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Research Article

Grammatical Deviations in the Lesson Plans Among Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSED) English Students

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About Article

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to analyze the grammatical deviations from the collected lesson plans of BSED English students. It also describes the types and causes of grammatical deviations that occur in their lesson plans. The data were taken from the 41 collected lesson plans of BSED English students who were enrolled during the second semester of the school year 2022-2023. The qualitative-descriptive research method was used to substantially analyze the grammatical deviations within the content of the collected lesson plans. The researcher and three validators checked and reviewed the generated data to ensure that the grammatical deviations were accurately identified. The Grammatical deviations that were found in the lesson plans among BSED English students across all year levels were: subject-verb agreement and verb form. The findings revealed that subject-verb agreement had the highest occurrences of deviations due to the influence of their language transfer, which often had distinct systems and patterns, while the verb form had moderate occurrences. The findings transpire that BSED English students are not merely regarded as grammatically incompetent, just because of grammatical deviations found in their lesson plans. Nonetheless, they should be understood that their grammatical deviations are influenced and shaped by the sociolinguistic reality, language variations, and cultural backgrounds. Which can still be used as a medium in delivering the lessons, and likewise influence the learners' academic development.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Languages may undergo boundless changes due to immigration, new technologies, trade, politics, colonization, and cultural imperialism (Jhonson 2015). In the case of Asian countries, the English language as a second language has been formed and adapted dominantly both linguistically and culturally. Hence, it is no longer exclusive to countries that use it as a native language (Jenkins et al., 2017). In which the dominance of the English language has become ubiquitous in all parts of the world. English across continents exhibit distinct grammatical features, such as tense and aspect markers and lexical borrowings from native languages (Sridhar & Sridhar, 2019). Similarly, the New English, such as Nigerian and Kenyan English, exhibit distinct grammatical features, such as articles and prepositions. These studies suggest that the grammatical features of World English reflect their speakers' unique linguistic and cultural identities and should be viewed as legitimate forms of English (Schneider, 2018).

In the Philippines, English is considered a second language which is widely used in various domains such as education, business, media, and government. It is one of the country's official languages, along with Filipino. English has become essential for communication, social mobility, and economic development in the Philippines. The widespread use of English in the Philippines can be traced back to the American colonization period when English was introduced as the medium of instruction in schools (Salazar, 2019).

However, research on students' mastery of grammar in the Philippines has also been conducted in recent years. It was found that many Filipino students still struggled with correctly using English grammar despite being exposed to the language forms (Baybay, 2020). Despite teachers' best efforts and available resources, low grammar performance among Filipino students is still a persistent issue. Even with experienced English teachers and the availability of various grammar resources, students still struggled with grammar concepts, particularly in sentence construction and subject-verb agreement (Lagrimas & Bautista, 2020).

In this respect, this should be noted that the distinct grammatical features of Philippine English, such as the use of the singular verb form with collective nouns, reduplication, use of the past participle as adjectives, and language expressions. The studies have suggested that grammatical deviations in Philippine English are widely accepted and used in the country and should not be viewed as incorrect or inferior forms of English. Instead, it reflects the Philippines' unique linguistic and cultural identity, and their use of Philippine English is evidence of the ongoing development of this distinct variety of English (Matsuda, 2019). Therefore, as an extension of such assertions, the researcher considers the significance of investigating the grammatical deviations within the phenomenon of the collected lesson plans among the bachelor of secondary education English students. The term deviations refer to the language use that diverges from the norms and conventions of the standard language. These deviations include non-standard grammar. In such a case, these deviations include using syntax that does not violate the communicative standards and disenabling violence to the grammar of English as used worldwide (Aldesir, 2014). On the

other hand, lesson planning reflects the teacher's fundamental abilities and applications of knowledge which can be associated with written forms. Jin (2011) pointed out that lesson plan preparation requires using words, constructing sentences, and affirming language. In this case, Education students are inclined to accomplish their lesson plans with a profound understanding of its content and students' diversity. A lesson plan is a process of constructing ideas, including the choice of words and language expressions that impact knowledge acquisition and learning (Nesari & Heidari, 2014).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of grammatical deviations has been a topic of much debate and discussion in linguistics, with some scholars arguing that such deviations should be viewed as incorrect or ungrammatical, while others say that they are legitimate and meaningful forms of language use. In the traditional views of grammar tend to prioritize standardized and prescriptive forms of language for effective and smooth discourses. Nonetheless, deviations of standard grammar can be legitimate and significant in the specific contexts.

Indeed, dwelling to this form of language realizations, which evidently several studies have supported and shared significant findings to which, grammatical deviations found either in speech or written productions. One of which is the study of Pennycook (2019) argued that non-standard forms of English, such as pidgins and creoles, should not be viewed as inferior or ungrammatical but rather as legitimate forms of communication that reflect their speakers' linguistic and cultural diversity. The study emphasized recognizing and valuing linguistic diversity rather than imposing a rigid set of prescriptive rules. Another study by Sridhar (2019) examined the use of code-switching, or the use of multiple languages or dialects in a single conversation, in Indian English. The study found that code-switching could serve essential communicative and social functions, such as expressing identity or establishing solidarity with other speakers.

Similarly, the study analyzed non-standard grammar in Philippine English and found that it was often used to convey meaning and establish social connections with other speakers. The study emphasized the importance of recognizing Philippine English's unique features and cultural contexts rather than viewing it as a deviation from standard English (Felicilda-Reynaldo & Catingub, 2021). Another study analyzed the use of non-standard grammar in working-class English and found that deviations from standard grammar were often used to establish social connections and express a sense of identity and belonging within working-class communities. The study emphasized the importance of recognizing the cultural and social factors that influence language use and the need to value linguistic diversity in all its forms (Milroy, 2018).

Furthermore, the influence of other languages spoken in the Philippines, such as Tagalog, Bisaya, and Ilocano, can further complicate grammar usage and create hybrid variations because of the distinct feature of language forms (Bautista, 2019). In this case, promoting a flexible and adaptable approach to grammatical deviation is essential to address these challenges while emphasizing the importance of clear



and effective communication (Gonzales & Torio, 2020). This includes providing ongoing support and feedback to language learners and educators and access to high-quality instructional resources emphasizing practical and communicative grammar skills (Bautista, 2019).

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Kachru's (2005) concentric circles of World Englishes to explain grammatical deviations' occurrences. The foremost claim of this study is that grammatical deviations are just features of Philippine English due to the emergence of sociolinguistic reality, language variations, and cultural backgrounds.

Kachru's (1997) Theory on World Englishes affirms that the English language has been used as a global language for communication. English is not only the language among native speakers but also a lingua franca used by different nationalities worldwide. Similarly, Tupas (2014) believes that more people use English as their second language than those who use English as their native language. Such a claim suggests that those second-language users have contributed to the distinct features of language varieties.

Moreover, the discourse of World Englishes since its inception (Kachru, 1985) remains at the level of sociolinguistic processes such as hybridization, localization, acculturation, and indigenization (Gonzales, 2017). Postcolonial countries tend to manifest a kind of linguistic independence (Tupas, 2008) that may deflect from the norms of native speakers. Hu (2015) posits that the trend of English use is not aligned with the framework of the native language anymore. Non-native speakers may also question the merits of the Inner Circle's linguistic hegemony as the only "correct" way of using English (Mahboob, 2010). The normativity of the natives is now slowly eroding, thereby giving speakers around the world a kind of sundry Englishes. Variations from the norms of the Inner Circle also occur inevitably in the Philippine context. Bautista (2000) shares that Philippine English shows a lack of (or faulty) subject-verb agreement, inappropriate use of articles, faulty preposition usage, the incorrect pluralization of nouns, the lack of (or faulty) agreement of pronouns and their antecedent, and faulty tense-aspect usage combinations. Jubilado (2016) also reports that Filipino speakers of English in Hawaii observe the Verb-Subject-Object sentence pattern as opposed to the English Subject-Verb-Object pattern; fronting or topicalization; object deletion; copula deletion; and SV-(dis)agreement.

In this current study, the BSED English students come from diverse linguistic backgrounds with varying exposure to English grammar. In this respect, students with limited exposure or non-native English speakers may face challenges in producing grammatically accurate lesson plans, given the fact that the English language is not the native language of the BSED English students. In this case, whatever grammatical inaccuracies and irregularities can be found in the lesson plans of the BSED English students are not considered an error or faulty as well as grammatically incompetent. Rather evidence of language variations and the peculiar grammatical features of Philippine English.

2.2 Problem Statement

This study aimed to analyze the Grammatical Deviations in the Lesson Plans produced by Bachelor of Secondary Education major in English – Students of Jose Rizal Memorial State University - Tampilisan Campus.

Specifically, this study provides answers to the following questions:

1. What grammatical deviations are found in the lesson plans of the BSED English students in terms of the following_____?

1.1 Subject-verb agreement, and;

1.2 Verb forms?

2. What type of grammatical deviations frequently occur in the lesson plans of the BSED English students?

3. METHODOLOGY

The qualitative-descriptive research design through content analysis. Since the data were in the form of words, phrases, or sentences. Content analysis, in other words, is a research method that offers methodological and impartial approaches to formulating legitimate inferences based on verbal, visual, or written data to describe and expound a specific phenomenon and can be employed inductively or deductively (Bengtsson, 2016). On the other hand, it is a qualitative form considering that the process of analyzing textual data to uncover patterns, themes, and meanings behind the grammatical deviations in the lesson plans produced by BSED English students and including their occurrences were qualitatively determined.

The researcher used the collected lesson plans as a document to review and as a primary source of data for content analysis. The collected lesson plans were written in free form by following the five basic parts of the lesson plans such as objectives, subject matter, procedures, generalizations, and evaluations. In this current study, the content analysis was collected through written detailed lesson plans produced by BSED English students during the second semester of the academic year 2022 – 2023. The analysis focuses on the content of the lesson plans, which includes grammatical structures. The participants of this study were 41 BSED English students during the second semester of the school year 2022-2023. However, the actual collected lesson plans were only 41 out of 67 participants. The participants were selected using non-probability sampling, specifically the purposive sampling technique.

To ensure the validity of the grammatical deviations found in the lesson plans, the researcher has requested three grammar validators with master's and doctoral degrees in English language teaching (ELT). Thus, the researcher has applied contextually the procedures of Haris (2001) to undertake a content analysis that involves eight steps.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The following grammatical deviations in the lesson plans of the Bachelor of Secondary Education English students have been identified. These grammatical deviations such as subject-verb agreement, word choice, verb form, redundancy, preposition usage, missing articles, and pronoun usage are considered to be grammatical features of Philippine English because such



variations are acceptable, recognized, and used by educated people (Bautista, 2000). It has been found by several studies that Philippine English is the language of educated Filipinos (Rivera, 2014). The following sections are the presentation of analysis and interpretations.

Table 1. Deviation Found in the Lesson Plans in Terms of Subject-Verb Agreement

Deviated SVA Rules	Frequency	Percentage
Rule 1: When the subject and verb in a sentence should match in terms of their grammatical number either singular or plural.	43	37.40%
Rule 2: Intervening words such as with, together with, in addition to, including, and as well as do not affect the verb.	19	16.52%
Rule 3: If the subject noun is singular or refers to a definite plural set, the verb is always singular. Each and every are considered a singular subject.	37	32.17%
Rule 4: There is should be followed by a singular noun; there are requires plural noun.	16	13.91%
Total	115	100

Based on Table 1 the highest percentage of deviations has been found in rule no. 1 constituting 43 or 37.40% followed by rule no. 3 37 or 32.17%, rule no. 2 19 or 16.52%, while rule no. 4 has 13.91% regarded as the lowest percentage of deviations as compared to any other rules in subject-verb agreements. To picture out the specifications of these deviations, the following sections are the figures taken from the actual written lesson plans:

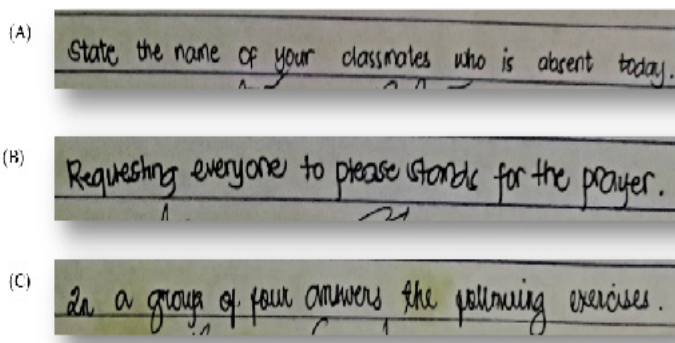


Figure 1. Sample Statements in SVA Rule 1

Indeed, one of the rules in subject-verb agreement which has the most deviated across all year levels, is rule 1. In the sample statement (A), the subject classmates do not agree with the verb is instead it requires the plural form are. Though, this violates the grammatical rules for mismatching the subject and the verb. The participant in this case, might think that the phrase state the name of your classmates is a singular form but the rule states that the nearest subject is where the verb agrees so the subject

is the classmates. For the sample statement (B) an indefinite pronoun serves as the subject and the rule for this is, that all singular indefinite pronouns take singular verbs. As the subject everyone does not agree with the verb stands meaning the verb should stand to agree with the subject. The participant perhaps considered the term requesting as the primary subject of the statement. While the next sample statement (C) the verb answers, does not maintain the proper matching of agreement since the subject in a group of four expresses singularity, then the verb answer should be correctly used. In this sense, the participant has regarded the phrase group of four, as a plural subject which therefore he/she added /s/ from the verb answer. As mentioned above, there is a confusion of the subject and the verb agreement. However, delving into the structure of the sample statements, nevertheless only a minor deviation of SVA. This means that learners can still decode the associated meaning of the statement. Meanwhile, another specific SVA that can be placed as a second most deviated rule is the insertion of the intervening words or phrases, which functioned as a way of clarifying the context or enhancing the overall flow of the sentence. However, it also causes an often mistakes in the ruling of verbs along with sentence structure, for instance in Figure 2 below:

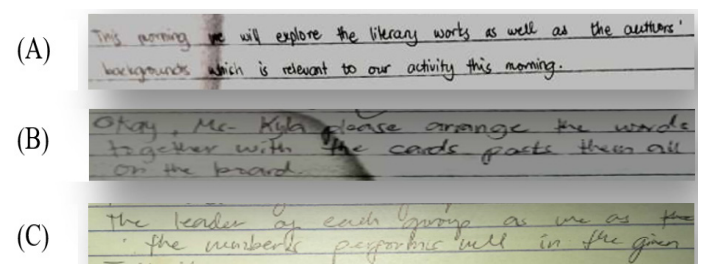


Figure 2. Sample Statements in SVA Rule 2

The sample statement (A) contains deviation wherein the subject of the sentence is the literary works as well as the authors' backgrounds, which is plural due to the inclusion of the term works. However, the used verb is as reflected as singular, which does not agree in number with the plural subject. In this case, the participant has been thinking that the works and backgrounds can be ruled by singular verbs due to the intervening phrase as well as. Another, deviation with a similar case is the sample statement (B) whereby the participant mistakenly misuses the plural verb posts them all instead of post them all to match the subject Ms. Kyla as a singular form. The participant in this part might consider the words together with cards as the main subject as linked by the intervening phrase together with.

In the case of sample statement (C) the verb performs does not agree with the subject members. In a critical sense, though the first element the leader of each group is a singular subject that is expectedly governed by a singular verb. However, the participant has mistakenly looked into the inclusion of nearest noun members and therefore uses the verb performs. The probable thinking of the participant is that the addition of /s/ to make it plural applies. The driving factor of the participant in these certain deviations might be the result of their immediate language transfer (O'Grady, 2000; Eastwood, 2002).

Another rule of the SVA from which the participants have deviated in conjugating its proper usage is the definite plural nouns. In this respect, the verb form should match with the plural form of the noun. However, it has no direct equivalent pattern to follow, similar case of Cebuano where the use of mga comes before the noun-verb form which deviated from the standard set of English grammar rules. Figure 3 below illustrates further where these occurrences are observable.

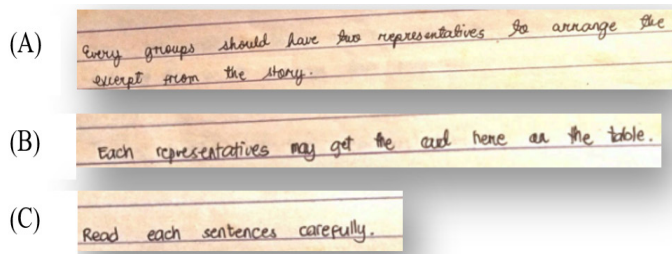


Figure 3. Sample Statements in SVA Rule 3

Figure 3 reveals that the subject noun and the preceded plural forms do not conform with numbers. For instance, the sample stamen (A) wherein the deviation in the original sentence lies in the incorrect plural form of the noun groups. The word group is a collective noun, which refers to a single entity even though it might consist of multiple individuals. When a collective noun is used as the subject, it is treated as singular, and therefore, it should be accompanied by a singular verb. In this case, the singular verb should have agreed with the singular subject group. These nouns can be tricky because they refer to a collection of things but are considered singular entities in the context of grammar.

Another sample statement (B) Each representative is the subject of the sentence. The word each is a distributive pronoun that refers to every individual within a group, and it always takes a singular noun and a singular verb. Therefore, the singular noun representative is used, and the singular verb may get agree with it. The next sample statement (C) is a similar case to a statement (B). As illustrated, Each is a distributive pronoun that refers to every individual item within a group. When it is used, it requires a singular noun. Therefore, the singular form sentence is used, not the plural sentences. Besides, the verb read is appropriate for the plural subject you, which is implied in the imaginary imperative form of the sentence. The base form of the verb is used with the pronoun you in commands or requests.

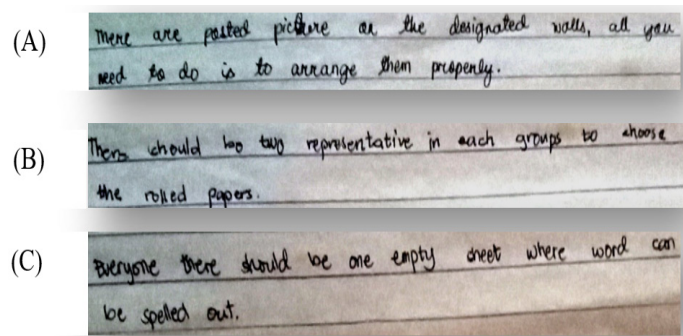


Figure 4. Sample Statements in SVA Rule 4

The terms there is and there are, are known as existential constructions in standard English grammar. Existential constructions are used to indicate the existence or presence of something or someone (Richard, 2016). Based on Figure 3, it can be analyzed that existential constructions have been found, which normally occur due to cultural language patterns. This is a similar case to sample statement (A) wherein the plural form of existential construction There are is paired with a singular noun picture which does not conform to the standard English grammar rules. The participant might think that the preceded clause on the designated walls, is more convenient to be paired with the plural form, which likely the standard English rules considered the nearest preceded noun.

On the other hand, in the sample statement (B) the word each is a distributive determiner that refers to every individual item within a group. When used in this context, it requires a singular noun and a singular verb. Therefore, the singular noun group should be used. But going down to this case the participant somehow tends to use groups by adding /s/ thinking that it would suffice to the word there. In sample statement (C) the indefinite subject everyone has not been conforming to the plural noun words.

The result implies natural deviants' recognition of the ruling of singular form but requires a plural verb, while it is a different case to the ruling plural in form but singular in meaning, which requires a singular verb. To Coral (2017), this might be classified as language interference wherein the difficulty in establishing the correct agreement between subject and verb can be attributed to the fact that the participant's first language (L1) does not have definite rules on subject-verb agreement. It is evident in local languages of the Philippines where the singular subject does not require a singular verb in some cases. For instance, in the Tagalog language verbs are not conjugated based on the number whether singular or plural of the subject. This is similar to the mentioned LPs with deviation in subject-verb agreement who are Bisayan, Tagalog, and Ilonggo speakers as they transfer in their linguistic repertoire, whereby the verb remains the same regardless of the subject or number.

Table 2. Deviations Found in the Lesson Plans in Terms of the Verb Forms

Deviated SVA Rules	Frequency	Percentage
Base form	27	32.53%
To infinitive	9	10.84%
Present participle	36	7.22%
Past participle	24	19.30%
Total	83	100

The data in Table 4 appeals that the highest percentage of deviation in terms of verb forms is the base form, which constitutes 27 or 32.53% of the total number. Followed by the past participle form which has 16 or 19.30%, past simple 14 or 16.86%, present simple 13.25%, to infinitive 9 or 10.84%, while the lowest deviation occurred is the present participle 6 or 7.22%. To critically expound the occurrences of each deviation in the verb forms herewith are the sample statements in Figure 5.



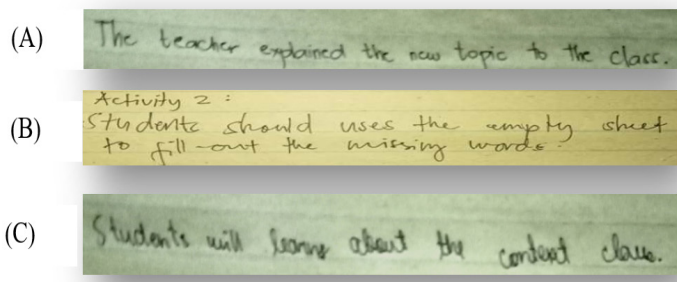


Figure 5. Sample Statements in Base Form

Based on Figure 5, the sample statement (A) wherein the base form of the verb explained has been expressed in a past tense form of the verb which does not agree with the ongoing state of the event. This deviation is common among non-native speakers, especially when there are subtle differences in verb forms particularly the present participle form of the verb and the simple present. The sample statement (B) is a form of giving specific instructions for a particular activity. However, the verb form uses with the /-s/ ending, does not agree with the plural subject Students, the correct base form is use. In addition, the sample statement (C), the base form of the verb learn is mistakenly conjugated as learns, which does not agree with the plural subject Students. The correct form uses the base verb learn without the /-s/ ending to match the plural subject.

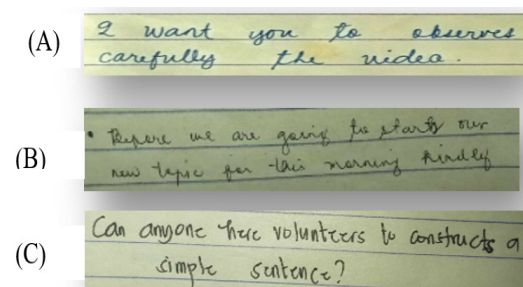


Figure 6. Sample Statements in To-infinitive Form

Based on the figure above concerning the deviation of to-infinitive verb form is indeed noteworthy to illustrate. As the sample statement (A) the use of the base form of the verb observes after the infinitive marker to has deviated by adding /-s/. Typically, in English grammar rule, the infinitive form of a verb consists of the word /to/ should be followed by the base form of the verb (to observe). Another sample statement (B) with similar case, the sentence appears to be the beginning of a request or instruction, likely in a formal or polite manner. The participant is addressing to a group of learners and establishing a specific time frame this morning for the upcoming activity. Nevertheless, the sentence contains the infinitive phrase to starts, which is grammatically incorrect in standard English. The base form of the verb should be used after the infinitive marker to by omitting the added /-s/. For the next sample statement (C), has the same structure wherein the infinitive phrase to constructs, which the correct form is to construct. Contrarily, the above-mentioned deviations whereby because of the added /-s/ at the end of the base form or main verb. The participants might think that the subjects preceded by the noun or auxiliary verb should also requires third-plural verb. Since the content of the lesson plans is intended to be used in the teaching

and learning process, the BSED English students in this respect may use or borrow the local verb form when transmitting the lessons, which may not strictly adhere to English rules. Apart from this, is that in English grammar rules, the third-person singular form of a verb in the present tense requires adding an /-s/ like for instance, he constructs, she builds. The mere fact that the user does not have a similar form of language with different verb conjugation patterns, might mistakenly apply rules from their native language, which causes deviation like adding /-s/ in the preceded infinitive marker to.

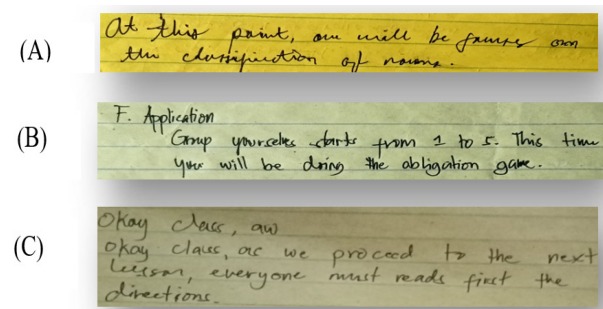


Figure 7. Sample Statements in Present Participle Form

It can be gleaned from the figure above that the sample statement (A) mistakenly used the verb focus by adding /-es/ in the base form, instead, the present participle form of the verb focusing as preceded by the modal verb is more accurate. In this context, since the nature of the statement indicates an ongoing action that will happen in the future then it requires the present participle form of the verb will be focusing.

While for sample statement (B), intends to instruct learners to form groups in a specific numerical order. The sentence can be further clarified for context. Since this instruction is given in a classroom setting, it means learners are supposed to organize themselves into groups, and each group should have a designated number from 1 to 5. But the verb form starts is mistakenly used in this context by adding /-s/ from the base form. Instead, after the imperative pronoun yourselves, the base form of the verb should be starting to accurately indicate the present-participle form. Following is the sample statement (C), the preceded indefinite pronoun everyone is a singular pronoun, so it should always be paired with a singular verb form, which is the base form without the /-s/ ending instead of reads to read ensures proper agreement between the subject and the present participle form of the verb.

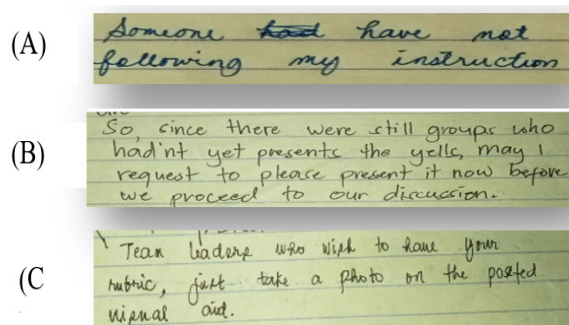


Figure 8. Sample Statements in Past Participle Form

Based on figure 8, it can be distinguished that it contains deviations in terms of the past participle form of the verb. For



instance, the sample statement (A), the verb form have, does not agree with the singular subject Someone. The correct form should be in the third-person singular subject which is has. Besides, the phrase have not following does not require/-ing/ form following instead has followed to accurately express the action that was not completed in the past. For the sample statement (B), the deviation is the use of the term presents instead of the correct past participle form presented. In this case, the interchange between ending /-s/ and /-ed/ has occurred. For the sample statement (C), the verb Team leaders who wish... has been expressed in a present participle form which makes the sentence inaccurate. By following the standard grammatical rules Team leaders who wished... add/-ed/ would be more acceptable.

Indeed, from the World Englishes point of view, this phenomenon wherein the interchanges among the /-ing/, /-s/, and /-ed/ are to the distinct English verb forms such as present tense, past tense, to-infinitive, and past participle. In the Cebuano, Ilonggo, and Ilokano, verb tenses are often indicated by context and verb affixes, rather than auxiliary verbs or distinct classification of verb forms. There might be a strong emphasis on the participant's grammar and vocabulary, which is associated with the nature of their lesson plans' content and the learners as well, as the receivers. The participants perhaps integrate the grammatical patterns from their native languages into English sentences, affecting the choice of verb forms.

Thus, occurrences of deviation in verb forms can be understood as indicators of the interaction between standard English and local linguistic forms of grammatical variations (Kachru, 2005). In this case, the deviations in the base form, to-infinitive verb form, present-participle form, and past-participle form, reflected in lesson plans are the evidence of the different language variations which is not a monolithic entity but a mixture of languages shaped cultural factors.

6. CONCLUSION

The current study was set out primarily to analyze the grammatical deviations found in the lesson plans among BSED English students as well as describe the types and causes of grammatical deviations. Indeed, the mere fact that BSED English students belong to the outer circle or expanding circle directly concurred with the theoretical claims of Kachru. It is a testament that would suffice that this phenomenon is purely deviations rather than errors. In the case of errors, the results of this study arguably do not conform to the nature of errors. In which, errors can only be determined when not following the standard set of rules or agreements which can be accounted to the competence of the students. A similar idea of misconceptions when language patterns or structures that learners acquire incorrectly from the start, often due to misunderstandings or misinterpretations. For instance, if learners consistently use a grammatical rule incorrectly because of a misunderstanding of how it functions in the entire discourse process, it could be considered a born misconception. However, rooted in natural occurrences of these deviations, which nonetheless this phenomenon, participants are not merely regarded as grammatically incompetent because of these grammatical deviations found in their lesson plans. Rather they should be

understood that these grammatical deviations are influenced and shaped by the sociolinguistic reality, language variations, and cultural backgrounds. In this empirical sense, grammatical deviations have been caused by continuously ignoring this reality which has no place in the prescriptivist's pedagogical practices. Contrarily, viewing grammatical deviations as mere errors should be seen as valuable living artifacts into the intricacies between language, culture, and society. Thus, this can still be used as a medium in delivering the lessons, and likewise influence the learners' academic development.

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