



Use of Concord and its Associated Effects on Semantics in English Essays:

A Case of Grade 10 First Additional Language Learners in South Africa

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Abstract

Concord is a fundamental aspect of English grammar that ensures the smooth flow and clarity of communication. The explicit purpose of this study was to explore the common concord errors committed by the Grade 10 First Additional Language learners in South African secondary school in essay writing. A qualitative design was used to conduct the study since it studies human behaviour within the context in which it would occur naturally without the researcher's interference. Learners' essay scripts were collected and analysed using thematic analysis. Ten (10) Grade 10 First Additional Language learners in the Malamulele Northeast circuit were used as the participants. Stratified random and purposive sampling techniques were both used to select the sample for this paper. This paper was underpinned by the Communicative Competence Theory by Swain and Canale (1980). The findings of this study showed that the grade 10 first additional language learners in South Africa have challenges in subject-verb concord or grammatical concord, subject-complement concord, pronoun-antecedent concord, subject-object concord, concord by proximity and notional concord. Some of the challenges were necessitated by mother tongue interference. The understanding and application of the principles of concord may improve learners' language skills and enhance their overall linguistic proficiency. This study recommends that learners should be equipped with sentence construction skills and grammatical rules to ensure that essay is error free and well-articulated.

Keywords

Concord, Communicative Competence, Essay, First Additional Language learners

INTRODUCTION

It is an undeniable fact that English is the most frequently used language in the world. Many countries use English as a language of learning and teaching. In South Africa, many children's additional language is mostly English, as the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) and compulsory subject in the school curriculum. According to the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (2011), by the time learners enter the senior phase, they should be reasonably proficient in their First Additional Language, and this includes to have mastered English grammar rules for effective communication. The CAPS document further stipulates that grammar, especially concord rule must be taught in different grades as it is one of the four English language skills that are pivotal in language learning.

Subsequently, the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (2011) promotes the teaching that may result in the following outcomes: "to enable learners to communicate effectively in speech and writing in the second

language, to express thoughts, ideas, experiences and values as an essential part of personal development and to develop proficiency in English". learners are expected to "write and make presentations (in acceptable English) that are grammatically accurate and appropriate for the context and the readers. Furthermore, the syllabus calls the 'English second language (ESL) teachers to teach appropriate grammar rules and vocabulary to learners so they may use correct grammatical structures in their writing".

Abdulummini (2017) defined concord as "a syntactic feature that establishes harmonious relationships between divergent grammatical elements in a sentence". Quirk (2010) stated that "concord is an agreement between words that agree in gender, number, case, person, or any other grammatical category that affects the forms of words that share a reference". Mungungu (2010) defined "concord as a relation between two elements such that they match each other in terms of some grammatical features". For example, Steven eats because he is hungry. In a sentence, 'Steven' is a noun, and 'he' is a pronoun referring to the former, it is considered that they agree in number and gender since both are singular and masculine. Therefore, concord means the agreement between different parts of a sentence where a singular subject is followed by a singular verb and a plural subject is followed by a plural verb. "A breach of concord is considered ungrammatical in Standard English" (Obi & Ezekulie, 2014).

In relation to the definitions above, concord is one of the most important grammatical aspects of English language that must be mastered for communication proficient. The importance of English concord is clearly seen when learners can articulate their thoughts in a way that it does not hamper communication. Linh (2013) noted that "knowing more on how grammar works also helps one to understand more about how it is used and misused". He proposes that it is through the knowledge of concord that can help learners to understand the essence of the text when reading. This implies that the First Additional Language (FAL) learners, can use knowledge of grammar as a criterion by which they could use to assess and measure the accuracy of what they write. Learning grammar rules ensures that learners have the skills of using language that they may when communicating both verbal and in written format" (Johansson 2012). Obi and Ezekulie (2014) posited that a good use of concord is a condition for a comprehensive and creative ability that can be used while writing or speaking. Basically, the process of learning English as a language cannot be separated from learning its grammar.

A plethora of studies have been conducted to examine the use of concord by English language users. For instance, Katernor (2019) conducted a study analysing concord errors in written essays in high school. The results revealed that pupils' essays had different concord errors such as grammatical concord errors, determiner-noun concord errors, verb tense concord errors, indefinite pronoun concord errors, and proximity concord errors. Another study was conducted by Jafar (2020) focusing on the proper use of concord in written English essays. The results revealed that though students were able to use some types of concord, there were errors of proximity and notion in their essays. Furthermore, Damayanti and Budiasih (2023) conducted a study analysing the Subject-verb concord mistakes in argumentative essays written by Second Semester Students of UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta. The result of the study revealed that students committed several concord errors including the subject-verb concord, proximity concord, and notional concord. The study also revealed that these errors were caused by the intralingual and intralingual transfer. In view of the findings above, this research paper is set to investigate concord errors by FAL learners in South Africa to assist these learners and their teachers.

Purpose of this study

The explicit aim of the study was to investigate the use of concord in Grade 10 additional language learners' essays and its associated effects on the semantics of the essays among high school in South Africa.

Research Objectives

The research study was divided into five objectives: (1) to establish the distinctions between the concept of concord and word classes, (2) to codify different levels of concord, and (3) to analyse the different types.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Perspective

Canale and Swain (1980) as the proponents of Communicative competence, elucidate that there are four components: strategic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, linguistic competence, or grammatical competence. However, this paper is mainly based on one component of communicative competence: grammatical competence. Grammatical competence is relevant to this paper as it emphasises grammatical rules of language and the rules that govern the combination of words and phrases to structure sentences.

Based on Swain and Canale (1980), linguistic competence or grammatical competence is the knowledge of the language code, that is, the grammar, vocabulary and conventions of its written representation (script and orthography). Furthermore, that grammar component includes the knowledge of the sounds and their pronunciation (i.e. phonetics); the rules that govern sound interactions and patterns (i.e. phonology); the formation of words by means of "inflection and derivation, for example (that is, "morphology); the rules that govern the combination of words and phrases to structure sentences (that is, syntax); and the way that meaning is conveyed through language (that is, semantics). Canale and Swain in Basit (2010) posit that grammatical competence is concerned with knowledge of the linguistic code (verbal or non-verbal), which includes vocabulary knowledge as well as knowledge of morphological, syntactic, semantic, phonetic and

orthographic rules. Mastering this competence enables the speaker to use the knowledge and skills needed for understanding and expressing the literal meaning of utterances.

Types of Concord

Grammatical Concord

Shuaibu and Mustapha (2021) claim that grammatical concord is the most important type of concord in which the verb matches with the subject in number such that a singular subject agrees with a singular verb and a plural subject takes a plural verb. Leech and Svartvik, (2002, p. 273) claim that grammatical concord is divided into concord of number and concord of person where concord of number focuses on singularity and plurality, but concord of person focuses on the '1st person, 2nd person and 3rd person'. Tuurosang (2012) defines grammatical concord as a "grammatical relationship in which a subject must agree with the verb in number and person". By number, he indicates the relationship between the speaker and what he/she is speaking about. The term "agreement" according to him is used to describe the type of grammatical changes that take place between the subject of a sentence and its verb. He adds that it has to do with the cordial relationship that must exist between the subject and the main verb or the first element of the verb phrase. The strict rule under the grammatical concord is that a "singular verb goes with a singular subject and a plural verb goes with a plural subject". For instance, in the sentence: "The door is open". The subject (door) is singular and the verb (open) is also singular, making this sentence to be grammatically correct. However, in the sentence, 'The doors are open'. The subject (doors) is plural and the verb (opens) is also plural, making even this sentence to be grammatically correct.

Proximity Concord

In Shuaibu and Mustapha (2021)'s definition, proximity concord denotes the agreement between a verb and the closely preceding subject. It is based on the position of the verb and the nearest subject. Biney (2019) asserts that the 'verb takes its number from whatever pronoun or noun phrase precedes it and functions as a subject. Along the same vein, Wiredu (1998), proximity concord refers to "agreement between the verb and its subject is not based on notion but on the fact that there is a nominal group which is immediately close to the verb". For example, in the sentence, "Neither the parents nor she speaks well". The verb 'speaks' agrees with the pronoun 'she' because it is very close to the verb. In the sentence, 'No one except his own supporters agree with him'. the verb "agree" agrees with the number of "supporters as the closet subject". Although the head noun "No one" is singular, the verb agrees with the nearest noun. It is very important to note that proximity concord is reinforced by a notional concord. Quirk and Greenbaum (2000) observe that proximity concord denotes "agreement of the verb with whatever noun or pronoun which closely precedes it, sometimes in preference to agreement with the headword of the subject".

Notional Concord

Quirk and Greenbaum (2000) articulate that notional concord is the "agreement of verb with subject according to the idea of number rather than the actual presence of the grammatical marker". This makes it possible for a "singular subject to agree with a plural verb without the sentence being considered grammatically incorrect". For example:

1. "The government are doing their best to develop the rural areas".
2. "The government has broken its promises".

According to the rule of notional concord, in example one above, the noun "government" is treated as a collection of individuals so a plural verb "are" is used making the sentence to be grammatically correct. However, in the second example, the noun "government" is treated as a singular individual body hence a singular verb "has" is used. Except for notional concord and the law of proximity, a learner has to apply the stable rules that govern the other types of concord to make grammatically acceptable sentences. Violation of the rules will result in the production of unacceptable linear sequences of words.

Oluikpe (2009) indicated a pronoun must agree in number, gender, and case with its antecedent. This means that pronouns depend on another structure for their meaning. Some of these pronouns that are controlled by their antecedents are the personal, demonstrative and relative pronouns. Here are some notes to consider about using pronoun-antecedent concord:

1. "A pronoun replacing a noun must have the same number as the noun it replaces". For example, "Mzamani and Basani eat porridge because they have not eaten anything for days". In this example "Mzamani and Basani" are plural nouns and replaced by a plural pronoun "they" which makes this sentence to be grammatically correct in terms of pronoun-antecedent concord.
2. "A pronoun replacing a noun must be masculine if the noun is masculine; feminine if the noun is feminine and neuter if the noun is neuter". For example, "Lettie eats because he is hungry". In this example, Lettie is a male and the pronoun "he" replaces him making this sentence grammatically correct in terms of pronoun-antecedent concord.
3. "A subject noun must be replaced by a subject pronoun; an object noun is replaced by an objective pronoun". For example, "Eunice sleeps because she is tired". In this example, "Eunice" is a subject noun and it is replaced by another subject noun "she" to make this sentence to be grammatically correct in terms of pronoun-antecedent concord.

Point of Time – Verb Concord

Latin (1996) states that “verbs must agree with one another where they occur in a chain”. For example, “Thomas received the ball from his teammate and scored” or “Thomas receives the ball from his teammate and scores”. In both sentences the tense is maintained, the verb “received” is in the past and “scored” is also in the past which makes this sentence to be grammatically correct in terms of point of time –verb concord. The same applies to the second sentence all verbs are at the same tense to make a grammatically correct sentence.

Previous studies about concord

Many studies have been explored the use of concord by English language users. For instance, Katernor (2019) conducted a study analysing concord errors in written essays in high school. The results revealed that pupils’ essays had different concord errors such as grammatical concord errors, determiner-noun concord errors, verb tense concord errors, indefinite pronoun concord errors, and proximity concord errors. Another study was conducted by Jafar (2020) focusing on the proper use of concord in written English essays. The results revealed that though students were able to use some types of concord, there were errors of proximity and notion in their essays. Furthermore, Damayanti and Budiasih (2023) conducted a study analysing the Subject-verb concord mistakes in argumentative essays written by Second Semester Students of UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta. The result of the study revealed that students committed several concord errors including the subject-verb concord, proximity concord, and notional concord. The study also revealed that these errors were caused by the intralingual and intralingual transfer.

Moreover, Igbokwe (2024) conducted a study analysing the usage of concord by the students of English, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University. The results showed that students face some challenges when using concord. These challenges included errors of omission, addition, disordering, and spelling. The researcher also found out that concord errors tend to affect meaning due to disagreement between the noun and the verb. Joshua and Okeke (2024) conducted a study from the selected PG students of English in Coou, Igbariam campus. It was revealed that concord errors tend to affect meaning because of disagreement between the noun and the verb. From the findings, the researcher recommended that further research should be carried out on general error analysis among postgraduate students. Given these findings above, this research study was set to investigate the concord errors in English essays written by FAL learners in the Malamulele northeast circuit to assist them and their teachers.

METHODOLOGY

Research Approach

This study was a qualitative case study, since qualitative research values human phenomena in context-derived terms and categories (Walliman, 2021). According to Babbie (2018), qualitative studies set up research opportunities designed to lead researchers into areas of discovery within the lives of the people they are investigating.

Research Instruments and Data Analysis

There are several research instruments researchers may use but the common ones are interviews, document analysis and questionnaires. However, this study used document analysis. According to Treffers and Daller (2020), document analysis is ‘any written materials that contain data about the phenomena the researcher wishes to study’. The data were collected from Grade 10 FAL learners’ English essays.

Participants and Setting

The sample for this study was the Grade 10 First Additional Language learners from one of the high schools in the South African rural High school. The researchers used simple random sampling to sample fourteen (14) Grade 10 FAL learners from the population of 100 learners. The researchers wrote numbers on small pieces of paper ranging from 1 to 10 and folded the papers in a manner that the numbers were not visible to the participants. The researchers placed the pieces of paper inside a box and learners were asked to randomly pick a piece of paper from the box. Learners who picked numbers from one (1) to ten (10) were allowed to participate in the study

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data were analysed using a thematic framework. This framework facilitated the classification and organisation of data based on significant themes, concepts, and emerging categories. As the analysis progressed, each category was further divided into sub-categories. Connections between the categories were identified by recognising patterns within the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following types of concord errors were observed to be challenges facing the Grade 10 First Additional Language learners in South Africa.

Errors on Verb ‘to be’-Concord

According to Linh (2013), the verb “to be” concord is a morphological change that occurs in some verbs due to the selection of a particular personal pronoun. In other words, there is some form of agreement between the type of pronoun selected as a subject and the form of the verb that goes with it. Below are the extracts from the participants;

- “I watching the game now”.

In this sentence, the learner violated the rule of the verb “to be”, which states that the first-person singular pronoun “I” must be used with “am” when the sentence is in the present continuous tense. The sentence has the first-person singular pronoun “I”, which must have been followed by “am” to become a grammatically correct sentence. The correct sentence is “I am watching the game now”. The word “now” makes this sentence qualify for the present tense only.

- “You late”.

In this sentence, the learner violated the rule of the verb “to be”, which states that the second Person (singular and plural) pronoun “you” occurs with “are”. The phrase “You late” has the subject “you” but there is no verb. The correct sentence is “you are late”. Or “you were late” depending on the tense of the sentence. The subject “you” can be used as a singular or plural subject as in “you are the best teacher” or “you are the best teachers”. In the past tense, the rule states If the subject is singular (no matter whether it is first or third-person pronouns) the form ‘was’ is used and when the subject is plural, the form ‘were’, is used. These findings concur with the findings from the study conducted by Igbokwe (2024). The study analysed the usage of concord by the students of English, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University. The results showed that students face some challenges when using concord. These challenges included errors of omission of the verb ‘to be’ rendering the sentence meaningless.

Subject-verb disagreement

Generally, the syntactic theory according to Chomsky (1982) cited in Khosa (2019) requires subjects and verbs to agree in number. Therefore, the rule states that ‘a singular subject must select a singular verb and a plural subject must select a plural verb.’ Subject-verb agreement error occurs when the subject and verb of a sentence do not agree in number. Below are extracts from the participants’ essays:

- “It is give me energy”.

The participant wrote, “It is give me energy”. In this sentence, the participant used the wrong form of a verb. This form interferes with the meaning as it is easy to understand the intended message. According to the syntactical rule, the single subject takes a single verb follow and the plural subject takes a plural verb. In this sentence the subject is singular, a singular verb should follow it. The correct sentence would then be, “It gives me energy.”

- “Ingredient use for the stew are palm oil, onion, tomato, and magi,”

The participant wrote, “Ingredient use for the stew are palm oil, onion, tomato, and magi,” the sentence is incorrect because the word ‘ingredient’ as used by the participant implies one ingredient which disagrees with the verb ‘are’. The verb ‘are’ connotes plurality. At the end of the sentence, the participant listed different kinds of ingredients, which serve as evidence that the use of the word ingredient was incorrect because there is no agreement between the subject and the verb, a plural subject ought to be used. Furthermore, the use of the present tense ‘use’ is also incorrect because the idea being depicted here denotes the past. The correct sentence should read, “Ingredients used for the stew are palm oil, onion, tomato, and magi,”

- “Soak it in water for some minute”

The participant wrote, “Soak it in water for some minute”. The sentence is incorrect because the word ‘some’ which implies an unknown amount has been used with ‘minute’ which refers to ‘one minute’. Since there must always be agreement in number, the correct sentence should be, “soak it in water for some minutes”.

- “My dog always eat the food I don’t finish.”

The participant wrote, “My dog always eat the food I don’t finish.” This construction has a singular subject which is a “dog”. The rules state that a singular subject demands a singular verb. The error here is therefore in the singular subject being matched with a plural verb ‘eat’. The singular verb is ‘eats’. Therefore, the correct sentence should be, “My dog always eats the food I don’t finish.”

These findings are congruent with the findings of the study conducted by Manurung, Muhammad and Akwene (2022). Their study revealed that students committed errors on a subject-verb agreement where 24.19 per cent of errors were misinformation errors, 1.6 per cent were ordering errors, 19.34 were deletions and 3.22 per cent were addition errors. Another study was conducted by Mayasari and Sari, (2024). The results revealed that students displayed countless types of subject-verb agreement errors such as misinformation, errors of omission and addition.

Notional concord

Quirk and Greenbaum (2010) opine that notional concord is an agreement of the verb with the subject according to the idea of number rather than the actual presence of the grammatical marker. This makes it possible for a singular subject to agree with a plural verb without the sentence being considered grammatically incorrect. This means that there are certain nouns which, in fact, are singular but typically denote a collection or group of individuals. These nouns are singular in form but are plural in meaning and they are referred to as collective nouns. Below are extracts from the participant’s essays:

- “The government provide food at our schools”

The participant wrote, “The government provide food at our schools”. The noun "government" is singular but the verb is plural. The word "government" does not denote individual members of the government but the government is treated as a collection of individuals so a plural verb should be used. The correct sentence is “The government provides food at our schools”. The verb “provide” takes the inflection (s) because the noun is singular. This finding is in line with the finding from a study conducted by Joshua and Okeke (2024). Their study found that the selected PG students of English in Coou, Igbariam campus had challenges with the use of subject and noun and this challenge affected the meaning of the message.

Concord between subject and complement of a sentence

The rule here stipulates that if the subject of a sentence is singular then the complement must be singular and if it is plural, the complement must be plural. Below are some of the extracts taken from learners' essays:

- “That teacher was a princes.”

The participant wrote, “That teacher was a princes.” This sentence is incorrect because the concord rule between subject and complement stipulates that if the subject of a sentence is singular then the complement must be singular and if it is plural, the complement must be plural. The subject of this sentence is singular (teacher) but the complement (princes) is plural, making this sentence ungrammatically correct. The correct sentence is “That teacher was a prince”.

- “The elephants are big animal in the park”.

The participant wrote, “The elephants are big animal in the park”. The sentence is incorrect because the subject of this sentence (elephants) is plural and it must have a plural complement. However, the participant used plural subject and singular complement rendering this sentence ungrammatically incorrect. The rule states that if the subject is plural, even the complement must be plural. The grammatically correct sentence is "The elephants are big animals in the park". The findings of this study concur with the findings from a study conducted by Joshua and Okeke (2024). Their study found that the selected PG students of English in Coou, Igbariam campus had challenges with the use of subjects and nouns and this challenge affected the meaning of the message.

Concord of proximity

According to Wiredu (1998), “proximity concord refers to agreement between the verb and its subject based not on notion but on the fact that there is a nominal group which is immediately close to the verb”. It is not easy to determine the subject of the sentence due to the insertion of the intervening words like as well as, together with, and along with. The rule is a singular subject followed by a plural modifier will require a singular verb even though the verb may be immediately placed next to a plural noun that is functioning as a post modifier to the subject of the sentence. Below are some of the extracts taken from learners' essays:

- ‘ The behaviour of these teachers are surprising’

The participant wrote, ‘ The behaviour of these teachers are surprising’. The sentence is incorrect because the rule of concord of proximity states that a singular subject followed by a plural modifier will require a singular verb even though the verb may be immediately placed next to a plural noun that is functioning as a post modifier to the subject of the sentence. In this sentence, the rule involving the concord of proximity is violated. The subject of this sentence is “behaviour” which is singular but the verb “are” is plural making this sentence grammatically incorrect. The plural noun “teachers” is not the subject of this sentence as it may have misled the participant. The correct sentence should read, ‘ The behaviour of these teachers is surprising’

- “Neither of the two stores were open”

The concord rule states that if a sentence begins with “neither” or “either” without the “or/nor” combination, the verb is singular. Neither and either always take singular verb when acting as the subject of a sentence, when these pronouns appear by themselves, they are singular, even though their use connects two things. The word “neither”, here means none of the two stores. In this sentence, the rule is violated rendering this sentence incorrect because of the verb “were”, which is in plural. The correct sentence is “neither of the two stores was open”.

- ‘His friends or parent are coming to school today’

The participant wrote, ‘His friends or parent are coming to school today’. The sentence is incorrect because the syntactic rule states that if a sentence has two subjects connected by or/nor, either/or, or neither/nor, the verb must agree with the second subject (the subject closer to the verb). In this sentence, the rule is being violated because the learner used the plural verb “are” closer to a singular subject “parent” rendering this sentence grammatically incorrect. The grammatically correct sentence is “His friends or parent is coming to school today.”

Concord between Determiners and the Nouns they modify

Determiners refer to words like, the, his, that, your, several, all, etc. As a result of the singular and plural distinction, when determiners occur with nouns, they must agree in number with the noun that is being modified. Below is the extract from the participant’s essays:

- ‘All this books are mine’

The participant wrote, ‘All this books are mine’. The sentence is incorrect because the concord rule of determiner and noun state that when determiners occur with nouns, they must agree in number with the noun that is being modified. The determiner is singular, but the noun is plural rendering this sentence grammatically incorrect. The correct sentence is “All these books are mine”.

Pronoun-Antecedent Concord

A pronoun must agree with its antecedent in number, case and gender. An antecedent is the word or group of words to which a person refers. Pronouns are used to prevent repetition of nouns and to simplify writing by making it less wordy. Below are extracts from the participant’s essays:

- “My daughter beats the door with his fists”.

The participant wrote, “My daughter beats the door with his fists”. The sentence is incorrect because the pronoun his does not agree with its antecedent in gender. The correct form of the sentence is “My daughter beats the door with her fists”.

CONCLUSION

The study reported in this paper forms part of a much broader project, which is an ongoing investigation into the linguistic problems faced by Grade 10 First Additional Language South African learners when writing English extended response essays. The aim was to inform the refinement of teaching materials to address these problems more effectively. The key findings of this study report on the language challenges encountered by the grade 10 EFAL language learners on the lack of subject-verb agreement in learners’ sentences and phrases construction. The paper elucidates there are seven categories of errors in the use of concord by the EFAL learners. This faulty use of concord encompasses errors on verb to be, subject-verb disagreement, notional concord, concord between subject and complement, concord of proximity, concord between determiners and nouns they modify, and pronoun-antecedent. In the English language, concord has always been a key aspect of any formal essay. Consequently, it is pivotal for learners to always exercise concord to justify their semantics and be understood. If there is a lack of concord, it may cause negative effects on the semantics of essays, which, in turn, may lead to poor comprehension and writing of the language. Moreover, this should use grammar and spell check tools but also manually review their work.

It is hoped that language teachers who are involved in the teaching of essay writing skills in FAL will find this information useful since it may assist them in generating new strategies targeted to address the language challenges identified in the field. This study was limited to one school owing to the limited resources with financial constraints and time limiting factors.

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the findings of the study, it is clear that the Grade 10 First Additional Language learners experience challenges with regard to English grammar, particularly concord rules. According to the results of the study, these challenges are partly caused by the fact that the level of English grammatical competence of these learners is not strong enough to support them academically. This research suggests an intervention program focused on English grammar designed to address the foundational language gaps experienced by Grade 10 learners of English as a First Additional Language, particularly those in the Malamulele Northeast circuit. While it is unrealistic to expect non-native learners to achieve 100 percent accuracy, they should strive for ongoing improvements in their grammatical accuracy to enhance the readability and effectiveness of their work. Additionally, it is advised that teachers teach grammar within a contextual framework rather than in isolation. Learners should participate in activities that enable them to internalise English grammar rules, allowing them to apply these rules when forming sentences. The researchers further suggest that the incorrect application of rules on concord should be used as a point of departure for the refinement of the teaching materials and curriculum content thereof. On modifiers, it is recommended that learners should be taught to place modifiers as close as possible to the words that they modify. The learners should ensure the verb agrees with the subject in number. The future studies should explore

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