

## Classification of Grammatical Errors Found in English Verb Forms from Students' Academic Writing Tasks at Gishari Integrated Polytechnic Regional College (IPRC), Rwanda

Moses Mitari<sup>1</sup>  
Patrick Ujwiga Anguru<sup>2</sup>  
Jacqueline Uwamariya<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>[mosesmitari@gmail.com](mailto:mosesmitari@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>[pujwiguru@gmail.com](mailto:pujwiguru@gmail.com)

<sup>3</sup>[uwajacky2013@gmail.com](mailto:uwajacky2013@gmail.com)

<sup>1</sup><https://orcid.org/0009-0006-3633-4936>

<sup>2</sup><https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0578-8162>

<sup>3</sup><https://orcid.org/0009-0007-3963-6144>

<sup>1,3</sup>IPRC Gishari, Rwanda Polytechnic, Rwanda

<sup>2</sup>University of Rwanda, College of Education

### ABSTRACT

*The analysis of language errors has been a beneficial exercise in academia and research, particularly for individual learners who use English as a second or foreign language. This study aimed to identify and classify grammatical errors in verb forms use among engineering students' academic writing tasks. It pursued one specific objective of categorizing errors in verb forms. The study involved 133 students and 15 teachers, who contributed to data collection through essay tests and questionnaires. Analytical methods included document analysis, deductive thematic analysis, and descriptive statistics were used to gather useful linguistic facts on the issue. The grammatical errors discovered encompassed all five verb forms errors and were categorized as omission, addition, misformation, and misordering based on students' essays and teachers' evaluation of the essays. Thus, writing errors detract the reader from the piece's overall readability with poor quality of writing and blurs written communication. Therefore, it is necessary to pinpoint the students' verb-form errors in order to provide them with the required foundational knowledge to write flawlessly. Teachers should be on the alert of grammatical verb forms errors when assessing their students' writings and ensure they correctly use the verb forms.*

**Keywords:** Academic Writing, Grammatical Errors, Verb Forms

### I. INTRODUCTION

Different studies have confirmed that students' English writing skills have a positive effect on their overall performance at all levels of education, especially at higher learning level (Komba et al., 2012; Suhaili & Mohama, 2021). This is because in many countries English is used as a medium of instruction. Explanations about different concepts and solving academic tasks such as assignments, exercises and other writing tasks require correct use of English (Sanyang et al., 2021). This means that the students' background in English language skills determine their level of performance and teachers and administrators need to have effective strategies to develop these skills of their students and evaluate their progress in preparing for future performance. In Engineering, particularly, English writing skills make students communicate their thoughts efficiently as engineers and even exchange with international correspondents (Shriganeshan, 2017).

On the other hand, English language being the medium of instruction does not reveal high level of students' proficiency based on academic writing skills in the literature. Hidayat et al. (2020) stated that, communication whether formal oral or written, should be carried out more efficiently by learning English grammar. However, most authors converge on the point that, English has different writing rules compared to the first languages which may make students build inappropriate writing structures in English. For example, Budiharto (2019) argued that, students struggle with the correct use of verb forms when dealing with writing in a second language because their first language, the mother tongue, influences the target language. In this situation, writing is regarded as the most challenging skill in English for those using it as a second language. Even though Fumero and Wood (2021) argued that, students' ability to express themselves in writing leads them to long-term educational, emotional and social success, similarly, they later found that students who learn English as a second language use verbs inaccurately when

writing. Thus, these students and others who use English not only as a second language, but also as a medium of instruction, have poor academic performance which makes it hard for them to achieve social success.

The insufficient students' communication skills in Gishari Integrated Polytechnic Regional College (IPRC for short) have been pointed out by former Acting Deputy Principal in charge of Academic and Training (Ag DPAT) as the biggest challenge for both students' performance and employability after graduation (Kepler, 2021). Talking to Kepler soft skills trainers during the launch of soft skills training at IPRC Gishari in 2021, the Acting DPAT highlighted that, some students at IPRC Gishari lacked soft skills including efficient communication during their professional and academic life. Since English is the medium of instruction at Rwanda Polytechnic, this means that, at IPRC Gishari, students struggle with communication in English. Although some studies about Communication in English have been conducted in Rwanda different schools, there is still lack of related empirical study in Rwanda Polytechnic, and other higher learning institutions in technical, vocational education, and continuous professional development training. There is a need to dig into the root causes of grammatical errors in English since the errors students make in speaking and writing are alarming. The aim of this study is to classify grammatical errors found in verb forms from students' academic writing tasks. Many English grammarians call these verb forms *tenses* which are used to mark a situation related to an action or state of the speaker or writer in the present, past and future time. For the sake of comprehension of this paper, the reader is to understand grammatical errors in English verb forms as *tenses* errors students make in their academic writings and, mainly, the production of un-English sentences.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 The Difference between Errors and Mistakes in Grammar

Both errors and mistakes show that something went wrong. Although both error and mistake relate to something that is incorrect, inaccurate, or defective, there is a distinction between these terms based on their usage. People make mistakes when they already have the knowledge, but lack concern and attention in structuring their thoughts while they are communicating with one another on a particular issue. On the other hand, an error shows that the language user does not know the rule of the grammar. For example, "Yesterday, he \*goed to the beach." In this sentence, the writer knows the rule of the past tense of regular verbs that end with -ED, but transfers it to the irregular verb forms that inflect in the past tense. This is positive since the user has learned something, but lack the new knowledge of irregular verb forms in English. That is why it is an error, not a mistake. But, if at any time during their interaction with their interlocutor, the language user realizes the flaw and correct their misuse of the grammar rule, then that would be a mistake because they missed to take (the mistook one thing for another) the correct verb form of the language. For instance, in the sentence "She \*speak English," if the speaker or the writer judges to recorrect the verb form instantly to make it become, "She speaks English," to sound the marker of the English simple present third person singular -s, which is a bound morpheme of the verb *speak*, that would be a mistake. As it is explained by Ariani and Artawa (2021), grammatical errors in English involve the inappropriate noun phrase formation, wrong use of the auxiliary verbs, inappropriate verbal phrase formation, wrong spelling and inappropriate application of tenses all due to lack of understanding the target language. Both grammatical errors and mistakes are encountered in students' academic writing tasks. It is argued that, grammatical mistakes are those incorrect writings which are done unintentionally, whereas; grammatical errors are done because students do not have sufficient theory on English grammar (Mughtar et al., 2021). Discovering students' grammatical errors is a task which requires both theoretical and methodological foundations for getting valid and reliable results.

### 2.2 Taxonomies of English Grammatical Errors

The topic of English grammatical errors in students' academic writing has been explored on several bases in previous studies and this has had an impact on subsequent investigations on the same matter. These include linguistic categories' taxonomy, surface strategies' taxonomy, comparative taxonomy and communicative effect taxonomy (Suprpto et al., 2022). Indeed, the existing literature reveals that, researchers have used these taxonomies within different contexts for classifying grammatical errors committed by students. For instance, errors are classified using the linguistic category taxonomy depending on the language component and specific linguistic ingredient the error influences. They include *phonology*, *syntax*, *morphology*, *semantics*, and *lexicon*, as well as *conversation*.

Lee (2006) classifies the linguistic categories' taxonomy for grammatical errors in English as morphology, syntax and others. These categories have been used by researchers to theoretically frame their analysis of grammatical errors in different countries. For example, Chuang and Nesi (2006) discussed the morpho-syntactic grammar error whose word class is noun or verb and which affect the grammatical system as *tense*, *number* and *voice*. However, it

was found that morphological errors occur in omission, addition and misformation, whereas; syntactical errors occur in omission, addition, misformation and disordering (Gayo & Widodo, 2018). Each of these categories represent a distinct facet of linguistic imprecision in academic writing. Understanding these dimensions of verb-related errors is crucial for language learners and writers striving for grammatical accuracy and effective communication. Altogether, morphology and syntax are foundational in crafting precise and error-free verb forms, contributing to overall grammatical accuracy in writing.

Another basis which is highly discussed in different studies on grammatical errors in English is the surface strategy taxonomy. As it is stated in the study conducted by Muchtar et al. (2021), the surface categories' taxonomy was introduced by Gayo & Widodo, (2018) and classified the grammatical errors in the category of omission, addition, misinformation and misordering. Suprpto et al. (2022) defined these categories in the following manner:

- Omission error is the absence of a certain item which could be in place for a well-structured utterance. For example: John is \*teach English now. There is omission on verb "teach", it was supposed to be "John is teaching English now."
- Addition error is the presence of the unwanted item in an utterance. When this is removed, then the utterance is well-structured. For example: They \*watches film twice a day. A grammatical error here is on watch where -s of third person was added.
- Misformation errors are characterized by the use of the wrong form of the morpheme or the structure. For example, the student will \*success different modules, a succeed is well formed. A correct sentence is "The students will succeed different modules."
- Incorrect placement of a morpheme or group of morphemes in an utterance. For example, "it can support me for to know a news for outside of school."

On the other hand, as revealed in various research pieces, the comparative taxonomy and the communicative effect taxonomy have also shaped the grammatical errors committed by students (Rubio & Conesa, 2022). While communicative effect focuses on separating errors that appear to lead to misunderstanding from those that do not, comparative category taxonomy compares the patterns of second language errors and various other types of construction (Mufidah & Islam, 2022). For the comparative categories' taxonomy, Rubio and Conesa (2022) classify grammatical errors in English as interlingual errors, developmental errors, ambiguous errors and other errors. Interlanguage error results from the interference of the first language, also known as linguistic interference, or crosslinguistic influence, where the learner tends to apply their first language knowledge to some linguistic features in the target language, but this frequently results in mistakes. When learning their first language, children frequently make developmental mistakes. One significant cognitive accomplishment that humans have made is learning languages. Children display a general awareness and understanding of the fundamental linguistic patterns during the first few years of life. A sentence that is ambiguous has two or more meanings that could apply to it as a whole (Rubio & Conesa, 2022).

## 2.3 Grammatical Errors in Academic Writing

Students' writing skills and the quality of their academic documents are the issues which have attracted researchers across the world. Many studies have focused on identification of students' grammatical errors and analysed them for the improvement of their writing skills. For example, Rubio and Conesa (2022) found out that, their study of error analysis in the essays of engineering students in Spain revealed that, interlingual errors were the most recurrent errors (99 in 256 errors detected) in written assignments of undergraduate engineering students for two academic years. This means that participants in the research were dominantly producing grammatical errors in writing which are related to their native language structure. However, in the same study, the interlingual errors recorded most was the verb-number disagreement (74 in 99 interlingual errors detected).

In another study carried out at one Islamic university in Indonesia, most students and lecturers claimed that, the poor academic writing skills originate from students' problems in English grammar, vocabulary, cohesion and coherence and developing topic ideas (Febriani, 2022). Authors claim that these problems of making errors consistently in their writing tasks are affected by both psychological and linguistic factors.

In the discussions of previous studies, students' grammatical errors were discovered using the linguistic categories' taxonomy. However, using the same taxonomy, the grammatical error analysis by Gayo and Widodo (2018) focused on morphological and syntactical errors in students' English writing. The findings in this study showed that, the copula verb "to be" was the most morphological error in students' writing tasks with a percentage of 14.86%. On the contrary, incorrect use of the subject-verb agreement occurred most in syntactic error with a score of 9.46%.

Moreover, the same study found that most grammatical errors for both morphological and syntactical errors were in the category of *omission* compared to *addition*, *misformation* and *misordering* (43.19%).

However, Nuraini (2019) found in their study that, most surface strategy errors were the misformation which scored the percentage of 54.49% compared to omission, misordering and addition. Still, in this research the classification of grammatical errors was based on surface strategies' taxonomy, whereas; in the former, it was based on linguistic category taxonomy. The findings in this study led the author to suggest more attention to writing in English for both teachers and students to minimize errors in academic writing tasks. Thus, students writing problems are particularly encountered in the use of verb forms to construct correct sentences. They need to enlarge their understanding and practical skills in using verb tenses for them to produce adequate written pieces of documents. However, non-English major undergraduate students in Bangladesh have shown a weak understanding in the use of tenses and subject-verb agreement in their writing tasks (Afrin, 2016). In this study which focused on 89 students, the grammatical error in verb forms occupied the second place with a score of 18.66%, whereas; errors in subject-verb agreement were the third with 14.37%. It can be noted that the first was in spelling which scored 23.04%. From this review, therefore, grammatical errors in relation to the use of English verbs frequently affect students' academic writing, thus; researchers in linguistics always carry out studies to find out linguistic solutions to the problems. But this paper has measured the classification levels of grammatical errors in English language through written essays evaluation of students.

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Research Approaches

This study has used a mixed research approach, which combines quantitative and qualitative research approaches due to the nature of the stated objectives and the nature of the research questions. A mixed-method approach enables the researcher to look at the research problem both deeply and broadly. In this instance, quantitative data helped to widen the problem while qualitative data contributed to make it more complex.

#### 3.2 Research Design

The current study employed the concurrent triangulation research design. The concurrent triangulation is one of mixed method research designs in which both qualitative and quantitative data are collected in the same phase and analysed at the same time (Castro et al., 2010). The questionnaire for teachers and the students' essay test on academic topics were respectively and simultaneously distributed and administered to participants of this research study. In other words, while students were sitting the essay test, teachers were answering the questionnaire on the study. Similarly, the process of data analysis was conducted simultaneously. However, data triangulation was made to address the current study's research objective. This means that the classification of grammatical errors in verb forms was completed by evaluating students' essays and teachers' responses on students' grammatical errors.

#### 3.3 Target population

The target population for the current study included year-one engineering students in the electrical and electronics department and civil engineering department for the academic year of 2022-2023 and their teachers in technical and general courses. The total number of these students and teachers was two hundred and sixty (260). These included 92 students in electrical technology combination, 52 in electronics and telecommunication technology combination as well as 96 students in construction technology combination and 20 teachers. Moreover, these teachers are those who teach social sciences and languages.

#### 3.4 Data Collection Techniques and Instruments

The current study used two categories of instruments to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. The first instrument was an essay writing test administered to the students in order to probe the common and classification of engineering students' grammatical errors in verb forms. Before the test, students were asked three questions related to their characteristics including age range, gender and studying field. The essay writing test was designed with three topics which students could choose one of them:

- "My first day at the university"
- "My life at the university"
- "Using mobile phone in my daily activities as a university student"



The essay was between 250 and 300 words and it was in the paper-pencil format. The researcher believed that students could use at least one of the six verb forms in their writing.

On the other hand, a questionnaire was distributed to teachers using google form for gathering data from them. The questionnaire was composed of both closed questions and open questions. The first part was composed of questions about teachers' characteristics including gender, level of education as well as their experience in using English in teaching. These data were in favour of addressing potential biases and comprehending how various teacher-related factors affect students' grammatical errors in academic writing.

### 3.5 Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

The validity of a research instrument is the measure of how the individual scores of an instrument are meaningful and make the researcher draw the correct conclusion on the measured construct, whereas; reliability is the measure of how these scores can remain the same in different occasions using the same instrument (Mohamad et al., 2015). The consideration of these measures in the current study has been ensured to draw the conclusions which are accurate and related to the problem investigated.

Construct validity refers to whether the research instrument items measure the concepts they should measure. These concepts are the ones which make the measurable variables within a study. First of all, to ensure that the validity of the instruments is acceptable, the development of the questionnaire items was done after a rigorous examination of the literature in line with the research problem and corresponding research objective. It went through a clear understanding of the constructs and concepts in the study with the measured corresponding variables.

### 3.6 Ethical Considerations

The research process adhered to ethical principles and established procedures, beginning with the acquisition of necessary authorizations and permissions. Research authorization was obtained from Gishari IPRC authorities to facilitate the researcher's activities. Prior to commencing the study, the researcher engaged into a friendly talk personally with potential participants to transparently explain the purpose of the research, ensuring they had a thorough understanding of the work. Participants willingly and voluntarily agreed to participate by signing consent forms.

Participants' independence and rights were paramount, as they had the freedom to withdraw from the study at any time. Stringent measures were implemented to safeguard participants' privacy and identities, and research data were protected against unauthorized access. The research findings were used exclusively for the study's objectives which are merely academic. There was no conflict of interest experienced in this study.

## IV. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The characteristics of the English teachers who responded to engineering students' grammatical errors in verb forms, as outlined in Table1, establish their suitability as respondents for this research.

**Table 1**

*Teachers' Characteristics*

Education level	Secondary	Diploma	Bachelor's	Master's	PhD
	0 (0.00%)	2 (13.30%)	7(46.70%)	5(33.30%)	1 (6.70%)
Experience in Teaching English	Under 2 years	2-4 years	5-7 years	8 years and above	
	3(20.00%)	2(13.30%)	1(6.70%)	9(60.00%)	

As shown in Table 1, teachers' educational background, which is between diploma and advanced degrees, shows how they are experienced in linguistics and ready to contribute to the analysis of grammatical errors. Owing to this, their teaching experience varies between two to eight years and above teaching English language or using English as a medium of instruction. This has ensured the researcher the readiness of the participants in the grammatical errors analysis in English verb forms.

## 4.2 Examples of Grammatical Errors in Verb Forms Read from Students' Essays

The classification of engineering students' grammatical errors in verb forms, the examples of errors shown in Table 2 can explain the classes of errors committed.

**Table2**

*Examples of Grammatical Errors in Verb Forms Read from Students' Essays*

Verb form	Examples of grammatical errors in verb forms
Root verb (infinitive)	...someone who *are not *neared by you ...the student will *success different modules... (What is the root in this example. Please explain well.
The third person of singular (presents the form of a verb)	... telephone also *have more important to university student... ... It *help to obtain or to get new information... ...truly, telephone *assist me *in in my daily program...
Present participle (when -ing form is used as a verb)	... it is *help me to know all information of my college... ... it can support me for to know *a news for outside of school...
Simple past (irregular and irregular verbs)	... when I *was get in university of course... ... in everything you *done...
Past participle	...I think different to the things I have *see... ... I do research about modules I have *took that day... ... all something that *has not *understand well... ... the question which is *complexity was *be simplified...

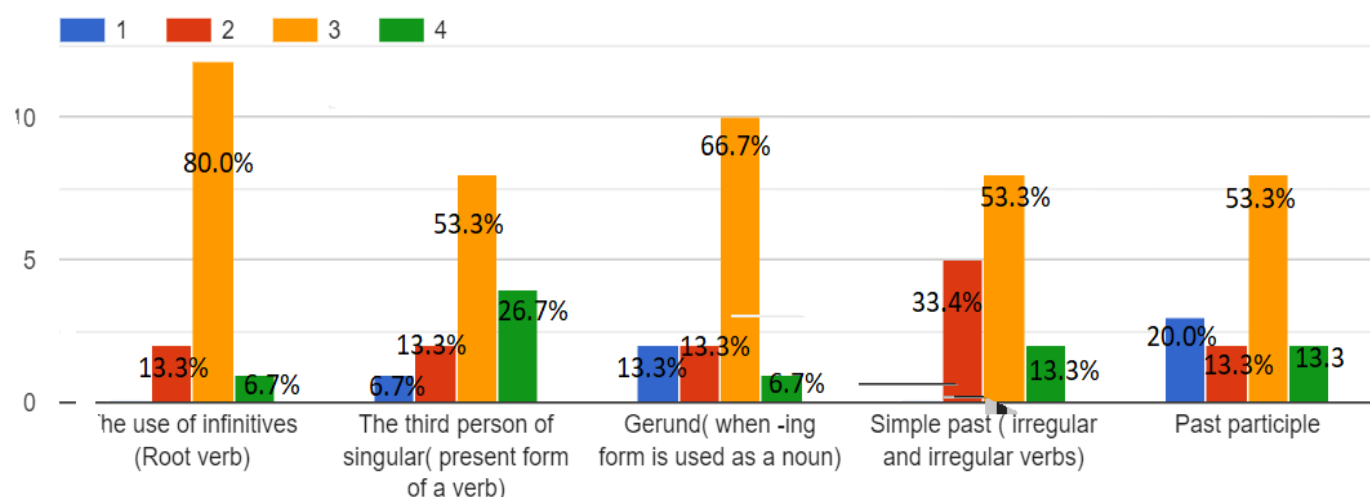
The grammatical errors in the provided examples can be classified into several categories, namely; *addition, omission, misordering, and misformation*. The analysis of errors and their classification are found hereafter:

**Root verb (Infinitive):** The first example is in "someone who are not neared by you". This error is classified as misformation and it means that the verb form \*are is incorrectly used with the singular subject "someone." It should be "is," resulting in the correct form: "Someone who is not near you." Another example of error appears in "the student will \*success different modules", classified in misformation. In this case, the verb \*success is incorrectly used; it should be "succeed." The correct sentence is: "The student will succeed in different modules."

**Present participle (When -ing Form is used as a Verb):** For the present participle, in "it is help me to know all information of my college", there is misformation error. The verb \*help is incorrectly used without the -ing form. It should be "helping" to convey the intended meaning as in "It is *helping* me to know all the information about my college." In "it can support me \*for to know \*a news for outside of school", both addition and misformation occur. There is an addition of the word, a preposition of purpose "for," which is unnecessary. The correct sentence is "It can support me in knowing news from outside of school." On the other hand, in "I \*studies a new curriculum," the grammatical error is classified in omission. The verb "studies" is in the incorrect form. It should be "study" in the first-person singular form: "I study a new curriculum."

**Simple past (regular and Irregular Verbs):** Here, in "when I \*was get in university of course," misformation is observed. The verb "\*was get" is incorrectly formed. It should be "got" in the past tense: "When I got to university, of course." Similarly, in "in everything you \*done" misformation occurs. The verb "done" is used incorrectly. It should be "did" to convey the past tense correctly: "...in everything you did."

**Past participle:** Finally, in "I think \*different to the things I have \*see" misformation appears. The past participle "see" is used incorrectly. It should be "seen" in the past participle form: "I think differently about the things I have seen. Again, in "all something that has not understand well", there is misformation. The past participle "understand" is not well inflected in line with grammatical rules. It should be "understood" in the past participle form: "...all something that has not been understood well." Lastly, in "the question which is complexity was \*be simplified", the student made an error of misformation. The past participle "be" is used incorrectly. It should be "been" in the past participle form: The correct form should be, "The question, which is complex, has been simplified, or "The question, which is complex, is simplified."

**Figure 1**

*Teachers' Views on Grammatical Errors Committed by Engineering Students*

There are a few similarities that can link teachers' responses and students' essay test results. Firstly, looking at the point highlighted in green "always = 4" from students, 4 teachers out of 15 (26.7%) confirmed that, engineering students commit errors in the third person singular form, which is the highest number compared to other verb forms. This matches with the highest percentage observed (58.78%) on this verb form in students' essay tests. Secondly, for the students' grammatical errors on the past participle where the results from the test show it is the least grammatical error committed and from teachers' responses, 3 teachers (20.0% highest) agreed that students never make this kind of error. However, looking at the Likert point "sometimes = 3", highlighted in orange, it is visible that, 12 out of 15 teachers (80.0%) (highest) confirmed that students sometimes commit the errors in the use of root verb compared to 8 teachers out of 15 (53.3%) who observed that, students commit errors in the third person singular form and 10 out of 15 (66.7%) on the present participle form.

#### 4.3 Teachers' Qualitative Responses on Grammatical Errors in Verb Forms and Their Classification from Students' Academic Writing Tasks

This study focuses on teachers' perspectives regarding grammatical errors in verb forms and their proposed strategies to enhance the academic writing proficiency of engineering students, providing valuable insights from experienced educators. The data were analysed through the deductive thematic analysis based on the literature review and the corresponding results are presented in the following themes.

To respond to the research objective: "How can the grammatical errors in verb forms of engineering students be classified?" One open question was asked to the teachers for the sake of getting more insights about the types and class of grammatical errors. In this case, the researcher asked the participant teachers to provide other students' grammatical errors that they observe in academic writing tasks when they are conducting assessments. Teachers' responses to this question have been collected and grouped under one theme which was formed before in line with the literature review on grammatical errors in verb forms.

Almost all fifteen teachers (15) who responded have given, in detail, other grammatical errors which were or were not mentioned in the Likert scale type questions by the researcher. Only one teacher did not provide an additional response and said "none." The responses from five teachers have reflected the grammatical errors in relation to the prescribed verb forms. For example, one teacher said: "3<sup>rd</sup> person" which is related to the third person singular form. Another one said: "Sometimes they confuse simple past tense and past participle of irregular verbs". Similarly, two other teachers agreed that, "The use of perfect tenses is a problem among learners" and "The use of the past form with the expression of future are regarded as a tense." However, this shows even teachers still consider the verb form like in this sentence, "I *will go* to Paris next month." The verb form *will go* is misinterpreted as a future tense in English, although this does not exist in English grammar of verb forms or tenses because, the term *tense* relates the situation of the verb to the present and past time action or state. On the level of verbal paradigm, *will* is a catenative verb or better mood marker rather than tense because, there is no bound morpheme at the end of *go* to indicate the future as in, "I *worked* all day long last weekend." Here, the verb *work* smartly takes the bound morpheme

-ED as the marker of simple past tense regular for all persons. The issue of tense could be another topic to debate on its own, however; this paper does not focus on the classification of tenses, but; the grammar of verb forms or tenses errors students make in their academic writing skills of essay assignments, continuous assessment tests, and examinations. On the other hand, another teacher raised a point of grammatical errors students make in subject-verb agreement in these terms: “*In writing, my students also commit subject-verb agreement mistakes and tense-related errors.*” These errors are related to the grammatical errors in verb forms as prescribed.

Apart from grammatical errors in verb forms, participant teachers have also detailed other grammatical errors in academic writing tasks including one who talked about students’ errors in punctuation and two who talked about students’ grammatical errors on the use of passive voice and active voice. Moreover, one teacher mentioned students’ errors of sentence formation which includes for example sentences without verbs, misplacement and repetitions of words. The same teacher also talked about errors in the use of articles and prepositions, confusing adjectives with adverbs and confusing nouns and verbs in the formation of sentences.

These results from the open question show that students’ grammatical errors in verb forms are encountered in all five verb forms namely root verb, third person of singular, present participle, simple past and past participle and there is no exception since they are frequently committed. However, students’ confusion between simple past form and the use of past participle has been greatly emphasised by three respondents. Moreover, in teachers’ responses, grammatical errors which are not directly falling in the five verb forms are observed. Nevertheless, these highlighted errors may be influenced by the errors in verb forms. For example, the construction of passive and active voices and sentence formation.

Moving on to the classification of engineering students’ grammatical errors in verb forms, the first category observed is omission. This category of grammatical errors in verb forms has been greatly observed on the use of the third person singular verb form, the use of present participle and the use of past participle. As it is observed in students’ essays, it was characterised by students missing some necessary words or letters in the construction of phrases or conjugation of the verbs. For example, “...It \*help to obtain or to get new information...” In this case there is a missing -s on the verb “help” to obey English grammatical rules of the third person singular. Similarly, in “...it is \*help me to know all information of my college...”, there is a missing -ing on the “help” in order to make a correct present participle form. Lastly, in “...I think different to the things I have see...”, the past participle of “see” is missing the -n.

Another category encountered is addition where students added unnecessary words or letters and produced grammatical errors in their essays. It was only seen in the use of past participle verb form. The example, in “...the question which is complexity was be simplified...”

Where the verb “be” was added and it has caused a grammatical error. On the other hand, the grammatical error of misformation has been the most observed across all verb forms except on the third person singular. This was characterised by students using wrong forms of verbs and words. For example, in the root verb form, in “...the student will success different modules.” the infinitive of verb “succeed” was wrongly formed and this has caused a grammatical error. Secondly, for the present participle, in “...I \*studies a new curriculum...”, the present participle of the verb “study” is not well formed. In the simple past form, in “... in everything you done...”, the simple past form of the verb “do” is incorrectly formed. Finally, in the past participle form, the example “... I do research about modules I have took that day...”, the correct past participle of the verb “take” is not formed.

In the misordering category, there was no encountered grammatical error in verb forms found in students’ essays. This could be the misplacement of words in constructing the correct verb forms. However, in the teachers’ responses, some of these categories are again mentioned. For example, some teachers talked about students’ confusion between simple past and past participle forms and other tenses which can be classified in the misformation category. Moreover, teachers’ ideas about grammatical errors other than verb forms can be linked with the misordering category. For example, when it is said that students commit errors in misplacement and repeating words within a sentence. Thus, the results show that the engineering students’ grammatical errors in verb forms encountered in their academic writing tasks are classified in *omission*, *addition*, *misformation* and *misordering*. However, from students’ essays, the class of *misformation* was *repeating*.

#### 4.4 Discussion and Relevance of Findings

The findings on classification of grammatical errors from students’ academic writing tasks are consistent with the findings in the previous studies about students’ grammatical errors in verb forms. On the level of classification of engineering students’ grammatical errors in verb forms, few similar studies have classified these errors in *omission*, *addition*, *misformation* and *misordering* (Irawan & Syafi’i, 2021; Tuminah et al., 2020; Pérez, 2021). Although these



studies have compared the classes of grammatical errors in verb forms, the current study is the only place where the classification was done and the findings have a strong similarity. These class of grammatical errors in verb forms are also consistent with the general classification of all grammatical errors as it is found in other studies like Gayo and Widodo (2018) about morphological and syntactical errors and Muchtar et al. (2021) about grammatical errors in English informal essays.

The engineering students' grammatical errors in verb forms uncovered in the context of IPRC Gishari are well fitting in the current literature in EFL contexts. The types and class of grammatical errors in verb forms recorded resembles those in studies consulted in the literature. Based on the error analysis theory, this identification and classification of engineering students' grammatical errors is one step to the process of eradicating these errors.

## V. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Conclusions

This study aimed at the analysis and classification of English grammatical errors to improve students' academic writing skills. A close examination of the findings has revealed that students commit grammatical errors from their written assignments, especially the use of verb forms as it was the focus of this study. They committed errors on the use of third person singular, root verb, present participle, simple past and past participle. Thus, grammatical errors were categorized as *omission, addition, misformation and misordering*. Although many students' grammatical errors were *misformation*, it is worth noticing that they still do make errors in *omission, addition and misordering* in their writings. Furthermore, students struggle to write errors free tasks and these do affect their academic performance. On the other hand, errors are easy to correct and make students improve their writing skills and their academic performance as well. Therefore, based on teachers' perspectives on grammatical errors of verb forms in Gishari IPRC, great attention is to be paid to writing skills of students. The foundation stone is to develop students' speaking skills in English concurrently with their writing skills because, one can write only what is said and how it is said about a topic for discussion.

### 5.2 Recommendations

In order to make students improve their writing skills, researchers, teachers and students themselves should militate against grammatical errors of verb forms. Firstly, researchers and English language teachers should detect the root causes of students' errors while using English as a medium of communication in their daily academic activities. Secondly, teachers are encouraged to give more writing activities to students and give them timely feedback. This will instil into students the desire to identify their own grammatical errors of verb forms areas where they need improvement. Finally, students should regularly practice by reading more books in English and engage themselves into conversation with speakers of English language. This will make them improve their knowledge of English grammar, and writing skills for their academic performance because, grammar is the description of what people say, how they say it and why they say it so before they put something down on paper. For teachers, the best pedagogy of teaching and learning writing skills should be to apply gamification techniques of English verb forms that blend speaking and writing skills alternatively, starting with speaking skills. This way all human senses of learners, with their relevant organs of speech, would be involved in using English for academic writing purposes to develop written communication skills.

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