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## An Analytical Review of Simple Sentence Pattern Errors in EFL Writing: Causes and Pedagogical Implications

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### Abstract

This analytical review examines simple sentence pattern errors in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing, focusing on their types, causes, and pedagogical implications. Simple sentence structures represent the foundation of English writing competence; however, EFL learners frequently encounter persistent difficulties in producing grammatically accurate sentences. These difficulties are commonly reflected in errors such as subject–verb disagreement, sentence fragments, incorrect word order, omission of essential sentence elements, and misuse of verb forms. The study synthesizes findings from previous literature to identify the most recurring structural problems in learners’ writing and to explore the underlying factors contributing to these errors. The review reveals that sentence pattern errors are primarily influenced by first language (L1) interference, limited grammatical knowledge, overgeneralization of rules, insufficient writing practice, and cognitive processing constraints. In addition, instructional approaches that emphasize memorization rather than meaningful language use are found to contribute to learners’ persistent difficulties. The study further highlights several pedagogical implications, including the importance of explicit grammar instruction, guided writing practice, corrective feedback, and the integration of communicative writing activities. Recent literature also suggests that AI-based writing assistants, can support learners in improving sentence-level accuracy. Overall, this review emphasized that effective teaching of simple sentence patterns requires a balanced approach that combines form-focused instruction with meaningful writing practice.

**Keywords:** Simple sentence patterns; EFL writing; structural errors; grammar instruction; error analysis.

### 1. Introduction

Writing is a fundamental skill in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, as it reflects learners’ ability to organize ideas, apply grammatical rules, and communicate effectively. Among the different levels of writing development, mastering simple sentence patterns represents an essential foundation. Simple sentences serve as the basic building blocks of written discourse, consisting of a subject and a predicate, and sometimes including objects or complements. Despite their structural simplicity, they play an essential role in enabling learners to produce clear and grammatically correct writing.

However, research has consistently shown that EFL learners often face persistent difficulties in constructing accurate simple sentences. These difficulties are typically reflected in various structural errors such as subject–verb agreement problems, incorrect word order, sentence fragments, and run-on

sentences. Such errors not only affect grammatical accuracy but also hinder clarity and coherence in writing. Studies in second language writing suggest that these problems are common across different educational contexts and proficiency levels, indicating that simple sentence construction remains a challenging area for many learners (e.g., Ferris, 2002; Ellis, 2008).

The occurrence of these errors can be attributed to several factors. One major explanation is first language (L1) interference, where learners transfer grammatical structures from their native language into English. In addition, limited grammatical knowledge, insufficient writing practice, and traditional teaching methods that emphasize memorization over communicative use may also contribute to these difficulties. As a result, learners often struggle to apply sentence patterns accurately in real writing tasks.

Given the importance of sentence-level accuracy in developing overall writing proficiency, it is essential to examine how these structural problems have been addressed in previous research. Therefore, this paper provides an analytical review of simple sentence pattern errors in EFL writing, focusing on their main causes and the pedagogical implications suggested in the literature. By synthesizing existing studies, this review aims to highlight recurring error patterns and discuss effective instructional approaches that can support EFL learners in improving their writing skills.

## **2. Conceptual Background**

Understanding simple sentence patterns is essential in EFL writing because they form the basic structure upon which more complex grammatical constructions are built. In English grammar, a simple sentence typically consists of a single independent clause that expresses a complete idea, usually made up of a subject and a predicate. Despite their structural simplicity, simple sentences require accurate grammatical control, and learners often face difficulties in applying correct sentence patterns in writing.

### **2.1 Simple Sentence Patterns in English Grammar**

A simple sentence is the most basic form of sentence structure in English, consisting of a single independent clause that expresses a complete idea. It typically contains a subject and a predicate, and it may also include additional elements such as objects, complements, and adverbials, which help to provide more detail and clarity to the message being communicated. According to Quirk et al. (1985), a simple sentence is characterized by only one finite verb phrase and does not contain subordinate or coordinate clauses. This structural simplicity makes it the foundational unit of English syntax, as it represents the smallest complete grammatical construction that can stand alone with full meaning. Mastery of simple sentence patterns is therefore considered essential for language learners, since it serves as the starting point for developing more complex sentence structures such as compound and complex sentences.

In EFL contexts, simple sentence patterns are often introduced early in grammar instruction to help learners develop accuracy, clarity, and confidence in writing. At the initial stages of language learning, students are typically encouraged to focus on producing correct and meaningful basic sentences before progressing to more advanced structures. Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) emphasized that understanding sentence structure is fundamental for developing grammatical competence, which directly influences learners' overall writing performance. From this perspective, sentence-level knowledge is not only about memorizing rules but also about applying them appropriately in written communication.

Therefore, learners who fail to master simple sentence patterns may experience persistent difficulties in producing coherent and grammatically accurate written texts. These difficulties can later affect their ability to organize ideas effectively and develop more complex writing tasks. As a result, strong control of simple sentence structures is widely viewed as a necessary step in building overall writing proficiency in EFL learning contexts.

## **2.2 Sentence Structure and Writing Development in EFL Learning**

Sentence structure plays a central role in second language writing development, as it directly affects how clearly and effectively learners can express their ideas. Hyland (2003) argued that writing is not only a linguistic skill but also a cognitive and social process that requires control over grammar, vocabulary, and organization. This means that learners must coordinate multiple aspects of language use at the same time, particularly at the sentence level where meaning is first shaped and communicated. Accurate sentence structure is therefore essential for ensuring clarity, coherence, and precision in written communication, while structural weaknesses often lead to ambiguity or misunderstanding in the reader's interpretation.

At the sentence level, accurate structure is especially important because it forms the foundation upon which larger units of writing, such as paragraphs and essays, are built (Fortuna, 2025). Without sufficient control of sentence construction, learners may struggle to produce logically connected ideas or maintain grammatical consistency across their writing. For this reason, sentence-level competence is widely considered a key indicator of overall writing ability in second language learning contexts.

EFL learners often progress through stages of interlanguage development, during which they gradually approximate target language structures. Selinker (1972) explained that interlanguage is a transitional linguistic system influenced by both the native language and the target language, reflecting learners' ongoing process of hypothesis testing and rule formation. As a result, learners may produce non-standard sentence patterns due to incomplete acquisition of English grammar rules. These developmental stages are natural in second language learning, but they also explain why sentence structure errors persist even at higher levels of proficiency, as learners continue refining their understanding of English grammatical systems.

## **2.3 Error Analysis and Sentence Pattern Difficulties**

Error analysis provides a systematic framework for identifying and understanding the types and sources of learners' grammatical problems in second language writing. It allows researchers and teachers to examine not only what kinds of errors learners make, but also why these errors occur and how they reflect underlying learning processes. Corder (1967) emphasized that learner errors should not be viewed simply as signs of failure, but rather as important evidence of the developmental stages in language acquisition. From this perspective, errors are considered a natural and necessary part of learning, as they provide insight into how learners construct and test their understanding of the target language system.

Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) further contributed to this understanding by classifying errors into developmental and interlingual categories. Developmental errors arise from the natural process of learning the target language, while interlingual errors result from transfer from the learners' first language. In the context of simple sentence patterns, both types of errors are frequently present. This

combination reflects the complexity of grammar acquisition in EFL environments, where learners are simultaneously influenced by internal developmental processes and external linguistic interference. In EFL writing, sentence-level errors are among the most commonly observed problems, particularly those related to incorrect word order, subject–verb disagreement, and fragmentary sentence structures. These recurring issues suggest that learners often struggle to fully control basic grammatical rules when producing written sentences (Hmouma, 2014).

### 3. Types of Simple Sentence Pattern Errors

EFL learners frequently produce a range of structural errors when constructing simple sentences. These errors often reflect gaps in grammatical knowledge, negative transfer from the first language, or incomplete mastery of English sentence structure rules. The most common types of simple sentence pattern errors identified in the literature are outlined below.

#### 3.1 Subject–Verb Agreement Errors

One of the most frequent errors in EFL writing is incorrect agreement between the subject and the verb, which occurs when the verb form does not match the subject in number or person. Learners may use singular verbs with plural subjects or vice versa, leading to grammatically incorrect sentences that may also affect meaning. For example, students may write “*She go to school*” instead of “*She goes to school*”. This type of error often results from structural differences between English and the learners’ first language, especially when the native language does not mark subject–verb agreement in the same way, or from insufficient understanding of English verb conjugation rules (Hmouma, 2024).

According to Ferris (2002), subject–verb agreement errors are highly persistent in EFL writing and can be observed even among intermediate-level learners. These errors tend to recur despite instruction and practice, indicating that they are not simply surface mistakes but reflect deeper gaps in grammatical control. As Ferris further suggests, such errors can significantly affect sentence accuracy and reduce the clarity and professionalism of learners’ written production, making them a key focus area in grammar instruction and corrective feedback.

#### 3.2 Sentence Fragments

Sentence fragments occur when a group of words is written as if it were a complete sentence, but it does not express a fully developed idea. In most cases, this problem arises when learners omit essential grammatical components such as the subject, the main verb, or both, resulting in incomplete constructions. For example, a learner might write “*Because I was tired*” without adding an independent clause, leaving the thought unfinished and grammatically dependent. Such errors reduce clarity and make it difficult for readers to interpret the intended meaning.

Ellis (2008) noted that sentence fragments are particularly common in the early stages of second language writing development. At this stage, learners often have limited control over syntactic structures and may focus more on conveying meaning than on ensuring grammatical completeness (Klila, 2025). As a result, fragments reflect developmental progress in interlanguage rather than simple carelessness. Over time, with increased exposure, instruction, and practice, learners are expected to develop greater syntactic control and produce more complete and coherent sentence structures.

### 3.3 Run-on Sentences and Comma Splices

Run-on sentences occur when two or more independent clauses are incorrectly joined without appropriate punctuation or coordinating conjunctions. In such cases, learners fail to clearly mark where one complete idea ends and another begins, which results in a long and confusing sentence structure (Ali et al., 2023). For example, a learner may write *“I went to school I met my friend”* instead of properly separating or connecting the ideas. This type of error often affects readability and makes the writing less coherent.

As noted by Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999), these errors indicate a lack of understanding of sentence boundary conventions and coordination rules. They suggest that learners may not yet fully grasp how to properly link independent clauses, highlighting the need for focused instruction on sentence structure, punctuation, and cohesive writing strategies. A comma splice is a specific type of run-on sentence in which independent clauses are incorrectly joined using only a comma without a coordinating conjunction. For instance, *“I went to school, I met my friend”* is grammatically incorrect because the comma alone is not sufficient to connect two complete sentences. Both run-on sentences and comma splices reflect a weakness in understanding how sentence boundaries should be marked in English writing.

### 3.4 Incorrect Word Order

Word order errors involve placing sentence elements in an incorrect sequence, which can distort meaning and reduce the clarity of written communication. In English, the standard sentence structure is typically Subject–Verb–Object (SVO), and this fixed order plays an important role in ensuring that sentences are easily understood by readers. However, EFL learners may struggle with this structure, especially when they are not fully familiar with English syntactic rules.

According to Cook (2016), word order errors are particularly common among learners whose first language has a different syntactic structure from English. This suggests that cross-linguistic differences play a major role in shaping sentence construction difficulties, highlighting the importance of explicit instruction and practice in English sentence patterns for EFL learners. These difficulties are often influenced by the transfer of word order patterns from the learners’ first language. When the native language follows a different syntactic structure, learners may apply those patterns directly to English sentences, resulting in unnatural or incorrect constructions. For example, they may place the verb or object in positions that do not conform to English grammar rules, which can significantly affect sentence accuracy and meaning.

### 3.5 Omission of Essential Sentence Elements

Learners may omit necessary sentence components such as subjects, verbs, or objects, resulting in incomplete or unclear sentences that fail to convey a full idea. This type of error often affects the grammatical integrity of the sentence and can make it difficult for the reader to understand the intended meaning. For example, a learner might write *“Went to school yesterday”* instead of *“He went to school yesterday”*, where the absence of the subject creates an incomplete structure.

Corder (1967) suggested that omissions of this kind are part of the natural developmental process in second language acquisition. From this perspective, such errors are not simply mistakes, but indicators of

learners' evolving interlanguage system. As learners gain more exposure and practice, they gradually develop greater control over sentence structure and reduce the frequency of these omissions. Such omissions are commonly associated with limited grammatical competence, where learners have not yet fully mastered the rules required to construct complete English sentences. In some cases, they may also result from the influence of spoken language patterns, where subjects or other elements are implied rather than explicitly stated.

### **3.6 Tense and Auxiliary Verb Errors in Simple Sentences**

Although simple sentences are structurally basic, learners often experience difficulties in correctly applying verb tense forms and auxiliary verbs. This can result in sentences that are grammatically incorrect or confusing, even when the overall structure appears simple. For instance, learners may produce sentences such as *"He go to school yesterday"* instead of the correct form *"He went to school yesterday"*. Such errors demonstrate problems not only with tense selection but also with the consistent application of grammatical rules in writing.

Ellis (2008) noted that errors in verb tense and auxiliary usage reflect underlying challenges in applying grammatical rules consistently in written production. These errors highlight the developmental nature of second language acquisition, where learners gradually refine their understanding of verb systems through instruction, exposure, and practice. These difficulties are often linked to incomplete mastery of English verb systems, where learners struggle to distinguish between present, past, and auxiliary verb functions. In addition, Yawiloeng (2025) pointed out that irregular verb forms and the complexity of English tense usage can increase the likelihood of errors, especially in spontaneous writing tasks. As a result, learners may rely on simplified or incorrect verb forms when constructing sentences.

## **4. Causes of Sentence Pattern Errors in EFL Writing**

Errors in constructing simple sentence patterns among EFL learners do not occur randomly; rather, they are the result of several linguistic, cognitive, and instructional factors. Understanding these causes is essential for explaining why learners repeatedly struggle with sentence-level accuracy in English writing.

### **4.1 First Language Interference**

One of the most widely recognized causes of sentence pattern errors in EFL writing is negative transfer from the learner's first language (L1). This occurs when learners apply the grammatical rules, sentence structures, or word order patterns of their native language while producing English sentences. As a result, their writing may reflect non-standard or incorrect constructions in English, particularly when the two languages differ significantly in syntactic organization. Such transfer is especially evident in sentence formation, where learners may directly map L1 structures onto English without adjusting for grammatical differences.

Selinker (1972), in his interlanguage theory, explained that learner language is shaped significantly by L1 interference and represents a transitional system between the native language and the target language. He further argues that this influence can persist over time, especially when learners do not receive sufficient exposure, input, and corrective feedback in the target language. Therefore, overcoming L1-based sentence errors requires sustained practice and focused instruction in English sentence structure. This influence can

lead to persistent errors in sentence construction, including incorrect word order, missing elements, or inappropriate verb usage.

#### **4.2 Limited Grammatical Knowledge**

Many EFL learners struggle with sentence patterns due to insufficient understanding of English grammar rules. Without a solid foundation in syntax, learners often find it difficult to construct complete, accurate, and meaningful sentences. This limitation affects their ability to apply grammatical rules correctly when forming even simple sentence structures, leading to frequent structural errors in their writing. As a result, their sentences may lack clarity, completeness, or grammatical correctness.

According to Ellis (2008), limited grammatical competence has a direct impact on learners' ability to construct accurate and meaningful sentences, especially during the early and intermediate stages of second language learning. This suggests that developing a strong grammatical foundation is essential for improving sentence-level accuracy and overall writing proficiency in EFL contexts. This problem is particularly evident when learners are required to produce sentences independently, without models or guided support. In such situations, gaps in grammatical knowledge become more visible, especially in areas such as verb usage, sentence completeness, and word order. Over time, these weaknesses can also affect learners' ability to progress to more complex writing tasks.

#### **4.3 Overgeneralization of Rules**

Learners sometimes apply grammatical rules too broadly, which leads to systematic and recurring errors in sentence construction. This phenomenon occurs when learners extend a rule beyond its correct use, resulting in incorrect sentence forms. For instance, they may treat irregular verbs as regular ones by adding standard past tense endings (e.g., "goed" instead of "went"), or they may apply a single sentence pattern across different contexts where it is not appropriate. Such errors indicate that learners are actively attempting to internalize grammatical rules, but have not yet developed a fully accurate understanding of their limitations and exceptions.

Richards (1974) identified overgeneralization as a common developmental error in second language acquisition, emphasizing that it results from learners' attempts to simplify and systematize complex grammar rules. This perspective suggests that such errors are a natural part of the learning process and indicate active engagement with the language rather than random mistakes. Overgeneralization is particularly common in early and intermediate stages of second language acquisition, when learners are still forming hypotheses about how the target language works. During this stage, they often simplify complex grammatical systems by applying familiar rules to unfamiliar structures, which can lead to consistent but incorrect usage patterns (Mubarok & Budiono, 2022). While these errors may appear as mistakes, they actually reflect an important stage in language development.

#### **4.4 Lack of Writing Practice**

Insufficient exposure to writing activities can also contribute significantly to persistent sentence pattern errors among EFL learners. When learners are not provided with regular and meaningful opportunities to practice writing, they may struggle to internalize correct sentence structures and grammatical patterns. As a result, their written production often remains inconsistent, with recurring structural errors appearing

even after instruction. Limited practice also reduces learners' ability to apply grammatical rules automatically, which is essential for producing accurate and fluent sentences.

In addition, Rahmani (2023) stated that the lack of sustained writing practice prevents learners from receiving repeated reinforcement of correct sentence forms. Without this reinforcement, grammatical knowledge may remain theoretical rather than procedural, meaning learners understand the rules but cannot effectively apply them in actual writing tasks. Hyland (2003) emphasizes that writing development requires continuous practice and feedback, as grammatical knowledge alone is not sufficient for accurate sentence production. This highlights the importance of integrating frequent writing activities with instructional support, ensuring that learners have both the opportunity and guidance needed to improve their sentence-level accuracy over time.

#### **4.5 Ineffective Teaching Methods**

Traditional grammar teaching methods that focus heavily on memorization and explicit rule explanation, rather than meaningful use and practical application, may not effectively support learners' sentence writing development. In such approaches, learners are often required to learn grammatical rules in isolation and reproduce them in controlled exercises without sufficient opportunities to apply them in authentic writing contexts. As a result, students may develop theoretical knowledge of grammar but still struggle to use it accurately when constructing sentences independently.

Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) argued that grammar instruction should be contextualized and integrated with meaningful writing tasks in order to help learners apply sentence structures correctly. This approach emphasizes the importance of combining form-focused instruction with communicative practice, enabling learners to develop both accuracy and functional use of grammar in writing. This gap between knowledge and application can lead to persistent sentence pattern errors, as learners are unable to transfer what they have learned into real writing situations. Without contextual practice, grammatical rules may remain abstract and disconnected from actual communication needs. Consequently, learners may continue to produce structurally incorrect sentences despite having been exposed to the relevant rules.

#### **4.6 Cognitive Processing Difficulties**

Writing in a second language requires learners to manage multiple linguistic and cognitive demands at the same time, including grammar, vocabulary selection, and the organization of ideas. This simultaneous processing makes writing a highly complex task, particularly for EFL learners who are still developing their language proficiency. When learners attempt to focus on expressing meaning while also applying grammatical rules, their attention is often divided, which can negatively affect the accuracy of sentence construction.

According to Kellogg (1996), limited working memory capacity in writing can lead to incomplete or inaccurate sentence formation. This suggests that cognitive constraints play an important role in shaping learners' writing performance, particularly at the sentence level, where multiple processes must be coordinated simultaneously. Learners may produce sentences that contain structural errors such as missing elements, incorrect verb forms, or poorly organized sentence patterns. These issues are more

likely to occur in less proficient learners who have not yet automatized basic grammatical structures. In such cases, the effort required to generate ideas in a second language can interfere with their ability to monitor sentence-level accuracy.

## **5. Pedagogical Implications**

The analysis of simple sentence pattern errors in EFL writing suggests several important implications for teaching practice. Addressing these errors effectively requires a shift from traditional grammar instruction toward more interactive, meaningful, and learner-centered approaches that support both accuracy and writing development.

### **5.1 Emphasizing Explicit and Contextualized Grammar Instruction**

Teachers should provide clear and explicit instruction on sentence structure while also embedding grammar within meaningful and communicative contexts. This means that learners need direct explanations of how sentence patterns work, but these explanations should not be limited to isolated rules or mechanical drills. Instead, grammar should be presented through authentic examples, reading passages, and guided writing activities that demonstrate how sentence structures function in real communication. Such an approach helps learners see grammar as a practical tool for meaning-making rather than as a set of abstract rules to memorize.

Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) argue that grammar is most effectively learned when it is connected to actual language use, enabling learners to understand how sentence patterns function in communication. This perspective highlights the importance of combining explicit instruction with meaningful practice, ensuring that learners can both understand and apply sentence structures effectively in their writing. When sentence structures are taught through contextualized input, learners are more likely to understand how different elements of a sentence interact to produce clear meaning. This also supports retention, as learners can associate grammatical forms with actual usage rather than disconnected explanations. Over time, this integration of form and meaning contributes to more accurate and flexible use of sentence patterns in writing.

### **5.2 Integrating Writing Practice with Grammar Learning**

Frequent writing practice is essential for developing accurate sentence construction in EFL learning. When learners are regularly engaged in writing activities, they have more opportunities to apply grammatical rules, experiment with sentence structures, and gradually internalize correct forms. This repeated exposure helps reduce sentence-level errors and supports the development of more automatic and accurate writing skills over time.

Hyland (2003) emphasizes that writing improvement depends not only on continuous practice but also on meaningful feedback. This combination ensures that learners are not only producing written work but also receiving guidance on how to improve their sentence accuracy. As a result, structured practice supported by feedback plays an essential role in strengthening learners' overall writing competence. To be most effective, learners should be given structured writing tasks that progress gradually in difficulty. Instruction can begin with simple sentence formation exercises, where students focus on constructing grammatically correct basic sentences. Over time, tasks can be extended to more complex activities such

as combining sentences, writing short paragraphs, and eventually producing longer texts. This step-by-step progression allows learners to build confidence while systematically improving their control over sentence patterns.

### **5.3 Providing Corrective Feedback**

Error correction plays a key role in helping learners recognize and improve their sentence structure problems in EFL writing. Through feedback, learners become aware of recurring grammatical issues and are guided toward producing more accurate sentence patterns. This process not only highlights errors but also supports learners in understanding why those errors occur and how they can be corrected in future writing tasks. As a result, error correction contributes directly to the development of more accurate and controlled sentence construction.

Ferris (2002) highlights that focused corrective feedback on recurring grammatical errors, such as sentence structure issues, can significantly improve writing accuracy over time. This suggests that consistent attention to specific error patterns, rather than general correction, is more effective in helping learners develop long-term improvement in their writing skills. Teachers are encouraged to use both direct and indirect feedback strategies depending on learners' proficiency levels and learning needs. Direct feedback involves providing the correct form explicitly, which can be especially useful for lower-level learners who may struggle to self-correct. In contrast, indirect feedback signals the presence of an error without providing the correction, encouraging learners to identify and revise their own mistakes. This combination allows for a more flexible and learner-centered approach to grammar instruction.

### **5.4 Teaching Sentence Patterns through Modeling and Drills**

Using model sentences and controlled practice activities can significantly help EFL learners internalize correct sentence structures. Model sentences provide clear examples of how grammatical rules are applied in real contexts, allowing learners to observe correct patterns before attempting to produce them independently. Through repeated exposure to these models, learners gradually develop a clearer understanding of how simple sentences are constructed and how different sentence elements function together to create meaning.

According to Ellis (2008), structured practice plays an important role in the proceduralization of grammatical knowledge. This means that through repeated and guided use, learners gradually move from simply knowing grammar rules to being able to apply them automatically and accurately in their writing. Controlled practice activities such as pattern drills, sentence transformation exercises, and guided writing tasks further reinforce this learning process. Pattern drills allow learners to practice specific sentence structures repeatedly, which helps reduce errors and build accuracy.

### **5.5 Promoting Communicative Writing Activities**

In addition to controlled exercises, learners should also be exposed to communicative writing tasks that encourage the use of language in more authentic and meaningful contexts. While controlled activities are useful for building accuracy, communicative tasks help learners transfer their grammatical knowledge into real writing situations where meaning and communication are the main focus. This balance is important for developing both fluency and accuracy in sentence construction.

Activities such as journaling, descriptive writing, and collaborative writing are particularly effective in this regard. Hyland (2003) concluded that journaling allows learners to express personal ideas regularly, which promotes frequent practice of sentence structures in a low-pressure environment. Descriptive writing encourages learners to organize ideas clearly while using appropriate sentence patterns to describe people, places, or events. Collaborative writing, on the other hand, enables learners to interact with peers, negotiate meaning, and jointly construct sentences, which can enhance awareness of grammatical accuracy through peer support and discussion.

### **5.6 Using Technology and AI-Assisted Tools**

Modern educational technologies, including grammar checkers and AI-based writing assistants, have become important tools in supporting EFL learners in identifying and correcting sentence-level errors. These technologies are particularly useful because they allow learners to receive immediate feedback on their writing, which helps them quickly recognize structural problems such as incorrect word order, subject–verb disagreement, and incomplete sentences. As a result, learners can revise their work more efficiently and develop greater awareness of common grammatical issues.

Li (2020) noted that AI-based writing tools can significantly support EFL learners in improving sentence-level accuracy by providing timely and focused feedback. This highlights the potential of integrating technology into writing instruction as a complementary approach to traditional teaching methods, particularly in enhancing learners' ability to construct grammatically accurate sentences. In addition, Klella and Mrghem (2024) stated that these tools encourage independent learning by enabling students to check and reflect on their own writing without relying entirely on teacher correction. This promotes learner autonomy and allows for continuous practice outside the classroom, which is essential for developing writing proficiency. Over time, repeated interaction with feedback from these tools can help learners internalize correct sentence structures and reduce recurring errors.

## **6. Discussion**

The discussion synthesized insights from the reviewed literature to explain why these errors persist across different learner levels and how they are shaped by linguistic, cognitive, and instructional factors. In addition, it highlights the role of teaching practices, and feedback strategies, providing an integrated understanding of sentence-level difficulties in EFL writing development.

### **6.1 Persistence of Simple Sentence Pattern Errors in EFL Writing**

The findings synthesized in this review indicate that EFL learners consistently face persistent difficulties in constructing accurate simple sentence patterns. These difficulties are reflected in recurring structural errors such as subject–verb disagreement, sentence fragments, incorrect word order, and misuse of verb forms. Such errors are frequently observed across different writing tasks and proficiency levels, suggesting that they are not occasional mistakes but stable patterns in learners' written production.

Across the reviewed literature, these errors are not isolated phenomena but systematic issues that persist even after instruction and practice. This indicates that learners often struggle with fully internalizing English sentence structure rules, particularly at the level of basic sentence construction (Rahmani, 2023). As a result, their writing may remain grammatically inconsistent, affecting clarity and overall

communicative effectiveness. The recurrence of these structural problems further suggests that simple sentence formation continues to be a challenging area in EFL writing development. Despite its foundational role in language learning, mastery of simple sentence patterns appears to require sustained instruction, practice, and feedback before learners can achieve consistent accuracy in their written output.

### **6.2 Multiple Causes of Sentence Pattern Errors**

One key insight from the reviewed studies is that sentence pattern errors in EFL writing result from the interaction of multiple factors rather than a single cause. This suggests that learners' difficulties in constructing accurate sentences are complex and cannot be explained by one-dimensional perspectives alone. Instead, these errors emerge from a combination of linguistic, cognitive, and instructional influences that work together during the writing process.

L1 interference is one of the most dominant explanations identified in the literature. Learners often transfer syntactic rules, word order patterns, and grammatical structures from their native language into English, which leads to non-standard sentence constructions. This transfer is especially evident when there are significant structural differences between the two languages. Such interference can persist over time if it is not addressed through explicit instruction and consistent practice. This finding aligns with Selinker's (1972) interlanguage theory, which describes learner language as a transitional system shaped by both L1 influence and target language input. From this perspective, learner errors are a natural part of language development and reflect the ongoing process of hypothesis testing and restructuring of grammatical knowledge.

In addition to L1 interference, limited grammatical competence and insufficient exposure to structured writing practice are frequently identified as contributing factors (Ellis, 2008). When learners lack a solid understanding of English grammar rules or do not engage in regular writing practice, they are more likely to produce inaccurate sentence patterns. Over time, these combined factors contribute to the persistence of structural errors in EFL writing.

### **6.3 Influence of Instructional Practices on Sentence Accuracy**

Another important observation from the reviewed literature is the significant influence of instructional practices on learners' sentence accuracy. Teaching methods play a central role in shaping how effectively learners understand and apply sentence patterns in their writing. When instruction does not adequately support practical language use, learners are more likely to continue producing structural errors despite repeated exposure to grammar rules. Hyland (2003) emphasized that writing development requires both form-focused instruction and meaningful language use. This highlights the importance of combining explicit grammar teaching with communicative writing practice, ensuring that learners develop not only grammatical awareness but also the ability to apply sentence structures effectively in real writing situations.

Traditional grammar teaching methods that emphasize rule memorization and decontextualized explanations appear insufficient in addressing persistent sentence-level errors. In such approaches, learners are often able to recall grammatical rules but struggle to apply them accurately in actual writing tasks. This gap between knowledge and use contributes to ongoing difficulties in sentence construction

and limits learners' writing development. In contrast, more effective instructional approaches integrate grammar instruction with communicative writing tasks, guided practice, and corrective feedback. These approaches allow learners to apply grammatical structures in meaningful contexts, which enhances both understanding and retention. Through guided activities, learners are supported in using sentence patterns actively rather than passively memorizing rules.

#### **6.4 Role of Error Correction Strategies in Sentence Development**

The literature also highlights the important role of error correction strategies in improving learners' sentence-level performance in EFL writing. Error correction is widely recognized as a key instructional tool that helps learners become aware of their grammatical weaknesses and gradually improve the accuracy of their sentence construction. Through feedback, learners are able to identify recurring structural problems and understand how to avoid them in future writing tasks.

Ferris (2002) argued that focused and consistent feedback on recurring sentence-level errors can gradually improve writing accuracy over time. This suggests that attention to repeated structural problems, rather than random or general correction, is more effective in supporting long-term improvement. However, the overall effectiveness of feedback also depends on how it is delivered and whether learners are provided with sufficient opportunities to revise their writing and reflect on their errors, which strengthens the learning process.

Different studies present varying perspectives on the most effective type of feedback. Some research supports direct corrective feedback, where teachers explicitly provide the correct form of the error. This approach is often useful for less proficient learners who may not yet have the ability to self-correct. In contrast, other studies advocate indirect feedback, where errors are indicated but not corrected, encouraging learners to actively engage in identifying and revising their own mistakes. This method is considered more beneficial for developing deeper grammatical awareness and learner autonomy.

#### **7. Conclusion**

This analytical review has examined simple sentence pattern errors in EFL writing, focusing on their types, underlying causes, and pedagogical implications. The findings from the reviewed literature indicate that EFL learners frequently experience persistent difficulties in constructing accurate simple sentences, particularly in areas such as subject-verb agreement, word order, sentence completeness, and verb usage. These structural problems remain common across different proficiency levels and learning contexts, suggesting that sentence-level accuracy continues to be a challenging aspect of second language writing development.

The review further shows that these errors are not caused by a single factor but result from the interaction of several influences. The most prominent causes include L1 interference, limited grammatical knowledge, overgeneralization of rules, insufficient writing practice, and cognitive processing constraints. In addition, instructional approaches that rely heavily on memorization rather than meaningful use of language may also contribute to the persistence of these errors, as learners often struggle to transfer grammatical knowledge into actual writing performance.

From a pedagogical perspective, the literature emphasizes the importance of integrating explicit grammar instruction with communicative and practice-based writing activities. Effective teaching strategies include modeling sentence patterns, providing corrective feedback, encouraging regular writing practice, and using technology-assisted tools to support learner autonomy. These approaches collectively help learners develop greater awareness of sentence structure, improve grammatical control, and gradually reduce recurring sentence-level errors in their writing.

In conclusion, improving EFL learners' ability to construct correct simple sentences requires a balanced instructional approach that combines form-focused teaching with meaningful language use. Addressing sentence-level errors at early stages of writing development is essential for building a strong foundation for more advanced writing skills and overall writing proficiency. Furthermore, continuous feedback and sustained practice are necessary for ensuring long-term improvement. Further research is recommended to explore innovative teaching methods, including digital and AI-supported tools, in enhancing sentence structure accuracy in diverse EFL learning contexts.

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