners' encountered, one external factor emerged from the data which is considered as a significant contributors to their difficulties. This factor is the technologies that either enable or impede the learning experience.

#### 4.3.3.1 Technologies

Dependence on digital tools for grammar correction weakens students' ability to self-edit their work. Overreliance on technology can lead to a reduction in the retention of grammar rules and spelling conventions.

**R1:** *"...sa pag-gamit po ng mga, sa pag-gamit po ng kasi ng technology, umaasa na lang po kami sa pag t-type, tapos 'di na po namin na s-sulat or 'di na po namin natatandaan 'yong mga spelling, kaya minsan po nakakalimutan na namin..."*

**English Translation:** "One of the factors why I struggle in grammar especially in spelling is the advent of technology, we solely rely on technologies when composing sentences."

**R3:** *"uh, nag re-rely po minsan, masyado sa mga uh, mga phones po...like sa mga uh... gadgets po"*

**English Translation:** "Sometimes, I rely too much on phones and other gadgets."

**R6:** *"Ano po, sa, lulong po sa, gadgets po..."*

**English Translation:** "I am addicted to gadgets"

As the world evolved, more diverse technological advancements were developed to enhance convenience in daily human activities and provide positive value (Indrawarsari, 2019). However, even though it was originally created to produce positive benefits, it is also possible to use it for negative purposes. Many advanced technologies have been created, for example, gadgets (Mosquera et al., 2016). Technology such as gadgets is growing rapidly among people and is widely used among students (Muthi'ah, 2021). The informants used gadgets and eventually became addicted to it, for instance, *"I am, addicted to gadgets" and "One of the factors why I struggle in grammar especially in spelling is the advent of technology, we solely rely on technologies when composing sentences,"* the informants highlighted technology such as gadget as one of the factors affecting their common syntactic errors, for the reason that they rely too much on their mobile phones when they write as it provides correction and suggestion of the correct structure and spellings. Thus, without the aid of mobile phones, the informants have difficulty writing as they forget the spelling and the grammar rules.

Additionally, the use of gadgets among students is not limited to serving as a communication tool; on the contrary, some students use gadgets to play games and access social media, and some of them prefer playing games over studying. Consequently, the continuous use of gadgets not only has a positive impact on student learning outcomes but can also have a negative impact. The positive impact is that students can easily access information, engage in long-distance communication, and develop their creativity. Meanwhile, the downside is that it can decrease student academic scores, for instance, the continuous use of gadgets will greatly interfere with student health and cognitive development, be prone to crime, students who are dependent on their gadgets become forgetful of time, lazy, and reluctant to study (Aprianti et al., 2022).

### 4.4 Pedagogical Implications

This study revealed several pedagogical implications that may guide educators, curriculum planners, and other stakeholders in addressing syntactic challenges encountered by students. First, the results indicate that the students' writing performance (M=2.53) is hindered by weak organization, though students can formulate relevant content. This requires explicit instruction in text structure, cohesive writing, and paragraph organization. Suggesting that while students possess foundational writing skills, targeted interventions, such as structured feedback, explicit instruction in organization, and practice in thesis development, are necessary to further improve their proficiency and coherence in writing. Thus, providing systematic feedback and instruction,

particularly in areas like thesis development and organizational strategies, is essential for enhancing ESL learners' writing skills (Casinto, 2023; Suastra & Menggo, 2020).

Moreover, with the high frequency of omission, addition, and misinformation errors, it suggests a need for contextualized grammar instruction in the class. It is evident in the learners' outputs and responses from interviews that students often rely on their intuition or first language transfer when they apply grammar rules. This finding is consistent with Crosthwaite's (2016) research on cross-linguistic influence. To address this, integrating grammar into meaningful writing activities and revision processes should be an integral part of grammar instruction.

It was also found that affective and motivational barriers, including writing anxiety, lack of interest in learning English, and fear of judgment, contribute to committing writing errors. With these results, the classroom must have low-stakes writing environments for the students. Teachers should promote peer collaboration and encourage a positive feedback mechanism in order to build students' confidence and motivation. According to Ong (2015), motivation has many dimensions and it can be enhanced by supporting the classroom dynamics and through activities that are student-centered. Findings also revealed that students cited struggles in expressing their thoughts because of unfamiliar words and inability to apply the correct rules of grammar. This highlights the need to conduct a stronger vocabulary-enrichment program or activities tied to reading comprehension strategies. This aligns with Graham and Herbert (2010), who assert that knowledge of vocabulary can significantly influence both writing and reading development.

Finally, relying too much on technologies raises the need for digital literacy interventions. They reported on their overreliance on them, which diminishes their ability to internalize and apply syntactic rules. Therefore, students should be taught how to use technology critically and reflectively. As Indrawarsari (2019) recommended, digital tools should be used as supportive aids in teaching.

## **5. Conclusions**

The study investigates the English writing performance and common syntactic errors of Southern Palawan ESL learners. Based on the findings above, although learners performed at a "satisfactory" level, their essays were marked by frequent syntactic errors, primarily misinformation, followed by addition, omission, and misordering. The errors commonly involved verb tense misuse, subject-verb disagreement, incorrect articles, punctuation, and misused modifiers. Additionally, the study identified factors that affect syntactic errors, including writing anxiety, linguistic limitations such as weak grammar and vocabulary, and external influences, including overuse of gadgets and limited exposure to structured writing tasks.

Specifically, the study revealed that Grade 10 ESL learners in Southern Palawan demonstrated satisfactory writing performance based on the MELC-aligned rubric; however, their compositions contained frequent syntactic errors, with *misinformation* as the most prevalent, followed by *addition*, *omission*, and *misordering*. These errors point to a gap between holistic writing performance and actual grammatical competence, as the rubric placed less emphasis on accuracy. The error patterns suggest a need for grade-specific and grammar-focused instructional support to address learners' limited syntactic proficiency.

Contributing factors to these errors include writing anxiety, insufficient grammar knowledge, and excessive reliance on digital devices. Despite English being the medium of instruction, learners struggled with basic rules, echoing findings in related ESL and EFL literature. Psychological and external influences, such as fear of critique and informal digital habits, further compound these issues. Recognizing these challenges highlights the urgency of implementing targeted, empathetic, and evidence-based teaching strategies to improve students' linguistic competence.

Thus, effective interventions should combine structured grammar instruction, contextualized learning, and blended digital tools that support, rather than replace, traditional writing practices. A supportive academic environment and curriculum reforms that prioritize grammatical accuracy are essential.

Ultimately, this study offers valuable insights for English language educators at BNHS regarding the prevalent syntactic errors committed by their students, enabling teachers to pinpoint areas for improvement in terms of syntax. This will empower them to generate tailored activities, effective language techniques, and targeted interventions that could strengthen their students' grammatical proficiency. Future studies should expand to other grade levels and examine the cognitive, sociolinguistic, and technological factors that influence ESL writing to create more comprehensive instructional frameworks.

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**ORCID iD:** Prences Mae M. Langga (<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4185-3272>); Jake B. Doloricon (<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5421-538X>); Ella L. Sala (<https://orcid.org/0009-0005-5478-3092>); Sittie Aina T. Pandapatan (<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6240-9587>)

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