

# Syntactic analysis of the written discourse of non-language learners

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## Abstract

This study investigates the syntactic features of written discourse produced by non-language learners at the Ilocos Sur Polytechnic State College (ISPSC)—Main Campus in the Philippines. The primary aim is to analyze their written outputs in terms of syntactic components—specifically parts of speech, phrases, clauses, sentence structures, sentence patterns, and common syntactic errors. Through qualitative research employing content and structural analysis, fifteen student writing samples were assessed to uncover recurring linguistic patterns and difficulties. The findings reveal that students frequently used abstract nouns, action verbs, and descriptive adjectives, demonstrating a narrative and reflective writing style. However, their limited use of modals and overreliance on linking verbs reflect a constrained syntactic range. Most constructions consisted of simple noun and verb phrases, with minimal variety in modifying phrases. Clause analysis showed dominant use of independent clauses with little subordination, while sentence structure was largely confined to simple and compound forms. Students favored basic sentence patterns such as Subject–Linking Verb–Complement and Subject–Transitive Verb–Direct Object. Syntactic errors included run-on sentences, punctuation misuse, subject-verb disagreement, and tense inconsistencies. The study concludes with the proposal to develop a syntactic primer as a practical instructional material to improve writing proficiency and suggests further exploration of teaching interventions.

**Keywords:** syntactic features, sentence patterns, sentence errors, syntactic analysis, written discourse, qualitative content and structural analysis

## Syntactic analysis of the written discourse of non-language learners

### 1. Introduction

Using good language in writing is very important for everyone to deliver the idea and to interact with other people intensively. Thus, effective written communication is a fundamental skill required in various academic and professional contexts as man must construct well-organized utterances to communicate meaningful interactions with people (Halliday, 1989). Hafiz et al. (2018) expressed that the correct knowledge of English language is necessary for students studying in higher education in general and in professional courses. In addition, Smart (2024) expressed that writing is important in college because it enhances communication, boosts idea sharing, opens up income opportunities, promotes career development, expands skill sets, and simplifies evaluation.

Syntax is one of the branches of linguistics that determines how words form phrases and phrases form sentences. It also deals with understanding the pattern of the language. Moreover, it is the study of principles and processes by which sentences are constructed in particular languages (Chomsky, 1957). Learning syntax is very important for it helps illustrate the patterns of English more effectively (Leba, 2021). Within syntax, a key focus is on the syntactic structure, encompassing matters of function, category, syntactic roles, and the arrangement of syntactic units in the forms of paragraphs, sentences, and utterances (Sunardin, 2023). According to Pamungkas (2020), in language learning process, writing a sentence is one of the basic lessons. Learners must have the ability to construct sentences, in order to communicate better. Without a sentence, learners could not deliver the information completely because sentence has the most important role in the development of communication. Hyland (2019) communicated that in the learning process, students are taught about the rules of language, vocabulary and so on yet students still make many errors when expressing thoughts and ideas in the form of written language. These errors include errors in using vocabulary, conjunctions or connecting words, sentence structure, and the syntactic tools that make up these particles. The factors that cause difficulties in writing skills are the complexity of the components involved in writing skills.

Constructing a sentence grammatically and syntactically correct has become a cliché but crucial problem for English as Second Language (ESL) learners. The problem is also faced by ESL teachers, significantly in correcting the students' papers and finding the solutions for this problem. The pattern of the sentences then should be analyzed in order to find a predominant pattern normally constructed by the learners (Qamariah, 2015). In essence, this study delves into the intricacies of how words come together and interact to form meaningful and coherent expressions in a written discourse by non-language learners. The study of Hafiz et al. (2018) focused on the most common syntactic errors of Arabic learners in learning English as a foreign language. The results of this study revealed that the most common syntactic errors made by the learners are in sentence structure; subject verb-agreement, verb tense, auxiliary verb, use of conjunction and preposition. Many students in this study were categorized as slow learners who were not even aware of the importance of writing skill.

Likewise, Muhammad et al. (2021) analyzed the language used in research articles at syntactic and semantic domain. Their findings recommended the dire need of conspicuous trainings in academic writing to solve the problems of the participants. Further, they suggested that guidelines should be provided for critical reviews and theses in the field of English Language, literature and linguistics. Also, Zhang and Kang (2022), explored the compositions of English learners in Hong Kong and Mainland China in terms of lexical and syntactic features. In terms of syntax, Hong Kong students use more adverbials and adverbial clauses, which is advantageous in syntactic simplicity and readability over their counterparts, whereas Mainland China students prefer using more specific expressions to demonstrate syntactic relations. Hence, more studies are needed to make further exploration from the perspective of diverse learners in different learning contexts. Specifically, future research may investigate the communicative function of language and identify implicit discourse and discourse argument structures.

In addition, Cantina and Banquiao (2015), determined the morpho-syntactic errors on the written discourse of criminology students enrolled in an English Writing Class. It was revealed that respondents committed errors in morphology in terms of affixes and verb tense. In terms of syntax, the predominance of errors was observed in subject-verb agreement and word order. Thus, they proposed a revision and enhancement of the syllabus and design a workbook to enhance writing competence among the students. Vibar (2022) also explored the syntactic features of spoken and written language to determine the composition of words and phrases to create meaningful and well-constructed sentences for language discourse. Syntactic errors in the classroom discourse of Grade 11 general academic strand students was also investigated by Zanoria (2018). Results showed that students committed errors in the omission of auxiliaries, prepositions, pronouns, and determiners; errors in the selection of verbs, pronouns, prepositions, determiners, and adverbs; errors in addition which were double marking, regularization, and simple addition; and errors in ordering of prepositional phrases and adverbs. Results further revealed that the causes of syntactic errors were intralingual, as the common cause of error, and interlingual. Furthermore, results showed that there were other reasons for committing errors like fear to commit errors and lack of confidence which impeded the students in their speaking performance.

While language students often receive dedicated instruction in writing skills, non-language students may not receive the same level of attention despite the significance of writing proficiency across disciplines. More so, despite the acknowledged importance of syntax in effective written communication, evidenced by numerous studies highlighting syntactic errors among learners of English, there remains a notable gap in understanding the specific syntactic challenges faced by non-language learners, particularly in academic and professional contexts. While existing research has explored syntactic errors among language learners, such as Arabic learners and students in specific academic disciplines, there is a dearth of studies focusing on the syntactic intricacies encountered by individuals who are not primarily engaged in language learning. This gap hampers efforts to address the diverse syntactic needs of non-language learners, inhibiting their ability to construct well-organized utterances and communicate effectively in various academic and professional settings. Additionally, there is limited insight into potential strategies or interventions tailored to mitigate these syntactic challenges among non-language learners. Thus, there is a pressing need for research that delves into the specific syntactic difficulties to enhance their written communication skills, thereby facilitating meaningful interactions and fostering academic and professional success in the future. The syntactic structures employed in written discourse play a critical role in conveying meaning and clarity. Thus, analyzing the syntactic patterns and errors in the writing of non-language learners of the ISPSC-Main Campus can provide valuable insights into their linguistic competencies and areas for improvement.

**Research Questions** - This study aimed to analyze the syntactic features and errors in the written discourse of non-language learners in order to inform the development of a syntactic primer aimed at improving their grammatical accuracy. Specifically, it sought answers to the following: What are the syntactic features in terms of parts of speech; phrases; clauses; and sentence structures? What are the sentence patterns used by non-language learners in their written discourse? What are the syntactic errors made by non-language learners in their written discourse? What syntactic primer could be developed to address the syntactic errors?

## 2. Methodology

**Research Design** - This study used the qualitative design, particularly content analysis. This methodological approach is particularly suitable for the study, as it focuses on identifying, describing, and examining syntactic errors in the written discourse of non-language learners at ISPSC-Main Campus. By systematically analyzing the linguistic structures present in students' writing, the study aims to provide understandings into the most common syntactic features and sentence patterns used in their written texts. Likewise, the most common syntactic challenges they face, the patterns of errors they commit, and the possible underlying causes of these mistakes.

**Sources** - This study was conducted at Ilocos Sur Polytechnic State College-Main Campus. The corpus were gathered from the English instructors teaching Purposive Communication under Bachelor of Arts in Political

Science (BAPoS), Bachelor of Science in Computer Science (BSCS), Bachelor of Science in Criminology (BSCrim), Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA), Bachelor of Science in Office Administration (BSOA), and Bachelor of Science in Midwifery (BSM). The diverse academic backgrounds of the students whom the texts were selected from provide a broad perspective on syntactic features and sentence patterns used and syntactic errors in written discourse.

Ensuring ethical considerations in research is essential. Therefore, the researcher must adhere to ethical guidelines to maintain the integrity of the study. To uphold ethical standards, the following measures were considered: The researcher sought permission by formally writing to the concerned authorities before accessing the written text outputs. Since no human participants were directly involved in the analysis, the study ensured that no individuals were subjected to harm in any way. The dignity and privacy of the students were highly prioritized, and all collected written texts were treated with strict confidentiality. The data were used solely for research purposes, and all identifying details remained undisclosed. Lastly, all sources of information, including books, online references, and other materials, were properly credited through accurate citations and acknowledgments. These ethical considerations ensured that the research was conducted responsibly and with respect for academic integrity.

**Data Gathering Procedure** - In the conduct of the study, the researcher first sought permission from the following authorities before the data gathering: The Research Ethics Committee of ISPSC for first endorsement, the Campus Director of ISPSC-Main Campus for second endorsement through a communication letter and to the English Instructors handling Purposive Communication. The researcher formally requested copies of the written text outputs submitted by non-language learners to their English subject instructors. These written texts served as the primary corpus for content analysis, enabling the identification and classification of syntactic features, sentence patterns and syntactic errors. The selected texts were gathered randomly from various academic programs to ensure a diverse and representative sample. After, the texts were reviewed and analyzed based on the objectives stated in the study.

**Analysis of Data** - The mode of analysis in this study was structural analysis, as it focused on identifying syntactic features, sentence patterns, and syntactic errors in the written discourse of non-language learners. Structural analysis examined how sentences were formed, how different syntactic elements functioned, and how they contributed to overall meaning and coherence. In the study on the syntactic analysis of written outputs of non-language learners, structural analysis was employed to systematically examine their grammatical structures, focusing on phrase and clause constructions, sentence types, and overall syntactic accuracy. The researcher first identified key sentence components, such as subjects, predicates, objects, and modifiers, to determine how these learners structured their writing. It also assessed subject-verb agreement and verb tense consistency to ensure syntactic coherence. Additionally, the study analyzed the use of noun phrases, verb phrases, and prepositional phrases, distinguishing between independent and dependent clauses to evaluate the complexity of sentence construction. To arrive at the themes of this study, the researcher meticulously reviewed the identified syntactic errors and patterns. Recurring error types, such as consistent issues with subject-verb agreement or frequent use of sentence fragments, were grouped together. These groupings then formed the basis of the study's themes, representing the key grammatical challenges and syntactic features prevalent in the written discourse of the non-language learners.

### 3. Result and Discussion

#### 3.1 *The syntactic features in terms of parts of speech; phrases; clauses; and sentence structures.*

The syntactic features of the written discourse, analyzed through the different parts of speech, reveal key patterns in students' language use.

Text 1 (abstract)	College <i>life</i> is one of the most memorable experience of one's <i>life</i> .
Text 5 (abstract)	From my <i>experience</i> some dogs can be very dangerous if they are not trained well.
Text 10 (abstract)	<i>Depression</i> is ignoring calls and text From Family and Friends.
Text 1 (compound)	especially a <i>freshman</i> student like me we went to our <i>classroom</i>
Text 3 (proper)	i left early to meet my friends and to <i>skyline</i> viewdeck
Text 11 (proper)	I am <i>Tristan Jay</i>
Text 4 (proper)	are so Fond of reading <i>wattpad</i> stories
Text 9 (common)	Throughout my <i>years</i> as a <i>student</i>
Text 2 (proper)	I enjoyed my first day as a college <i>student</i> .

The syntactic analysis of student-written discourse revealed distinct patterns in their use of different parts of speech. Nouns were categorized into abstract (e.g., *life*, *experience*, *happiness*) and concrete (e.g., *student*, *classmate*, *teacher*) types. The frequent use of abstract nouns suggests that students tend to focus on expressing thoughts, emotions, and experiences rather than tangible objects. Meanwhile, the presence of compound nouns such as *freshman* and *classroom* indicate an awareness of word formation, though their usage remains relatively limited. Also, proper nouns such as *Dominic*, *Skyline*, *Wattpad* and common nouns like *instructors*, *college*, *years*, *dog*. The inclusion of proper nouns demonstrates students' tendency to reference specific people, places, or well-known entities, while the use of common nouns reflects their ability to describe general concepts, institutions, time frames, and everyday objects.

Text 4 (linking verb)	When I <i>was</i> in grade 6 I found myself reading every story of Jonaxx and I completely absorbed
Text 2 (linking verb)	I met new people and some of them became my friends who <i>were</i> with me up until now.
Text 14 (action verb)	I <i>felt</i> a mix excitement and nerves I <i>learned</i> to position myself
Text 3 (action verb)	I <i>learned</i> to ride a bike because of my parents. I <i>left</i> early to meet my friends and go to Skyline Viewdeck.
Text 4 (modal verb)	The power of her story and the way it <i>could</i> transport me into another place.
Text 2 (modal verb)	I didn't know if I <i>could</i> survive

Verbs were classified into main verbs (*action and linking*), auxiliary verbs (*helping verbs*), and modal verbs. The prevalence of action verbs (*e.g., felt, learned, see, came, get*) suggests that students primarily narrate experiences or actions. However, the frequent repetition of linking verbs (*e.g., is, was, will be*) reflects a reliance on basic sentence structures, which may indicate limited syntactic variety. The presence of modal verbs (*e.g., would, will, can, should*) demonstrates an attempt to express possibility, ability, or necessity, though their usage remains constrained.

In terms of adjectives, students predominantly used descriptive adjectives (*e.g., memorable, excited, nervous, special, fresh*), with minimal use of quantitative or demonstrative adjectives. This pattern suggests a tendency to focus more on subjective descriptions rather than specifying amounts or pointing to particular entities. Adverbs were primarily related to manner and time (*e.g., honestly, specially*) which helped modify verbs but displayed limited diversity.

Text 15 (descriptive adjective)	WHICH IS STILL <i>FRESH</i> IN MY MEMORY IT WAS NO <i>PERFECT</i> RING
Text 14 (descriptive adjective)	The <i>sun-kissed</i> court build <i>unforgettable</i> Friendships
Text 2 (adverb)	our instructors <i>immediately</i> dismissed us
Text 3 (adverb and descriptive adjective)	i <i>always</i> Fell <i>unfortunately</i> i rolled a rock I want to see <i>beautiful</i> places
Text 4 (descriptive adjective)	I was so <i>curious</i> Fictional stories is <i>childish</i>

Prepositions such as *of, on, as, because, to, and in* were used to indicate time, place, and relationships. However, some instances suggest potential misuse or redundancy in sentence construction. Conjunctions were mostly coordinating (*e.g., and, but*) and subordinating (*e.g., because*), implying that students rely on simple sentence connections rather than incorporating varied complex structures. Determiners and pronouns featured frequent use of personal and possessive pronouns (*e.g., I, my, we, they*), highlighting a strong personal perspective in the writing. While definite and indefinite articles (*e.g., the, an*) were present, their frequency suggests potential challenges in appropriate article usage. Overall, the analysis indicates that students rely heavily on fundamental syntactic structures, particularly descriptive adjectives, personal pronouns, action verbs, and simple conjunctions. Their writing demonstrates a preference for basic sentence patterns with limited complexity, suggesting areas for improvement in sentence variety, preposition accuracy, and advanced syntactic construction. Strengthening instruction in complex sentence formation, varied conjunction use, and article application could enhance students' syntactic proficiency and overall writing quality.

Several studies corroborate the findings of the present research regarding the syntactic features of student writing, particularly in the use of parts of speech. A study published by Ali et al. (2024) analyzed argumentative essays written by fourth-semester English majors and found that students often struggled with distinguishing between different parts of speech, which affected their sentence construction and coherence. Common errors

included misclassification of words, such as using adjectives instead of adverbs or confusing noun and verb forms, leading to syntactic inconsistencies. This aligns with the current study's findings, where students exhibited reliance on basic sentence structures and showed difficulty in effectively using prepositions and conjunctions.

Similarly, a study by Ahmad et al. (2023) examined syntactic complexity in Pakistani academic writing across various disciplines and found that noun usage was more frequent in formal and technical fields, as academic writing tends to favor nominalization. This supports the present study's observation that students frequently used abstract nouns to express experiences and emotions rather than concrete descriptions. The study also highlighted variations in verb usage, where humanities students relied on linking verbs to describe abstract ideas, while science students used more action verbs to explain processes. This mirrors the current study's findings, where students predominantly used action verbs (e.g., "*toured*," "*went*," "*see*") to narrate experiences. Additionally, the research pointed out that prepositions and conjunctions were crucial in developing syntactic complexity, yet misuse often led to unclear relationships between ideas. This aligns with the observed reliance on simple conjunctions (e.g., "*and*," "*but*," "*because*") in the present study, suggesting a need for greater variety in sentence connectors.

Another study published in *Frontiers in Psychology* by Zhang and Kang (2022) compared the lexical and syntactic features of ESL (English as a Second Language) and EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners and emphasized the role of parts of speech in sentence structuring and coherence. The research found that adjectives and adverbs played a significant role in written fluency, with ESL learners frequently using descriptive adjectives and manner adverbs, similar to the present study's findings that students relied on subjective descriptors like "*memorable*," "*excited*," and "*nervous*." However, both groups underused demonstrative and quantitative adjectives, limiting specificity in writing. Pronouns and determiners were also found to be overused, leading to redundancy, a pattern observed in the present study, where students frequently relied on personal and possessive pronouns (e.g., "*I*," "*my*," "*we*," "*they*"). Furthermore, verb usage was identified as a key factor in writing proficiency. Advanced writers demonstrated a higher use of modal verbs (e.g., "*would*," "*will*," "*can*," "*should*") to indicate possibility and necessity, whereas beginner writers depended more on linking verbs (e.g., "*is*," "*was*," "*will be*"), a trend also seen in the present study.

The findings indicate that students tend to rely on fundamental sentence structures, particularly descriptive adjectives, personal pronouns, action verbs, and simple conjunctions. This suggests that writing instruction should focus on expanding students' use of complex sentence structures, incorporating a wider range of conjunctions and prepositions, encouraging the use of specific adjectives and adverbs for greater descriptive precision, and developing awareness of noun and verb variations to improve coherence and avoid redundancy.

### **Phrases**

The analysis of syntactic features along phrases in students' written discourse reveals patterns that reflect their level of proficiency in constructing grammatically sound and cohesive sentences. Examining noun phrases, verb phrases, adjective phrases, adverbial phrases, and prepositional phrases provides ideas into their writing tendencies and areas for improvement. Noun phrases, such as "*one of the most memorable experience*," (Text 1) demonstrate an attempt to add specificity and detail to writing. The inclusion of determiners (*one of the*), adjectives (*most memorable*), and plural nouns (*experiences*) suggests an awareness of complex noun phrase structures. However, issues with singular-plural agreement, as seen in *experience* instead of *experiences*, indicate a need for greater attention to grammatical consistency. This highlights the importance of reinforcing proper article-noun agreement to improve clarity in written communication.

Verb phrases in the students' writing, such as "*is one of the most memorable experiences*" and "*was excited and nervous*," (Text 2) show a reliance on linking verbs (*is*, *was*) to describe states of being and emotions. While these phrases effectively convey meaning, the limited variety of verb structures suggests that students may benefit from incorporating more dynamic verb phrases. Encouraging the use of action verbs and varied tense structures can enhance fluency and engagement in writing. Prepositional phrases, including "*of coloring pens*" and "*on that particular day*," (Text 15) indicate an awareness of how to express relationships between ideas, such as possession

and time. However, the possibility of redundancy or misplacement in sentence construction suggests that students need guidance in using prepositional phrases effectively. Proper placement and avoidance of unnecessary prepositions can improve sentence clarity and overall coherence.

Overall, the syntactic analysis of phrases in students' writing highlights key areas for development. There is a need to reinforce noun phrase agreement, encourage verb phrase variation, expand the use of adjective and adverbial phrases, and refine the use of prepositional phrases. Addressing these aspects through targeted writing instruction can help students construct more grammatically complex and coherent sentences, ultimately improving their overall writing proficiency. The data aligns with findings from a research study which indicates that students often exhibit limited syntactic variety, relying heavily on basic sentence structures and simple conjunctions. For instance, Biber et al. (2016) found that adolescent L2 students' academic writing commonly lacks syntactic variety and shows an underuse of sophisticated subordination to express relationships between ideas. Similarly, Ortega (2015) examined syntactic complexity in academic writing and revealed that students frequently depend on fundamental syntactic structures, with limited use of complex noun phrases and advanced verb forms. This reliance on simpler constructions suggests a need for instructional strategies that promote the development of more complex syntactic skills.

Conversely, some studies have highlighted the importance of syntactic complexity as a predictor of writing quality. Lu (2017) investigated the relationship between syntactic complexity and writing quality in EFL argumentative essays and found that higher-rated essays exhibited greater syntactic complexity, including the use of varied sentence structures and more sophisticated phrasal constructions. Similarly, Uccelli et al. (2019) emphasized that the ability to use complex noun and verb phrases is a strong predictor of overall writing proficiency in academic discourse. These findings suggest that syntactic complexity plays a crucial role in effective written communication. The results of the present study confirm previous findings that students tend to rely on fundamental syntactic structures, such as simple noun and verb phrases, rather than employing more advanced constructions. The predominance of basic noun phrases, such as *"an opportunity for growth,"* (Text 9) and simple verb phrases, such as *"learned the value of seeking help,"* (Text 9) indicates a need for further development in syntactic flexibility. Moreover, the frequent use of prepositional phrases, such as *"to overcoming there challenges"* (Text 9) and *"of time management,"* (Text 9) highlights a dependency on basic relational markers. The implications of these findings suggest that targeted instructional strategies focusing on syntactic expansion—such as encouraging the use of appositive noun phrases, participial verb phrases, and complex prepositional phrases—can help students develop more sophisticated writing skills.

### Clauses

*But I had an experience that changed me and made me stop Cycling because one day we left, I left early to meet my friends and to skyline viewdeck, and then i realized that i was going too fast on the slope so i noticed on the left turn side that i would have trouble turning, unfortunately i rolled a rock that knocked my rear tire off and i went straight to the side of the road near the cliff, which crashed and broke my left hand because I tried to stop it from rocking back then.* (Text 3)

The paragraph contains a combination of independent and dependent clauses that contribute to the complexity and coherence of the narrative. The independent clause in the sentence *"But I had an experience that changed me and made me stop cycling"* stands on its own, presenting a complete thought. However, the clause *"that changed me and made me stop cycling"* is a restrictive relative clause modifying the noun "experience," providing essential information about what kind of experience it was. Relative clauses like this add specificity to sentences and are commonly observed in narratives to enhance descriptions (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 2015).

Another notable structure is the compound sentence: *"One day we left, I left early to meet my friends and to Skyline Viewdeck."* Here, two independent clauses (*"One day we left"* and *"I left early to meet my friends and to Skyline Viewdeck"*) are joined by a comma, making this a run-on sentence. To improve grammatical accuracy, coordinating conjunctions should be appropriately used to maintain clarity. This aligns with findings by Biber et



al. (2021), who highlight how improper clause coordination can lead to syntactic ambiguity in student writing.

Further, the dependent clause *"because I tried to stop it from rocking back then"* is an adverbial clause of reason explaining the cause of the crash. Dependent clauses like this serve to provide logical connections between events in storytelling. Similarly, the dependent clause *"that I was going too fast on the slope"* is a noun clause acting as the object of *"realized,"* illustrating how subordinate clauses function as integral components of sentence structures, as noted in Quirk et al. (1985). Another noun clause, *"that I would have trouble turning,"* acts as the object of *"noticed,"* reinforcing how noun clauses often serve as complements to cognitive verbs in complex sentences. Moreover, the dependent clause *"which crashed and broke my left hand"* is a relative clause that modifies *"the side of the road near the cliff."* While relative clauses help elaborate on antecedents, the unclear reference of *"which"* might cause ambiguity, a common syntactic issue in student writing (Hyland, 2019).

With the presented findings, the syntactic structure of the paragraph reveals a strong use of complex and compound sentences, demonstrating an attempt at detailed storytelling. However, the presence of run-on sentences and ambiguous clause structures suggests areas for improvement in clarity and grammatical accuracy. Studies on syntax and second-language writing, emphasize the importance of structuring clauses properly to enhance coherence and avoid run-on sentences. If not addressed, such syntactic errors can hinder comprehension, making it difficult for readers to follow the intended meaning (Ellis, 2016). Additionally, improper clause coordination may affect the logical sequencing of ideas, a challenge noted by Hyland (2019) in academic writing research. These suggest that greater attention to clause boundaries, conjunctions, and punctuation would significantly improve readability and grammatical precision, enhancing the overall effectiveness of written communication.

### **Sentence Structures**

The syntactic analysis of sentence types in students' writing reveals a predominant reliance on simple and compound sentences, with less frequent use of complex and compound-complex structures. Simple sentences, such as *"It was love at first serve."* and *"The sense of camaraderie was instant" (Text 14)* suggest that students tend to construct straightforward statements that express singular ideas. While these sentences are grammatically correct, the absence of subordination or coordination limits the depth and fluency of their writing. The use of compound sentences, such as *"In the first day of class there will be a program welcoming students, especially a freshman student like me, and we toured the campus," (Text 1)* indicates an attempt to connect ideas using coordinating conjunctions like *and*. However, the construction shows potential issues in punctuation and organization, which may affect readability. The frequent use of *and* as a coordinating conjunction suggests that students rely on basic additive relationships rather than employing a wider variety of conjunctions to express contrast, cause-effect, or conditionality.

Complex sentences, as seen in *"On that first day, after our instructors told us what we do and from what I hear that college is difficult, I think I can do it,"* demonstrate an emerging ability to integrate multiple ideas using subordination. However, structural inconsistencies, such as the awkward phrasing of *"from what I hear that college is difficult,"* indicate potential struggles with constructing well-formed dependent clauses. This suggests that students may need additional support in forming clear logical relationships between clauses and avoiding sentence fragmentation or ambiguity. Compound-complex sentences, exemplified by *"After that, we went to our classroom, and I see most of my class more is quiet because they don't know anyone yet,"* show an attempt to integrate both coordination and subordination. However, structural errors, such as *"most of my class more is quiet,"* indicate challenges in maintaining grammatical agreement and clarity within complex structures. The final example, *"Yes, college is challenging, but I don't give up. I like to try new things, and I like to continue on this journey,"* suggests an effort to express contrast and persistence, yet the repetition of *I like* indicates a lack of variety in sentence structure.

Another sentence follows a compound-complex structure, incorporating multiple clauses that convey simultaneous actions, reactions, and shifts in perspective. The first part, *"They're sitting in the corner, smiling and giggling while reading their favorite stories, and I always find myself saying, 'ang corny nyo naman'"*, consists of

a main clause with participial phrases ("*smiling and giggling while reading their favorite stories*") that modify the subject. The coordinating conjunction "*and*" connects this clause to another independent clause, highlighting both an observed action and the speaker's reaction. "*How funny because I used to be disgusted, but I read the whole Trilogy book, and then I fully understood their reasons,*" is another compound-complex sentence. The phrase "*How funny*" serves as an interjection, setting up the shift in perception. The dependent clause "*because I used to be disgusted*" explains the initial attitude, while the coordinating conjunction "*but*" introduces contrast, leading into another independent clause, "*I read the whole Trilogy book,*" and an additional clause, "*and then I fully understood their reasons,*" which signals a transformation in thought.

The findings suggest that students primarily rely on simple and compound sentences, which may hinder their ability to produce more sophisticated and cohesive academic writing. This aligns with studies by Ortega (2015) and Uccelli et al. (2019), which found that L2 learners often struggle with syntactic complexity and tend to overuse basic coordination rather than developing more advanced subordination. Research by Lu (2017) also highlights that stronger academic writers exhibit a higher frequency of complex and compound-complex sentences, indicating that syntactic diversity is a key marker of writing proficiency. Biber et al. (2016) and Myhill & Watson (2014) also emphasize that compound-complex sentences allow for expression of thought processes and attitudes. Biber et al. (2016) discuss how coordination and subordination enhance discourse coherence, while Myhill & Watson (2014) highlight how syntactic complexity correlates with cognitive development in writing. The progression from initial skepticism to understanding, as seen in this sentence, reflects the natural use of sentence complexity in narrative shifts, a concept also supported by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) in their study of functional grammar. Hence, to enhance students' writing skills, instructional interventions should focus on developing their ability to construct well-formed complex and compound-complex sentences. This could include explicit instruction on subordinating conjunctions, clause embedding, and syntactic variety. Additionally, targeted writing exercises that encourage students to expand on simple ideas using subordinators like *although*, *while*, *because*, and *since* can help them build more nuanced and sophisticated discourse.

### 3.2 *The sentence patterns used by non-language learners in their written discourse.*

The analysis of sentence patterns in students' written discourse reveals a predominant reliance on basic structures, particularly the Subject–Linking Verb–Complement (S–LV–C) pattern, as seen in sentences like "*College life is the most challenging part.*" and "*My first day wasn't that bad.*" These constructions demonstrate students' preference for declarative statements that describe experiences and personal identities. While this pattern is fundamental to sentence construction, an overreliance on linking verbs suggests a limited range of syntactic structures. Similarly, the Subject–Transitive Verb–Direct Object (S–TV–DO) pattern, exemplified by "*They say college life is challenging,*" indicates that students are capable of forming transitive structures, but their verb usage remains relatively simple. In another, Subject–Transitive Verb–Direct Object (S–TV–DO) construction, as seen in the sentences "*What does your dog contribute to you?*" and "*Do they make you smile?*" These structures indicate a preference for direct object inclusion, meaning students tend to construct sentences that involve clear action–receiver relationships. The reliance on S–TV–DO suggests that students primarily use verbs that require objects, which aligns with their tendency to describe actions that affect people or things. If students use S–TV–DO predominantly, this may indicate a reliance on action-driven sentence structures rather than descriptive or existential statements, which often employ intransitive verbs.

Likewise, the Subject–Transitive Verb–Direct Object–Object Complement (S–TV–DO–OC) pattern, as in "*I came home with an injury,*" appears infrequently, implying a lack of elaboration in sentence formation. The limited use of these more complex structures suggests that students tend to rely on straightforward subject–verb–object constructions rather than incorporating additional layers of meaning through indirect objects or object complements. These findings align with studies by Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (2015), who observed that second-language learners often favor basic sentence structures, particularly those involving linking verbs, due to their predictability. Similarly, Brown (2014) found out that students tend to avoid complex transitive constructions, reinforcing the patterns observed in this analysis. Further, he stated that beginners and intermediate learners tend

to construct sentences that explicitly link an agent (subject) to an affected entity (object) rather than employing intransitive verbs, which do not provide as much clarity in meaning. Conversely, Ellis (2016) suggests that more proficient writers incorporate a mix of transitive and intransitive structures to create sentence variety and improve readability. Meaning, language proficiency develops. As learners naturally incorporate more varied sentence patterns, including S–TV–IO–DO and S–TV–DO–OC, suggesting that these structures may emerge with further instruction and practice. The implications of these findings highlight the need for targeted instruction that encourages students to expand their syntactic range. By incorporating exercises that promote the use of transitive verbs with indirect objects, object complements, and varied verb types, students can develop greater flexibility in their writing. Enhancing their ability to construct more complex sentences will improve their overall writing fluency and academic expression.

### 3.3 *The syntactic errors made by non-language learners in their written discourse.*

Errors in subject-verb agreement, such as *"Some says dogs are..."* and *"Some of them is my classmates,"* highlight common grammatical challenges among learners, particularly in distinguishing between singular and plural subjects and selecting the appropriate verb forms. In the first sentence, the word "Some" is a plural indefinite pronoun, requiring the plural verb "say" instead of the singular "says." Similarly, in the second sentence, "Some of them" refers to a plural subject, meaning the correct verb should be "are" rather than "is." Similarly, the error *"They knows how to comfort people"* demonstrates incorrect subject-verb agreement since the plural subject "they" should take the base form "know" instead of the singular form "knows." These mistakes hinder clarity and grammatical accuracy in writing. These errors suggest that learners struggle with the agreement rules governing indefinite pronouns and quantifiers, which is a frequent issue in second-language acquisition (Ellis, 2016).

A study by Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (2015) indicates that subject-verb agreement errors often stem from learners relying on memorized rules rather than understanding contextual grammatical patterns. Additionally, Brown (2014) found that quantifiers like "some," "all," and "each" can be particularly challenging for English learners, as their grammatical number is not always immediately clear. Moreover, Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (2019) argue that errors in subject-verb agreement may be influenced by first-language (L1) transfer, meaning learners apply grammatical structures from their native language that do not align with English rules. These findings suggest the need for explicit instruction and corrective feedback in teaching subject-verb agreement. Ellis (2016) recommends targeted exercises that focus on pluralization rules, particularly for indefinite pronouns and quantifiers. Similarly, Swain (2018) emphasizes the importance of real-world examples and sentence analysis to reinforce correct usage. By incorporating structured grammar practice and contextual learning, educators can help learners develop a more accurate understanding of subject-verb agreement, ultimately improving their syntactic accuracy in both writing and speech.

#### **Sentence Fragments**

Sentence fragments occur when a group of words lacks an independent clause, meaning it does not express a complete thought. In the given sentences, syntactic errors in sentence fragmentation can be attributed to missing subjects, incorrect phrase constructions, or the lack of a main verb, all of which disrupt grammatical coherence. The sentence *"Some people also kill them to just become Foods during events."* presents issues in verb usage and phrase construction. The phrase *"to just become Foods during events"* is problematic because "to become" suggests transformation, which does not align with the intended meaning. This lack of clarity affects comprehensibility and should be revised to *"Some people also kill them just to use them as food during events."* Such syntactic issues are common among second-language (L2) learners, as research shows that non-native speakers often struggle with infinitive verb placement and noun phrase agreement (Ellis, 2016).

Similarly, the phrase *"to learn, to ride a bike"* is a fragment because it lacks a subject and a main verb. Infinitive phrases such as *"to learn"* and *"to ride a bike"* function as verbal phrases but cannot stand alone as complete sentences. The missing subject and verb make the sentence incomplete and ambiguous. A proper revision

could be *"I want to learn how to ride a bike."* This ensures the sentence contains a subject ("I") and a main verb ("want"). Studies indicate that learners often use infinitive phrases as standalone sentences due to first-language interference, particularly in languages where infinitives function independently (Richards & Schmidt, 2014).

Another example, *"Excited because I would meet my new classmates and new teachers and nervous honestly because I know there is an introduction yourself that teachers always ask to do."* lacks a subject and a proper verb in the first clause. The phrase *"Excited because I would meet my new classmates"* is a dependent clause that does not function as a complete sentence. The fragmented nature of the sentence affects clarity and readability. A corrected version might be *"I was excited because I would meet my new classmates and teachers, but I was also nervous because I knew the teachers would ask us to introduce ourselves."* This revision ensures the sentence has a subject, proper conjunctions, and correct phrasing. Fragmented sentences, especially those beginning with adjectives like "excited" or "nervous," reflect a tendency among learners to omit essential grammatical elements. Research highlights that second-language writers frequently omit subjects in informal discourse due to their reliance on spoken language patterns (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 2015).

Sentence fragmentation affects both written and spoken communication by reducing clarity, coherence, and readability. In academic and professional writing, fragmented sentences can cause misunderstandings, leading to misinterpretation of ideas. Moreover, such errors reflect gaps in syntactic awareness, highlighting the need for targeted instruction in sentence construction. In educational contexts, fragmented sentences may indicate a developmental stage in language learning where students struggle with clause integration. Teachers must emphasize sentence completeness through explicit grammar instruction and structured writing exercises. Additionally, learners should engage in peer editing to identify and correct fragmented constructions. The analysis of syntactic errors in sentence fragments demonstrates that non-language learners often struggle with clause completeness, subject-verb alignment, and phrase integration. These challenges align with existing research on L2 writing, reinforcing the importance of structured grammar instruction (Hyland, 2019). Addressing these errors through syntactic awareness activities and corrective feedback can enhance students' writing fluency and grammatical competence.

### **Run-on Sentences**

Errors in run-on sentences, as seen in examples like *"Only three of our instructors came and they required us to introduce ourselves in front of our classmates and after that, our instructors immediately dismissed us."* and *"Stray dogs for example they are smelly and dirty but if you put your hands on them and take care of them, they be as clean as you want,"* indicate a lack of proper punctuation or conjunction use. These sentences contain multiple independent clauses that are improperly connected, making them difficult to read and understand. The absence of coordinating or subordinating conjunctions, as well as missing commas or periods, results in a loss of clarity and coherence. To correct these run-on sentences, students should use proper punctuation, conjunctions, or break the ideas into separate sentences. For instance, the first example could be revised as: *"Only three of our instructors came. They required us to introduce ourselves in front of our classmates. After that, our instructors immediately dismissed us."* This correction ensures that each independent clause is clearly separated, improving readability. Alternatively, subordinating conjunctions can be used to create complex sentences, such as: *"Only three of our instructors came, and they required us to introduce ourselves before dismissing us."* Similarly, the second example could be corrected by restructuring the sentence: *"Stray dogs, for example, are often smelly and dirty. However, if you take care of them, they can be as clean as you want."* This revision adds proper punctuation and transitions to enhance clarity.

One major implication of run-on sentences is that they can hinder effective communication, making it challenging for readers to grasp the intended message (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 2015). In academic and professional writing, such errors can diminish the credibility of the writer and reduce readability (Brown, 2014). Research suggests that learners who struggle with sentence boundaries often lack awareness of syntactic structures and the role of punctuation in conveying meaning (Dulay, Burt, & Krashen, 2019). Additionally, run-on sentences

can affect writing fluency and reader engagement. For example, in "As I scrolled through my Facebook Feed. I noticed exchanged conversation between two characters from a certain story which is the Until Trilogy of Jonaxx—the exchanged of words and lines of Elijah and Klare, captivated attention," the structure creates confusion due to awkward phrasing and incorrect punctuation. A more grammatically sound revision would be: *"As I scrolled through my Facebook feed, I noticed an exchange of conversation between two characters from the Until Trilogy of Jonaxx. The exchange of words and lines between Elijah and Klare captivated my attention."* According to Ellis (2016) learners who produce run-on sentences often struggle with complex sentence construction, leading to errors in cohesion and coherence.

To address these, Swain (2018) recommends explicit grammar instruction on sentence boundaries, including exercises on comma splices, coordinating and subordinating conjunctions, and proper punctuation. Using sentence diagramming and peer editing activities can also help students recognize where sentences should be split or revised for clarity. Additionally, direct exposure to well-structured texts can enhance learners' syntactic awareness and grammatical accuracy (Larsen-Freeman, 2017). By focusing on sentence structure and punctuation, students can significantly improve the clarity and readability of their writing, leading to more effective communication. Addressing these issues is essential in academic settings, where proper sentence construction is crucial for conveying ideas with precision and coherence.

### **Incorrect Usage of Verb Tense**

Errors in verb tense, such as *"They be as clean as you want"* instead of *"They will be as clean as you want"* or *"They can be as clean as you want,"* indicate a misunderstanding of modal verbs and their appropriate usage. In standard English, the base form "be" cannot stand alone in this context; it requires an auxiliary verb like "will" or "can" to convey future possibility or ability. Another example of incorrect verb tense usage is seen in *"In my 2nd class did not also discussed anything,"* where the auxiliary verb "did" is incorrectly paired with the past tense verb "discussed." In English, when using "did" as an auxiliary verb, the main verb should be in its base form, making the correct sentence: *"In my second class, we did not discuss anything."* Additionally, in *"In the future as a college student and I will gladly gonna face it,"* the phrase "gonna face" is grammatically incorrect. The word "gonna" is an informal contraction of "going to" but should not be used in formal writing. A grammatically accurate revision would be, *"In the future, as a college student, I will gladly face it."*

The presence of verb tense errors affects the readability and coherence of writing, making it difficult for readers to follow the intended message (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 2015). Verb tense is crucial in conveying time relations and maintaining logical sequencing in a sentence. Ellis (2016) suggests that L2 learners often struggle with verb tenses due to the complex interplay between auxiliary verbs, modals, and irregular forms. These errors are particularly common among learners whose first language does not have extensive verb conjugations (Brown, 2014). One implication of incorrect verb tense usage is a lack of fluency and accuracy in written communication. Swain (2018) indicated that inconsistent verb tense can confuse readers and disrupt the logical flow of ideas. Furthermore, incorrect subject-verb agreement can lead to misunderstandings and make writing appear unpolished (Dulay, Burt, & Krashen, 2019). This is particularly important in academic and professional settings, where grammatical precision is essential for credibility (Larsen-Freeman, 2017).

To correct these errors, students should engage in explicit grammar instruction focused on verb tense consistency and subject-verb agreement. Activities such as verb tense timelines, sentence correction exercises, and peer editing can help learners recognize and apply the correct verb forms. Additionally, using corpus-based learning—where students analyze authentic texts—can improve their understanding of natural verb usage (Ellis, 2016). Exposure to well-structured sentences in academic reading can also reinforce correct grammatical patterns. Addressing these verb tense issues will enhance syntactic accuracy and improve overall writing clarity, making students' work more effective in academic and professional communication. By mastering verb tense rules and subject-verb agreement, learners can express their ideas more precisely, ensuring their writing is both grammatically sound and easily understood.

### Incorrect Spellings

Lexical errors, such as incorrect word choice and spelling mistakes, can significantly impact writing clarity and readability. Errors like "strunggle" instead of "struggle," "journerly" instead of "journey," "abandonned" instead of "abandoned," "highschool" and "viewdeck" instead of "high school and view deck" result from phonetic confusion, typographical mistakes, or overgeneralization of spelling rules. For instance, "*strunggle*" deviates from the correct form "*struggle*," which refers to difficulties or challenges. Similarly, "*journerly*" should be "*journey*," as the incorrect spelling affects word recognition. The word "*abandonned*" incorrectly doubles the "n," whereas the correct form, "*abandoned*," follows standard spelling rules. Additionally, the words *highschool* and *viewdeck* should be separated such as "*high school*" and "*view deck*" to ensure clarity and proper noun usage.

Spelling and vocabulary errors can negatively influence communication effectiveness. Studies by Nation (2018) and Laufer (2017) highlight that vocabulary knowledge is crucial for both writing and reading comprehension. Misspelled words hinder fluency and can alter the intended meaning of a sentence. Perfetti and Hart (2017) further suggests that accurate spelling enhances reading comprehension, making it easier for learners to process and produce text efficiently. Moreover, Schmitt (2019) emphasizes that improper word choices can affect the credibility of academic and professional writing. To address these issues, explicit spelling instruction, vocabulary-building exercises, and exposure to well-written texts are essential (Nation, 2018). Tools like spell-checkers, proofreading strategies, and peer reviews can help learners recognize and correct errors. Additionally, corpus-based learning and contextualized vocabulary instruction have proven effective in reinforcing proper word usage (Laufer, 2017). By improving spelling and lexical accuracy, students can enhance their writing proficiency, ensuring that their ideas are communicated effectively and professionally.

### Capitalization

The capitalization errors found in the text—such as "*what i was*", "*almost everyday*", "*i always Fell*", "*used for Foods*", and "*But I had an experience that changed me and made me stop Cycling*"—reflect inconsistencies in standard written conventions. These errors have linguistic and cognitive implications that may point to the writer's syntactic awareness, familiarity with writing conventions, and level of proficiency in formal written discourse. One major implication of these errors is the possibility of incomplete mastery of capitalization rules, particularly regarding proper nouns, sentence-initial words, and irregular capitalization patterns. For example, "*what i was*" and "*i always Fell*" indicate a lack of awareness that "*I*" is always capitalized in English, a common issue among early language learners or those with limited formal writing practice (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 2015). Similarly, "*almost everyday*" should be "*Almost every day*," as sentences must always start with a capital letter. Such errors could stem from a more speech-oriented writing habit, where informal conventions are transferred from spoken to written discourse.

The phrase "*used for Foods*" presents another significant capitalization error. "*Foods*" should not be capitalized unless referring to a proper noun, a menu section, or a brand name. This suggests an overgeneralization of capitalization rules, a common syntactic error observed in ESL and EFL learners (Richards, 2017). Overcapitalization is often linked to direct translation from a first language where nouns may have different capitalization rules. Moreover, "*But I had an experience that changed me and made me stop Cycling*" incorrectly capitalizes "*Cycling*," which is a common noun unless used as a proper noun referring to a specific event or entity. This mistake suggests an inconsistency in noun classification and capitalization rules, which may be linked to semantic emphasis rather than grammatical correctness (Brown, 2014). Such errors, when frequent, could interfere with meaning and clarity in written communication, leading to misinterpretation by readers.

According to Kachru (2006), learners from multilingual backgrounds often exhibit capitalization transfer errors, influenced by the rules of their native language. Additionally, studies on syntactic development indicate that inconsistent capitalization errors may signal either a lack of editing and proofreading strategies or interference from digital communication habits, where informal writing (e.g., texting, social media) leads to reduced attention to standard conventions (Crystal, 2019). To address these challenges, explicit instruction on capitalization rules,

structured writing exercises, and exposure to well-formed texts are necessary. A syntactic primer focusing on capitalization and punctuation could support non-language learners in developing better control over their writing mechanics, ultimately enhancing their academic and professional communication skills.

### **Use of Punctuation Marks**

The identified errors in punctuation are a common challenge I writing among learners. The missing comma before a conjunction in a compound sentence, as seen in *"Since this is our first day of school our Instructor did not discussed anything yet because It's the first day of school and she just let us introduced ourselves in front with partner, who will introduced each other;"* demonstrates difficulties in sentence segmentation and verb usage. The absence of a comma after "school" makes it difficult to distinguish independent clauses. This mistake suggests that learners may be influenced by the grammatical structures of their first language, a phenomenon known as interlingual interference (Ellis, 2015). Research on second-language writing (Ferris, 2018) also confirms that punctuation misuse often stems from differences in syntactic structures between a learner's native and target language.

Similarly, the presence of a comma splice in *"In my first day I was having a hard time finding my first class, luckily I saw a guard and showed me the way to my first class."* illustrates a lack of understanding of sentence boundaries. The incorrect use of a comma to join two independent clauses disrupts logical flow and readability. A correct revision, such as *"On my first day, I was having a hard time finding my first class. Luckily, I saw a guard who showed me the way to my first class,"* effectively separates the ideas and enhances coherence. Studies by Truscott (2017) indicate that learners often rely on spoken language patterns when writing, leading to misplaced punctuation. Hyland (2019) supports this by emphasizing that L2 learners frequently struggle with sentence segmentation, particularly in differentiating independent and dependent clauses. These errors reflect broader challenges in English syntax and discourse coherence among learners, reinforcing the need for explicit grammar instruction and structured writing exercises to enhance syntactic awareness. As Richards and Schmidt (2014) argue, punctuation errors are common in second-language acquisition due to differences in writing conventions across languages. Addressing these challenges through targeted feedback and syntactic training can improve students' writing proficiency, ultimately aiding their academic and professional communication.

### *3.4 The syntactic primer to be developed to address the syntactic errors.*

To address common syntactic errors in student writing, a syntactic primer can be developed focusing on sentence structure, subject-verb agreement, verb tense consistency, word choice, and spelling. These issues often lead to unclear writing, making it difficult for readers to follow the intended message. The primer will include practical exercises to help students recognize and correct errors. For example, run-on sentences will be tackled by teaching proper punctuation and conjunction use, while subject-verb agreement mistakes will be corrected through pattern recognition activities. Verb tense inconsistencies, will be addressed with timeline-based exercises to ensure students maintain consistency. To improve word choice and spelling, the primer will include vocabulary-building activities and proofreading strategies. The primer will also incorporate peer editing, guided writing, and quizzes to make learning interactive. Explicit grammar instruction improves writing skills (Ellis, 2016), while contextual learning helps students apply rules effectively (Myhill et al., 2018). By balancing accuracy with creativity, the primer ensures that students not only write correctly but also express their ideas clearly. The Syntactic Primer is a structured language resource designed to enhance students' proficiency in grammar, sentence structure, and writing conventions. This primer provides foundational guidance in addressing common linguistic challenges, ensuring that learners develop clarity, coherence, and grammatical accuracy in their writing.

### **Key Features of the Primer**

The primer is divided into several sections that target essential syntactic skills:

Sentence Structure – This section focuses on correcting run-on sentences, fragments, and misplaced modifiers.

Through sentence identification and rewriting exercises, students refine their ability to construct grammatically sound and logically structured sentences.

**Subject-Verb Agreement (SVA)** – This component provides exercises that reinforce the correct pairing of subjects and verbs. Students practice recognizing singular and plural subjects, handling collective nouns, and identifying tricky agreement rules in complex sentences.

**Verb Tense Consistency** – This section helps learners maintain proper verb tense throughout their writing. Exercises challenge students to correct tense inconsistencies in isolated sentences and larger passages, ensuring logical sequencing and clarity.

**Word Choice and Spelling** – To refine lexical precision, students engage in activities that address commonly confused words, homophones, and spelling errors. This section strengthens their ability to select the appropriate vocabulary for academic writing.

**Paragraph Writing** – The final section encourages students to apply their syntactic knowledge in structured writing tasks. It includes guided paragraph composition activities that emphasize coherence, unity, and grammatical accuracy.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Non-language learners mostly use basic sentence structures with limited variety and accuracy in prepositions and articles. They rely on simple noun and verb phrases instead of more complex constructions, affecting creativity. Their use of simple and compound sentences reduces cohesion in academic writing. Further, S-LV-C, S-TV-Do, S-TV-DO-OC are the common sentence patterns used by non-language learners. Meanwhile, the syntactic errors committed by the non-language learners are sentence fragmentation, run-on sentences, incorrect usage of verbs, capitalization, incorrect use of punctuation marks and incorrect spellings. With this, syntactic primer focused on sentence structure, subject-verb agreement, verb tense consistencies, word choice and spelling and paragraph writing is developed to address the common syntactic errors committed by the non-language learners.

These results are significant for learners, teachers, and the language curriculum. For learners, these findings highlight specific areas needing focused attention. They should prioritize understanding and practicing fundamental sentence structures, paying close attention to the correct use of prepositions and articles. Conscious effort should be made to expand their use of more complex noun and verb phrases to enhance the sophistication and creativity of their writing. Furthermore, learners need to develop strategies to construct longer, more cohesive texts by moving beyond reliance on simple and compound sentences. Deliberate practice in identifying and correcting common errors like sentence fragments, run-on sentences, and verb tense inconsistencies is crucial.

For teachers, these results provide insights into the typical syntactic challenges faced by non-language learners. This knowledge should inform their pedagogical approaches, emphasizing explicit instruction on basic sentence patterns (S-LV-C, S-TV-Do, S-TV-DO-OC) and providing targeted practice in areas where errors are most frequent, such as sentence construction, verb usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. Teachers should incorporate activities that encourage learners to move beyond simple sentence structures and develop more complex and varied sentence constructions to improve writing cohesion and creativity. The development of a syntactic primer specifically addressing these common errors offers a valuable resource for focused instruction and remediation.

For the language curriculum, these findings underscore the necessity of a strong foundational focus on sentence-level grammar and mechanics, even within subject areas not explicitly designated as language courses. The curriculum should integrate explicit instruction and practice on the identified common sentence patterns and error types. It should also emphasize the importance of moving from basic sentence structures to more complex ones to foster creativity and improve the overall quality and cohesion of academic writing across disciplines. The developed syntactic primer provides a concrete example of a resource that can be integrated into the curriculum to



directly address the identified syntactic weaknesses of non-language learners.

**Recommendation** - Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends the following:

- Language instructors may enhance syntactic proficiency by designing lessons on complex sentence formation, conjunction use, and article application. Structured exercises should expand students' use of complex sentences and varied noun-verb structures, while focused writing instruction improves grammatical cohesion. Activities incorporating appositive noun phrases, participial verb phrases, and complex prepositional phrases develop syntactic flexibility. Explicit instruction and corrective feedback on subject-verb agreement, along with verb consistency drills, timelines, and peer reviews, further strengthen grammatical accuracy.
- College Administrators shall support faculty development by providing opportunities through workshops and seminars on clause structuring, coherence strategies, and advanced writing instruction to improve students' writing clarity and syntactic proficiency.
- Instructors should emphasize sentence completeness in both oral and written responses during class to help students correct fragmented constructions. Students should consistently practice grammar exercises and make use of writing resources available in the library and the internet about subject-verb agreement to develop a strong command of its rules.
- The Syntactic Primer may be used by the Senior High School Students to strengthen their grammar and writing skills, preparing them for college-level academic works.

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