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Writing errors of English as Second Language (ESL) learners in the 21st Philippine context

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Abstract— To learn a second language (L2), once mastered, entails various prospects for Filipinos. One of the goals of the K-12 curriculum is to strengthen communicative competencies, which include linguistic competence; however, it was reported that the English Proficiency Index (EPI) of the Philippines has continuously declined in 2019, a year after the first batch of Senior High School graduated. As the country's EPI declines, it may negatively impact the competitiveness of Filipinos in the international arena. Additionally, this result demonstrates the presence of errors in the writing performance of the learners despite the change in the curriculum. This research utilized a descriptive method to analyze the corpus from 100 ESL learners of a private school in Marawi City, Lanao del Sur. The findings illustrate that the majority, or 96.3221% were local errors and among these were mechanical or orthographic errors which ranked first with 1677 or 33.70%. Furthermore, the most committed error was misuse or omission of verb tenses, followed by capitalization and punctuation marks. With these results, it is important to expose learners to the target language (TL) and teachers to create remedial writing programs focusing on the weakest linguistic areas.

Keywords: Errors; Error Analysis; Senior High School; Competence

Introduction

Learning a second language has facilitated abundant opportunities for Filipinos through time. In this globally competitive world, one must keep up with global demands to survive. Despite the countless research about language and English used as a medium of teaching throughout the years, many problems and issues still arise. One of these problems is the presence of errors in the language of the speakers. In the implementation of the K-12 curriculum in basic education of the Philippines, grammar is being taught implicitly since it is incorporated into other subjects like Mathematics and Science. This is due to the belief that high school students have already mastered the said language. Despite the addition of two years in high school, the linguistic competence of the students is yet to be determined. Teachers likewise cannot deny the presence of errors in the writing performance of the learners today. Though authorities have continually stated that errors are essential to learning a language, nevertheless too many occurrences would correspondingly impede the mastery of the target language.

Al-Kresheh (2016) states that analyzing language learners' errors has been an integral part of teaching language for teachers. One reason is the idea that errors indicate linguistic competence of the learners which is essential in a globally competitive world. Thus, to produce globally competitive graduates, the Philippines has implemented the K-12 curriculum.

The implementation of the curriculum was made to address the problems encountered in the previous curriculum. The authorities have been continuously defending that the K-12 Program would solve the problem of the lack of employment and delay of acceptance to foreign Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Furthermore, the State mandates the creation of an efficient educational system that can produce and develop responsible, skillful, and globally competitive Filipinos who will be ready to take on the national and global challenges in the 21st century.

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