Grammatical Competence in Writing Academic Texts Among Grade 10 Students in a Private School

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ABSTRACT

Grammatical competence is an important component of academic writing because it enables students to communicate ideas clearly, organize sentences logically, and convey intended meanings. However, students may experience difficulties in using appropriate word forms, constructing sentences, and expressing ideas coherently. This study examined the grammatical competence of Grade 10 students in a private school in Pangasinan, Philippines, focusing on morphology, syntax, and semantics. It also identified common grammatical errors in students' written outputs and explored teachers' perceptions of the difficulties students experience in academic writing.

The study employed a descriptive approach involving 25 purposively selected Grade 10 students from a population of 46 during School Year 2024–2025. Students' written outputs were evaluated using a grammatical competence rubric, while teacher discussion notes provided supplementary qualitative information. The reported mean scores were 3.61 for morphology, 3.77 for syntax, and 3.75 for semantics, resulting in an overall mean of 3.71, interpreted as High based on the study's rating scale. The error inventory recorded 156 instances across ten identified categories. Incorrect sentence construction and structure accounted for the largest number of recorded errors, with 28 instances, followed by incorrect use of affixes, with 24 instances, and ambiguous expression of ideas, with 20 instances.

Teacher discussion notes identified concerns involving word formation, verb usage, sentence organization, connectives, and punctuation. Teachers also perceived informal language use, limited reading, and insufficient writing practice as possible influences on students' writing difficulties. These perceptions were not independently tested as causal factors. The findings provide a basis for proposing TUKLAS, a learning activity material designed to support grammar instruction and academic writing development. Further validation and evaluation are necessary before its effectiveness can be established.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Academic writing is an essential skill in secondary education because students are expected to express ideas, explain concepts, present arguments, and demonstrate learning through written outputs. Effective academic writing requires more than the presentation of relevant information. It also involves the appropriate use of grammatical structures, accurate word formation, logical sentence construction, and clear expression of meaning.

Grammatical competence contributes to the clarity and organization of written communication. Morphology concerns the structure and formation of words, including the appropriate use of affixes and other word-forming elements. Syntax concerns the arrangement of words and phrases into grammatically and logically organized sentences. Semantics concerns meaning and the ways language choices communicate intended ideas. Difficulties in these areas may affect the comprehensibility, accuracy, and coherence of students' academic texts.

In the classroom, students may communicate their ideas successfully in conversation but experience difficulty expressing those ideas in formal written language. Errors involving affixes, verb forms, sentence construction, connectives, and word choice may affect the precision and flow of their writing. Ambiguous expressions and weak connections between ideas may also make a written text difficult to understand.

Examining students' actual written outputs can help identify recurring difficulties and establish a more specific basis for instructional support. Rather than relying only on general impressions of students' writing ability, teachers can examine the grammatical features of written texts and determine which areas require further instruction and practice.

At NLAC Academy in Artacho, Sison, Pangasinan, the present study examined the grammatical competence of selected Grade 10 students. It focused on morphology, syntax, and semantics and documented grammatical errors identified in their written outputs. Teacher discussion notes were also considered to provide additional context regarding the writing difficulties observed in the classroom.

The findings were used as a basis for proposing TUKLAS, or Tulong Upang Kaalaman ay Lumago, Aasenso at Sisibol, a learning activity material intended to provide structured exercises in word formation, sentence construction, meaning development, and integrated academic writing.

Statement of the Problem

This study examined the grammatical competence of Grade 10 students in writing academic texts at a private school. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

What is the level of students' grammatical competence in terms of:

- morphology;
- syntax; and
- semantics?

1. What grammatical errors are identified in the students' written outputs, and how frequently does each category occur?
2. What writing difficulties and possible contributing influences are described in the available teacher discussion notes?
3. What instructional material may be proposed based on the identified grammatical difficulties?

Objectives of the Study

The study aimed to:

1. describe students' grammatical competence in morphology, syntax, and semantics;
2. identify and summarize the frequency of grammatical errors recorded in students' written outputs;
3. describe teachers' observations and perceptions of students' academic writing difficulties; and
4. propose a learning activity material responsive to the identified areas of difficulty.

Significance of the Study

Students. The findings may help students recognize recurring grammatical difficulties and develop greater awareness of word formation, sentence construction, and clarity of meaning.

Filipino and language teachers. The results may provide a basis for planning targeted grammar instruction, guided writing exercises, revision activities, and formative assessment.

School administrators. The findings may inform instructional planning and the development of supplementary learning materials that address students documented learning needs.

Learning material developers. The identified error categories may serve as a reference when preparing exercises that focus on particular grammatical skills.

Future researchers. The study may provide a starting point for further investigations involving larger samples, more clearly defined writing corpora, validated scoring procedures, and evaluations of instructional interventions.

Scope and Delimitations

The study focused on the grammatical competence of 25 purposively selected Grade 10 students from a population of 46 at NLAC Academy during School Year 2024–2025. The analysis covered morphology, syntax, and semantics. It also examined ten categories of grammatical errors reported in the study's error inventory and considered supplementary information from teacher discussion notes.

The findings are limited to the selected participants and the written outputs available for analysis. Because the participants were purposively selected from one private school, the results should not be generalized to all Grade 10 students or other school settings without further evidence.

The study's conclusions also depend on the completeness of the writing samples, the consistency of the scoring process, and the reliability of the error-classification procedure. The available documentation does not establish the exact number and length of texts contributed by each student, the complete scoring arrangements among raters, or an independently measured relationship between the proposed contributing influences and students' grammatical performance.

Definition of Terms

For clarity, the following terms are used operationally in this study.

Academic writing. Written schoolwork intended to communicate information, ideas, explanations, or reflections in an organized and appropriate manner.

Grammatical competence. The ability demonstrated in written outputs to use grammatical forms and structures in ways that support accurate and understandable communication.

Morphology. The area of language concerned with word structure and formation, including the appropriate use of affixes and word forms.

Syntax. The organization of words, phrases, and clauses into sentences that are grammatically and logically structured.

Semantics. The aspect of language concerned with meaning and the clarity with which written expressions communicate ideas.

Grammatical errors. Instances in students' written outputs classified under the error categories used in the study. Classification depends on the definitions and procedures applied by the evaluators.

TUKLAS. An acronym for Tulong Upang Kaalaman ay Lumago, Aasenso at Sisibol, referring to the proposed learning activity material intended to support students' grammatical competence and academic writing.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive research design to examine the grammatical competence of Grade 10 students in writing academic texts. It focused on three dimensions of grammatical competence: morphology,

syntax, and semantics. Quantitative data were used to describe the students' grammatical competence ratings and the frequency and distribution of grammatical errors identified in their written outputs.

Supplementary qualitative information was drawn from teacher discussion notes concerning students' writing difficulties and possible instructional responses. These notes provided contextual information for interpreting the quantitative findings and identifying potential instructional needs. The qualitative information was treated as supplementary evidence rather than as a separately validated qualitative analysis because the available documentation did not establish a complete transcription and coding procedure.

Research Locale

The study was conducted at NLAC Academy in Artacho, Sison, Pangasinan, Philippines, during School Year 2024–2025. The school served as the research setting for examining the grammatical competence of selected Grade 10 students through their academic writing.

Participants and Sampling Procedure

The study involved 25 purposively selected Grade 10 students from a population of 46 students. Purposive sampling was used to select participants relevant to the investigation of grammatical competence in academic writing. The participants represented the student group examined in the study. Since the selection was nonrandom and limited to one private school, the findings describe the selected participants and should not be generalized to all Grade 10 students without further research.

The available documentation identifies the number of participants and the sampling approach but does not sufficiently establish all the specific inclusion criteria used in selecting the students. Accordingly, no additional selection criteria are claimed in this manuscript.

Research Instruments

Grammatical Competence Rating Rubric

A grammatical competence rating rubric was used to assess students' writing in three areas: morphology, syntax, and semantics. The original instrument employed a five-point scale, with each score corresponding to a qualitative description of grammatical performance.

The rating scale and its interpretation ranges were as follows:

Score range	Interpretation
4.21–5.00	Very High
3.41–4.20	High
2.61–3.40	Moderate
1.81–2.60	Needs Improvement
1.00–1.80	Requires Assistance

The rubric assessed the following dimensions:

Morphology. This dimension examined the accuracy and appropriateness of word forms, including the use of affixes and other word-forming elements. The highest rating represented accurate and well-developed word forms, while the lowest represented inaccurate or unintelligible forms.

Syntax. This dimension examined sentence construction, organization, and logical arrangement. The highest rating represented logically organized sentences, while the lowest represented confusing or incomprehensible sentence structures.

Semantics. This dimension examined the clarity and comprehensibility of meaning. The highest rating represented clear and well-developed meaning, while the lowest represented writing in which the intended meaning was not understandable.

Score	Morphology	Syntax	Semantics
5 – Very High	Word forms are accurate and appropriately developed.	Sentences are logical and well organized.	Meaning is clear and well developed.
4 – High	Few word-form errors occur, and meaning remains clear.	Most sentences are well structured.	Most statements communicate clear meaning.
3 – Moderate	Some limitations in word formation are evident.	Some sentences are awkward or repetitive.	Some portions of the text are unclear.
2 – Needs Improvement	Numerous inaccurate word forms make some expressions unclear.	Many sentences are illogical or incomplete.	Many portions of the text are unclear.
1 – Requires Assistance	Word forms are inaccurate or unintelligible.	Sentence structures are confusing or incomprehensible.	The overall text is not understandable.

Grammatical Error Classification Inventory

An error classification inventory was used to organize the grammatical errors recorded in the students' written outputs. The original inventory contained ten categories grouped under morphology, syntax, and semantics. The frequency of each category was summarized to identify the most frequently recorded error types.

The categories included incorrect sentence construction and structure, incorrect use of affixes, ambiguous expression of ideas, inappropriate code-switching, incorrect use of connectives, repetition of words or ideas, incorrect verb use, insufficient cohesion or coherence, inappropriate word choice, and incorrect phrase and clause construction.

For consistent interpretation, the categories should be applied using explicit linguistic criteria. An instance classified as a sentence-structure error, for example, should involve a problem with the arrangement or construction of a sentence rather than merely an unclear idea. Errors involving affixes and verb forms should be distinguished according to the specific word-form issue observed. Errors involving cohesion, repetition, and ambiguous meaning should be classified according to the primary problem demonstrated in the written text.

Some categories may overlap. Therefore, the final interpretation should follow the actual classification procedure used in the study and should not imply that independent categories were established unless the original scoring records support that conclusion.

Code-switching also requires careful interpretation. The presence of English words or expressions in a Filipino text does not, by itself, establish a grammatical error. Such instances should be considered errors only when they violate the stated requirements of the writing task or the operational criteria used by the researcher.

Teacher Discussion Notes

Supplementary qualitative information was obtained from teacher discussion notes dated February 28, 2025. The available records identify two teacher participants and the researcher in connection with the discussion.

The notes documented teachers' observations concerning students' use of affixes and verbs, sentence organization, connectives, and punctuation. They also included teachers' perceptions of informal language use, social media language, limited reading and writing practice, and possible classroom interventions.

The available records do not establish the existence of a complete interview guide, verbatim transcripts, a detailed coding framework, or an independent coding audit. Consequently, the teacher discussion findings are presented as documented observations and perceptions. They are not treated as the results of a fully reproducible thematic analysis.

Writing Corpus and Data Collection

The study examined students' written outputs to describe grammatical competence and identify recurring grammatical errors. The original manuscript refers to academic writing activities, including essays and reaction papers. However, the available documentation does not sufficiently establish the exact number of texts collected, the number of texts contributed by each student, the prompts used, the word-count range, the collection dates for individual writing tasks, or the criteria used to include texts in the analysis. These details are necessary for replicating the study and interpreting the error frequencies. The number and length of written outputs may influence the number of errors identified. Accordingly, the final manuscript should specify the actual writing corpus using the original collection records. If some details cannot be recovered, this limitation should be acknowledged rather than addressed through estimated or invented figures.

The documented research materials included the grammatical competence rubric, the error classification inventory, and teacher discussion notes. The data collection account in this manuscript is limited to these documented materials; additional procedural details are not claimed without supporting records.

Data Analysis

Analysis of Grammatical Competence

The students' grammatical competence was summarized using mean ratings for morphology, syntax, and semantics. The reported results were as follows:

Dimension	**Mean**	**Interpretation**
Morphology	3.61	High
Syntax	3.77	High
Semantics	3.75	High
Overall grammatical competence	**3.71**	**High**

The interpretations were based on the five-point rubric and its corresponding score ranges. The overall mean of 3.71 falls within the High range of 3.41–4.20.

Analysis of Grammatical Error Frequencies and Percentages

The grammatical error inventory was analyzed using frequency counts and percentages. The percentage for each error category was computed by dividing its recorded frequency by the total number of recorded errors

(156) and multiplying the result by 100. Percentages were rounded to two decimal places, and categories were ranked according to their recorded frequencies, from highest to lowest.

The formula used was:

$$
\text{Percentage}=\frac{\text{Frequency of a category}}{\text{Total recorded errors}}\times100
$$

The analysis covered ten grammatical error categories with a total of 156 recorded errors. The resulting frequencies and percentages describe the distribution of errors in the analyzed material; they do not indicate the proportion of students who committed each type of error.

Analysis of Teacher Discussion Notes

The teacher discussion notes were reviewed to identify observations concerning students' grammatical difficulties and possible instructional responses. The documented concerns included word formation, verb use, sentence organization, connectives, and punctuation. Suggested instructional strategies included writing activities, grammar exercises, peer editing, contextualized learning materials, and teacher feedback.

The notes were used to contextualize the quantitative findings and identify possible instructional responses. Because the available documentation does not establish a systematic qualitative coding procedure, the findings are presented as teacher observations and perceptions rather than as themes derived from a fully documented qualitative analysis.

The manuscript distinguishes between grammatical errors recorded in students' written outputs and possible influences suggested by the teachers. Informal language use, limited reading, and insufficient writing practice were identified as perceived influences but were not independently measured in the study. Accordingly, these factors are not presented as demonstrated causes of students' grammatical performance.

Rater Agreement and Scoring Reliability

Three raters independently evaluated the same 25 student writing samples using the study's grammatical competence rubric. Their ratings were recorded in the original scoring tables as "Score 1," "Score 2," and "Score 3." The ratings served as the basis for the computation of the reported mean scores and descriptive interpretations of students' grammatical competence in morphology, syntax, and semantics. Although the scoring procedure involved three raters, no numerical inter-rater agreement statistic was calculated as part of the original data analysis. Accordingly, the study reports the descriptive results derived from the ratings but does not claim a statistically established level of inter-rater agreement or scoring reliability. This limitation is acknowledged when interpreting the findings. Future studies may strengthen scoring reliability by incorporating a suitable agreement statistic, documenting rater calibration procedures, and specifying how discrepancies in ratings are addressed.

Ethical Considerations

Participation in the study was voluntary. Parental or guardian consent was obtained for participating students who were minors, and student assent was also obtained. The researcher maintained the confidentiality of participants and took steps to protect their identities throughout the presentation of the findings.

Permission to conduct the study was granted by the school. Students' written outputs and research data were handled with due consideration for confidentiality. Excerpts included in the manuscript were presented without students' names or other identifying information to protect their identities.

Any formal research ethics review or approval is reported only if applicable and supported by the actual records.

Methodological Limitations

Several methodological limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the study involved 25 purposively selected Grade 10 students from one private school. Therefore, the findings describe the selected participants and should not be generalized automatically to other student populations or educational settings.

Second, the available documentation does not fully specify the composition of the writing corpus, including the number of texts analyzed, text lengths, writing prompts, and selection procedures. These details are important for assessing the basis and comparability of the reported grammatical error frequencies.

Third, the scoring arrangement represented by the three columns labeled “Score 1,” “Score 2,” and “Score 3” requires clarification. Without establishing what these columns represent, the number of raters and the appropriate measure of scoring agreement cannot be determined from the available records.

Fourth, some grammatical error categories may overlap unless their operational definitions and classification rules are clearly specified and applied consistently. This may affect the consistency of error classification and the interpretation of category frequencies.

Fifth, the teacher discussion notes provide contextual observations about students’ writing difficulties and possible contributing influences. However, these observations do not independently establish the causes of students’ grammatical difficulties.

These limitations define the scope of the conclusions that can reasonably be drawn from the study. The findings are best interpreted as a descriptive account of the grammatical competence ratings and recorded error patterns of the selected students, supplemented by teachers’ observations and suggested instructional responses.

Further research with more comprehensive documentation and clearly defined scoring and classification procedures would strengthen the reliability and broader applicability of the findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings on the grammatical competence of the selected Grade 10 students in morphology, syntax, and semantics. It also reports the frequency and distribution of recorded grammatical errors and discusses the observations documented in the teacher discussion notes. The results are interpreted in relation to the study’s objectives and are used as a basis for proposing instructional support through the TUKLAS learning activity material.

Level of Students’ Grammatical Competence

The study examined students’ grammatical competence in three dimensions: morphology, syntax, and semantics. The reported mean ratings are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Mean Ratings of Students’ Grammatical Competence

Dimension	**Mean**	**Descriptive interpretation**
Morphology	3.61	High
Syntax	3.77	High
Semantics	3.75	High
Overall grammatical competence	**3.71**	**High**

Note. Interpretations follow the original five-point rubric: 4.21–5.00 = Very High; 3.41–4.20 = High; 2.61–3.40 = Moderate; 1.81–2.60 = Needs Improvement; and 1.00–1.80 = Requires Assistance.

As shown in Table 1, the overall mean of 3.71 falls within the High category. This finding corrects the inconsistent descriptions in the earlier manuscript that characterized the students' overall grammatical competence as Moderate. Based on the study's stated rating scale, the appropriate interpretation is High.

Among the three dimensions, syntax obtained the highest mean of 3.77, followed by semantics at 3.75 and morphology at 3.61. Although all three dimensions were interpreted as High, morphology had the lowest mean among them. This indicates that, within the study's scoring framework, word formation and the use of appropriate word forms may warrant particular instructional attention.

The relatively high mean for syntax suggests that students generally received favorable ratings for sentence construction and organization. However, the mean does not establish that every student constructed sentences accurately or that sentence-level difficulties were absent. Likewise, the semantics mean indicates a generally favorable rating of meaning and clarity, but it does not rule out individual instances of ambiguous expression or weak coherence.

The results therefore show an overall High level of rated grammatical competence alongside identifiable areas for further development. The findings should not be interpreted as evidence that students no longer need grammar instruction. Instead, they provide a basis for targeted practice in the dimensions where specific errors were recorded.

Distribution of Students Across Grammatical Competence Categories

The original results also classified students according to the descriptive levels of grammatical competence in each dimension. The reported distribution is summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of Students by Grammatical Competence Category

Competence category	Morphology, n (%)	Syntax, n (%)	Semantics, n (%)
Very High	8 (32%)	9 (36%)	7 (28%)
High	6 (24%)	7 (28%)	9 (36%)
Moderate	8 (32%)	8 (32%)	8 (32%)
Needs Improvement	3 (12%)	1 (4%)	1 (4%)
Requires Assistance	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Total	**25 (100%)**	**25 (100%)**	**25 (100%)**

Note. Percentages are based on the 25 participants and are reproduced from the reported category counts.

For morphology, eight students (32%) were classified as Very High, six (24%) as High, eight (32%) as Moderate, and three (12%) as Needs Improvement. This distribution shows variation in students' ratings of word formation and word-form accuracy. Although a proportion of the students received high ratings, the number classified as Moderate or Needs Improvement suggests that additional opportunities to practice affixation and appropriate word forms may be useful.

For syntax, nine students (36%) were classified as Very High, seven (28%) as High, eight (32%) as Moderate, and one (4%) as Needs Improvement. This distribution is consistent with syntax having the highest dimension mean. Nevertheless, the recorded sentence-construction errors discussed in the next section show that a high overall rating does not mean that sentence-level problems were absent from the writing samples.

For semantics, nine students (36%) were classified as High, seven (28%) as Very High, eight (32%) as Moderate, and one (4%) as Needs Improvement. This distribution indicates that most students were classified within the High or Very High categories, while some remained in the Moderate category.

No students were reported in the Requires Assistance category in any of the three dimensions. These classifications should be interpreted as results of the study's rubric rather than as evidence that every participant demonstrated consistent grammatical competence across all writing tasks.

Frequency and Distribution of Grammatical Errors

The study's error inventory recorded 156 grammatical error instances across ten categories. Table 3 presents the original category labels, their classification by linguistic dimension, the recorded frequencies, recalculated percentages, and ranks.

Table 3. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Recorded Grammatical Errors

Rank	Error category	Dimension	Frequency	Percentage
1	Incorrect sentence construction and structure	Syntax	28	17.95%
2	Incorrect use of affixes	Morphology	24	15.38%
3	Ambiguous expression of ideas	Semantics	20	12.82%
4	Inappropriate code-switching	Semantics*	17	10.90%
5	Incorrect use of connectives	Syntax	15	9.62%
6	Repetition of words or ideas	Semantics	13	8.33%
7	Incorrect verb use	Morphology	12	7.69%
8	Insufficient cohesion or coherence	Syntax*	10	6.41%
9	Inappropriate word choice	Semantics	9	5.77%
10	Incorrect phrase and clause construction	Syntax	8	5.13%
	Total		**156**	**100.00%**

Note. Percentages were recalculated as category frequency divided by 156 and multiplied by 100, then rounded to two decimal places. The dimension assignments marked with an asterisk follow the original inventory and should be checked against the operational definitions used in the study.

The most frequently recorded category was incorrect sentence construction and structure, with 28 instances (17.95%). Incorrect use of affixes ranked second, with 24 instances (15.38%), followed by ambiguous expression of ideas, with 20 instances (12.82%). Together, these three categories accounted for 72 of the 156 recorded errors, or 46.15%.

The five most frequent categories accounted for 104 errors (66.67%) of the total. This concentration suggests that instructional activities could initially prioritize sentence construction, word formation, clarity of expression, appropriate language choices, and the use of connectives. However, the distribution reflects the recorded errors in the analyzed material; it does not establish the prevalence of these errors among all Grade 10 students.

Incorrect Sentence Construction and Structure

Incorrect sentence construction and structure was the most frequently recorded error category, with 28 instances (17.95%). This category concerns difficulties in arranging words and sentence elements to communicate a complete and logically organized idea.

Sentence-level problems may affect readability when ideas are placed in an unclear order, sentence elements are incomplete, or clauses are connected in ways that obscure the intended meaning. The examples documented in the original materials should be examined using the study's scoring criteria to determine whether each instance reflects a structural error rather than a problem primarily involving meaning or cohesion.

The frequency of this category supports the inclusion of sentence-building, sentence-reordering, and guided revision exercises in the proposed instructional material. Students can be asked to revise unclear sentences, identify their essential components, and combine related ideas into coherent statements.

Incorrect Use of Affixes

Incorrect use of affixes ranked second, with 24 instances (15.38%). This category concerns the inappropriate addition, omission, or selection of affixes in word formation.

Examples documented in the source materials include forms such as "nag papasalamat," "pag kakaibigan," and "nakapag tapos." These examples may involve the separation of affixes from their bases or other word-formation and orthographic issues. The final classification should distinguish morphological errors from spacing and spelling errors according to the original coding rules.

The frequency of this category indicates that word formation is an important area for instructional attention. Activities involving affix identification, word-family construction, sentence completion, and revision of incorrectly formed words may provide opportunities for students to apply word-formation rules in context.

Ambiguous Expression of Ideas

Ambiguous expression of ideas accounted for 20 instances (12.82%). This category concerns written expressions in which the intended meaning is unclear, imprecise, or open to more than one interpretation.

Ambiguity may arise when relationships between ideas are not clearly expressed, when a reference is uncertain, or when a sentence does not communicate the writer's intended message. For example, the source materials include a statement about being happy because of graduation and the family's pride. Such examples need to be assessed in their full textual context before a specific error can be assigned. The findings support the use of meaning-focused revision activities. Students can identify unclear expressions, explain what they intend to communicate, and revise their statements to make the relationships between ideas more explicit.

Inappropriate Code-Switching

The inventory recorded 17 instances (10.90%) under inappropriate code-switching. The source materials include English expressions such as "goodluck," "thankyou," and "well u can say."

The presence of English words or phrases in a Filipino text is not inherently a grammatical error. Filipino speakers may code-switch for communicative, rhetorical, or contextual reasons. Therefore, a code-switching instance should be classified as inappropriate only when it conflicts with the requirements of the writing task or a clearly stated language-use criterion.

The category should be retained as part of the original results while its definition is clarified. If the original classification criteria did not distinguish purposeful code-switching from inappropriate usage, this should be acknowledged as a limitation in interpreting the category.

Incorrect Use of Connectives

Incorrect use of connectives accounted for 15 instances (9.62%). Connectives help communicate relationships such as cause and effect, contrast, addition, and sequence. Inappropriate use or omission of these expressions may make relationships between ideas difficult to follow.

This category supports instructional activities in which students select suitable connectives, combine related sentences, and explain the logical relationship between clauses. Such activities should emphasize meaning and coherence rather than the mechanical insertion of linking words.

Repetition of Words or Ideas

The inventory recorded 13 instances (8.33%) of repetition of words or ideas. Repetition may affect clarity and conciseness when the same information is unnecessarily restated. However, repetition is not always erroneous; it may be used intentionally for emphasis or rhetorical effect.

The classification should therefore distinguish unnecessary repetition from purposeful repetition. Revision exercises can help students identify redundant expressions, use appropriate references or synonyms where suitable, and maintain the intended meaning of their writing.

Incorrect Verb Use

Incorrect verb use accounted for 12 instances (7.69%). This category concerns inappropriate verb forms or uses that affect the grammatical accuracy of a statement.

The examples should be evaluated in their linguistic context to identify the particular verb-related issue, such as an inappropriate form or an inconsistency in the expression of an action. The available summary does not provide sufficient detail to assign a more specific subtype to every recorded instance.

Instructional activities may include contextualized verb exercises, sentence revision, and short writing tasks that require students to apply appropriate verb forms in meaningful contexts.

Insufficient Cohesion or Coherence

Insufficient cohesion or coherence accounted for 10 instances (6.41%). Cohesion concerns the linguistic connections between parts of a text, while coherence concerns the logical relationship and overall organization of its ideas.

A text may contain grammatically acceptable sentences yet remain difficult to follow if the ideas are poorly connected or arranged. Conversely, a single sentence may be structurally incorrect without necessarily demonstrating a broader coherence problem. These distinctions should guide the classification of this category and help prevent overlap with sentence construction and connective errors.

Instructional activities may include paragraph sequencing, identification of relationships between ideas, and revision of short texts to improve logical flow.

Inappropriate Word Choice

Inappropriate word choice accounted for nine instances (5.77%). This category concerns the selection of words that do not convey the intended meaning accurately or suit the context of the text.

The classification should distinguish word-choice problems from morphological errors and general semantic ambiguity. A word may be grammatically formed but still be inappropriate for the intended meaning or context.

Vocabulary development, contextual word-selection exercises, and guided editing may help students evaluate whether the words they use communicate their ideas precisely.

Incorrect Phrase and Clause Construction

Incorrect phrase and clause construction accounted for eight instances (5.13%), making it the least frequent category in the inventory. This category concerns difficulties in constructing phrases or clauses and integrating them into sentences.

Although it had the lowest recorded frequency, it remains relevant to the development of sentence-level accuracy. Instructional activities may include phrase completion, clause combination, sentence expansion, and guided revision. The frequency of this category should not be interpreted as proof that phrase and clause construction is unimportant. The recorded number may also depend on the amount of writing analyzed and the classification rules used.

Teachers' Observations of Students' Writing Difficulties

The teacher discussion notes provided supplementary information about writing difficulties observed by the participating teachers. Two teacher participants were identified in the available records. Their documented observations concerned word formation, verb use, sentence organization, connectives, and punctuation. The notes also included perceptions about informal language use, social media language, limited reading, and insufficient writing practice.

Table 4 summarizes these observations without treating them as independently measured causes of grammatical performance.

Table 4. Summary of Documented Teacher Observations and Suggested Instructional Responses

Area	Observation or perception in the notes	Possible instructional response
Word formation	Teachers identified difficulties involving affixes and word forms.	Contextualized affix exercises and word-formation practice.
Verb use	Teachers noted concerns involving verb usage.	Guided verb exercises and sentence revision.
Sentence organization	Teachers identified sentence-structure and organization difficulties.	Sentence construction, reordering, and editing activities.
Connectives and punctuation	Teachers noted difficulties involving connections between ideas and punctuation.	Exercises on logical relationships, connectives, and punctuation.
Informal language use	Teachers perceived informal language and social media use as possible influences on formal writing.	Activities comparing informal and task-appropriate academic expressions.
Reading and writing practice	Teachers perceived limited reading and writing practice as possible contributors to students' difficulties.	Regular reading, short writing tasks, revision, and feedback.
Instructional support	Teachers suggested writing activities, grammar drills, peer editing, contextualized materials, and feedback.	Integrated writing lessons with guided practice and formative assessment.

Note. The table summarizes the available teacher discussion notes. The proposed responses are instructional implications, not evidence that any intervention has already been shown to improve student performance.

The teachers' observations broadly correspond to several categories in the error inventory. For example, the reported concerns about word formation and verb use align with the recorded categories involving affixes and verbs. Similarly, observations about sentence organization and connectives are relevant to the recorded sentence-construction and connective errors.

This correspondence provides contextual support for considering these areas in instructional planning. However, it does not establish a causal relationship between the teachers' suggested influences and the students' grammatical performance. Informal language use, social media exposure, limited reading, and insufficient writing practice were reported as teacher perceptions; they were not independently measured in the study.

The qualitative information should also be interpreted in light of the available documentation. The discussion notes provide a record of teachers' observations, but the absence of a complete interview guide, verbatim transcripts, and a documented coding audit trail limits the extent to which more elaborate qualitative claims can be made.

Integration of Quantitative Findings and Teacher Observations

The quantitative findings and teacher discussion notes provide complementary, but not equivalent, forms of evidence. The quantitative results describe the reported grammatical competence ratings and the distribution of recorded errors. The teacher discussion notes provide contextual observations about writing difficulties and possible instructional responses.

The highest dimension mean was observed in syntax, at 3.77, while morphology had the lowest mean, at 3.61. At the same time, incorrect sentence construction and structure was the most frequently recorded error category, with 28 instances, and incorrect use of affixes ranked second, with 24 instances.

These findings are not necessarily contradictory. A dimension-level mean summarizes ratings across the assessed writing, whereas an error frequency counts recorded instances assigned to particular categories. A dimension may receive a High overall rating while individual errors remain present in students' work. Differences in scoring and error-counting procedures may also influence the relationship between the two measures.

The teacher discussion notes similarly identify concerns involving word formation, verb use, sentence organization, and connectives. These observations are relevant to the recorded error categories and help identify areas that teachers considered appropriate for further instruction. However, the notes do not establish that the teachers' perceived influences caused the errors.

Taken together, the findings support the development of instructional materials that combine word-formation exercises, sentence construction, meaning-focused revision, and integrated writing practice. The proposed material should be viewed as a response to the observed error patterns and teachers' suggestions, not as a validated intervention whose effectiveness has already been demonstrated.

Implications for the Proposed TUKLAS Learning Activity Material

The results provide a descriptive basis for proposing TUKLAS (Tulong Upang Kaalaman ay Lumago, Aasenso at Sisibol), a learning activity material intended to support students' grammatical competence and academic writing.

The recorded frequency of sentence-construction errors suggests a need for structured sentence-building and revision activities. The frequency of affix errors supports focused work on word formation. The recorded errors involving ambiguous expressions, connectives, and cohesion suggest opportunities for meaning-focused editing and paragraph development.

Based on these findings and the instructional strategies mentioned in the teacher discussion notes, the proposed material may be organized into four instructional stages:

- **Morphology:** exercises on affixes, word formation, and verb use.
- **Syntax:** sentence construction, word order, and connective use.

- **Meaning and coherence:** activities for revising ambiguous expressions, reducing unnecessary repetition, and strengthening connections between ideas.

- **Integrated writing:** short academic writing tasks followed by guided revision, peer feedback, and teacher assessment.

These stages are proposed instructional components derived from the study's findings. The study did not establish that TUKLAS had been implemented, validated, or demonstrated to be effective. Its content, usability, and potential contribution to student learning should be examined through expert review, pilot testing, and subsequent evaluation.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The study reported an overall grammatical competence mean of 3.71, interpreted as High according to the original five-point rubric. Syntax obtained the highest mean of 3.77, followed by semantics at 3.75 and morphology at 3.61.

The error inventory contained 156 recorded instances across ten categories. Incorrect sentence construction and structure was the most frequently recorded category, followed by incorrect use of affixes and ambiguous expression of ideas. The distribution of errors indicates several areas that may warrant focused instructional attention, although the frequencies describe recorded instances rather than the proportion of students who experienced each difficulty.

Teacher discussion notes identified concerns involving word formation, verb use, sentence organization, connectives, and punctuation. Teachers also suggested possible influences and instructional responses. Their explanations are treated as perceptions rather than established causal factors.

Overall, the findings provide a basis for proposing TUKLAS as a supplementary learning material. Further clarification of the scoring procedure, writing corpus, error-classification rules, and qualitative documentation would strengthen the transparency and replicability of the study.

PROPOSED TUKLAS LEARNING ACTIVITY MATERIAL

Rationale

The findings of the study identified recurring grammatical errors involving sentence construction, affix use, clarity of meaning, connectives, and other aspects of academic writing. Although the students' overall grammatical competence received a High rating, the recorded errors indicate opportunities for further instructional support. In response to these findings, the researcher proposes TUKLAS, which stands for Tulong Upang Kaalaman ay Lumago, Aasenso at Sisibol. The proposed learning activity material is designed to provide structured exercises that address the grammatical difficulties identified in the students' written outputs.

TUKLAS is intended to supplement classroom instruction through guided practice, contextualized exercises, revision activities, and feedback. Its proposed content draws on the quantitative findings and the instructional strategies suggested in the available teacher discussion notes.

Objectives

The proposed TUKLAS learning activity material aims to:

- strengthen students' understanding of word formation, affixes, and appropriate verb forms;

- develop students' ability to construct complete and logically organized sentences;

- improve clarity of expression, appropriate word choice, and connections between ideas;
- encourage students to revise and edit their written outputs; and
- provide opportunities for students to apply grammatical knowledge in academic writing tasks.

Proposed Components

The material may be organized into four instructional stages, each addressing a set of grammatical skills identified in the study.

Stage	Focus	Proposed learning activities	Intended learning outcome
1. Word Formation	Morphology	Affix exercises, word-family activities, verb-form practice, and contextualized sentence completion	Students practice forming and using appropriate word forms.
2. Sentence Construction	Syntax	Sentence building, word-order exercises, sentence combination, and connective selection	Students practice constructing complete and logically organized sentences.
3. Meaning and Coherence	Semantics and textual organization	Revision of ambiguous statements, word-choice activities, redundancy checks, and paragraph sequencing	Students practice expressing ideas clearly and connecting them logically.
4. Integrated Writing	Application of grammatical skills	Short essays or reaction papers, self-editing, peer feedback, and teacher assessment	Students apply the targeted skills in connected academic writing.

Implementation Plan

The proposed material may be used during supplementary language lessons, guided writing sessions, or remediation activities. Teachers may begin with exercises on word formation and sentence construction before progressing to meaning-focused revision and integrated writing.

Each stage should include a brief explanation, a worked example, guided practice, an independent activity, and feedback. The teacher may use students' responses to identify skills requiring additional practice.

For the integrated writing stage, students may prepare a short academic text and revise it using a checklist aligned with the study's three grammatical dimensions. Feedback should identify specific strengths and areas for improvement rather than rely solely on a general score.

The duration, sequence, and difficulty of the activities should be adjusted after the material has been reviewed and pilot-tested with an appropriate group of learners.

Assessment and Evaluation

The proposed TUKLAS material should undergo expert review to assess the accuracy of its grammatical content, alignment with the identified learning needs, clarity of instructions, and appropriateness for Grade 10 students.

A pilot implementation may then be conducted to determine whether the activities are understandable, manageable, and relevant to the intended learners. If its effectiveness is to be evaluated, a subsequent study should use a clearly defined assessment procedure and suitable comparison of students' performance before

and after instruction. Where appropriate, a stronger evaluation design could include a comparison group and consistent scoring procedures.

The original study did not establish that TUKLAS had been implemented or that it improved students' grammatical competence. Therefore, its effectiveness remains to be determined through future validation and evaluation.

Expected Contribution

TUKLAS is proposed as a supplementary instructional resource that may help teachers organize grammar and writing activities around documented areas of difficulty. By combining word formation, sentence construction, meaning development, and integrated writing, the material may provide a structured approach to grammar practice in context.

Its contribution should ultimately be assessed through expert validation, classroom usability, and evidence from subsequent implementation. Until such evaluation is completed, TUKLAS should be regarded as a proposed learning material rather than a proven intervention.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the grammatical competence of 25 purposively selected Grade 10 students at a private school in Pangasinan, Philippines. The reported mean ratings were 3.61 for morphology, 3.77 for syntax, and 3.75 for semantics, resulting in an overall mean of 3.71, interpreted as High according to the study's five-point rubric.

Despite the overall High rating, the error inventory documented 156 grammatical error instances across ten categories. Incorrect sentence construction and structure was the most frequently recorded category, followed by incorrect use of affixes and ambiguous expression of ideas. These findings identify areas that may warrant continued instructional attention, particularly sentence construction, word formation, and clarity of expression.

Teacher discussion notes provided additional context concerning students' writing difficulties and possible instructional responses. The teachers' observations were consistent with several of the error categories, although their proposed explanations for students' difficulties were perceptions rather than independently measured causal factors.

Based on these findings, the researcher proposes TUKLAS (Tulong Upang Kaalaman ay Lumago, Aasenso at Sisibol) as a supplementary learning activity material. Its proposed activities focus on word formation, sentence construction, meaning and coherence, and integrated academic writing. However, its effectiveness has not been established and requires further validation and evaluation.

The findings should be interpreted within the limits of the study's purposive sample, the incomplete documentation of the writing corpus, and the need to clarify the scoring arrangement and error-classification procedures. These limitations identify important directions for improving the transparency and rigor of future research.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and limitations of the study, the following recommendations are offered:

For language teachers. Teachers may provide targeted practice in affix use, verb forms, sentence construction, connectives, and clarity of expression. Guided revision, peer editing, and regular writing activities may be incorporated into instruction according to students' demonstrated needs.

For school administrators. The school may consider supporting the development and review of supplementary learning materials that respond to documented student writing difficulties. Any implementation should be informed by teachers' feedback and evidence of student learning needs.

For the development of TUKLAS. The proposed material should undergo expert review and pilot testing before wider classroom use. Its activities should be checked for linguistic accuracy, age appropriateness, clarity, and alignment with the intended learning outcomes.

For future researchers. Subsequent studies may involve larger and more diverse samples and provide a more complete description of the writing corpus, including the number of texts, writing prompts, word counts, and selection criteria. Researchers should also define error categories operationally, document scoring procedures, and report appropriate reliability or agreement statistics when multiple raters are involved.

For qualitative research. Future investigations involving teacher interviews or focus-group discussions should document the interview guide, participant selection, recording and transcription procedures, coding process, and methods used to integrate qualitative and quantitative findings. Potential influences on writing performance should be measured directly if causal or associational claims are intended.

For ethical research practice. Future studies should maintain appropriate records of school authorization, informed consent, student assent, and any required ethics review. Reports should accurately reflect the procedures actually followed.

Overall, the study provides a descriptive account of the grammatical competence ratings and recorded error patterns of the selected students. The findings offer a basis for targeted instructional planning and the proposed development of TUKLAS, while further research is needed to establish the reliability, broader applicability, and effectiveness of the resulting instructional material.

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