

An Open Access, Widely Indexed, Peer Reviewed Referred
Journal
Vol. 3 No. 1, June, 2026

Grammatical Errors in English Writing: A Study on the Secondary Level Students in Khulna City, Bangladesh

Md. Nasim Mia¹, Md. Samyul Haque^{2*}

¹Faculty Member, NASCK and Ambassador, class2class.org, Bangladesh.

²Professor English Discipline, Khulna University, Khulna, Bangladesh.

Corresponding Author: *Md. Samyul Haque, samyulhaque@eng.ku.ac.bd

ARTICLE INFO

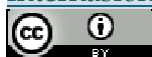
Keywords: grammatical errors, error analysis, L2 writing, secondary education, Bangladesh, gender differences in L2 acquisition, interlingual transfer, pedagogical implications

Received: 20.01.2026

Revised: 15.05.2026

Accepted: 05.06.2026

©2023 The Author(s): This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).



ABSTRACT

The challenge of achieving grammatical accuracy in English writing among Bangladeshi students necessitates granular investigation. This quantitative study provides an analysis of grammatical errors in the written compositions of 260 secondary-level students (132 male, 128 female) from Classes 7 and 8 across 10 schools in Khulna City. Employing a corpus of 35,820 words generated from two structured writing tasks—a descriptive paragraph and a formal application. This study identified, categorized, and quantified 1,086 grammatical errors. Results demonstrated an overall error density of 3.03 errors per 100 words. A detailed categorical analysis revealed that errors in Verb Tense and Form were most frequent (22.02%), followed by Subject-Verb Agreement (15.22%) and Word Choice/Order (14.61%). This result suggests substantial challenges with both intralingual rule application and interlingual transfer from Bangla. An independent-samples t-test confirmed that female students ($M = 1.84$, $SD = 0.96$) committed markedly fewer errors than their male counterparts ($M = 2.41$, $SD = 1.12$), $t(258) = 3.87$, $p = .001$. This disparity was consistent across most error categories, with notable differences in Subject-Verb Agreement and Article usage.

INTRODUCTION

In the 21st-century globalized landscape, proficiency in English, particularly in written communication, is an indispensable asset for academic advancement and professional mobility. However, anecdotal evidence and preliminary studies consistently suggest a concerning reality: after seven or eight years of classroom instruction, a vast number of secondary school graduates emerge unable to construct coherent and grammatically accurate writing in English. This persistent deficiency underscores a critical failure within the current educational framework. This study seeks to move beyond general observations by conducting a systematic, empirical investigation into the specific nature of this problem. It focuses with precision on the grammatical errors found in the English writing of students at the secondary level in Khulna City. The research is designed not merely to catalog mistakes but to provide a diagnostic, fine-grained analysis. It attempts to illuminate the most persistent and problematic areas of grammatical weakness. Furthermore, this inquiry incorporates a crucial and often overlooked variable: gender. By examining whether significant differences exist in the error profiles of male and female students, the study aims to uncover potential sociocultural or pedagogical factors that differentially impact language acquisition. The trajectory of English language education in Bangladesh is deeply inscribed within the nation's socio-political history. The post-Liberation War era (post-1971) was characterized by powerful linguistic nationalism. As a result came the Bangla Implementation Act of 1987. This marginalized English as a colonial vestige. However, globalization prompted a policy reversal in the 1990s. It reinstated English as a compulsory subject and adopting Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Despite this, the educational infrastructure has struggled with large class sizes, a scarcity of materials, and inadequate teacher training. All these created a pedagogical vacuum where exam-oriented rote learning prevails over genuine communicative competence (Chowdhury & Kamal, 2014; Imam, 2005). This dissonance between policy and practice leaves students without the systematic grammatical foundation necessary for accurate expression.

The secondary education sector in Bangladesh (Grades 6-10), governed by the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB), exemplifies this systemic issue. While English is allocated four to five periods per week, student-teacher ratios frequently exceed 1:50. This makes individualized instruction nearly impossible. Consequently, instruction devolves into drilling model paragraphs and memorizing set phrases. This practice fosters a culture of superficial learning where students replicate forms without internalizing grammatical logic (Podder & Mazumder, 2013). The central problem addressed in this research is the discrepancy between the substantial investment in English language education in Bangladesh and the demonstrably low levels of grammatical accuracy achieved by secondary-level students in their written expression. This deficiency actively disenfranchises Bangladeshi youth. It is limiting their competitive edge and potential for upward mobility in an era where English proficiency mediates access to global information and skilled employment. Therefore, a systematic

diagnostic investigation is urgently required to move beyond anecdotal observation. To guide this systematic inquiry, the study was formulated around three core research questions: (a) What are the most common types and their relative frequencies of grammatical errors in the English writing of secondary-level students in Khulna City? (b) What is the overall density of grammatical errors (errors per 100 words) present in the corpus, and what does this metric reveal about general writing proficiency? and (c) Is there a statistically significant difference in the mean frequency of grammatical errors between male and female students, and in which specific categories are these differences most pronounced? The primary objective is to conduct a comprehensive analysis of these errors to illuminate underlying linguistic and pedagogical causes. This paper, thereby, provides an empirical, data-driven profile to guide curriculum reform and pedagogical intervention.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework: Error Analysis and Second Language Acquisition

This research is conceptually anchored in the paradigm of Error Analysis (EA), pioneered by Corder (1967). EA fundamentally reconceptualized learner errors as invaluable windows into the cognitive processes of language acquisition. It provides a methodological framework for moving beyond mere correction to a deeper diagnostic interpretation of the interlanguage system (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005). This study employs this framework by systematically identifying, classifying, and quantifying grammatical deviations to map the interlanguage of Bangladeshi secondary students.

To interpret the sources of these errors, the study draws upon the classic distinction between interlingual and intralingual influences, as elaborated by Richards (1971). Interlingual transfer refers to the negative interference of the learner's first language (L1) – in this case, Bangla. This is hypothesized to be a primary source of errors in areas where the grammatical structures of Bangla and English diverge significantly. Examples can be article usage (as Bangla lacks a definiteness system), prepositional collocations, and syntactic word order (e.g., the Bangla Subject-Object-Verb structure versus English's Subject-Verb-Object). Conversely, intralingual transfer encompasses errors that originate within the target language itself. It includes overgeneralization (e.g., applying the regular past tense "-ed" to irregular verbs like "goed"), simplification (omitting morphological markers like the third-person singular '-s'), and faulty rule application (Brown, 2007). This theoretical lens allows the study to distinguish between developmental errors common to all L2 learners and those specifically exacerbated by the unique differences between Bangla and English (Gass & Selinker, 2008).

Empirical Studies on Grammatical Errors in L2 Writing

Research into grammatical errors in L2 writing is a well-established domain within applied linguistics, yet studies focusing specifically on the Bangladeshi secondary-level context remain notably scarce. The existing

international literature provides a foundational understanding of common challenges. For instance, Al-Badawi's (2012) research on Saudi university students identified article errors, preposition misuse, and subject-verb agreement issues as predominant, attributing them largely to the absence of parallel structures in Arabic. Similarly, Mungungu (2010), in a study of Namibian learners, documented persistent difficulties with English articles and verb tense, highlighting the role of both L1 interference and the complexity of the English grammatical system. More recent work by Alobaid (2020) reinforced these findings, emphasizing that verb tense and form remain the most recalcitrant areas for learners with morphologically simpler L1 systems.

Within Bangladesh, scholarly attention has predominantly centered on the tertiary level. Chowdhury and Kamal (2014) provided a macro-level critique, noting the generally poor English proficiency of university entrants and linking it to flawed policy implementation and washback effects from high-stakes examinations. Imam (2005) claimed that the average English language skill of a Bangladeshi university student is equivalent to the Class 7 level, pointing to a systemic failure whose roots lie in the secondary education system—a gap that the present study directly addresses. Hamid and Baldauf (2008) critically examined the implementation of CLT in Bangladesh, arguing that while the policy shifted towards communicative competence, classroom practices remained stubbornly teacher-centered and grammar-translation oriented. More recently, Rafi (2018) echoed this sentiment, describing the ELT situation as "bogged down" despite the "bailed-out" CLT policy, due to a lack of contextualized materials and teacher training. The few studies conducted at the secondary level, such as Podder and Mazumder's (2013) evaluation of CLT, have effectively critiqued the methodological shortcomings in classroom practice. However, they often lack the error-specific quantitative data that would allow for precise pedagogical recommendations. Sultana (2020) provided a comprehensive overview of English language teaching in Bangladesh, noting a persistent gap between curriculum aspirations and classroom realities, particularly in developing writing skills.

Furthermore, the variable of gender in L2 writing accuracy presents a complex and underexplored area, particularly in the South Asian context. Ellis (2008) has noted that female learners often demonstrate higher levels of metalinguistic awareness and academic engagement, which can translate to greater grammatical accuracy. Some global studies report minimal or context-dependent differences, but the disparity observed in the preliminary data of this study suggests crucial mediating factors, including differing levels of academic conscientiousness and potentially varied responses to instructional methods. This study aims to fill this gap by providing empirical evidence on gender-based differences in grammatical error production within the specific Bangladeshi secondary context.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Participants

This cross-sectional quantitative study employed a stratified random sampling technique to select participants from ten (10) secondary schools in Khulna City, comprising a mix of public and private institutions across various zones to enhance generalizability. A total of 260 secondary-level students (N=260), comprising 132 male (50.77%) and 128 female (49.23%) students, participated. The participants' ages ranged from 13 to 15 years ($M = 13.8$, $SD = 0.7$). All had received formal instruction in English as a compulsory subject following the NCTB syllabus for a minimum of six years. Bangla was the first language (L1) for all participants.

Instruments

The primary instrument for data collection was a Written Composition Task booklet containing two distinct, syllabus-relevant prompts designed to elicit different registers of writing:

1. A descriptive paragraph writing task requiring students to compose approximately 120 words on the topic "The Importance of Learning English." This task was selected to assess students' ability to organize ideas and use grammatical structures in a monologic discourse.
2. A formal application writing task where students were provided with a specific scenario (requesting permission to organize a cultural event). This task aimed to evaluate their mastery of formal register alongside grammatical accuracy.

To ensure systematic and consistent error identification, a **Coding Protocol Sheet** was developed. This protocol was grounded in the study's theoretical framework and detailed operational definitions and examples for each of the ten predefined grammatical error categories (e.g., what constitutes a "word order" error versus a "preposition" error).

Data Collection Procedures

The data collection phase was executed over an eight-week period. Following the granting of formal permission from the respective school authorities and ensuring ethical compliance (including informed consent from school heads), the researcher administered the writing tasks during a single, proctored 45-minute session in each school. To eliminate confusion, standardized instructions were read aloud in Bangla, clarifying the requirements for both tasks and emphasizing the need for individual, unaided work. Participants were provided with dedicated answer scripts and completed both tasks sequentially within the allotted time. The scripts were collected immediately upon completion, resulting in a 100% return rate.

Data Analysis

The data analysis adhered to a multi-stage quantitative error analysis procedure employing both descriptive and inferential statistics. The process commenced with the calculation of the total word count for the entire corpus of

260 scripts, which amounted to 35,820 words. Two trained raters, both holding postgraduate degrees in English/Applied Linguistics, engaged in the identification and categorization of errors. They worked independently, marking errors line-by-line on the scripts. To establish inter-rater reliability, a randomly selected subset of 50 scripts (19.2% of the total) was co-rated. Cohen's Kappa was calculated, yielding a score of $\kappa = .89$, which indicates an almost perfect level of agreement (Landis & Koch, 1977). The few discrepancies that arose were resolved through consensus discussion between the raters. Each confirmed error was then tallied and entered into a master database using SPSS (Version 26). The overall error density (errors per 100 words) was calculated using the formula: $(\text{Total Errors} / \text{Total Words}) \times 100$. Descriptive statistics—including frequencies, means, standard deviations, and percentages—were computed for the total error count and for each of the ten individual error categories. To address the gender-based research question, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the mean total error frequency of male and female students.

RESEARCH RESULT

The comprehensive analysis of the 260 writing samples yielded a corpus of 35,820 words, within which a total of 1,086 distinct grammatical errors were identified and validated. This results in an overall error density of **3.03 errors per 100 words**, indicating that, on average, every 33 words contained a grammatical inaccuracy that compromised the clarity or correctness of the text.

Error-Specific Data Tables

The following ten tables provide a detailed breakdown of the frequency distribution for each grammatical error type across the sample of 260 students. The tables demonstrate that while Verb Tense errors were the most frequent overall (Table 1a), a substantial 32.7% of students made no such errors. Conversely, errors like Double Negatives (Table 1j) were rare, affecting only 4.2% of the sample. This granular view helps distinguish between widespread challenges and those problematic for a smaller subset of learners.

Table 1a.

Frequency Distribution of Verb Tense and Form Errors

Frequency of Errors	Number of Students	Percentage of Sample (%)
0	85	32.7
1	92	35.4
2	58	22.3
3	19	7.3
4	6	2.3
Total	260	100.0

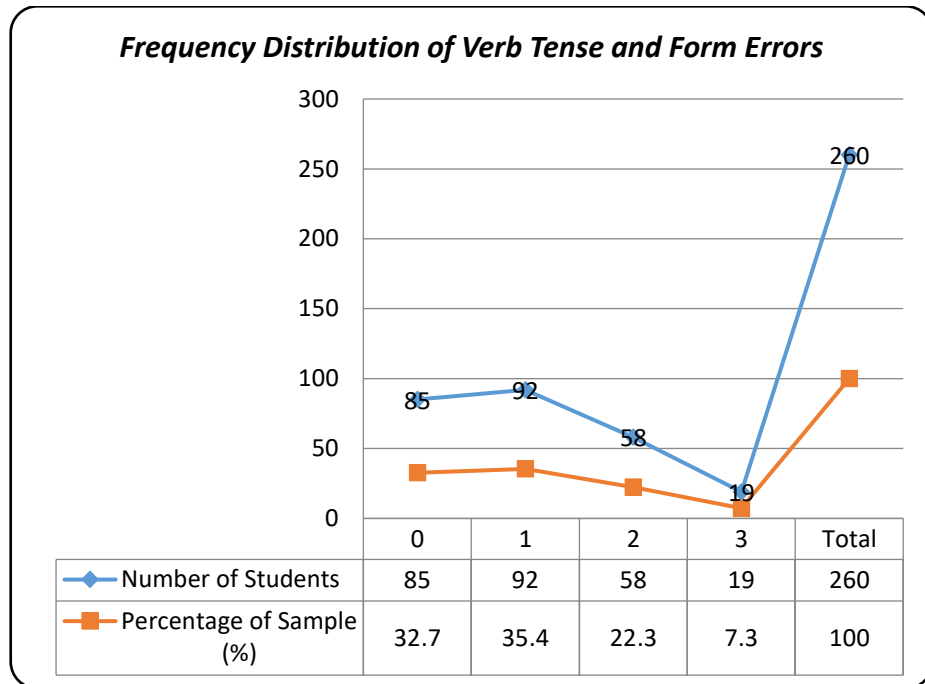
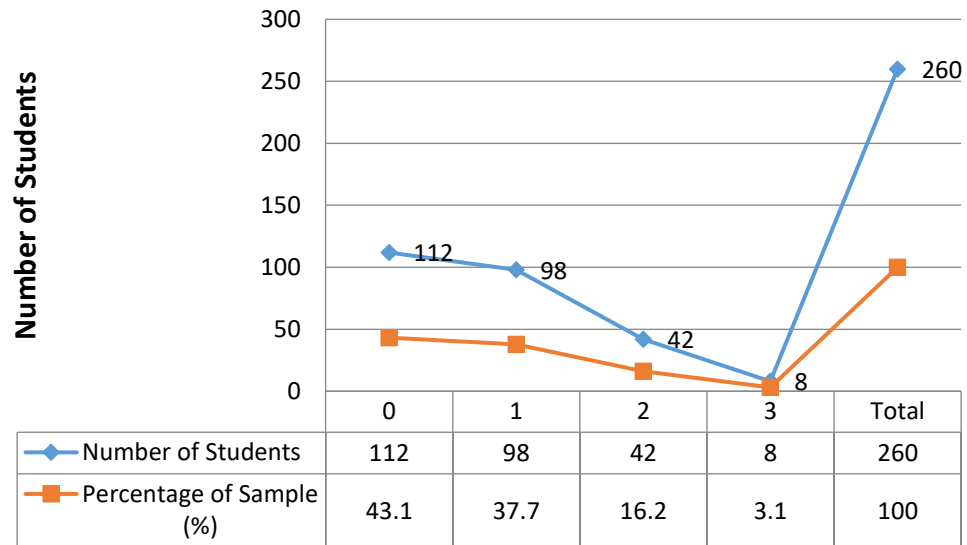


Table 1b

Frequency Distribution of Subject-Verb Agreement Errors

Frequency of Errors	Number of Students	Percentage of Sample (%)
0	112	43.1
1	98	37.7
2	42	16.2
3	8	3.1
Total	260	100.0

Frequency Distribution of Subject-Verb Agreement Errors



Table

Frequency Distribution of Word Choice/Order Errors

1c

Frequency of Errors	Number of Students	Percentage of Sample (%)
0	107	41.2
1	89	34.2
2	51	19.6
3	13	5.0
Total	260	100.0

Frequency Distribution of Word Choice/Order Errors

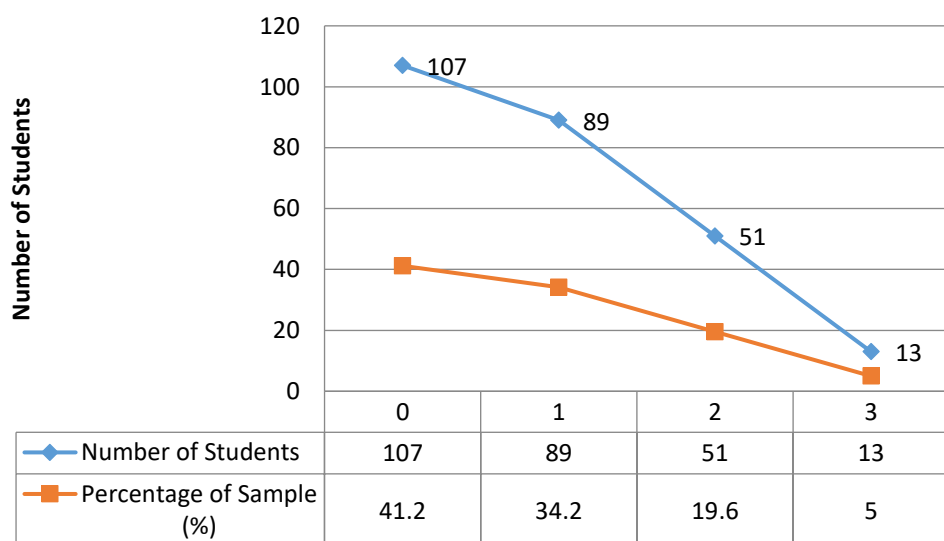


Table 1d
Frequency Distribution of Preposition Errors

Frequency of Errors	Number of Students	Percentage of Sample (%)
0	123	47.3
1	87	33.5
2	42	16.2
3	8	3.1
Total	260	100.0

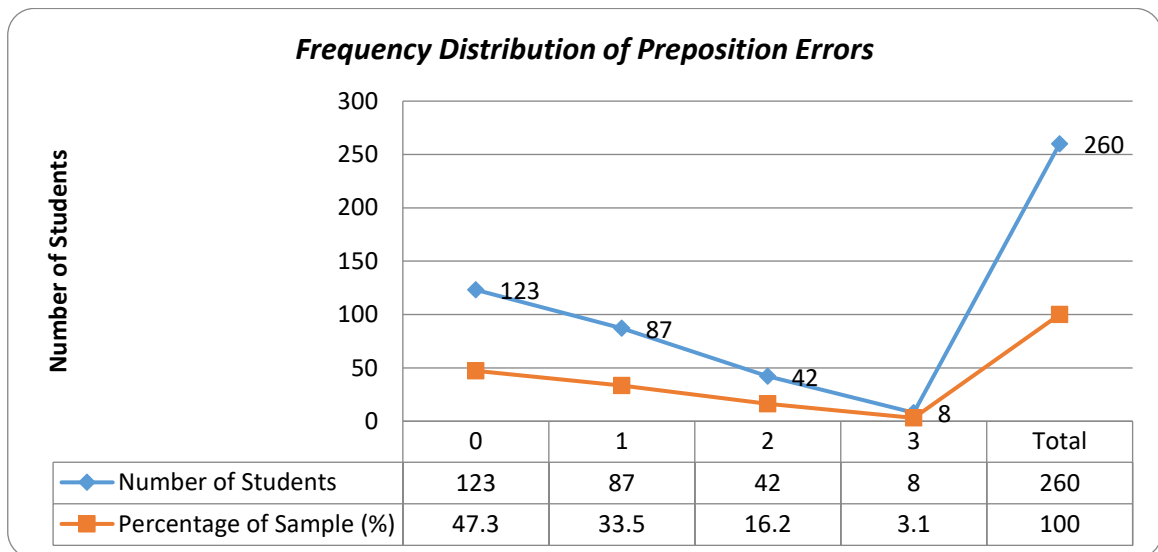


Table 1e
Frequency Distribution of Article Errors

Frequency of Errors	Number of Students	Percentage of Sample (%)
0	141	54.2
1	79	30.4
2	35	13.5
3	5	1.9
Total	260	100.0

Frequency Distribution of Preposition Errors

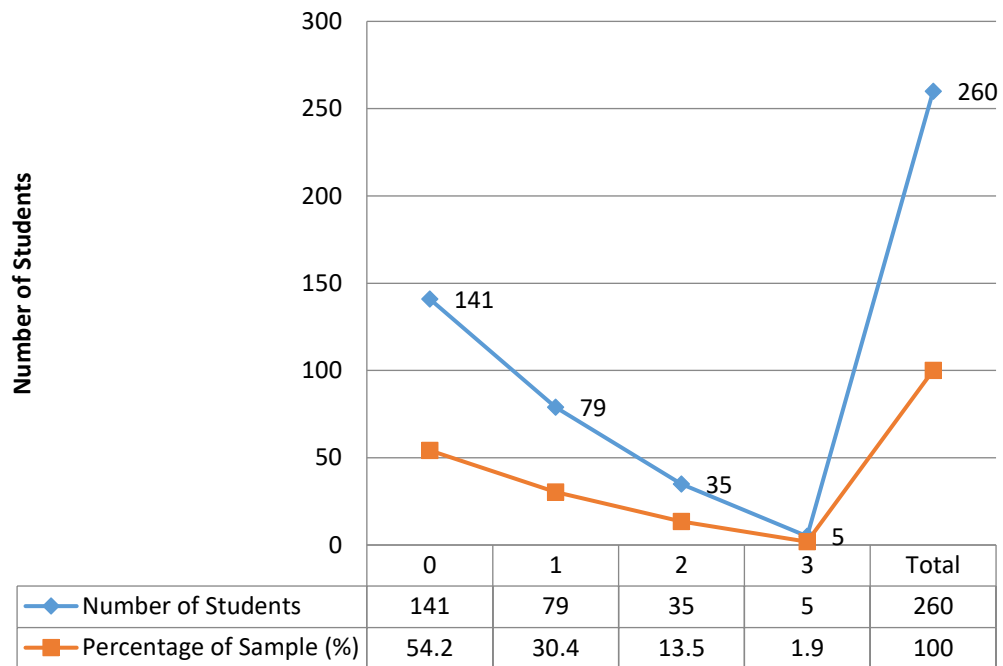


Table
Frequency Distribution of Plurality Errors

1f

Frequency of Errors	Number of Students	Percentage of Sample (%)
0	168	64.6
1	68	26.2
2	21	8.1
3	3	1.2
Total	260	100.0

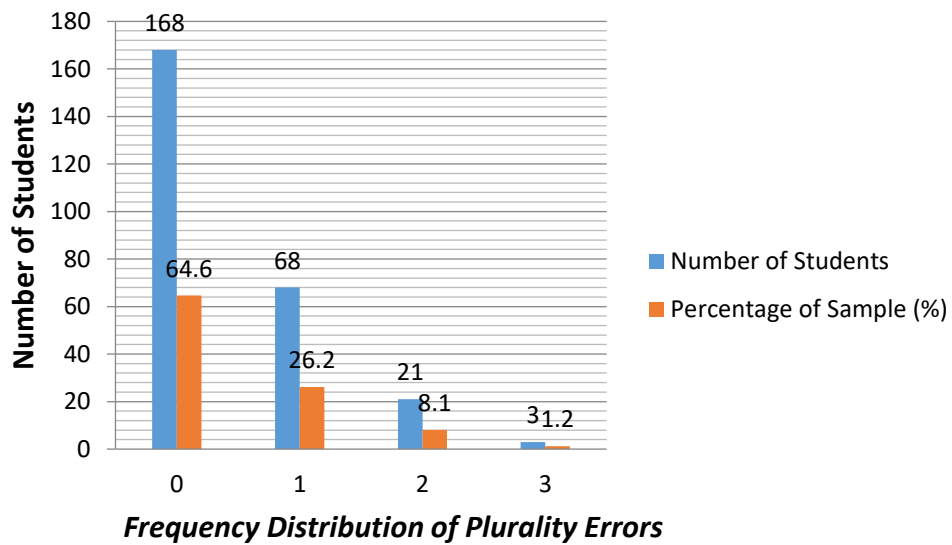
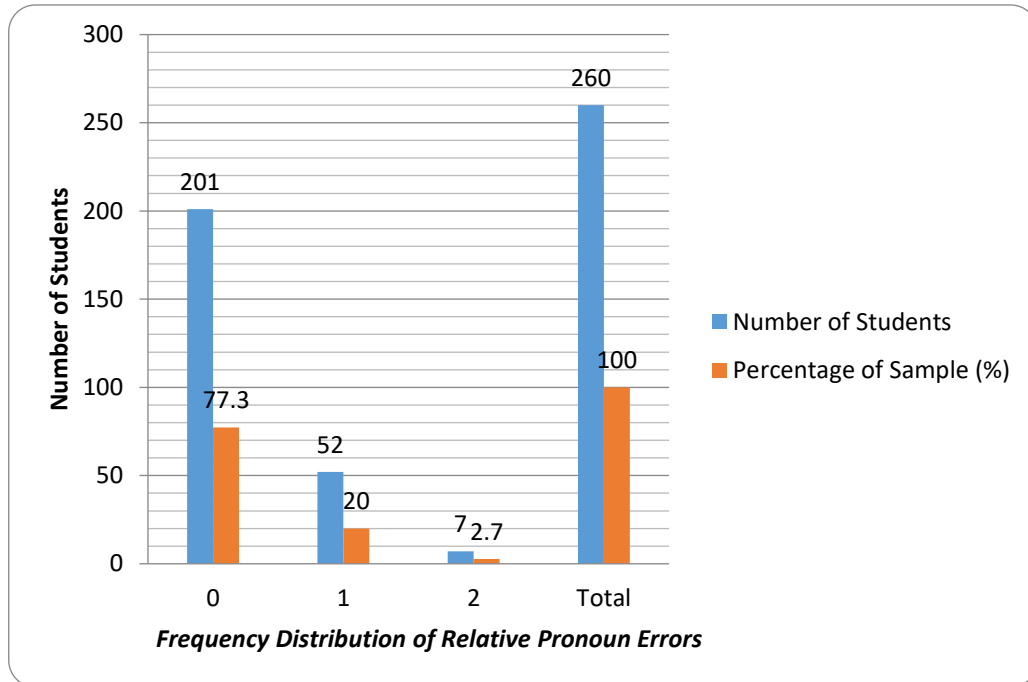


Table 1g

Frequency Distribution of Relative Pronoun Errors

Frequency of Errors	Number of Students	Percentage of Sample (%)
0	201	77.3
1	52	20.0
2	7	2.7
Total	260	100.0



Table

Frequency Distribution of Voice (Active/Passive) Errors

1h

Frequency of Errors	Number of Students	Percentage of Sample (%)
0	224	86.2
1	33	12.7
2	3	1.2
Total	260	100.0

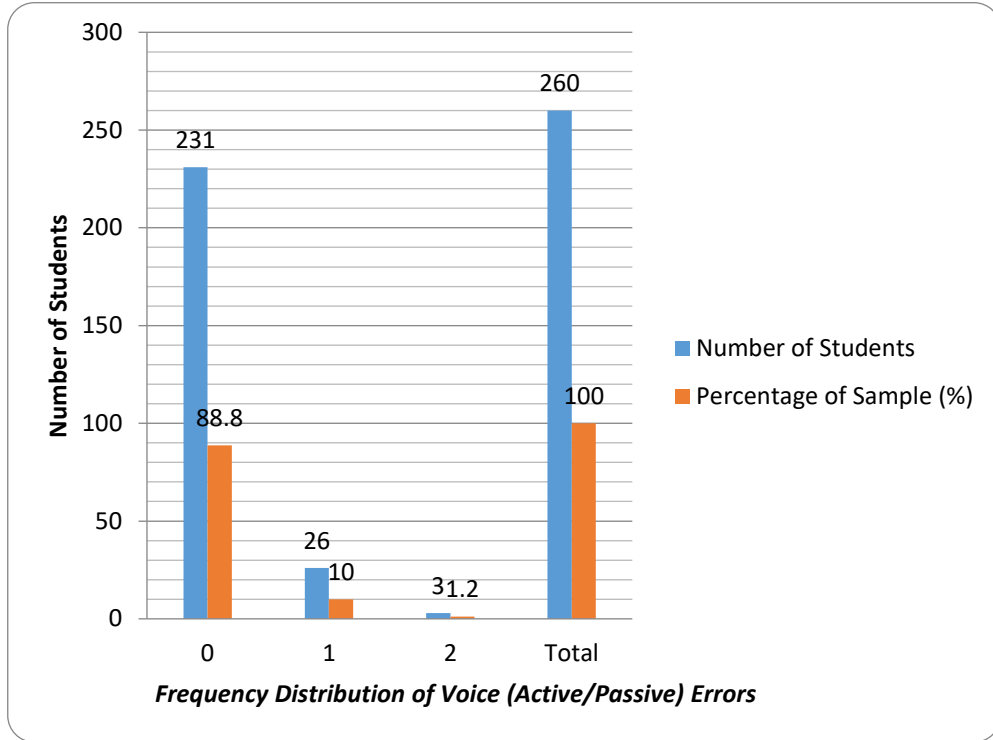


Table 1i
Frequency Distribution of Redundancy Errors

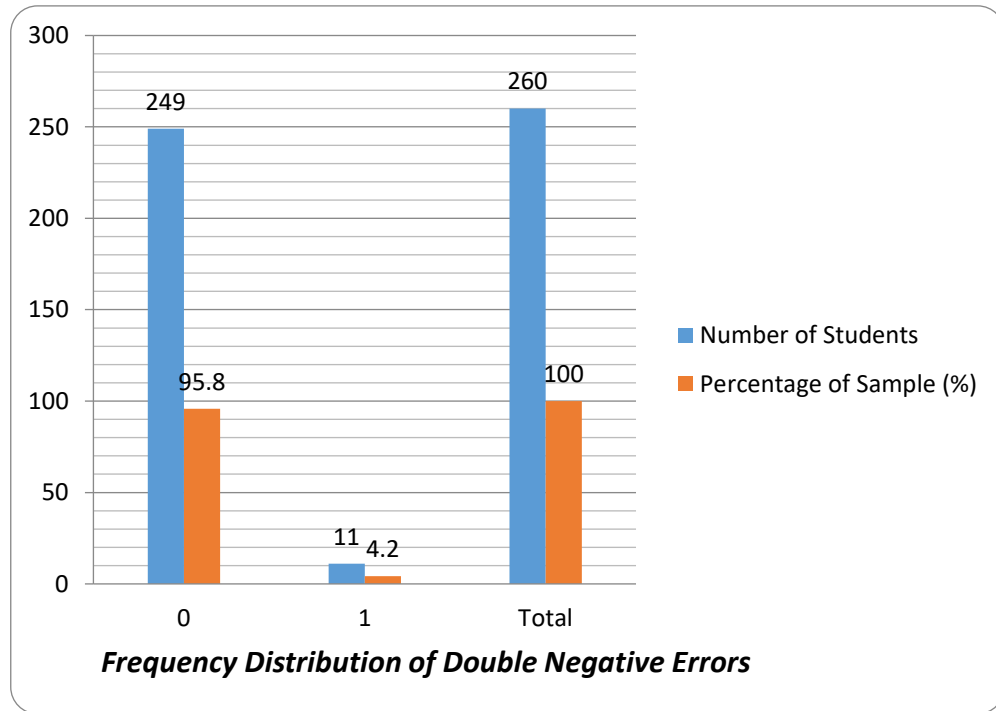
Frequency of Errors	Number of Students	Percentage of Sample (%)
0	231	88.8
1	26	10.0
2	3	1.2
Total	260	100.0



Table 1j

Frequency Distribution of Double Negative Errors

Frequency of Errors	Number of Students	Percentage of Sample (%)
0	249	95.8
1	11	4.2
Total	260	100.0



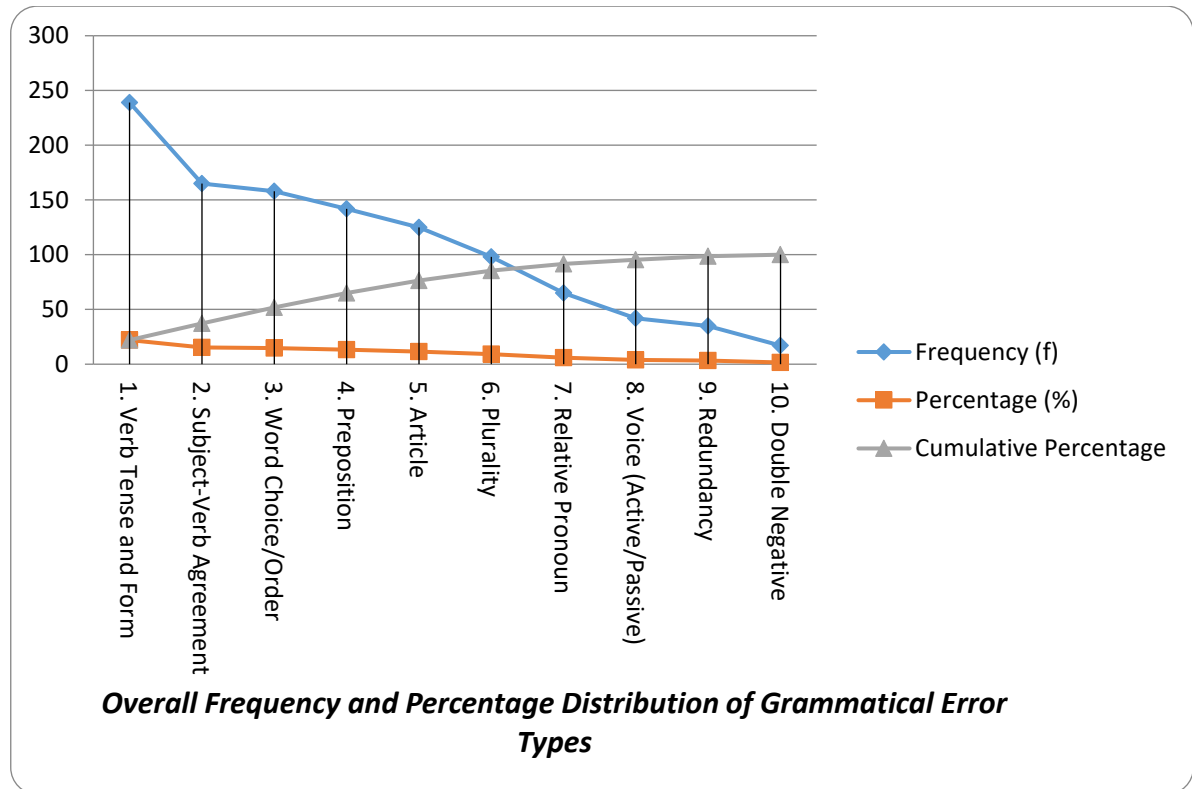
Overall Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Error Types
Table

2.

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Grammatical Error Types

Error Type	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage
1. Verb Tense and Form	239	22.02	22.02
2. Subject-Verb Agreement	165	15.22	37.24
3. Word Choice/Order	158	14.61	51.85
4. Preposition	142	13.10	64.95
5. Article	125	11.53	76.48
6. Plurality	98	9.03	85.51
7. Relative Pronoun	65	5.99	91.50
8. Voice (Active/Passive)	42	3.87	95.37

Error Type	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage
9. Redundancy	35	3.23	98.60
10. Double Negative	17	1.57	100.00
Total	1086	100.00	



As delineated in Table 2, errors related to Verb Tense and Form constituted the most prevalent category. It is accounting for over one-fifth (22.02%) of all errors. It was closely followed by Subject-Verb Agreement errors (15.22%) and Word Choice/Order errors (14.61%). Together, these three categories represented more than half (51.85%) of all grammatical inaccuracies in the corpus. The distribution shows a steep decline in frequency for the latter categories, with Double Negatives being the least common error type.

Prevalence and Distribution of Individual Error Types

A deeper analysis of the frequency distributions for each error type (as presented in Tables 1a-1j in the Methodology) reveals nuanced patterns of prevalence across the student population.

- **Widespread Challenges:** The distributions for Verb Tense (Table 1a), Subject-Verb Agreement (Table 1b), and Word Order (Table 1c) show that these were not isolated issues. For instance, while 85 students (32.7%) made no Verb Tense errors, the remaining 175 students (67.3%) committed at least one, with 83 students (31.9%) committing two or more. This

indicates that mastering these core verbal and syntactic structures is a challenge for a majority of learners.

- **Common but Not Universal Errors:** Errors in **Prepositions** (Table 1d) and **Articles** (Table 1e) also affected a significant portion of the cohort. Over half the sample (52.7%) made at least one preposition error, and 45.8% made at least one article error. This suggests that these functional categories, which are either used differently or are absent in Bangla, pose a consistent, though not universal, hurdle.
- **Localized Difficulties:** Errors in **Plurality** (Table 1f) and **Relative Pronouns** (Table 1g) were less widespread but still notable. While 64.6% of students made no plurality errors, 35.4% did, indicating a specific area of confusion for a substantial minority. Relative pronoun errors were even more localized, affecting only 22.7% of students, primarily with a single error.
- **Niche Errors:** The remaining categories – **Voice** (Table 1h), **Redundancy** (Table 1i), and **Double Negatives** (Table 1j) – were niche problems. They were produced by a small fraction of the students (13.8%, 11.2%, and 4.2% respectively), suggesting that these are advanced or idiosyncratic error types not central to the general proficiency issues in this cohort.

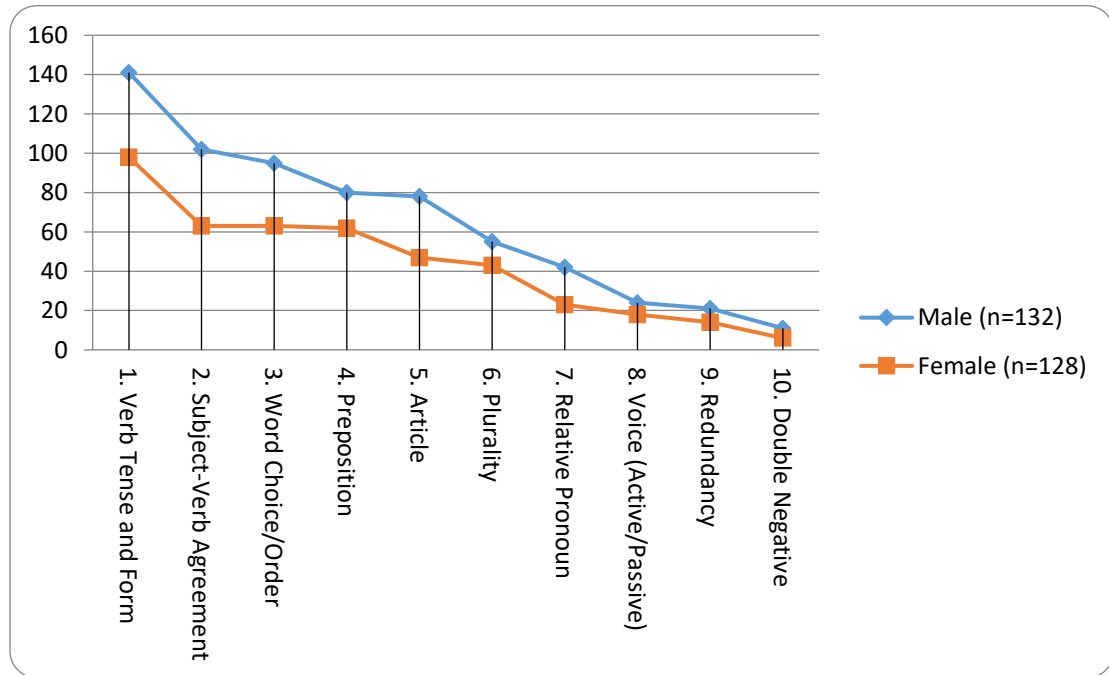
Gender-Based Analysis of Error Types

A granular examination of error distribution by gender revealed a consistent and statistically significant pattern of disparity.

Table 3

Frequency and Mean of Grammatical Errors by Gender and Type

Error Type	Male (n=132)		Female (n=128)		Total Frequency
	Frequency	Mean	Frequency	Mean	
1. Verb Tense and Form	141	1.07	98	0.77	239
2. Subject-Verb Agreement	102	0.77	63	0.49	165
3. Word Choice/Order	95	0.72	63	0.49	158
4. Preposition	80	0.61	62	0.48	142
5. Article	78	0.59	47	0.37	125
6. Plurality	55	0.42	43	0.34	98
7. Relative Pronoun	42	0.32	23	0.18	65
8. Voice (Active/Passive)	24	0.18	18	0.14	42
9. Redundancy	21	0.16	14	0.11	35
10. Double Negative	11	0.08	6	0.05	17
Total	649	4.92	437	3.41	1086



Comparison of Mean Grammatical Errors by Gender and Type

As detailed in Table 3 and visualized in Figure 2, male students had a higher mean error frequency than female students in every single one of the ten grammatical categories. The disparity was most pronounced in the top three error categories: Verb Tense (Male $M=1.07$ vs. Female $M=0.77$), Subject-Verb Agreement (Male $M=0.77$ vs. Female $M=0.49$), and Article usage (Male $M=0.59$ vs. Female $M=0.37$).

Table 4

Independent Samples T-Test of Total Errors by Gender

Variable	Gender	n	Mean	SD	t	df	p
Total Errors	Male	132	2.41	1.12	3.87	258	.001
	Female	128	1.84	0.96			

The independent-samples t-test yielded a statistically significant result, as shown in Table 4. Male students ($M = 2.41$, $SD = 1.12$) committed significantly more grammatical errors per script than female students ($M = 1.84$, $SD = 0.96$); $t(258) = 3.87$, $p = .001$. This confirms hypothesis H_2 . The analysis confirms that the gender gap in grammatical accuracy is not confined to a few areas but is a comprehensive trend across the spectrum of grammatical knowledge as reflected in written production.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide a granular, empirical map of the grammatical challenges confronting secondary-level students in Khulna, Bangladesh. The study also illuminate a significant demographic variation in writing proficiency. The results offer substantial support for the proposed

hypotheses. They also invite a multi-faceted interpretation rooted in the principles of Second Language Acquisition (SLA).

The Predominance of Verb and Syntax-Related Errors

The confirmation that verb-related errors would be most frequent underscores a fundamental weakness in mastering the core system of English sentences. The high prevalence of Verb Tense and Form errors (22.02%) suggests that students struggle to navigate the complex nuances of the English verb system. For example, intricate interplay of tenses (simple, continuous, perfect) and strict morphological rules (e.g., third-person singular '-s') etc. This system is markedly different from the relatively simpler and context-dependent verb system of Bangla (Thompson, 1987). This finding aligns with studies by Al-Badawi (2012) and Mungungu (2010), which also identified verb tense as a major hurdle for learners whose L1 has a dissimilar verbal structure. The compounded high rate of Subject-Verb Agreement errors (15.22%), a rule that is less salient and morphologically simpler in the students' L1, points to a lack of automatization of this rule, despite years of instruction.

Furthermore, the significant frequency of Word Choice/Order errors (14.61%) provides strong evidence of interlingual transfer. These errors are not random but are systematic calques from Bangla, where the standard syntactic order is Subject-Object-Verb (SOV), as opposed to English's Subject-Verb-Object (SVO) structure. Examples from the data, such as "I your help need" directly translating Bangla's "Ami tomar sahajjo dorkar," demonstrate this deep-rooted L1 interference (Gass & Selinker, 2008). This triad of errors points to a dual challenge where learners must grapple with the intralingual complexity of the English grammatical system while simultaneously combating persistent negative transfer from their native tongue.

Systemic Failure and the Error Density Metric

The overall error density of 3.03 errors per 100 words firmly supports the third hypothesis (H_3) and paints a concerning picture of writing proficiency. This metric translates to a text where clarity and fluency are severely compromised, with errors occurring, on average, every 33 words. Such a high density after 7-8 years of compulsory instruction is a stark indictment of the current pedagogical model. It suggests a system that prioritizes the memorization of discrete vocabulary and formulaic passages for exams. The development of a robust and flexible grammatical competence that can be deployed in novel, spontaneous writing situations is often bypassed. So the focus appears to be on product over process, leading to learners who can replicate but not create, who can memorize but not apply. This finding resonates with the critiques of Podder and Mazumder (2013), who highlighted the implementation gaps in communicative teaching, which, in its diluted form, often neglects the explicit instruction necessary for grammatical accuracy.

The Significant Gender Gap in Grammatical Accuracy

The most striking finding is the statistically significant superiority in grammatical accuracy demonstrated by female students. This was not a marginal difference but a consistent trend across almost all error categories. The particularly large disparities in Subject-Verb Agreement and Article usage suggest that female students may possess a sharper metalinguistic awareness – a better ability to think about and manipulate the formal properties of language (Ellis, 2008). This disparity can be interpreted through a sociocultural and motivational lens. Female students in this context may exhibit higher levels of academic conscientiousness, paying closer attention to grammatical details and adhering more strictly to instructed rules. They may also demonstrate greater integrative motivation, associating English proficiency with broader educational and personal aspirations, which leads to more engaged and diligent learning practices (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). This finding actively challenges any residual sociocultural biases in Bangladesh that underestimate the academic capabilities of girls, particularly in fields requiring linguistic precision. It demonstrates that under the current system, female students are navigating the challenges of L2 writing more successfully than their male peers, suggesting that the potential for higher proficiency exists but is not being universally realized.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has undertaken a systematic and diagnostic investigation into the grammatical errors plaguing the English writing of secondary students in Khulna, Bangladesh. The conclusions drawn are multifaceted, addressing linguistic precision, pedagogical efficacy, and sociocultural dimensions of learning. The analysis yields three definitive conclusions.

Firstly, the current instructional model for English language teaching at the secondary level in Bangladesh is demonstrably failing to equip students with a functional command of English grammar. The high error density of 3.03 errors per 100 words reveals a foundational weakness that severely impedes written communication. The specific error profile, dominated by challenges with Verb Tense and Form, Subject-Verb Agreement, and Word Choice/Order, points to a system that inadequately addresses both the complexity of the English grammatical system and the influence of L1 interference. Students are emerging from years of instruction as learners who can replicate memorized forms but lack the grammatical competence required for spontaneous and accurate written expression.

Secondly, the significant and statistically robust gender gap in performance is not merely a statistical artifact but a meaningful educational phenomenon. The finding that female students ($M = 1.84$) committed significantly fewer errors than male students ($M = 2.41$) demonstrates that, under the current system, female students are developing a sharper metalinguistic awareness and achieving greater grammatical accuracy. This challenges pervasive sociocultural stereotypes and confirms that the potential for higher L2 writing proficiency exists within the student population. It underscores the need to consider engagement and learning strategies across genders.

Thirdly, from a theoretical standpoint, the nature of the errors provides clear evidence of an interlanguage system still heavily in flux, characterized by both developmental sequences common to many L2 learners and systematic transfers from Bangla. This validates the continued relevance of the interlingual versus intralingual error distinction for diagnosing the specific challenges of this learner population.

Recommendations

For policymakers at the NCTB, this study provides an empirical mandate for curriculum revision. The syllabus must be enriched to explicitly integrate spontaneous and contextualized grammar instruction that directly targets the most persistent error types identified. For teacher training and professional development, the findings highlight an urgent need to equip educators with the skills to implement focus-on-form instruction more effectively (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999). Teachers must be trained not only to identify these common errors but also to understand their sources and to provide corrective feedback that guides learners toward restructuring their interlanguage. Training should also include strategies for differentiated instruction addressing the observed gender disparity in outcomes. For classroom practice, the study advocates for a pedagogical shift towards task-based learning, where the use of specific grammatical forms is essential for task completion. Furthermore, incorporating process writing approaches—involving cycles of drafting, receiving targeted feedback on grammar, and revising—can provide the necessary practice for automatizing correct grammatical structures.

REFERENCES

- Al-Badawi, K. (2012). *An analysis of phonetic, morphological and syntactic errors in English of Saudi BA students*. King Saud University Press.
- Alobaid, A. (2020). ICT multimedia learning affordances: Role and impact on ESL learners' writing accuracy. *Journal of Educational Technology Systems*, 49(1), 84-109.
- Banu, R., & Sussex, R. (2001). English in Bangladesh after independence: Dynamics of policy and practice. In B. Moore (Ed.), *Who's centric now? The present state of post-colonial Englishes* (pp. 122-147). Oxford University Press.
- Brown, H. D. (2007). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (5th ed.). Pearson Longman.
- Celce-Murcia, M., & Larsen-Freeman, D. (1999). *The grammar book: An ESL/EFL teacher's course* (2nd ed.). Heinle & Heinle.
- Chowdhury, R., & Kamal, M. (2014). Balancing the communication and grammar in the English curriculum at the secondary level in Bangladesh: A review of the issues. *Language in India*, 14(5), 1-17.
- Corder, S. P. (1967). The significance of learners' errors. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 5(1-4), 161-170. <https://doi.org/10.1515/iral.1967.5.1-4.161>
- Dörnyei, Z., & Ushioda, E. (2011). *Teaching and researching motivation* (2nd ed.). Pearson Education.
- Ellis, R. (2008). *The study of second language acquisition* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, R., & Barkhuizen, G. (2005). *Analysing learner language*. Oxford University Press.
- Gass, S. M., & Selinker, L. (2008). *Second language acquisition: An introductory course* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Hamid, M. O., & Baldauf, R. B. (2008). Will CLT bail out the bogged down ELT in Bangladesh? *English Today*, 24(3), 16-24. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078408000254>
- Imam, S. R. (2005). English as a global language and the question of nation-building education in Bangladesh. *Comparative Education*, 41(4), 471-486. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03050060500317588>
- Landis, J. R., & Koch, G. G. (1977). The measurement of observer agreement for categorical data. *Biometrics*, 33(1), 159-174. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2529310>
- Mungungu, S. S. (2010). *Error analysis: Investigating the writing of ESL Namibian learners* (Publication No. 1771943201) [Master's thesis, University of South Africa]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.
- National Curriculum and Textbook Board. (2012). *English for today: Classes 11-12*. Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.
- Norrish, J. (1983). *Language learners and their errors*. Macmillan Press.
- Podder, R., & Mazumder, M. (2013). The effectiveness of CLT in Bangladeshi context: A case study. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 4(18), 118-126.
- Rafi, A. S. M. (2018). Bogged down ELT, bailed-out CLT? *English Today*, 34(1), 25-31. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078417000439>

- Richards, J. C. (1971). A non-contrastive approach to error analysis. *ELT Journal*, 25(3), 204-219. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/XXV.3.204>
- Sharpe, P. J. (2009). *TOEFL iBT: The official guide to the TOEFL test* (4th ed.). McGraw-Hill.
- Sultana, S. (2020). English language teaching in Bangladesh: A critical overview. In M. O. Hamid, H. Nguyen, & R. B. Baldauf (Eds.), *Language planning for medium of instruction in Asia* (pp. 88-105). Routledge.
- Thompson, R. M. (1987). *A practical English grammar for Bangla speakers*. The University Press Limited.



Appendices

Appendix A

Comprehensive Coding Protocol for Grammatical Error Analysis

This protocol provides detailed operational definitions and examples for each grammatical error category analyzed in this study. Raters used this standardized protocol to ensure consistent identification and classification of errors across all 260 writing samples.

Table A1

Error Category Definitions and Examples

Error Category	Operational Definition	Examples from Student Writing (Incorrect → Corrected)
1. Verb Tense/Form	Use of incorrect verb tense or improperly formed verb (including participles, infinitives)	"Yesterday he go to market." → "Yesterday he went to market." "She has write a letter." → "She has written a letter."
2. Subject-Verb Agreement	Mismatch between subject number and verb form	"The students is studying." → "The students are studying." "My friend like English." → "My friend likes English."
3. Word Choice/Order	Inappropriate lexical selection or non-standard word order reflecting L1 transfer	"I gave him a good advice." → "I gave him good advice." "I school to go every day." → "I go to school every day."
4. Preposition	Incorrect preposition use, omission, or unnecessary addition	"She is good in English." → "She is good at English." "We reached to the station." → "We reached the station."
5. Article	Misuse, omission, or unnecessary use of articles (a, an, the)	"This is book." → "This is a book." "The water is important for life." → "Water is important for life."
6. Plurality	Incorrect noun pluralization or treating uncountable nouns as countable	"I have two childs." → "I have two children." "Many homeworks are given." → "Much homework is given."

Error Category	Operational Definition	Examples from Student Writing (Incorrect → Corrected)
7. Relative Pronoun	Wrong relative pronoun selection or omission where required	"The man which came is my uncle." → "The man who came is my uncle." "This is the book I bought it." → "This is the book I bought."
8. Voice	Incorrect construction or use of active/passive voice	"The letter was wrote by me." → "The letter was written by me." "English is spoken by people." → "People speak English."
9. Redundancy	Unnecessary repetition of words or ideas	"He returned back to home." → "He returned home." "Combine together the ingredients." → "Combine the ingredients."
10. Double Negative	Use of two negative forms in a single clause	"I don't know nothing." → "I don't know anything." "He doesn't have no money." → "He doesn't have any money."

Appendix B

Sample of Anonymized Student Writing with Coded Errors

Student Code: S12_F_P (Female Student, Private School)

Writing Task: Paragraph on "The Importance of Learning English"

Word Count: 98 words

Original Version with Coded Errors:

"Learning English is very importance¹. It is a international² language what³ is spoken by many peoples⁴. We can communicates⁵ with peoples from others country⁶. If we know English, we can got⁷ good job and can went⁸ to abroad⁹ for study. Many book¹⁰ are written on¹¹ English language. So we need to learn English good¹². It help¹³ us for¹⁴ higher studies and to get a better life. I am hoping¹⁵ my English will improved¹⁶."

Coded Error Analysis:

1. **Word Choice/Order** (importance → important)
2. **Article** (a international → an international)
3. **Relative Pronoun** (what → that/which)
4. **Plurality** (peoples → people)
5. **Subject-Verb Agreement** (can communicates → can communicate)

6. **Plurality** (country → countries)
7. **Verb Tense/Form** (can got → can get)
8. **Verb Tense/Form** (can went → can go)
9. **Preposition** (to abroad → abroad)
10. **Plurality** (book → books)
11. **Preposition** (on → in)
12. **Word Choice/Order** (learn English good → learn English well)
13. **Subject-Verb Agreement** (It help → It helps)
14. **Preposition** (help us for → help us with)
15. **Verb Tense/Form** (am hoping → hope)
16. **Verb Tense/Form** (will improved → will improve)

Appendix C

Data Collection Instrument - Writing Task Prompts

Task 1: Paragraph Writing (Time: 25 minutes)

Write a paragraph of about 120 words on the following topic:

"The Importance of Learning English"

In your paragraph, you may include:

- i. Why English is important in today's world
- ii. How English helps in education and career
- iii. The benefits of knowing English in Bangladesh

Task 2: Formal Application (Time: 20 minutes)

Write a formal application to the Headteacher of your school on the following situation:

You are a student of Class 8. Your class wants to organize a "Cultural Day" program in your school. Write an application to your Headteacher requesting permission to organize this program. Mention the date, venue, and activities you plan to include.

Appendix D

Inter-Rater Reliability Analysis Documentation

The Cohen's Kappa coefficient of $\kappa = .89$ was calculated based on the independent coding of 50 scripts (19.2% of the total sample) by two trained raters. The following table shows the agreement matrix for the primary error categories:

Table D1

Inter-Rater Agreement Matrix for Major Error Categories

Error Category	Percentage Agreement	Cohen's Kappa (κ)
Verb Tense/Form	92%	.87
Subject-Verb Agreement	94%	.91
Word Choice/Order	88%	.85
Preposition	90%	.86
Article	96%	.94
Overall	94%	.89

Discrepancies were primarily in borderline cases between Word Choice/Order and Preposition errors, which were resolved through consensus discussions with reference to the coding protocol.

