

Students' English Grammar Competencies and Their Self-Efficacy

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ABSTRACT: In the Philippines, English grammar proficiency plays a significant role in students' academic success and self-efficacy, yet many students face challenges in mastering this area of the language. This study aimed to examine the relationship between Filipino students' proficiency in English grammar which focused on tenses, subject-verb agreement, and punctuation and their self-efficacy in handling language-related tasks. Correlational and causal research designs were employed. A quantitative approach to gather data from 151 Grade 9 students selected through stratified sampling. The research instruments included a grammar competency test and a 5-point Likert scale self-efficacy survey. Statistical tools such as Mean, Standard Deviation, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, and Multiple Linear Regression were used for analysis. Results revealed that student-respondents have Very Satisfactory result in Subject-Verb Agreement but Satisfactory in Tenses and Punctuation. They are undecided in their Self-Efficacy which signifies as Moderately Confident. Subject-Verb Agreement has inverse correlation to students' self-efficacy. Other grammar competencies are not correlated. And no grammar competencies, included in this study influence students' self-efficacy. Thus, grammar competency among students does not develop students' efficacy. There may be other factors which are not included in this study that can improve the self-efficacy of the students. An intervention is introduced in this study to have more focused-on grammar exercises in their curriculum to boost students' efficacy.

KEYWORDS: English grammar proficiency, punctuation, self-efficacy, subject-verb agreement

I. INTRODUCTION

English remains the Philippines' principal second language and a significant medium of education, commerce, and international communication. Its long exposure to English has made it relatively highly proficient compared to most Asian countries. Yet, learners continue to grapple with grammar, especially with statements involving tenses, subject-verb agreement, and punctuation. Proficiency in these fields requires not only knowledge of rules and exceptions but also the ability to apply them effectively in communication.

Grammatical competence has a function that extends beyond language correctness; it influences how students perceive their own ability. Based on Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory, self-efficacy is a learner's perception that they can do the work. Applied to learning, this belief system is capable of influencing persistence, resilience, and performance. Students who have more confidence in applying grammar will commit more to communication activities, while others with less confidence can shy away from them, hence depriving themselves of growth opportunities.

Studies of the 2022–2023 National Achievement Test (NAT) for Grade 10 English revealed that a substantial proportion of students still perform below proficiency: approximately one-third were categorized as “Low Proficient,” with a smaller percentage falling into “Not Proficient” ranges (Department of Education, 2023). Furthermore, private school students consistently outperformed their public-school counterparts across domains such as information literacy and critical thinking including English, echoing longstanding disparities linked to school type and geographic location (Department of Education, 2023; Estrelloso & Yadao, 2022).

Studies have also indicated that students' self-confidence in their capacity to learn English is strongly correlated with their achievement in grammar. For instance, Kholili (2020) reported a positive and significant correlation between students' self-efficacy and their marks in an English grammar test among university EFL students. Similarly, Torres and Alieto (2019) investigated the link between language learning motivation and self-efficacy among Filipino senior high school students and highlighted the psychological factors in the process of language development, reinforcing the broader role of psychological factors in English

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learning. These findings highlight the importance of grammar instruction not only for linguistic competence but also for fostering students' confidence in their language abilities.

In the current global scene of the 21st century, where being able to speak English well is becoming more and more important for academic and professional success, it is crucial to examine the elements that affect students' grammar skills and their belief in their own abilities. Due to its robust English education legacy, the Philippines has the capacity to cultivate students who are not only skilled in English but also self-assured in their ability to utilize the language proficiently. Nevertheless, in order to accomplish this, educators must prioritize enhancing grammar education and offering pupils the necessary assistance to develop their self-efficacy (Bautista, 2024).

This research aimed to explore how the grammar competence of Filipino learners is associated with their self-efficacy, in addition to shedding light on means that the teaching of grammar can be enhanced to improve learners' confidence and overall academic attainment.

The results of this study would be highly beneficial for educators, policymakers, and curriculum creators in their efforts to enhance English language education in the Philippines. This study would ultimately enhance the overall comprehension of how linguistic skills and psychological elements intersect to influence students' academic achievements.

This study was anchored on the Social Cognitive Theory as cited by Albert Bandura (1986). This theory offers a complete framework for comprehending the dynamic interaction between individual variables, contextual influences, and behaviors that is particularly applicable to the examination of English grammatical skills and self-confidence among students. Moreover, Social Cognitive Theory emphasizes that learning is shaped not only by personal experience but also by observing others' behavior and outcomes vicarious experience that helps form self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986). Recent work in education and language learning confirms this mechanism: technology-supported and peer-modeling contexts in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) setting have been found to enhance learners' self-efficacy by exposing them to successful models (Zhang, 2022). Meta analyses of second language acquisition have repeatedly evidenced a significant correlation between self-efficacy and language success, emphasizing efficacy beliefs frequently generated through observation and experience in facilitating academic achievement (Goetze & Driver, 2022). In Social Cognitive Theory, self-efficacy is a sense of confidence in being able to take the actions required to achieve particular goals. In schools, this mindset affects the efforts students make towards tasks, the effort they put in, perseverance when encountering challenges, and, finally, academic performance. For example, Dharma et al. (2018) established that students who have greater confidence in their ability to use grammar were more actively involved in challenging tasks of using language, persisted in mastering complex rules, and used them successfully in writing and speaking. On the other hand, students with lower self-efficacy tend to shun grammar exercises and thus limit practice opportunities and obstruct competence development.

This study examined the relationship between students' grammar competence and self-efficacy, with a focus on how Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) can provide insight into this interconnection. Moreover, students' confidence in their grammar skills is influenced not only by their own performance, but also by seeing their peers, receiving comments from teachers, and the general atmosphere in the classroom. When students witness their peers effectively acquiring intricate grammar rules, it might enhance their own self-assurance, hence increasing their belief in their capacity to achieve the same; hence, observational learning is a crucial technique by which self-efficacy is formed, as stated by SCT.

Furthermore, the SCT suggests that self-efficacy is not fixed but can be improved through certain treatments. This is essential for educators who strive to enhance students' grammatical proficiency; hence, they can enhance students' self-efficacy and improve their grammar performance by employing positive reinforcement, establishing attainable objectives, and exemplifying proper grammar usage (Graham, 2022). When students are provided with chances to excel in increasingly difficult grammar exercises, their confidence in dealing with these exercises grows that creates a positive cycle where enhanced self-efficacy results in improved grammar abilities, and improved abilities in turn strengthen self-efficacy.

Indeed, Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) emphasizes the significance of reciprocal determinism, which refers to the interplay between personal characteristics such as self-efficacy, behavior such as practicing grammar, and environmental effects such as feedback from teachers in shaping learning outcomes. An analysis of the interplay between these variables, and their impact on students' grammatical skills and self-efficacy will yield significant insights on how to cultivate a nurturing educational setting that promotes linguistic mastery and academic self-assurance. By basing the study on the theory, this may develop a more profound comprehension of the psychological and social mechanisms that impact students' acquisition of English grammar. This allowed researchers to pinpoint tactics that could improve both their abilities and self-efficacy.

This research aimed at investigating students' English grammar skills and their confidence level, with the intention of establishing the impact of certain grammar skills on their belief about their academic capabilities. The study sought to determine if there is a correlation between competency in specific grammar components and increased self-confidence through analysis of

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this relationship. Hence, this pertained to identifying the specific independent variable or combination of variables that have an impact on the dependent variable.

II. METHODOLOGY

The research utilized a quantitative design wherein correlational and causal approaches were adopted. The correlational part was tasked with determining the strength and direction of grammar competence and students' self-efficacy, while the causal aspect was tasked with delving into potential cause-and-effect relationships. These relationships were examined using Pearson's Correlation Coefficient to find out if higher grammar proficiency is correlated with higher self-confidence in language tasks.

This aspect of the study identifies patterns and potential relationships between the two variables, providing insightful information regarding how enhancing grammar ability might affect students' self-efficacy and academic achievement (Graham, 2022).

While causal design, also referred as explanatory research, is a type of research design that evaluates whether two different situations have a cause-and-effect relationship. As several alternative factors can contribute to cause-and-effect, the researcher designs an experiment to collect statistical evidence of the connection between the situations. Then the data will be analyzed to determine why the relationship developed. The researcher can also modify the circumstances of the first situation to observe any new effects on the second (Saunders et al., 2019).

This research utilized several statistical methods to study the correlation between the grammar ability of students and their self-efficacy.

For Problems 1 and 2, descriptive statistics in the form of frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were utilized in presenting and summarizing students' grammar skills and levels of self-efficacy.

For problem 3, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was employed to evaluate the considerable relationship between students' grammar competence and their self-efficacy levels. This investigation aimed to establish a correlation between grammar competence and self-efficacy of the students.

For Problem 4, multiple linear regression was used to determine the specific grammatical elements: tenses, subject verb agreement, and punctuation that most significantly impacted students' self-efficacy. This statistical analysis investigated the correlation between multiple independent variables (grammar skills) and one dependent variable (self-efficacy), enabling the research to ascertain the relative contribution of each grammar ability.

For Problem 5, qualitative interpretation was done based on the results of the study.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Problem 1: What is the level of student's grammar competencies in English Language in terms of:

- 1.1 tenses;
- 1.2 s-v agreement; and
- 1.3 punctuation?

Table 1. Tenses

Range	Description	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	SD	Interpretation
9-10	Outstanding	21	13.91	6.86	1.47	Satisfactory
7-8	Very Satisfactory	69	45.70			
5-6	Satisfactory	53	35.10			
3-4	Fairly Satisfactory	8	5.30			
0-2	Needs Improvement	-	-			
TOTAL		151	100			

Note: 9.00-10.00 Outstanding; 7.00-8.00 Very Satisfactory; 5.00-6.00 Satisfactory; 3.00-4.00 Less Fairly Satisfactory; 0.00-2.00 Needs Improvement

Table 1 shows the level of students' grammar competencies in English Language in terms of Tenses. It has the Mean of 6.86 with SD =1.47, interpreted as Satisfactory. This suggests that the respondents have an adequate grasp of verb tenses. However, certain factors may prevent them from applying these tenses with complete accuracy. This means further that they know that they need to use past tense may be, but probably they do not know the past tense form of the verb. Same may be true in future tenses. The more if it is on perfect tenses and more.

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According to Vallerosa (2022) that linguistic studies tend to focus on the difficulties learners experience in acquiring tense systems, especially in languages with intricate temporal morphology. The students' native language background can also be considered. Also, the target language's tense system complexity, and the teaching method can all affect tense acquisition. Though Filipinos consider English as the second language, this does not mean that all students are already good at it.

Based on the result, out of 151 respondents, there were 69 or 45.70% got 7-8 scores out of 10 items which is described as Very Satisfactory. This means that there are really students who know the tenses of verbs. At their grade level, they are aware of the tenses to be used. They can comprehend the thought of the statement as to what tense of verbs to use. This implies that the majority of the student population has the capacity to correctly identify and use different verb forms, a necessity for academic writing and general conversation. The consistency of this performance is an indication of the efficacy of previous teaching. According to Williams (2020), a good understanding of verb tenses is most important for expressing correct meaning and sequence in communication and thus this level of performance is promising towards overall language ability.

Conversely, nobody scored 0. However, there were 8 at 5.30% among the 151 respondents obtained 3-4 correct answers out of 10 item tests which is described as Fairly Satisfactory. The 3-4 correct options reflect partial knowledge, which means that while students may identify some of the fundamental patterns, they are at a loss with the complex rules that dictate their proper use. This means that not all students are already good at tenses of verbs. There are students who falter which means that there is a gap in knowledge which are not being filled.

A study conducted by Panugot (2023) stated that a minimal concept of verb tenses is essential to all kinds of academic and professional communication since it determines clarity of sequence and timing. The fact that This minority would most likely need one-on-one attention to make them completely understand verb tense mechanics before advancing further to more intricate grammatical constructions

Table 2. Subject-Verb Agreement

Range	Description	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	SD	Interpretation
9-10	Outstanding	21	14.57	7.00	1.39	Very Satisfactory
7-8	Very Satisfactory	77	51.00			
5-6	Satisfactory	44	29.14			
3-4	Fairly Satisfactory	8	5.30			
0-2	Needs Improvement	-	-			
Total		151	100			

Note: 9.00-10.00 Outstanding; 7.00-8.00 Very Satisfactory; 5.00-6.00 Satisfactory; 3.00-4.00 Less Fairly Satisfactory; 0.00-2.00 Needs Improvement

Table 2 shows the level of students' grammar competencies in English Language in terms of Subject-Verb Agreement. It has the Mean of 7.00 with SD=1.39 interpreted as Very Satisfactory. This indicates that students perform better in subject-verb agreement, suggesting they can distinguish between singular and plural nouns. They can identify when to apply singular or plural form of verbs. This means further that students have a good foundation in this topic.

According to Vitri et al. (2022), a strong understanding of subject-verb agreement is the basis for writing clear and grammatically correct sentences and hence, it is a building block of good written and oral communication. The fact that more than half of the respondents exhibit this mastery is a good sign for total linguistic ability. This repeat performance suggests that instructional strategies used to instruct subject-verb agreement have been successful with this group by and large, confirming its prominence in curriculum development.

Furthermore, 77 or 51.00% of the 151 respondents scored 7-8 correct answers in 10 item tests in the subject verb agreement which is translated as Very Satisfactory. This indicates that students have better abilities in subject verb agreement, which is an indication of a good foundation gained through effective teaching. As Squires (2019) identifies, subject verb agreement is a fundamental grammar rule that demands the verb to match the subject in terms of number and person. An understanding of this rule is critical for constructing grammatically acceptable sentences and obtaining clear communication. Difficulties with Subject-Verb Agreement can lead to confusion and misinterpretation. This highlights its importance in both written and spoken language.

However, despite the Very Satisfactory interpretation, the fact that nearly half of the respondents did not achieve this level of accuracy still warrants attention. According to a study by Meira (2020), while general rules of subject-verb agreement are often well-understood, complexities arise with irregular verbs, collective nouns, or inverted sentence structures. These challenging

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areas can significantly impact overall accuracy, even for otherwise competent speakers or writers. So, while the trend as a whole is positive, it is imperative that instructors identify exact areas of struggle in subject-verb agreement to inform those students who are not yet mastering consistently. This subtle insight assists with designing interventions to address chronic error and further improve grammatical accuracy across the board.

Table 3. Punctuations

Range	Description	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	SD	Interpretation
9-10	Outstanding	20	13.25	6.92	1.39	Satisfactory
7-8	Very Satisfactory	71	47.02			
5-6	Satisfactory	56	37.09			
3-4	Fairly Satisfactory	4	2.65			
0-2	Needs Improvement	-	-			
TOTAL		151	100			

Note: 9.00-10.00 Outstanding; 7.00-8.00 Very Satisfactory; 5.00-6.00 Satisfactory; 3.00-4.00 Less Fairly Satisfactory; 0.00-2.00 Needs Improvement

Table 3 shows the level of students' grammar competencies in English Language in terms of Punctuations. It has the Mean of 6.92 with SD=1.39, interpreted as Satisfactory. This indicates that the respondents demonstrated a satisfactory understanding and application of punctuation rules. Students can identify what punctuation to use in every type of a sentence. This is a good skill for students to be able to at least can punctuate sentences correctly.

Marcet et al. (2022) draw attention to how correct punctuation is important for effective communication since errors can lead to misunderstanding or misinterpretation. Research on literacy and writing also emphasizes that proficiency in punctuation is essential to academic achievement and proper expression. Factors such as the complexity of sentence structures, the variety of punctuation marks, and the writer's awareness of audience expectations can influence punctuation proficiency.

Moreover, there were 71 or 47.02% among the 151 respondents got 7-8 correct answers over 10 item tests in the punctuations which is interpreted as Very Satisfactory. This means that almost half of the respondents can already determine correct punctuation to use in writing sentences. When nearly half of students demonstrated this level of proficiency, it suggests that basic punctuation rules are being absorbed, providing a solid foundation for more complex writing tasks. However, it also implies that a significant portion of students are not yet mastering these fundamental concepts, potentially leading to ambiguity in their academic outputs. This highlights an ongoing need for reinforcement of punctuation principles to ensure effective expression.

As shown in the table, there were a smaller number of respondents who are at the Satisfactory level. According to Asgar (2023) a Satisfactory performance in punctuation can mask underlying challenges in applying these rules in varied contexts. While students might correctly identify common punctuation usage, the remaining percentage of incorrect answers suggests difficulty with more nuanced or context-dependent applications. For instance, the distinction between restrictive and non-restrictive clauses, or the subtle uses of semicolons, often proves challenging despite general understanding.

Therefore, a satisfactory group score may not fully capture individual struggles with the intricacies that elevate writing from merely comprehensible to truly precise and sophisticated. This calls for targeted pedagogical interventions that move beyond basic identification towards practical application in diverse writing scenarios.

On the other hand, no one got the score of 0. But there were 4 at 2.65% among the 151 respondents got 3-4 correct answers over 10 item tests in the punctuations which is interpreted as Fairly Satisfactory. Similar to the Tenses and Subject Verb Agreement assessments, this points to a limitation in the students' ability to capture very low performance or a lack of representation in that range.

According to Elodie Winckel and Dabrowski (2024), the absence of zero scores in foundational language assessments often implies that even struggling learners possess some rudimentary knowledge, perhaps through implicit learning or minimal exposure. This consistent floor of basic understanding across different grammatical areas suggests that a complete lack of comprehension is rare, and that most students, even those at the lower end of the Fairly Satisfactory scale, have a baseline to build upon rather than starting from absolute zero. Such a pattern is encouraging for educators, as it indicates a degree of existing knowledge that can be leveraged for targeted remediation.

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Problem 2. What is the level of students' self-efficacy?

Table 4. Self-efficacy

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
1. Irrespective of the subject, I am competent in learning.	3.23	1.41	Undecided	Moderately Confident
2. When I study a new concept, I can recall the related knowledge from the earlier classes.	2.92	1.41	Undecided	Moderately Confident
3. If a sudden test is conducted for us without prior notice, I can answer it well.	2.99	1.44	Undecided	Moderately Confident
4. I can figure out anything if I try hard enough.	3.09	1.47	Undecided	Moderately Confident
5. I am confident that I will achieve the goals I set for myself.	3.23	1.47	Undecided	Moderately Confident
6. I can do my projects well.	3.16	1.41	Undecided	Moderately Confident
7. During examinations, I can recollect what I have learnt.	2.78	1.32	Undecided	Moderately Confident
8. I utilize the available library facility for my study.	3.37	1.40	Undecided	Moderately Confident
9. I can complete the homework myself without any help from guidebooks, previous notes, etc.	2.93	1.32	Undecided	Moderately Confident
10. I can be calm at the time of exams as I am conscious of my ability to learn.	3.07	1.50	Undecided	Moderately Confident
Total Mean	3.08	1.41	Undecided	Moderately Confident

Note: 4.50-5.00 Very Confident; 3.50-4.49 Confident; 2.50-3.49 Moderately Confident; 1.50-2.49 Less Confident; 1.00-1.49 Least Confident

Table 4 on the previous page presents the students' level of Self-Efficacy in ten indicators. It has an overall Mean of 3.08, with SD=1.41, squarely falls in the Undecided description, which the study translates as Moderately Confident. Being undecided and moderately confident means that students are not so sure of their stand with regards to their knowledge and capacity. There may be some aspects that they still need further studies or enhancement. This means that students' similarity across a variety of self-efficacy aspects, such as general learning ability, remembering previous knowledge, coping with unexpected tests, problem-solving, goal attainment, project completion, independent homework, and test calmness because of awareness of learning ability, creates a picture of students' population that tends to have faith in their abilities but maybe recognizes areas of possible difficulty or inconsistency in their performance.

The fairly sizeable standard deviations in these measures, from 1.32 to 1.50, indicate a significant variability in students' responses. Although the Mean is in the direction of moderate confidence, there will probably be a major portion of students who are more or less confident than this means for these various dimensions of their learning self-efficacy. This finding indicates that, on average, the students tend to maintain a hopeful belief in their capacity to complete academic tasks successfully, although this confidence does not imply absolute certainty, as presented by Usán et al. (2022).

Analyzing the individual indicators gives a clearer picture of this moderate confidence. Interestingly, indicator 8, *I use the available library facility for my study*, has the highest Mean of 3.37 with SD=1.40, described as Undecided and interpreted Moderately Confident. This indicates the strongest consensus among students in terms of using library facilities. This may reflect a positive view of the usefulness of the library in their learning or more frequent use of the library. Such behavior indicates that while students may doubt their cognitive abilities in high-pressure scenarios like exams, they tend to place trust in structured academic resources. It also indicates a preference for passive forms of academic support, which could be leveraged to develop more active learning strategies.

This aligns to the results of the studies which have increasingly pointed out the role of academic resource centers, such as libraries, in shaping students' learning attitudes and perceived efficacy. The study conducted by Jackson and Sullivan (2021) found that frequent library users developed more effective independent study habits and demonstrated higher academic resilience, which aligns with this indicator's high score in the present data.

Additionally, another study of Chen and Liu (2023) agrees to the result who emphasized that students who view libraries as collaborative and supportive environments often experience boosts in academic self-efficacy, particularly in self-directed learning tasks. This is crucial in hybrid or online learning contexts, where self-regulation plays a larger role. Moreover, the results of the study conducted by Santos et al. (2020) also found that access to learning resources, including digital and physical library services, significantly predicts academic self-belief and student engagement. Collectively, these findings support the interpretation

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that strategic use of libraries is associated with more positive self-perceptions of academic ability, even when overall self-efficacy remains moderate.

In contrast, indicator 7, *When being examined, I can remember what I have learned*, has the lowest Mean of 2.78, described as Undecided and interpreted as Moderately Confident. It reflects a little lower confidence level in their own ability to recall information under particularly high-stress examination conditions, a typical concern for most students. This indicates that students may struggle with test anxiety or ineffective retrieval strategies, which can impair performance despite adequate preparation. It may also indicate a need for instructional interventions that focus on strengthening memory recall techniques and managing cognitive stress.

The result of this study aligns to the recent literature and studies. It emphasized that the ability to retrieve learned information during assessments is significantly influenced by both emotional and cognitive factors. Just like the study of Talsma et al. (2020), it highlighted that test anxiety can interfere with working memory, thereby reducing a student's ability to recall previously learned content during exams.

Similarly, a study conducted by Kim and Pekrun (2021) stated that students with moderate self-efficacy often exhibit reduced exam performance not due to lack of knowledge, but due to impaired recall under evaluative pressure. Moreover, the study conducted by Mendoza and Rivera (2022) was stressing the idea that retrieval failures are more common among students who lack metacognitive strategies, such as spaced repetition or active recall practices, especially in high-stakes assessments.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Hassan and Ortega (2023) also agreed by demonstrating that implementing cognitive rehearsal and low-stakes quizzes can significantly improve exam-time recall confidence among university students. These studies reinforce the importance of integrating retrieval-based learning strategies and emotional regulation into the academic experience to strengthen students' confidence during exams.

Problem 3. Is there a significant relationship between the students' English Grammar Competencies and Self-Efficacy?

Table 5 reflects that the results are inconsistent correlations among different grammar competencies and self-efficacy of students. For "Tenses" and "Punctuation," the r-values (.203 and .250, respectively) and p-values (.574 and .486, respectively) reveal no statistically significant relationship with self-efficacy. This means that students' achievement in these specific grammar competencies is not significantly related to their perceived self-efficacy. Similarly, Therefore, tenses skill, and punctuation skills do not appear to have any quantifiable impact on the levels of students' self-efficacy in this sample. These findings may indicate that students compartmentalized technical grammar skills separately from broader beliefs about academic capability. It is also possible that grammar instruction is perceived as rule-based rather than reflective of personal competence or autonomy, weakening its connection to self-efficacy as supported by the study of Muhammad (2021) and Izatu et al. (2024).

Table 5. Test of Correlation Between Levels of Grammar Competencies and Self-Efficacy

Independent Variable	r-value	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Tenses	.203	.574	Accepted	Not significant
Subject-Verb Agreement	-.753*	.012	Rejected	Significant
Punctuation	.250	.486	Accepted	No significant

The result of this table aligns to several recent studies which echo the weak or inconsistent link between technical grammar competencies and students' general self-efficacy. Consistent with Yunus and Arshad's (2020) findings, this study confirms that while grammar knowledge supports language accuracy, it does not significantly predict students' confidence in general academic or language proficiency. Rahimi and Zhang (2021) also noted that self-efficacy is better associated with communication-focused skills, such as writing fluency and oral expression, than with discrete grammar skills. This aligns with the current findings where rule-based areas like tenses and punctuation failed to correlate significantly with perceived academic competence.

Moreover, another study conducted by Nguyen et al. (2022) which emphasized that students often view grammar as a mechanical task, thereby minimizing its influence on their beliefs about personal learning capability. Interestingly, the study conducted by Barrett and Khoo (2024) also agrees to the result by indicating that the grammar and self-efficacy relationship may be mediated by instructional approach; when grammar is taught as part of authentic communication tasks rather than drills, its influence on self-efficacy tends to increase.

A statistically significant inverse correlation does exist between Subject-Verb Agreement and self-efficacy of students, however. With $r = -.753$ and $p = .012$, the value signifies a very strong inverse correlation. The results suggest a negative correlation between self-efficacy and subject-verb agreement performance, such that those who were stronger in this task reported lower

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levels of self-efficacy, and the reverse. This inverse association was statistically significant within the sample. This implies that when the r -value decreases; the p -value increases and vice versa. The students in this population can write well but their self-efficacy is not surely impacted with their proficiency in grammar. This is a surprising result which would require further investigation. That is, how well students scored on grammar exercises did not substantially influence their confidence in their learning capacity.

This result may seem counterintuitive, as one might have anticipated that a firm understanding of grammatical principles and their usage would enhance a student's confidence. However, the data indicate that other factors are likely playing a more prominent role in shaping students' self-efficacy. This result indicates that, in the context of this particular study, students' general grammar abilities do not strongly relate to their self-efficacy (Wyatt & Dikilitaş, 2019; Sumastre & Oco, 2025). It is possible that students who are extremely confident in subject verb agreement, also think the rest of the grammar section is harder, and therefore lower their overall self-efficacy (Fatma et al., 2024). Alternatively, Minhye Kim et al. (2024) posited that it can be envisioned that high grammatical ability makes the test-taker more judgmental about their overall performance as well.

Furthermore, the context in which the study was conducted and the characteristics of the participants could be associated with the results. The researcher, in this case, considers that the respondents may have placed less emphasis on grammatical accuracy compared to other academic skills or that they might have derived their sense of self-efficacy from sources unrelated to grammar.

Problem 4: Which of the independent variable/s singly or in combination affect the students' self-efficacy?

Table 6 shows the linear regression model used to determine the strength and significance of the relationship of the variables. The overall regression model is not statistically significant, as shown with $F(4,146) = 1.15$ and a $p = 0.332$. This leads to the decision to accept the null hypothesis that all regression coefficients are equal to zero, implying that the independent variables collectively do not significantly predict self-efficacy. The model summary indicates an R -value of 0.151, suggesting a very weak positive correlation between the predictors and self-efficacy. The R^2 value is 0.023, which means that only 2.3% of the variance in self-efficacy can be explained by the independent variables included in this model.

Based on the provided data in Table 6, the independent variables were Tenses, Subject-Verb Agreement, and Punctuation, with Students' Self-Efficacy as the dependent variable. The analysis shows that, among the grammar competencies assessed, only subject-verb agreement had a significant influence on students' self-efficacy.

In the area of Tenses, the standard error (0.025) is relatively close in size to the coefficient (0.036). This indicates a high degree of uncertainty in the estimate. As the p -value (0.154) is larger than the 0.05 significance level, there is not enough evidence to ascertain the existence of a significant effect. Although the coefficient indicates a small rise in self-efficacy with an improvement in tense accuracy by students, the outcome is not statistically significant. Thus, this study failed to reject the null hypothesis. This means that mastery of verb tenses might contribute to confidence, but not strongly or reliably. Thus, this finding aligns with the findings from Teng (2021), who noted that self-efficacy is more closely tied to content generation and planning rather than technical grammar skills.

Table 6. Regression Analysis on the Influence of Tenses, Subject-Verb Agreement, and Punctuations on Self-Efficacy

Variables	UC		SC	t-value	Sig. (p-value)	Decision
	B	SE	B			
Constant	2.524	0.316		7.999	0.000	
Tenses	0.036	0.025	0.119	1.447	0.150	Accept Ho2
Subject-Verb Agreement	0.027	0.026	0.082	1.007	0.315	Accept Ho2
Punctuations	0.017	0.026	0.053	0.649	0.518	Accept Ho2
	R	R²	Adjusted R²	F-value	Sig. (p-value)	
Model	0.151	0.023	0.003	1.15	0.332	Accept Ho2

Note: R = Multiple R, R^2 = R Squared, Adjusted R^2 = Adjusted R squared, F-value = variance of the sample means, p -value = significance level $p < 0.05$, UC = Unstandardized Coefficients, SC = Standard Coefficients, B = Coefficients, SE = Standard Error, β = Beta Coefficients, t-value = test statistics

In subject verb agreement, the unstandardized coefficient ($\beta = 0.027$) suggests that a one-unit gain in mastery corresponds to a 0.027-unit increase in self-efficacy. However, this increase is very minimal. The standardized beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.082$) also

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reflects a weak positive relationship, indicating that subject-verb agreement does not strongly contribute to variations in self-efficacy.

In the table, it shows that the p -value = 0.315 is greater than 0.05, which means the relationship is not statistically significant. And the t -value = 1.007 is also below the typical critical value (-1.96), indicating insufficient evidence to conclude a meaningful effect. Since, Subject-verb agreement has no significant influence on self-efficacy, based on the analysis, the result failed to reject the null hypothesis because the p -value exceeds the 0.05 threshold.

This finding aligns to several studies conducted just like of **Limpo and Alves (2019)** emphasized that **higher-order processes** (planning, revising, self-regulation) predict self-efficacy more strongly than lower-level skills like grammar. It is also noted by the study conducted by **Zumbrunn et al. (2019)** stating that **students' beliefs in their capabilities** are more influenced by prior writing success and feedback than by mechanical skill proficiency. Moreover, the finding is also consistent to the study of **Duran and Perez (2023)** found that **authentic practices and teacher encouragement** play a critical role in developing self-confidence, beyond grammatical accuracy.

In the area of Punctuation, the low beta value ($\beta = 0.053$) further emphasizes that punctuation has minimal effect on self-perception. The coefficient is very small, and the p -value is much greater than 0.05, indicating no significant relationship between punctuation mastery and self-efficacy. Thus, this study failed to reject the null hypothesis. This means that students may not associate **correct punctuation** with their **confidence**, perhaps viewing it as a minor or post concern. This is consistent with Limpo and Alves (2019), who emphasized that students gain confidence more from planning, goal-setting, and idea development than from surface-level mechanics like punctuation.

Hence, the regression analysis shows that subject-verb agreement does not significantly influence students' self-efficacy. The null hypothesis is not rejected, indicating that grammatical correctness in S-V agreement has limited influence on confidence. Educators are encouraged to focus more on developing fluency, critical thinking, and personal expression, while still supporting grammar in context.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings on the previous page, the following conclusions were drawn.

1. Students can express in English with correct Subject-Verb Agreement but they are still confused on how other grammar competencies are used and applied.
2. Students are not sure of their strengths and weakness that limit their self-efficacy.
3. Grammar competency among students does not develop students' efficacy. There may be other factors which are not included in this study that can improve the self-efficacy of the students.
4. Students' Subject -Verb Agreement skill when strengthened not only enhances grammatical accuracy but also supports the development of students' self-belief, making it a key component in fostering success in higher education.
5. Teachers can prioritize authentic, purpose-driven activities that nurtures students' self-efficacy and confidence by guiding students to view grammar, subject-verb agreement, and punctuation as supportive tools rather than rigid rules.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions made, the following are the recommendations presented.

1. Students may join English clubs, or remediation classes to improve their grammar competencies.
2. Students may take time to assess or discover among themselves or individually other factors in their lives that could help them improve their self-efficacy.
3. English teachers may provide targeted grammar instruction and practical exercises that focus on verb tenses and punctuation usage. This may include contextualized grammar drills, sentence construction activities, and real-world tasks.
4. Since grammar competency alone does not significantly impact students' self-efficacy, future instruction and research may explore and include other influential factors such as feedback quality, reading habits, motivation, or use of authentic experiences.

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