

Research Paper



## Error analysis of written English essays: the case of NCE year one primary education students of the Federal College of Education (Technical), Akoka, Lagos, Nigeria

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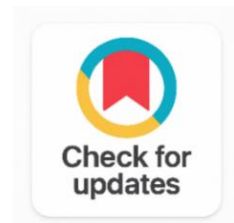
Error Analysis

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### ABSTRACT

This study investigates the written English errors of NCE Year One Primary Education students at the Federal College of Education (Technical), Akoka, Lagos, through the lens of Error Analysis Theory (Corder, 1974) and Selinker's Interlanguage Theory (1972). Grounded in the view that learner errors are meaningful indicators of language development, the research identifies, classifies, and analyzes common linguistic errors in students' essays. Fifty essays were randomly selected from a population of 100 students, and data were collected through a spontaneous in-class summary writing task. The analysis revealed 18 distinct error types, with frequent issues in auxiliary verb usage, subject-verb agreement, article misuse, and punctuation. Most errors were intralingual, arising from overgeneralization and rule misapplication. However, interlingual influences, particularly from Yoruba, also contributed to structural and lexical deviations. The findings underscore the persistence of interlanguage features in learners' writing and highlight the need for targeted pedagogical interventions focusing on grammar instruction and contrastive analysis. The study concludes that students made distinct types of errors, covering areas such as grammar, punctuation, syntax, and mother tongue interference.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Language is a vital tool for human interaction and plays a key role in communication. It consists of four main skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these, writing is often the most difficult, especially for learners of a second or foreign language, because it requires significant mental effort and linguistic accuracy [1]. Indeed, the status of English as a second or foreign language of significance is fully acknowledged in Nigeria's linguistically plural milieu. Its usage in formal contexts like education and governance underlines the reason it is upheld as a requirement for success in writing and career progression. Despite all of these, L1 interference and learning challenges hinder competences in writing.

In multilingual environments like Nigeria, learners' native languages such as Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa frequently influence their English use, leading to common grammatical and structural errors [2]. Good writing in English involves more than just expressing thoughts; it demands correct grammar, proper sentence structure, clear meaning, and well-organized ideas. The difference between learners' native languages and English often causes predictable mistakes, which highlight gaps in language mastery. In Nigerian schools, British Standard English is the norm, and any deviation is generally seen as an error.

Error Analysis (EA) is an invaluable tool for not only identifying and understanding the marked deviations from the normative standard of English but also assisting educators tracking and noting the patterns that are associated with students' writing. This knowledge helps them to adopt new teaching strategies that will the learners to overcome the hurdles in the target language.

Although English writing is emphasized in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) programs, many students still lack proficiency. Undoubtedly, some factors that inhibit proficiency in the language are linked to insufficient exposure to correct and standard usages, limited vocabulary and poor grammar. Therefore, an examination of the writing errors of students will provide insights into the nature of their challenges and the areas of focus for academic improvement.

This study examines common writing mistakes made by first-year NCE Primary Education students at the Federal College of Education (Technical) in Akoka, Lagos, during the 2023–2024 academic year. A group of 100 students (46 male and 54 female) was asked to write a 450–500-word summary of "Tolani the Hardworking Girl" within one hour. Error Analysis (EA) techniques were deployed in analyzing the students' essays. It was helpful in identifying, classifying, assessing, and establishing the frequency of the errors and their impact. Such results are important as they would help devise more effective teaching strategies to support better writing performance.

## 2. RELATED WORK

### 2.1. Mistake and Error

Language is inherently dynamic and adaptable, allowing users to communicate beyond rigid norms. However, its fluid nature across different contexts makes occasional written lapses inevitable. These lapses are generally categorized as mistakes or errors [3].

The terms 'mistakes' and 'errors' differ semantically. Mistakes are brief lapses that are performance related—often caused by stress or inattention that learners can easily recognize and corrected. Errors, however, are systematic deviations common among L2 learners. They mirror gaps the learners understanding of the L2, owing to influences from the L1. Unlike mistakes, errors indicate deeper aspects in linguistic competence, which typically require an educator's intervention.

Acquiring a foreign language like English presents learners with unfamiliar rules and structures. Errors are signs of knowledge deficiency [4] and signpost consistent inaccuracies resulting from incomplete learning [5], [6]. Basically, certain errors impinge on the grammar, vocabulary and even syntax, thereby affecting communicative lucidity.

Errors originate from two distinct sources, namely Interlingual transfers, where patterns from the first linguistic experience are transferred into the target language, in this case, English. This usually results in incorrect syntax or incorrect tense usage [7]. On the other hand, Intralingual errors spring from within the target language and are fecundated by overgeneralization, faulty analogies, incomplete application of

the rule of the target language [8]. Errors of this nature often occur due to the learner's inadequate exposure to the real language experience, which exposes attempts that result in incorrect rule application.

A thorough exploration of learners' errors offers teachers critical insights into how language is acquired and developed towards designing strategies to enhance more effective learning outcomes [9]. Common error patterns often involve issues with word order, tense usage, and article application [10]. Apart from interlingual concerns, intralingual influences such as overgeneralization of rules, which markedly contribute to the prevalence and types of these errors learners make [11].

In Nigeria's multilingual environment, Error Analysis (EA) is a pedagogical barometer for identifying and classifying writing challenges. It is also useful for uncovering patterns that require focused teaching strategies [12], [13]. In Nigeria's educational system, British English is upheld as the normative standard, and any deviant structure is perceived and taxonomized as errors. However, the influence of the American variety is becoming widespread, thereby leaving the learner with the choice of which variant to adopt because both forms are acceptable.

Understanding of the difference between mistakes and errors is important for effective language instruction because it shapes teaching methods, evaluation and feedback. Mistakes are performance-related slips, often caused by fatigue, distractions or stress, which learners can typically self-correct with prompt feedback. Errors in themselves are more patterned, reflecting major intersections in the rules of the target language, which learners often grapple with. Recognizing this distinction enables educators to channel their feedback appropriately: apportioning swift correction for mistakes and deeper interventions for errors.

## 2.2. Sources of Errors and their Categories

Learner errors in language learning fall into three main types, namely interference, intralingual and developmental errors [5]. Interference errors emanate from the influences of a learner's first language, resulting in grammatical or contextual inappropriate expressions in the second language owing to transferred patterns. However, the complex nature of the target language's protean rules and assumptions, which yield non-standard productions, are responsible for interlingual errors. For developmental errors, they are traceable to the learners' struggles amidst limited exposure and the effort to navigate novel linguistic forms in the target language. All in all, these forms of error expose learners' challenges while learning the rules of a second language.

In second language learning, there are two major sources of errors: interlingual and intralingual transfer [8]. Each error type manifests unique cognitive processes and linguistic influences. While interlingual errors arise from interference from the learner's L1, which often results in expressions that are structurally inappropriate, owing to influences from L1 syntax, semantics and direct translation. On the other hand, intralingual transfer originates from the L2 itself. Such errors always result from wrongly applied rules, overgeneralization or wrong analogies with the L2 system itself. While interlingual errors reflect external linguistic interference, intralingual errors imply active engagement, processing and experimentation with the L2 system, albeit without full understanding and mastery of rules of the language. Understanding both error types would provide educator valuable insight into L2 developmental process, helping them to re-evaluate the instructional strategies that would best address both internal rule formation and cross-linguistic concerns.

## 2.3. Error Analysis: an Overview of Previous Studies

Several studies have explored the forms and causes of grammatical errors in learners' English writing and have offered insights that explicate the perennial challenges in language learning. A study that analyzed grammatical errors in the essays from a small group of SS I and SS II students, in Akure L.G.A of Ondo State is insightful. The study covered a plethora of errors, ranging from mechanical issues (spelling and punctuation) to those involving morphology and syntax, a more complex domain. These findings underscore the enduring difficulty students face in mastering written English at the secondary level and highlight the need for more targeted instructional support to address these recurring issues [14].

Building on the study above, another extensive research in Akoko South-West of the same state, assessed the writing proficiency of 100 students across five secondary schools in order to ascertain the causes of errors in students' essay writing, their types and frequencies, with a view to shedding light on the nature of the challenges. The descriptive research design was used, as essay-writing tasks and systematic error analysis (SER) were deployed in identifying recurring challenges across different aspects of grammar. The findings revealed that the students had challenges and struggled with sentence structure, cohesion, and grammatical accuracy. The most severe challenge was in the area of sentence and cohesion errors while limited vocabulary, poor command of English and cursory proofreading were also identified [14].

An investigation into written English errors among isiZulu-speaking high school students in South Africa provided important insights into the linguistic challenges faced by learners of English First Additional Language (EFAL). Central to the study were errors that covered syntax, morphology and semantics and the revelation did not conceal recurring patterns significant enough to inhibit proficiency in written communication [15]. The study adopted a qualitative technique that analyzed the writing samples from seven students across five schools in Pinetown District. The contributions of the study, through its findings, lend weight to understanding teaching strategies that focused on specific instructional improvement. The study suffered from limited sample size that could not be representative enough in its generalizations. From the findings, the study advocated further studies that will involve a larger population with a diverse cohort capable of strengthening the results' generalizability and applicability with a view to encouraging interventions with broader educational interventions.

A large spectrum of research in grammatical errors in English writing has consistently revealed the relationship between linguistic influence and cognitive development. For example, in a study that involved 50 Pakistani undergraduates, 76 error types were identified and the majority of them were linked to interlanguage development, while a smaller fraction was attributed to mother tongue interference. The findings emphasize the dual effect of internal learning mechanisms and cross-linguistic transfer in shaping and determining learner output [16].

Similarly, a study that investigated the writing of 30 Malaysians secondary school students revealed 665 diverse errors that covered 11 significant categories, with singular/ plural misuse ranking as the most common. First language interference and inconsistent mastery of the grammar of English were identified as factors that contributed to the errors. This finding reinforces the view that error formation is attributable to both the learner's linguistic background and developing competence [17].

When these studies are taken together, one common finding that is obvious is that interlingual and intralingual factors shape learner error, mirroring how L1 interference and internal rule misapplication contribute to the challenges in learners' second language writing. From the foregoing, this present study explores the nature and frequency of errors in the written English among First Year NCE students in Nigeria. This research aims to provide new insights into the cognitive and linguistic processes at work, by investigating how L1 transfer, and internal language mechanisms impinge on learners' written production. The approach adopted in this study does not only agree with extant theoretical paradigms but also offer context-specific instances that reveal the grammatical and structural challenges that Nigerian students face in the writing. Similarly, another study investigated the essays of Iranian postgraduate students studying in Malaysia, and it identified 389 grammatical errors. This study revealed the challenges that learners of English at the tertiary level face.

The study revealed that sentence structures issues ranked as the most common (32.9%). It was followed by the wrong use of articles, punctuation, capitalization and lexical choices. Some of the less frequent errors were found in the area of wrong use of prepositions, verbs forms and subject-verb agreement. Mother tongue interference, intralingual transfer and rule-overgeneralization were fingered as contributing dynamics [18].

These results also validate the notion that errors in the English writing of learners are underpinned by interlingual and intralingual affordances and contribute to the perennial challenges learners face in mastering the grammar of written English. The dual constitution of errors is a proof of the importance of pedagogical techniques which should be harnessed to address specific error patterns instead of depending absolutely on generalized instructions. Beyond the function of language as a tool of communication, it is

also a vehicle for identity expression. So, the flaws that could be termed structural or grammatical deviations can significantly impact on the purpose and clarity of the message [19]. Hence, for language teaching to be termed effective, it must go beyond surface borderline corrections to deeper cognitive concerns that mold learners' competence.

#### 2.4. Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored in the theoretical foundations of Error Analysis Theory and Interlanguage Theory [20], [21] both of which regard learner errors not as failures but as meaningful indicators of the language acquisition process. According to these frameworks, learners construct an evolving internal linguistic system, which is referred to as interlanguage and that is shaped by the interaction between their first language (L1) and the target language (L2). In line with this perspective, the study adopts a structured error analysis model comprising five key stages.

Firstly, detecting deviations from Standard English in students' writing is one way of identifying their errors and their types. What follows next is the taxonomy into interlingual errors i.e., those that stem L1 interference and intralingual errors i.e., those that arise from the wrong application of L2 rules and developmental errors i.e., those that genuinely reflect the learners' developing hypotheses towards the target language.

These errors can be described using linguistic categories such as morphology and syntax. Surface strategy classification can also be helpful. Here, the underlying causes of the error types can be fully explicated, and all their different dimensions fully accounted for. In the end, the errors can be evaluated for their impact, differentiating between those that are global i.e., those that affect overall comprehension and those that local i.e., those that affect specific sentence structures. This paradigm allows for a systematic evaluation of learners written texts and provides some understanding about the types of errors that are common with them alongside their sources. This information provides a springboard for evolving teaching strategies that will ultimately improve their writing skills.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This study deployed a multi-faceted approach that incorporated the design of the study, the target population, sampling procedure, data sources, collection methods and analytical procedures. For this study, a structured checklist was designed to systematically record and explicate various shades of linguistic errors identified in students' written essays and were analyzed using frequencies and percentages to identify recurring patterns.

An Error Analysis model which combined both qualitative and quantitative approaches to taxonomize and measure error prevalence. The simple random sampling technique was used to select 50 essays from the sampling population of 100 first year students of NCE studying Primary Education at the Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka, Lagos State in the 2023/24 academic session. Only half of the population was used for the study, as the distribution of 20 males and 30 females was considered representative enough.

The collection of data was based on students' spontaneous responses to a summary writing exercise culled from a popular classroom text used in the school. There was no prior notice of the exercise in order to reduce any rehearsal advantage in the hope of capturing genuine and contextual language use. In Again, additional data was sourced from scholarly documents and peer-reviewed journal articles and credible online sources.

This study adopted a five-step analytical paradigm that involved collecting, identifying, explaining, and evaluating errors. The identified errors were grouped and assessed for frequency occurrence and percentage. To ensure that the study's instrument validity was not compromised, three academic experts reviewed the essay prompt to ensure that it was appropriate and aligned with students' academic level. A pilot study that involved 20 randomly selected students was adopted to confirm that reliability was consistent with performance over a two-week interval, thereby validating the instrument's robustness and aptness.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings were interpreted based on the frequency and percentage of errors.

### 4.1 Errors Committed by the Students

**Table 1.** Errors Committed by the Students

Types of Errors	Quantity/ Frequency of Errors	Percentage of Errors
Capitalization	80	3.72%
Spelling	130	6.05%
Punctuation marks	180	8.38%
Possessives	40	1.86%
Sub-verb agreements	209	8.80%
Verb tenses	260	9.31%
Singular / Plural	80	3.72%
Articles	210	9.78%
Conjunctions	95	4.42%
Prepositions	42	1.96%
Adverbs	49	2.28%
Adjectives	51	2.37%
Auxiliary verbs	220	10.24%
Main verbs	200	9.31%
Nouns	95	4.42%
Tautology	32	1.49%
Conditional sentences	50	2.33%
Total	2148	100%

**Table 1** shows that the most frequent errors occur in the use of auxiliary verbs (10.24%), followed by articles (9.78%), verb tense issues (9.31%), main verb errors (9.31%), and subject-verb agreement errors (8.80%). Mechanical issues are also prominent, especially punctuation (8.38%) and spelling (6.05%). Less frequent categories include conjunctions and nouns (each 4.42%), capitalization and singular/plural forms (each 3.72%), adjectives (2.37%), conditional sentences (2.33%), adverbs (2.28%), prepositions (1.96%), possessives (1.86%), and tautology (1.49%).

Overall, the distribution indicates that morphosyntactic control, particularly mastery of verbs, articles, and agreement, as well as mechanical accuracy in writing, remains the major pressure points for students' written English.

### 4.2. Sample Errors and their Corrections

**Table 2.** Sample Errors Committed by the Students and their Corrections

Error Classification	Error Identification	Error Correction
Capitalization	justina asked tolani why she get to School Late	Justina asked Tolani why she got to school late.
Spelling	She is not there child	She is not their child.
Punctuation marks	She frowned. went to the kitchen wash the meat and started boiling it	She frowned, went to the kitchen, washed the meat, and started boiling it.
Possessives	Tolani parents love her	Tolani's parents love her.
Sub-verb agreements	Tolani feel her parents does not loves her	Tolani feels her parents do not love her.
Verb tenses	She get up from her bed	She got up from her bed.
Singular / Plural	She cleans the furnitures	She cleansed the furniture.

Articles	We are training you to be good wife material	We are training you to be a good wife.
Conjunctions	And also give me	Also, give me.
Prepositions	I am not happy when our teacher tell you kneel down in the ground.	I am not happy when our teacher told you to kneel on the ground.
Adverbs	Hurry she goes to school	Hurriedly, she went to school.
Adjectives	I can say Tolani is a hard working girl	I can say that Tolani is a hardworking girl.
Auxiliary verbs	You are been punished everyday	You are being punished every day.
Main verbs	“My mother is come again”	“My mother has come again.”
Nouns	Tolani needs to have some patient and listen to her parents’ advice	Tolani needs to have some patience and listen to her parents’ advice.
Mother tongue influence	My mummy prepare are self and go to their shop they can’t cook the food	My mummy prepared herself and went to her shop; she couldn’t cook the food.
Tautology	She always got to the school late all the time	She always got to school late.
Conditional sentences	When young girls obey their parents then they become good wife materials in future	If young girls obey their parents, they will become good wives in the future.

When the examples presented in [Table 2](#) are closely examined, one would observe that they not only corroborate the trends of the frequency captured in [Table 1](#) but also provide lucid understanding of the nature of learners’ errors. Apparently, these examples underline the analytical capacity of Error Analysis Theory and Interlanguage Theory [7], [22] in the explication of the complex cognitive and linguistic processes that define students’ written output, especially in an L2 situation. Through a systematic analysis of these common errors, the educators understand the challenges facing the learner, who has gained some maturity and competence in an L1 before engaging in a target language, and the ways in which the learner is able to navigate the intricacies of the grammar and syntax of the target language. Again, the educator comes to terms with the manner in which learners’ errors reflect a dynamic interplay between their L1 (mother tongue) and the L2 (target language)’s.

Additionally, a combination of both quantitative data and qualitative examples in this study presents multiple perspectives in understanding the learner’s challenges in the process of gaining competence in the target language. This fusion underpins the notion of complementarity, which allows the investigation to go beyond mere statistical analysis to the underbelly of the mechanisms and evolving processes that inform the nature of errors that learners grapple with. Ostensibly, the visual aids in [Figure 1](#) and [Figure 2](#) corroborate the patterns of errors by revealing the categories of errors, their distribution and frequency, thereby mirroring the pedagogical significance of the findings. The analysis reflects the relevance of a detailed investigation to understand and address learners’ errors, considering both the qualitative and quantitative concerns of L2 learning.

[Figure 1](#) and [Figure 2](#) represent a visual account of the pattern of errors that have been observed in the data. In [Figure 1](#), a pie chart is used to illustrate, in relative terms, various portions of errors, and provide a palpable viewpoint for their distribution. [Figure 2](#) complements [Figure 1](#), where a bar chart is used to emphasize the numerical frequency of each error category and allows for easy comparison across each error type. When the quantitative data in [Table 1](#) is juxtaposed with that of [Table 2](#) the visual depictions reinforce, in a collective manner, the trends and patterns that have been identified in the study, thereby elucidating both understanding and analytical rigor.

4.3 Figures on Distribution and Frequency of Errors

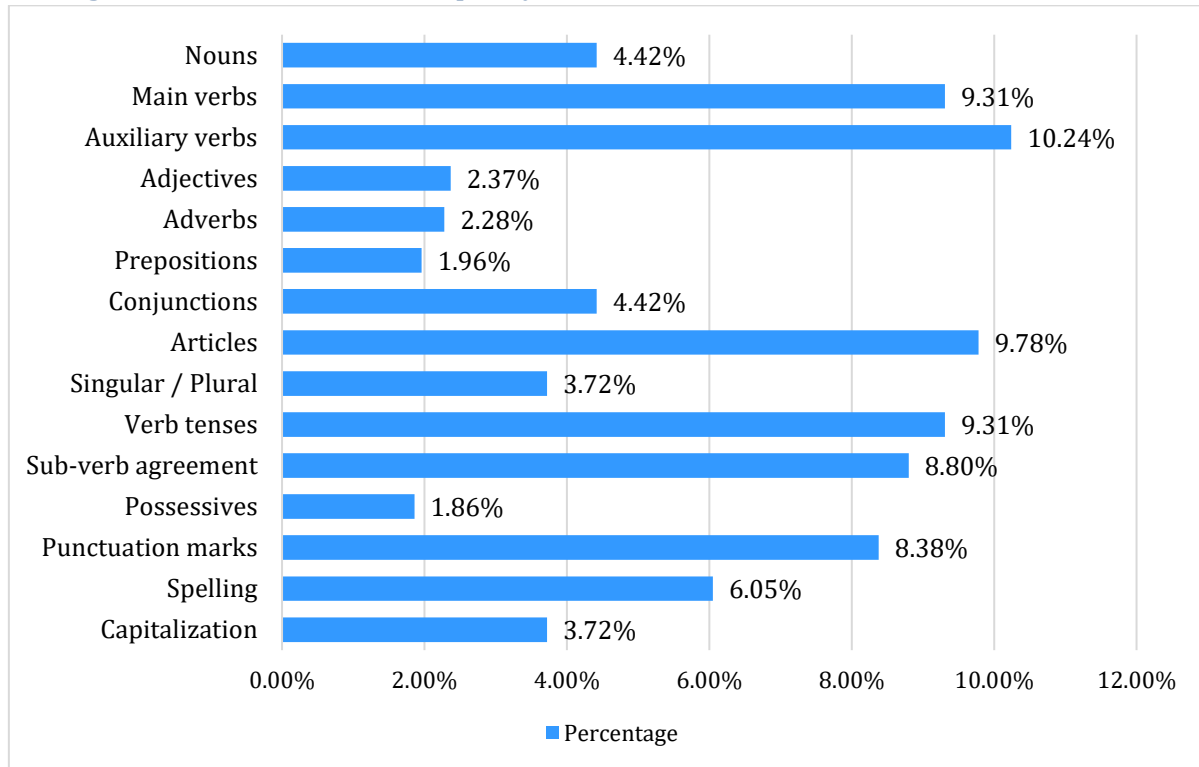


Figure 1. Distribution of Error Types in Student Essays

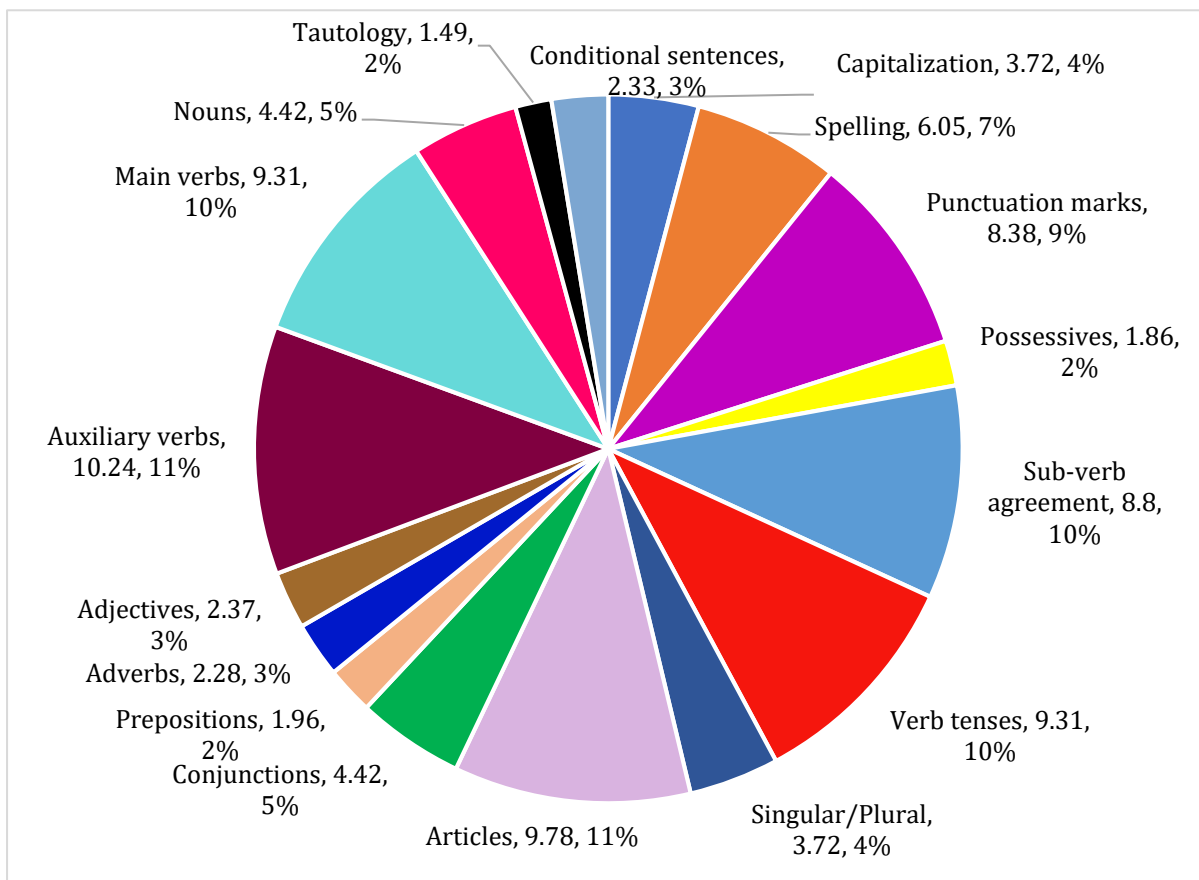


Figure 2. Frequency of Error Types in Student Writing

Error types and their frequencies are captured in [Figure 2](#) where Verb Errors are the most prominent with (260; 12.85%). Auxiliary Verb errors rank second with (220; 10.87%), while wrong Article Use is (210; 10.38%), Subject-Verb agreement error records (209; 10.33%), Lexical Verb error is (200; 9.89%). All of these are evident in the study. These categories collectively account for nearly 54% of all errors, confirming that learners experience persistent difficulties with morphosyntactic accuracy, especially in tense, aspect, and agreement.

Errors bordering on mechanics of writing constitute impediments to effective writing and communication generally, with punctuation and spelling errors leading as disruptive agents. Errors in the area of punctuation accounted for (8.90%). Spelling errors, which had the frequency of 130 occurrences, (6.43%), were largely responsible for obfuscating clarity and coherence in students' writing. Far and above these matrices, the study identified what could be referred to as moderately frequent errors which also contributed to the decline in the quality of students writing. In this category are conjunctions and incorrect nominal forms, each appearing 97 times and accounting for (4.70%), of the total errors. Capitalization and the misuse of singular and plural forms both occurred 80 times, ranking (3.95%).

Though less common, the study identified other error types, which impact students' writing and should be identified because of their larger cumulative implications. Adjectival misuse (2.52%), wrong conditional constructions (2.47%) and adverbial infractions (2.42%) all undermine grammatical competence in writing. Again, prepositional misuse accounts for (2.08%), possessive form errors (1.98%) and tautology (1.58%). All these indicate knowledge gaps in students' understanding of the syntactic and semantic precision in an L2. These identified error types reveal diverse dimensions of errors and advocate new instructional approaches that will holistically address them.

When taken together, [Figure 1](#) and [Figure 2](#) prove that students' main challenges in writing are in the area of verb usage, agreement and article misuse. Persistent problems in the area of mechanics notably punctuation and spellings further complicate matters for them. Although some error types appear less frequently, they remain pedagogically significant because they expose systematic gaps in learners' interlanguage and developmental stages.

#### 4.4. Identification of Errors

This study identified 2,148 individual errors in written essays by NCE Year One Primary Education students at the Federal College of Education (Technical), Akoka. The error types identified cover 18 linguistic and grammatical categories involving grammar, mechanics and syntax. Each instance of non-standard English that deviated from target norms was marked as an error, for example:

"justina asked tolani why she get to School Late"

(Justina asked Tolani why she got to school late)

"She is not there child"

(She is not their child)

"You are been punished everyday"

(You are being punished every day)

Apparently, the examples above mirror the need for language instruction which holistically address the problems of errors in students' written English, as these errors reveal the underbelly of the challenges faced when mastering the complex rules and structures of a second language learning.

#### 4.5. Errors Types and their Classifications

Following Error Analysis proponents, L2 errors can be classified into three: interlingual, intralingual and developmental. The underlying sources can help educators to identify the main sources of student's linguistic challenges and address ultimately. In Interlingual Errors (L1 Transfer), the errors are due to the direct influence of the learner's L1 on the L2. Traces of this error type are visible in prepositional phrases element replacements such as "kneel down in the ground" instead of on, in is used to replace it. Another one is redundant expressions such as "She always got to the school late all the time." (She comes late to school always).

Intralingual Errors stem from wrong application or overgeneralization of English rules. For example: “You are been punished” (You are being punished) and “She get up” These are a clear reflection of the confusion arising from not understanding when to use a passive construction and a progressive one. The failure to apply the correct inflected verb form has resulted in the error in the second sentence.

For Development Errors, they arise from the learner’s hypothesis about the grammar of the L2. In this case, the learner produce novel and transitional expression such as “A good wife material or “hardworking”.

Categories is a concept in Error Analysis and applying it to the study reveals that distribution of the errors across the different levels of language description, namely morphology (“patient” vs patience), syntax (“Hurry she goes to school”), mechanics (“justina” a proper begun without capitalization), and agreement (“Tolani feel...”). From a surface strategy perspective, students tend to omit (e.g., “She get up”), add (e.g., “And also give me”), misform (e.g., “You are been punished”), misorder (“Hurry she goes to school”), or substitute elements (“prepare are self”).

These patterns of errors are clear indications of L1 transfer, incomplete application of grammatical rules and cursory proofreading. No doubt, these examples mirror the systematic nature of errors, and how they are shaped by both internal, cognitive strategies and extralinguistic influences.

#### 4.6. Evaluation of Errors

Errors can be viewed as either global or local. The former refers to those errors where there is marked interference with expressions or sentence constructions that can hinder clarity. For example, “My mother prepare are self and go to their shop” (My mother prepared and left for her shop). The case of missing punctuation marks can also impede meaning. However, local errors as found in this example: “She is not there child” (She is not their child) or “She cleans the furnitures” (She cleans the furniture) are clear deviations that do not impede understanding.

#### 4.7. Pedagogical Concerns

The findings mirror major instructional concerns for Nigerian colleges of education where English is taught and learnt as a second language. The implications include the following:

- Grammar-Centered Teaching: Focus on verb related issues with structured practice.
- Contrastive Error Analysis: Learners’ attention should be drawn on the distinctions between the indigenous languages and English to minimize error transfers.
- Constant Writing Exercises and Peer Review: Editing skills should be encouraged to minimize errors in spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.
- Communicative Proficiency: reintegrate the correction of errors in students’ essays and different tasks.
- Prioritized Feedback: Make comparisons between global errors but focus on local errors.

A blended strategy that that will guarantee balances accuracy and fluency will help learners develop greater proficiency in written English.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The study has revealed that the errors in the written English of Year One NCE students are prominent at the formative stage of acquiring a second language and that the errors were not random but systematic. While a majority of the errors were intralingual, arising from the misapplication or overgeneralization of English rules, interference from the students’ mother tongue also played a significant role.

The most pronounced challenges were identified as errors in the following aspects: auxiliary verbs, subject-verb agreement, verb tense, and punctuation marks wrong use of articles, spelling and capitalization. Students’ errors were also visible in the word classes’ conditional sentences, otiose repetitions and sentence structures.

These findings underscore the fact that learners’ challenges are diverse, covering such aspects of language descriptions such as mechanics, morphology and syntax, highlighting the lacuna in the area

covering grammar instruction, contrastive error analysis, effective writing practice. Efforts in these areas of learning are not only critical to reducing perennial errors but also enhancing accuracy, and in the long run improving students' competence in writing and language proficiency.

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### Authors Contribution Statement

Name of Author	C	M	So	Va	Fo	I	R	D	O	E	Vi	Su	P	Fu
Ruth Anjorin-Ojewole	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	

C : Conceptualization

M : Methodology

So : Software

Va : Validation

Fo : Formal Analysis

I : Investigation

R : Resources

D : Data Curation

O : Writing - Original Draft

E : Writing - Review & Editing

Vi : Visualization

Su : Supervision

P : Project Administration

Fu : Funding Acquisition

### Conflict of Interest Statement

The researcher declares no conflict of interest. This study on the error analysis of NCE Year One students was conducted independently and objectively, with no external influence or bias that could compromise the integrity of the findings.

### Informed Consent

All participants were duly informed about the nature of the study, and they gave their consent before the collection of data. The researcher ensured that participants' privacy and anonymity were protected in the course of the study.

### Ethical Approval

Ethical clearance for this study was granted by the relevant institutional review board. The research conformed to recognized ethical guidelines and involved minimal risk to participants and made sure that participation was wholly of their volition and devoid of coercion.

### Data Availability

The findings that underpin this study were completely drawn from students' essays and notes gathered over time from the school. In order to safeguard participants' anonymity and comply with confidentiality protocols, the original data are not accessible. Top of Form

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