

# Common grammatical errors in the persuasive essays of Grade 10 learners: Implication for English language instruction

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## ***Abstract***

This study aimed to identify and analyze the common grammatical errors present in the persuasive essays of Grade 10 learners and to determine their implications for English language instruction. Using a qualitative research design, specifically content analysis, the study analyzed the written compositions of 34 Grade 10 learners from Baringcucurong National High School during the school year 2024-2025. The corpora consisted of 68 persuasive essays ranging from 150-200 words, written in response to two essay prompts. The analysis followed the steps of error analysis proposed by Corder, which include the identification, description, explanation, and evaluation of errors. The identified errors were categorized based on the classification of Runkati, which includes word level and sentential level errors.

The findings revealed several recurring grammatical errors in the learners' persuasive essays, particularly incorrect word choice, incorrect use of prepositions, incorrect use of articles, incorrect use of punctuations, subject-verb disagreement, and incorrect word order. These errors were found to affect clarity, coherence and persuasiveness of the learners' written outputs. The occurrence of these errors suggests that the learners still experience difficulties in applying fundamental grammatical rules in written communication, which may be influenced by limited vocabulary, insufficient mastery of grammar structures, and interference from the learners' first language. The results highlight the need for more focused grammar instruction integrated with writing activities in the classroom. The study recommends the implementation of targeted instructional strategies, continuous writing practice, and guided feedback to help learners improve their grammatical accuracy and overall writing competence.

***Keywords:*** English language instruction, error analysis, Grade 10 learners, grammatical errors, persuasive essays

## Common grammatical errors in the persuasive essays of Grade 10 learners: Implication for English language instruction

### 1. Introduction

Effective communication in English is often reflected in an individual's ability to express ideas clearly in written or oral form. In the academic setting, written communication is especially important because it allows learners to demonstrate comprehension, reasoning, and critical thinking. For writing to be effective, grammatical accuracy is essential since it ensures clarity, coherence, and proper transmission of meaning. When writing is free from grammatical errors, ideas become easier to understand and the intended message is conveyed more effectively to readers. English has become a global language widely used in education, business, and international communication. In the Philippines, it serves as an official language and as a medium of instruction in many school subjects. However, recent reports show a decline in English proficiency among Filipinos. For instance, the 2023 Social Weather Stations survey revealed that only a portion of Filipinos are confident in writing, speaking, or thinking in English. Writing, in particular, remains one of the most challenging language skills because it requires accuracy in grammar, structure, and organization. Errors in grammar are common and inevitable in language learning, but they provide valuable insights into learners' language development through the process of error analysis, which helps teachers understand the difficulties learners encounter in writing.

Despite continuous efforts by schools and teachers to improve learners' writing skills, many Grade 10 students still struggle with grammatical accuracy, including issues in subject-verb agreement, punctuation, word choice, and sentence structure. While several studies have examined grammatical errors in students' writing, limited research has analyzed these errors in persuasive essays using Runkati's (2013) grammatical error taxonomy, which categorizes errors into word-level and sentential-level forms. Addressing this gap, the present study aims to identify the common grammatical errors in the persuasive essays of Grade 10 learners and determine their implications for English language instruction. By identifying these errors, the study seeks to contribute to improved teaching strategies that can enhance learners' grammatical competence and overall writing proficiency.

#### *Framework of the Study*

**Error analysis.** Error analysis was introduced in the 1960s by Stephen Pit Corder. He noted that errors are an indication of how far towards the goal the learner has progressed and, consequently, what remains for him to learn. Further he views errors as valuable information for three beneficiaries: for teachers, it clues them on the progress of the learners; for researchers, it provides evidence as to how language is acquired or learned; for learners themselves, it gives them resources to learn (Corder, 1967). He argues that studying learner's errors has immediate practical applications for foreign language teachers: errors provide feedback; they tell the teachers something about the effectiveness of his teaching materials and his teaching techniques and show him what parts of the syllabus he has been following have been inadequately learned or taught and need further attention (Corder, 1973). Moreover, he views the study of error as part of the investigation of the process of language learning (Corder, 1974).

The current study is anchored on this theory by applying its principles in identifying, analyzing and interpreting the learners' grammatical errors in their persuasive essay writings. This study also believed that a learners' use of the second language is influenced by his/her first language. Moreover, consistent with the view of the proponent of this theory, Stephen Pit Corder, the findings of this study are expected to offer valuable insights not just for English language teachers and future researchers but more on the learners themselves by highlighting

areas that require focused instructional attention.

**Statement of the Problem** - Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the grammatical errors in the persuasive essays of the learners?
2. What are the implications of the findings for English language teaching?

## 2. Research Design

A qualitative approach was employed, specifically using content analysis.

**Data Gathering Procedure** - After securing permission from the School Head and obtaining consent from the parents of the participants and the participants themselves, the researcher oriented the participants about the first topic of the essay and the length of the essay that they need to accomplish. The participants were informed that their written compositions would be analyzed for errors in grammar. The participants were also assured that all information gathered in the study would be treated with strict confidentiality. The second topic for their writing test was given to the participants on the following day.

Based on the steps of error analysis proposed by Corder (1974), the analysis started with the collection of data, wherein the participants were asked to write a persuasive essay consisting of 150 to 200 words answering and explaining the topics: *Why do I need to Listen* and *Why do I need to master the English language?* Before the writing task, the participants were instructed to carefully comprehend the given topic, organize their ideas thoughtfully and write independently without the assistance from classmates nor the teacher-researcher. The participants were also restrained from using dictionary or gadgets during the writing task. The writing test was conducted for 45 minutes during the participants' remedial class in the afternoon from 3:15 to 4:00. The essays were written inside their own classroom to minimize anxiety issues, and for the researcher to check and monitor the activity of the learners.

After the writing test, the participants were given time to review and revise their work before finally submitting the written output to the researcher. The identified errors and corrections were not disclosed to the participants after the completion of their first essay. The accomplished essay compositions were then subjected to both manual and digital analysis by the researcher to identify, classify, and describe the common grammatical errors committed by the learners.

**Analysis of Data** - The analysis of data followed the steps indicated in Corder's steps in error analysis, which were the identification of errors, description of errors, explanation of errors and evaluation of errors. The data collected through the written compositions underwent errors identification to analyze the error in the persuasive essay writings. Each essay was examined word by word and sentence by sentence to identify the errors. The words and sentences were identified as errors if they were not in accordance with the appropriate and standard usage of English language. The identified errors were described and categorized under different types of errors as proposed by Runkati (2013) which is composed of word level and sentential level. The word level includes Incorrect use of Articles, Incorrect use of Prepositions, Incorrect Word Choice, Incorrect Noun Usage, and Incorrect use of Numbers, whereas, sentential level includes Disagreement between Verb and Subject, Incorrect Verb Tense, Missing Punctuation, Sentence Fragment, Run-on sentences, Incorrect Capitalization and Incorrect Word Order. Afterward, explanations were provided to account for how these errors occurred and were committed by the participants. Lastly, the errors were evaluated, and appropriate instructional interventions and suggestions were recommended based on the findings.

## 3. Results and Findings

**Research Question 1:** What are the grammatical errors in the persuasive essays of the learners?

### ***Discussion***

**Incorrect Word Choice.** Incorrect word choice occurs when a writer uses a word that does not accurately convey the intended meaning, often leading to confusion or a change in the message. This error can result from misunderstanding a word's definition, using a word that sounds similar but has a different meaning or translating directly from the first language. This kind of error often leads to misunderstanding and language breakdown since the real meaning of the message is not effectively stated. The participants often rely on terms that they are familiar with when they are unsure of the correct English equivalent of the word. Some of them makes use of Tagalog terminologies, while others use English terms that do not actually define what they mean. Below are some of the statements containing incorrect word choice committed by the participants in their persuasive essays:

*"You can communicate with other lahi. . ." (S4)*

In the statement, the writer used a Tagalog terminology which is "lahi" because they do not know the English translation of it. Readers of that statement who are non-Filipino might not get the idea because they are not familiar with the vocabulary being used. The sentence should be: "You can communicate with other people," or "You can communicate with people of different background," or simply "You can communicate with other races."

*"Otherways, to maintain my knowledge and because, if you go to other country you will use this to communicate to other people." (S6)*

The message is confusing due to the use of "otherways" which could be changed to "otherwise" to come up with an understandable statement. Additionally, the word "other" should be changed to "another" because the writer is referring to different countries that they will be visiting. The use of "other country" refers to a specific country or place only, hence the use of another.

*"Because of your worst English language." (S17)*

Worst is a superlative used to describe something that is the most negative or poorest compared to others. But the writer is only trying to say that their use of English is not that good enough therefore, "bad" or "poor" should be used instead.

*"As the matter of fact. . ." (S17)*

This phrase is used to emphasize your point of view and sometimes used to describe something that is true, factual and accurate. It is a way of adding clarity, correcting or elaborating on something to make it clear that the speaker is providing concrete information. However, the phrase above used the article "the" which does not fit in the expression because "the" is used to refer to something specific or already known. Whereas the article "a" refers to a general concept emphasizing that the statement given by the speaker is not just an opinion but rather a clear or factual statement. Therefore, that phrase should be as a matter of fact.

*"If you can talk to the people that there language is English." (S19)*

The word "there" is an adverb that refers to a place or location. But in the sentence, the intended meaning is possession, as in the people having the English as their language, therefore the possessive pronoun "their" indicating ownership should be used. However, the sentence is still awkward because of its structure, therefore a more natural phrasing should be used, hence the sentence, "if you can talk to the people whose language is English."

This suggests that incorrect words when used in writing can have significant implications that affect not only the clarity of the work but also its quality. Learners who used incorrect words in their essay lead to the confusion and misinterpretation of what they intend to convey. This reduces the effectiveness of communication and may cause writing to lack credibility and reliability as required in academic writing. Moreover, incorrect word choice errors may reflect a lack of mastery over a language, which can hinder a learner's development in writing. Consequently, learners may find it more challenging to express themselves clearly and effectively in the English

language in future writing activities. Therefore, learners should be exposed to a variety of texts to increase their knowledge of vocabulary. Additionally, they should be encouraged to use a dictionary rather than asking for the English translation of the words to the teacher. This will ensure that the words they used are the exact term in the target language. Lastly, teachers should apply different strategies that aim to develop the learners' vocabulary.

Additionally, the findings of this study on incorrect word choice are supported by several previous studies that have identified vocabulary misuse as a recurring issue among second language learners. Ferris (2011) suggest that wrong word choice and sentence structure errors are common issues in learner's writing. This is also evident in the study of Chen (2002). Huang (2006) and Wu & Garza (2014) emphasized that learners often rely on direct translation from their first language or use familiar terms that do not align with the intended meaning in English, resulting in unclear or inaccurate statements. This aligns with the present study's observation that some participants used Tagalog terms like "lahi" or English words such as "otherways" and "there" inappropriately due to limited vocabulary knowledge.

As stated by Fitri (2015), errors committed by the learners in word choice are caused by lack of vocabulary, lack of holistic understanding in grammar, lack of interaction with target language, lack of research of the topic given, not rereading their own texts, and being too dependent on bilingual dictionaries.

**Incorrect Use of Prepositions.** This error describes the incorrect use of the prepositions in, on, at, for, by, etc in a writing. These errors that occurred in the essays of the learners happen because they are confused as to the use of these prepositions, some of the learners even lack prepositions while others added prepositions in sentences that do not require it. Incorrect prepositions can confuse the readers and listeners because it would be difficult to understand the intended meaning of the writing. These prepositions when not used properly can lead to grammatical inaccuracy of the sentences and the overall structure of the writing. The continuous misuse of prepositions can also limit the language development of the learners. Below are the examples of the errors in prepositions:

*"Because the English language is used any country." (S1)*

The preposition "in" needs to be added before the word any to emphasize the idea that the language is used in those countries. It should be "because the English language is used in any country."

*"You can go in any countries. . ." (S4)*

The preposition "in" is used for enclosed or defined spaces surrounded by boundaries, example, "in the room", "in the box", or "in the Philippines" but it is not used to refer to traveling or moving towards a destination. Instead of the use of "in", the sentence should be "you can go to any countries" since it denotes the movement of the person from a country to another country.

*"I will use this to my job" (S6)*

This sentence is incorrect due to the misuse of the preposition "to". This preposition is used to indicate movement, time and direction such as "I am traveling to Japan." It also shows a range of time such as "I am studying from Monday to Friday." Preposition "to" does not fit in the context, use "for" instead which makes the sentence, "I will use this for my job" because preposition "for" is used to indicate purpose of the reason for something to be done. In the sentence, English is used for the purpose of job, hence, "for" should be the preposition.

*"To communicate to other specially if you're going to. . ." (S15)*

The preposition "to" is used to describe an action or recipient of an action. This suggests that the writer is directing a message towards somebody. But when you are interacting with someone such as the example above, whether the writer is discussing something with someone, exchanging information with someone, or any communication involving both parties, "with" should be used instead of "to". Therefore, the sentence should be

“to communicate with others especially if you’re going to..”

*“Go another country. .” (S20)*

The example above lacks the preposition “to” after the verb “go” as an indication of a movement towards a destination, in this case, the destination is another country. The correct phrase should be, “go to another country.”

The findings of this study on the incorrect use of prepositions are consistent with previous research that highlights prepositional errors as one of the common challenges faced by second language learners. In the study of Ulit (2018), he revealed that in terms of grammatical category, the incorrect use or lack of prepositions had the highest number of errors during the pretest and second during the posttest. This is also related with the study of Quibol-Catabay (2016), where the error on the use of prepositions ranked second among the errors in English. Moreover, the study of Magmood et al. (2014) found that misuse of prepositions can negatively affect the overall grammatical accuracy of learners’ writing and may hinder their ability to construct coherent and contextually appropriate sentences. There related findings reinforce the idea that targeted grammar instruction, especially in the area of prepositions, is essential in improving learners’ writing skills and overall language development.

**Incorrect Use of Articles.** This error is the result of the participants’ misuse and omission of the articles “the”, “a”, and “an.” Some of the learners do not pay much attention to these one or three letter words, unbeknownst to them, these are also essential for a clear and organized writing. The following are some of the statements containing incorrect word choice committed by the participants in their persuasive essays:

*“Why do I need to master English language?” (S5)*

The statements lack an article “the”. When referring to a specific language, “the” is often necessary. So it should be, “Why do I need to master the English language?”

*“You understand the any country. .” (S7)*

The statement made use of the article “the” before “any country.” However, article “the” is not necessary and the statements does not require an article, so it should be removed.

*“I want to speak to everyone a English language...” (10)*

The article “a” before the “English language” is incorrect because English starts with a vowel sound therefore the article “a” should be changed to “an”.

*“I want learned and speak a English language. ” (S14)*

Article “the” should be used in place of the article “a” because it refers to a specific noun which is the language. The statement should be, “I want to learn and master the English language” or simply “I want to learn and master the language.”

*“First of all English language is a international language. .” (S15)*

Articles “a” and “an” vary in usage. “A” for instance is used before a word that begins with a consonant sound regardless of its spelling. Examples include a pentagon, a diamond, a book, and a university. The article “an” on the other hand is used before a word that begins with a vowel sound, regardless of the spelling. This includes an apple, an eel, an igloo and an honor. Therefore, the word international which starts with a vowel sound, should be preceded by the article “a” which makes the statement, “First of all, English language is an international language.”

This implies that the consistent misuse and omission of articles observed in the learners’ essays reveal a gap in their understanding of one of the most fundamental aspects of English grammar. The use of incorrect articles in writing an essay has clear implications for both the learners and the teacher. Both recognize the importance of mastering the proper use of articles, however, learners sometimes struggle considering the complexity of the rules

on the use of articles. This problem affects clarity, effectiveness and quality of written work. This suggests therefore that more activities in articles should be implemented.

Finally, consistent with the finding of Ellis (2005), the English article system poses challenges because it is both rule-governed and heavily dependent on context, making it difficult for learners to apply consistently. This supports the current study's observation that learners frequently omit necessary articles or use them incorrectly. Furthermore, the study of Uka et.al. (2023), found out that learners commit errors by substituting articles like "a" into "the" which often caused problem in the learners' sentences. Some of the learners in their study also misuse the articles "an", "a", and "the" when referring to nouns or other elements. Similarly, L. Yuliawati et al. (2020) also stated that the English article is one of the most difficult parts of English grammar for EFL/ESL learners.

**Incorrect Use of Punctuations.** This error results in the misuse of proper symbols in clarifying meaning, indicating pauses or emphasis as well as the relationship of ideas in writing. These misused punctuations include comma, period, dash and colon. The following are some of the sentences containing misuse of punctuations marks by the participants:

*"Because the English language is used any country" (S1)*

The sample above lacks the punctuation period (.) which is important and commonly used to mark the end of a sentence, indicating that a thought or idea has been fully expressed. A sentence must end with a punctuation mark such as a period.

*"As they say that first thing first;" (S17)*

A semicolon is generally used for joining two independent clauses, however, the sample is a dependent clause, it cannot stand alone, so a semicolon is unnecessary. A comma should be used instead to separate the idea. It should be, "As they say, first things first."

*"Why do, I need to listen?" (S17)*

The comma which is placed between the verb "do" and the subject "I" is incorrect because they must stay together to form the basic structure of the question. The sample is a question that does not require a pause in between, therefore a comma is unnecessary.

*"Examples: Interview questioning etc." (S18)*

A colon is typically used to introduce a list, explanation or elaboration. The use of a colon is not appropriate and unnecessary in this sentence. It would be better to say "Examples include interview questions, etc."

*"First why did you need to listen?" (S21)*

The introductory word "First" should be followed by a comma to separate it from the main part of the sentence which gives clarity to the meaning of what the writer wanted to convey. The comma will serve as a short pause signaling the reader through the structure of the sentence. In the sample, the learner didn't make use of a comma after the word "First", without a comma, the word "First" will be part of the question. The correct sentence should be: "First, why did you need to listen?"

Writings should have a proper punctuation mark to effectively communicate the meaning of it and to ensure that the writer's intended meaning is clear to the reader. The learners who committed errors in this category usually misplaced the punctuations or used incorrect punctuation. Such errors affect the readability of a certain piece of writing as it also affects the pause as well as its tone.

Consequently, the findings on the incorrect use of punctuation underscores its significant impact on the clarity, coherence and overall quality of a writing. Misuse of punctuation marks, including commas, period, colons and others, not only disrupts the natural flow and rhythm of sentences but also leads to confusion in meaning and

interpretation of ideas. As illustrated by the cited learner responses, even a single misplaced punctuation mark can alter the structure of a sentence. These errors reflect a deeper issue in foundational writing skills, emphasizing the need for targeted instruction in punctuation use. Therefore, addressing these issues through focused practice and explicit teaching strategies is essential in helping learners communicate effectively.

Finally, the findings of this study regarding the incorrect use of punctuation are supported by several previous works that highlight punctuation errors as a common difficulty among Esl and EFL learners. McCuen and Winkler (2000) states that punctuation errors occur with the omission or misuse of one of the punctuation marks such as slash, comma, apostrophe, period, exclamation point, colon, semicolon, question mark, dash and many more. Similarly, Apuhin et al. (2023) identified punctuation errors emerge as the most frequent mechanical mistakes made by learners, surpassing errors in spelling and capitalization. This supports the present study's observation that learners either omit necessary punctuation or insert it incorrectly, resulting in awkward phrasing and unclear communication. These related studies confirm that punctuation errors are not isolated incidents but are part of a broader pattern in second language writing, thus highlighting the need for more targeted instruction and feedback in this particular area.

**Incorrect agreement of the Subject and the Verb.** The subject-verb agreement means that the subject and the verb must appropriately match in grammatical number – a singular subject needs a singular verb, while a plural subject will need a plural verb. However, several participants exhibited difficulties with subject-verb agreement, leading to incorrect sentence constructions. These errors were seen in the following samples:

*“Like a stranger ask us speaking in English we can answer it fluently.” (S2)*

The subject “a stranger” is singular, so the verb should also be in its singular form which is “asks” for it to agree with the subject. This mistake commonly happens to learners and non-native speakers where they thought that since the singular subject has no -s the singular verb does not contain an -s also at the ending.

*“Learning and speaking English has a lot of benefits. .” (S9)*

According to the rule of English grammar, when two concepts are form joined by “and”, they form a plural subject, unless they refer to a single idea or unit. In the sentence above, “learning” and “speaking” are two separate but related skills, so they should be treated as a plural subject. Therefore, the verb “has” must be in its plural form which is “have” to match the plural subject. Hence, the sentence should be, “Learning and speaking English have a lot of benefits.”

*“Some individual even use the English language.” (S16)*

The sample above contains a subject-verb agreement error due to the use of the singular subject “individual” and a plural verb “use.” To attain its correct agreement, the sentence should be, “Some individuals even use the English language.”

*“This words is commonly used while someone is talking. .” (S23)*

The error in the sentence above lies on the mismatch between the word “This” which is singular, the word “words” which is a plural noun and the verb “is” which is a singular. The word “This” is a singular demonstrative used to point to one item or concept such as “this book”, “this town”, or “this idea.” However, in the sentence above, “This” is used to refer to “words” which is a plural word that does not refer to one or single item or concept. Also, the verb “is” should only be used with singular subject, such as he, book, word. But in the sentence, the subject is “words”, a plural noun. Therefore, the correct form of the verb should be “are”.

The sentence can be corrected in two ways. The first is, “This word is”, making the noun agree with the number of the pronoun and the verb. Second is, “These words are”, making the pronoun and the verb agree with the number of the noun.

These findings imply that the use of incorrect subject-verb agreement reveals how frequent this error happens especially among learners whose English is their second language, reflecting a fundamental gap in their understanding of English grammar. These mistakes, such as mismatches and confusion between singular and plural forms suggest that learners often rely on patterns from their native language, which may not align with the rules of English grammar. The examples presented highlight how such errors can lead to unclear or grammatically incorrect statements, ultimately affecting the clarity and professionalism of learners' writing. This issue is not isolated to Filipino learners but resonates with global trends as observed by researchers like Alrabah and Wu (2017), who noted similar challenges among English learners elsewhere. Addressing these challenges through focused grammar instruction and consistent practice is essential in developing learners' confidence and competence in writing English accurately. Moreover, subject-verb agreement is another typical problem in writings of the ESL learners in the Philippines as proven by the studies of Dolba (2023), Cuyos et. al (2024) & Esperanza et. al (2024). It is also a common error made by other EFL learners from various nations. (Huang, 2006; Wu & Garza, 2014; Tampubolon, 2020).

These results align with the findings of Alrabah and Wu (2017), who observed that subject-verb agreement errors were a persistent issue among English learners. Moreover, Norrish (1987) identified first language interference as a major factor contributing to errors, which is evident in learners' difficulties in internalizing English subject-verb agreement rules. These studies reinforce the need for more focused grammar instruction and consistent feedback to help learners internalize proper sentence structure and develop grammatical accuracy in English.

**Incorrect Word Order.** Several participants struggled with arranging words correctly, leading to awkward sentence constructions. Incorrect word order occurs when the words in a sentence are arranged in a way that does not follow the standard grammar rules, making the sentence awkward, confusing and incorrect. Some of the sentences that were written by the participants containing incorrect word order are seen below:

*“I would understand what would they say. .” (S18)*

The incorrect word order in the sentence is found in the embedded question part which is the “what would they say”. Usually, in a direct question, the subject comes after the verb. For example, “what would they say?” In this case, the question is indirect, and it is used within a sentence therefore the verb should come after the subject. The word order must follow statement order, not question order. The sentence should be, “I would understand what they would say.”

*“In short word only in english language we can talk understand every one. .” (S28)*

In a standard English sentence, the correct order follows the pattern: subject + auxiliary verb + main verb + object. This structure resembles question formation or formal emphasis but is not used properly in this context. Aside from that, the “word” between “short” and “only” is unnecessary in the sentence, thus it should be removed. The corrected version of the sentence goes like this, “In short, we can only understand everyone when we speak in the English language.

The use of incorrect word order in writing can affect how clearly ideas are conveyed and understood. One major effect is miscommunication. Another consequence is poor academic performance. Lastly, it may also affect one's ability to develop critical thinking.

Consequently, the findings of this study emphasize how incorrect word order significantly affects the clarity and effectiveness of learner writing, often resulting in confusion, misinterpretation, and weak communication. As shown in the examples, many learners struggle with the structure of indirect questions and the proper sequencing of sentence elements, which reflects deeper issues in their grasp of English grammar. These errors not only hinder the reader's understanding but also point to the learners' reliance on patterns from their native language or spoken habits, which do not always translate well into formal written English. The consequences of such mistakes extend

beyond grammatical accuracy, affecting learners' academic performance and limiting their ability to express their ideas critically and logically. This aligns with Garner's (2012) view that poor syntax disrupts the message. Clearly, consistent and focused instruction on word order is essential to help learners construct clearer, more coherent sentences and improve their overall language competence.

**Research Question 2:** What are the implications of the findings for English language teaching?

**Implications to English Language Instruction** - This study aimed to describe the common grammatical errors in the persuasive essays of the Grade 10 learners and determine the implications for English language instruction. The analysis revealed several significant grammatical errors, including incorrect word choice, incorrect use of prepositions, incorrect use of articles, incorrect use of punctuations, incorrect agreement of the subject and the verb and incorrect word order. One significant implication is that incorrect word choice affects not only the precision but also the credibility of the participants' written output. Many of the participants were observed using Tagalog terminologies, overly familiar words, or incorrect vocabulary, often due to limited vocabulary or over-reliance on direct translation. This tendency can obscure meaning, mislead the reader, or weaken the persuasive impact of their writing. This finding supports the study of Nuruzzaman et.al (2018), who reported that ESL learners frequently struggle with word choice and vocabulary accuracy due to limited knowledge and first language interference.

Also, the misuse of prepositions shows that the participants may have a surface-level understanding of how these function within a sentence. Their errors often led to awkward or confusing phrases, indicating that they may struggle with the nuances of English usage. Without intervention, this could result in mistakes. Similarly, research by Richards (2015) found that prepositions and articles are among the most difficult grammatical elements for second language learners because their usage varies greatly depending on context. There is also the misuse or omission of articles, which plays a crucial role in sentence accuracy and clarity. These small yet essential words are often overlooked, but their improper use suggests that learners may not fully grasp the rules. In addition, punctuation errors, particularly commas, periods, and colons, reflect the weaknesses in the organization of sentences. These mistakes disrupt the flow of ideas and make it harder for readers to follow the intended meaning. This is concerning because punctuation also influences structure and clarity of a writing. Moreover, several learners demonstrated a lack of understanding in Subject-Verb agreement, often mismatching singular and plural forms of verbs. These errors reveal gaps in grammatical knowledge and reflect possible first language interference, where English rules conflict with the learner's native linguistic patterns. Persistent issues in this area can hinder the development of accurate and fluent written expression, underscoring the importance of exercises that reinforce grammatical agreement in varied sentence structures.

Lastly, incorrect word order was also found to be a recurring issue. These errors often involved incorrect arrangement or order of verbs and subjects, leading to awkward or confusing constructions. Such mistakes impair the standard sequencing of ideas and diminish the effectiveness of writing. One factor that contributes to this error is the influence of their mother tongue where learners directly translate words into the second language. This highlights the need for instruction that develops learners' awareness and ability to organize their writing for clarity and coherence. This observation aligns with the principles of EA by Corder, which emphasized that recurring grammatical errors reveal learners' developmental stages in acquiring a second language.

In summary, the findings suggest that the participants are still developing their grammatical proficiency and need more support in learning the conventions of writing in English. More importantly, this highlights the need for repetitive guided practice through writing tasks that reinforce grammar. Teachers should also incorporate grammar instruction into writing activities, using real examples from learners' texts to build awareness and encourage self-correction.

**Practical Implications** - Describing the common grammatical errors in the persuasive essays of Grade 10 learners has important practical implications for both grammar teaching and assessment in education. Grammar analysis provides clear basis on developing instructional materials, development of teachers and creation of

targeted interventions. This study contributes to a clearer picture of how grammatical competence supports not just in persuasive writing of the learners but writing ability in general, ultimately aiming to enhance learners' academic writing skills and communication effectiveness. Teachers should conduct targeted grammar instruction which enables them to design targeted lessons and exercises focusing on the grammar weaknesses of the learners. There is no best strategy, therefore, teachers can use a variety of approaches in teaching grammar to the learners to appropriately address the vast learning needs of the learners.

Additionally, rather than teaching grammar in isolation, teachers can integrate grammar lessons within any writing activity, allowing learners to apply grammatical rules in authentic communicative context. Lastly, teachers are encouraged to participate in more continuous professional development programs such as trainings and seminars that could help them identify, analyze and address grammatical errors more effectively using modern, communicative, and learner-centered approaches.

**Theoretical Implications** - First, the prominence of Tagalog intrusions, direct translations and Filipino-based syntactic patterns in the writing confirms the claim by Charles Fries in his Contrastive analysis (CA) theory (Fries, 1945) which states that errors and difficulty in grammar occur due to the differences between the first language (L1) and the target language (L2). Many of the errors such as the misuse and omission of articles, misuse of prepositions and the incorrect word order reflect the Filipino grammar which do not align with the English grammar. Filipino grammar often uses a verb-subject-object (VSO) syntactic pattern, whereas English grammar commonly follows the subject-verb-object (SVO) pattern (Raymunde, 2023). Additionally, the insertion of Tagalog terms by the learners such as *lahi* suggest that negative transfer is a significant factor influencing learners' writing. This difference brings challenge especially to Filipino native speakers.

At the same time, the identified errors also embody the characteristics of Interlanguage theory coined by Selinker in 1997. The errors such as misuse of articles, use of incorrect and the use of mixed application of English grammatical rules point to an evolving interlanguage. These patterns support the idea that learners construct a transitional system that does not wholly reflect either their first language (L1) or the target language. Furthermore, the results also align with Stephen Pit Corder's error analysis theory (1967). This theory views learner errors as systematic indicators of learning rather than simple lapses. The recurrence of similar errors among the learners, such as articles, prepositions, subject-verb agreement, word-order and punctuation, proves that these are developmental rather than mistake or accidental mistakes suggesting the learners' current linguistic competence. The errors offer insight into the stage of the learners' linguistic competence and highlight areas where instructional and grammar intervention is highly needed. In conclusion, the findings suggest that learners' grammatical errors are shaped by a combination of different factors

**Policy Implications** - The findings of this study have several important implications for school policies and instructional practices in English language teaching. The consistent errors observed in word choice, prepositions, articles, punctuations, word order, and subject-verb agreement show that many Grade 10 learners continue to struggle with fundamental grammatical skills that directly affect the clarity and coherence of their writing. This suggests that although there are national frameworks such as the K-12 Curriculum, the Bilingual Education Policy (BEP), the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) and the Department of Education's literacy initiatives that aims to develop learner's communicative and grammatical competence of the learners, the results of this study still show gaps between the intentions of these and policies and the actual learning outcomes inside the classroom.

The K to 12 English Curriculum for instance is a program that emphasizes in providing better quality of education through the development of grammatical accuracy and writing proficiency based on the Spiral Progression Approach starting with simple topics moving toward increasing complexity in order for learners to gain mastery of concepts and skills, posing an expectation that the graduates of the K+12 program are therefore envisioned as better prepared to compete globally for employment opportunities (Abgaran, et al.) . However, the recurring errors in articles, prepositions, subject-verb agreement, punctuation, word choice and word order indicate

that the participants have not fully achieved the expected mastery. This suggests a need to reassess how grammar instruction is being implemented in the curriculum as well as strengthening grammar-focused lessons ensuring that grammar objectives are aligned with writing tasks across all quarters and grade level.

Additionally, the Bilingual Education Policy (BEP) introduced to balance English and Filipino promoting bilingualism among learners using English as the primary medium of instruction in Science, Mathematics and English does not show much of an improvement among the learners as revealed through this study. The persistent errors in the word choice and use of Filipino words seen in the persuasive essays of the participants show insufficient mastery of English grammar which does not align with the BEP's intention that is to, develop communicative competency in both Filipino and English. These findings demonstrate that while the BEP provides a clear framework for bilingual competency, actual classroom outcomes show uneven English language development, suggesting a need for stronger, more consistent grammar instruction especially in higher grades levels. Moreover, the observed presence of Filipino-influences syntax, direct translations and insertion of Tagalog terminologies in the persuasive essays of the participants indicates challenges in the transition from MTB-MLE to English especially in higher grades. While MTB-MLE strengthens early literacy, the findings in this study suggest that the bridging process to English in higher grade levels may not be adequately supported. These results indicate a call for gradual increase in English exposure and applying interventions for learners who continue to rely heavily on their first language structures.

#### ***Research Simulacrum***

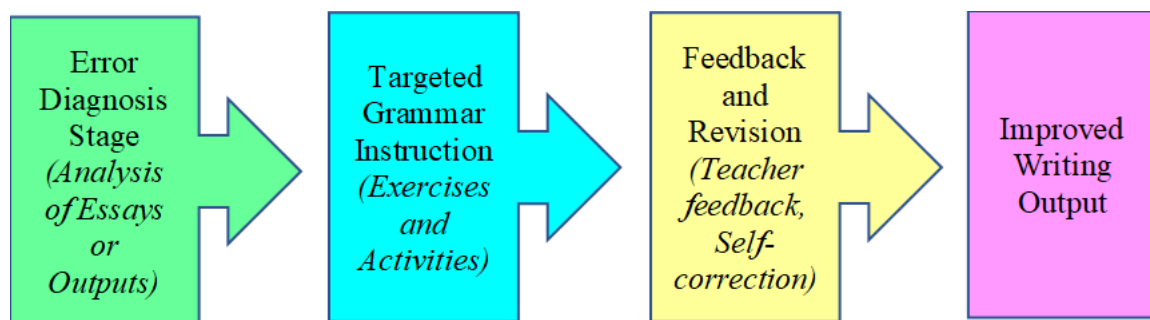


Figure 1. Research Simulacrum

Figure 1 illustrates the research simulacrum of the study, presenting a research simulacrum model for improving learners' writing through grammar-focused intervention. It illustrates a four-stage instructional process that begins with diagnosing learners' grammatical difficulties and ends with improved writing performance.

#### **4. Conclusions**

The results of the analysis of the persuasive essays of the Grade 10 learners revealed several recurring grammatical errors, particularly in incorrect word choice, incorrect use of prepositions, incorrect use of articles, incorrect use of punctuations, incorrect agreement of the subject and the verb and incorrect word order. These errors indicate that many learners still encounter difficulties in applying the fundamental rules of English grammar when expressing their ideas in written format. Furthermore, the findings suggest that these grammatical difficulties may be attributed to factors such as limited vocabulary knowledge, insufficient mastery of grammatical rules, and the influence of the learners' first language. As a result, some sentences produced by the learners became unclear, awkward, or grammatically inaccurate which affected the overall clarity and effectiveness of their persuasive essays.

The results of the study also emphasized the importance of error analysis as a tool for understanding the language development of learners. The recurring patterns of errors observed in the essays indicate that grammatical errors are not merely accidental mistakes but reflect the learners' current stage of language learning and their

developing understanding of the English language. In conclusion, the findings of the study highlighted the need for more focused grammar instruction, continuous writing practice, and targeted instructional interventions to address the grammatical difficulties encountered by the learners. By identifying and understanding the common grammatical errors committed by the learners, teachers can develop more effective teaching strategies that support the improvement of learners' writing skills and enhance their overall proficiency in the English language.

### ***Recommendations***

1. Integrate writing and grammar not just in English or Filipino subjects but across all learning areas, may it be in Mathematics, Science or even in Values Education subject. This does not only encourage the learners to write effectively but it also gives all the teachers a view of the language and grammar competence of the learners prompting them to create strategies that will aid the learners use English appropriately.

2. Enhance writing practice through guided feedback. Many learners struggle with redundancy, wordiness, and improper sentence structure, highlighting the need for continuous writing practice. Participant 17 emphasized, "Imagine again you tried to post photos in your social media but you don't know what to say in the caption for your photo imagine putting caption in wrong spelling and in a wrong grammar and many people reading and laughing at it because of your worst English language." Providing learners with step-by-step writing tasks and constructive feedback will help refine their expression. Castillo-Martínez and Ramírez-Montoya (2020) emphasized that structured writing instruction, including planning, drafting, and revising, significantly improves writing organization and coherence.

3. Finally, although there are existing trainings, seminars and learning action cells (LAC) sessions, schools may still adopt policies encouraging teachers to attend in-service trainings that focused only on grammar instruction and writing pedagogy. The study's findings show that learners continue to commit errors that should have been addressed earlier through spiral progression and the other policies. By strengthening teachers' skills in diagnosing and addressing learners' grammatical errors, instruction can become more aligned with the curriculum's goals.

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