

# Syntactic Ability in Relation to Expository Writing Skills of Senior High School Students

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## Abstract

The ability to write well is a key academic skill, more so in the case of expository writing where writers are expected to have a clear line of thought, both at content and sentence levels. However, writing poses challenges to many Senior High School students, which can be attributed to lack of syntactic competence. This research examined the relationship between students' syntactic skills and their capabilities in expository writing. More specifically, the study investigated syntactic skill in terms of sentence complexity, grammatical accuracy, and cohesion at sentence level, in relation to expository writing skills in terms of coherence and mechanical accuracy. This study employed a quantitative correlational research design. The participants were the Senior High School (Grade 12) students taking English for Academic and Professional Purposes subject in a public senior high school. Information was gathered via a writing task designed by the researcher and completed by the students entitled: "What is Unique About Your Family?" The written products were rated by using a rubric which had been prepared. Descriptive statistics were computed to determine the syntactic ability and writing performance. Then Spearman's rho rank correlation coefficient was applied to determine the relation between the two areas. The findings showed that students overall had a good command of syntax. Sentence complexity was considered proficient; grammatical and sentence cohesion were considered good. In addition, the students' expository writing (in particular coherence and mechanical accuracy) was also evaluated as satisfactory. The analysis also revealed a significant positive correlation between syntactic and expository writing ( $\rho = .978$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Hence, these results implied that syntactic competence has a significant influence in students' writing. This study demonstrates that enhancing instruction of sentence structure could facilitate gains in students' writing of expository essays.

**Keywords:** Syntactic Ability, Expository Writing Skills, Sentence Complexity, Grammatical Accuracy, Sentence Cohesion, Coherence, Mechanics, Senior High School Writing

## Introduction

Writing well is a fundamental skill, essential for success in all academic fields [1]. Expository writing is especially crucial as it describes, informs and makes clear various concepts. These roles are the building blocks of communication in both theoretical and practical environments. Under the Senior High School (SHS) curriculum, expository writing is integrated as a major strand to develop students' academic literacy, research capabilities, and the writing of technical and formal reports as provided by the Department of Education (DepEd). Expository writing allows students to show their analytical skills and understanding of various subjects.

On the other hand, expository writing is a challenge for numerous Senior High School learners in the Phi-

lippines as they face language and cognitive barriers [2]. Such challenges seem to manifest as scattered, ambiguous and insufficient written outputs. Existing scholarship often addresses broad challenges in writing, yet there is a paucity of focused investigation into the specific linguistic and cognitive proficiencies that contribute to expository writing success, especially concerning syntax.

Syntax is not only a side aspect of writing add syntax enhances its effectivity. As a part of the organization of words and phrases within a sentence, syntax has a direct impact on clarity, sentence complexity, and textual coherence [3]. Students who know how to use syntactic structures effectively can express subtle ideas clearly, and they can link information logically.

On the other hand, students with syntactic difficulties tend to have a writing that is choppy or too convoluted, making it more difficult to read. Although important, most writing tests and educational models focus mainly on vocabulary, coherence, or the organization of writing, and do so in isolation. The analysis is focused on syntax rather than on lexical items or the overall text structure as the syntax is a reflection of the student's ability to make meaning at the sentence and discourse level and plays a part in the making and linking of ideas. Unlike vocabulary, which can be learnt little by little through input, syntax is a form of structural knowledge that requires instruction and that instruction must be supported by output to be effectively acquired.

In addition, the study of syntax allows a more complete description of the writing ability, showing us how the students conveyed the ideas. Hence, the purpose of the present study is to explore more complex patterns of students' writing problems by delving into underlying causes of communication breakdowns rather than focusing on surface errors.

The study is significant for the Senior High School students under the Department of Education. As part of their performance tasks, final projects, and research activities, these students are expected to produce a range of academic texts. Expository writing is taken as a part in these tasks, but many students begin SHS underprepared without a text field of some sort. To find the determinants of writing success at this level of education is vital to the design of intervention that are both educationally feasible and customized to the needs of specific students.

In brief, the present study attempts to fill a significant gap in the research by investigating the influence of syntactic skill on the expository writing performance of DepEd SHS students. The findings are expected to inform instructional practices and curricular reforms aimed at effectively promoting the writing development of the Filipino learner, ultimately enhancing learner academic performance and equipping the learners with communication skills for life.

### **Theoretical Framework of the Study**

The relationship between syntactic ability and writing expository texts can be well studied based on Piaget's theory of cognitive development. What this means is that the theory highlights stages in the development of thinking to represent a shift in thinking to the formal operational mode during adolescence. Clear writing needs some associated thinking: expository writing is nothing if not the expression of logical thinking, analysis, and judgment [4]. From Piaget's point of view, thought comes before language in development, that is, the structures of thought determine the use of language.

Therefore, syntactic ability, defined in this study as sentence complexity, grammatical accuracy, and cohesion, is both a reflection and a product of developing cognitive schemas. This study also integrates insights from recent research, which affirm that students' cognitive development is directly linked to their capacity to organize and express ideas in expository formats [5]. Having the ability to construct complex

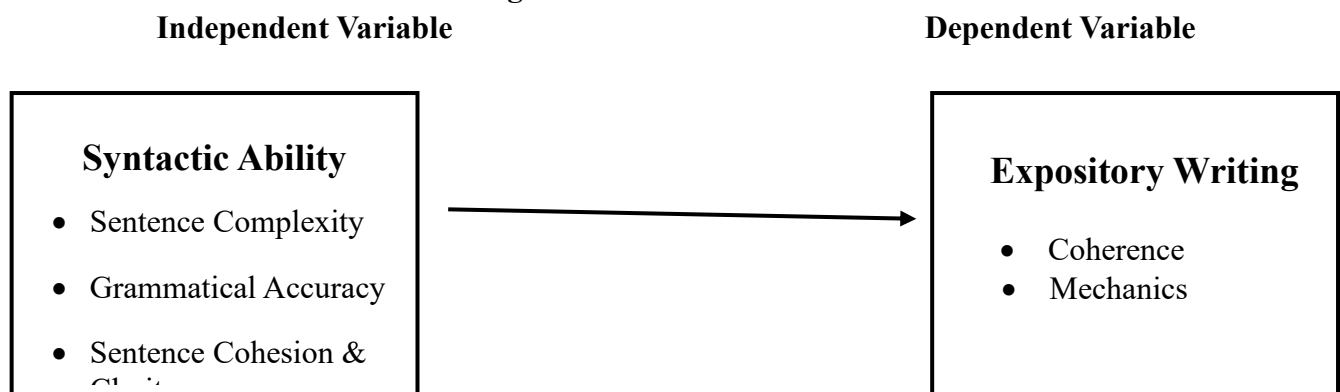
syntactic structures allows for precise expression and enables the process of analysis and evaluation; both are necessary for the development of coherent expository writing [6]. Furthermore, from a Socio-Cultural perspective, Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural Theory and Chomsky's Universal Grammar provide other sets of lenses.

Vygotsky's notion of the ZPD highlights that social interaction and pedagogy contribute significantly in the development of syntactic ability. In contrast, Chomsky's notion of an innate linguistic structure explains the manner in which learners come to know the set of rules that determine how sentences are formed. These perspectives, consequently, expand upon Piaget's focus on individual cognitive growth by incorporating environmental and biological influences into the understanding of linguistic development. Therefore, the combination of these theoretical viewpoints supports the conceptual model, suggesting that syntactic skill affects expository writing.

Therefore, the present study's theoretical framework describes the following sequential and interacting relation: Syntactic Ability → Expository Writing, where the antecedent, Syntactic Ability, has a direct effect on Expository Writing. Synthesizing cognitive, linguistic and socio-cultural aspects, this thesis offers a solid understanding of how the factors combine and the effect they have on the performance of academic writing of Senior High School students. This unified hold not only confirms the variables of the study but also provides a developmentally perspective of understanding to better inform teaching practices and curriculum development in the Department of Education.

**Conceptual Framework of the Study**

**Figure 1: Research Variables**



This study suggests that the syntactic ability of students has a significant influence on the quality of their expository writing. Syntactic competence includes the students' ability to make sentences that are well-formed, meaningful, and varied. This study assesses syntactic ability through the lenses of sentence complexity, grammatical accuracy, and sentence cohesion and clarity, all of which are fundamental elements of syntactic competence within the context of written communication.

Sentence complexity serves as a measure of a learner's ability to create different sentence structures, including compound and complex forms. This ability enables writers to communicate their thoughts more clearly and completely. Therefore, students who know how to rearrange sentences have an advantage when it comes to writing detailed explanations.

Rigor in grammar means we must apply the rules, informed by subject-verb agreement, tense consistency, sentence well-formedness. Using correct grammar and punctuation makes the written word easier to

understand and lends credibility to the communication, whether the intended reader is a boss, friend or the general public.

Cohesion, clarity and coherence are related to the flow and connection of ideas between and within sentences. Cohesion in sentences is also important in making the transition between ideas and this is crucial to the maintenance of reader understanding in expository writing.

These syntactic processes are hypothesized to influence students' ability to write expository texts, as assessed in the present study by measures of coherence and mechanics. Coherence refers to the organization and natural flow of ideas in a written work, and mechanics relate to the use of appropriate punctuation, capitalization, spelling and general formatting. Consequently, the framework posits that students exhibiting superior syntactic proficiency are more inclined to generate expository texts characterized by both coherence and mechanical precision. This study aims to determine the impact of language proficiency on students' writing in academic context, by investigating the relationship among these factors.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

This research is concerned with exploring the syntactic competence of Senior High School students and the impact of their syntactic competence on their expository writing skill. In particular, students' syntactic competence will be investigated by analyzing their sentence complexity, grammatical accuracy as well as the coherence and clarity of their sentences. At the same time, the test taker will be assessed on their ability to write explanations by considering cohesion and accuracy in writing. The purpose of this paper is to investigate whether students' syntactic competence has a statistically significant effect on their ability to write clear, coherent and error free expository texts by focusing on these particular linguistic components. Hence, the findings of the study are anticipated to shed light on students' understanding of grammar and its contribution to effective writing in school. This knowledge will be utilized to enhance the teaching of writing in the Senior High School curriculum.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

The study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the syntactic ability of students in terms of Sentence Complexity, Grammatical Accuracy, and Sentence Cohesion?
2. What are the students' expository writing skills in terms of coherence and mechanics?
3. Is there a significant relationship between students' syntactic ability and their expository writing skills?

### **1.5 Limitations of the Study**

This research aimed to investigate the students' syntactic competence and if it was related to the ability in writing expository texts. The study focused on the students' syntactic ability in terms of sentence complexity, grammatical accuracy, sentence cohesion and sentence clarity, and on the students' expository writing performance in terms of coherence and mechanical accuracy. The main goal was to determine whether syntactic competence had a significant contribution in students' generation of clear, organized, and mechanically correct expository texts. The study was limited to the Senior High School Grade 12 students under the Department of Education enrolled in the English for Academic and Professional Purposes subject in the school year 2025–2026. The evaluation was confined to the specified indicators of syntax and writing performance, with the recognition that other linguistic and contextual elements might have an effect on the students' overall ability in writing.

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study offered beneficial information to educators about the importance of syntactic

awareness in students' expository writing. As far as the students are concerned, it was a revelation for some of them how even at this level it is crucial to work on the sentence in order to enhance the quality of academic writing as well as that of their studies. For their part, teachers acquired deeper knowledge of the language ability of their students and consequently were able to design more suitable teaching sessions and writing tasks. The empirical findings enabled school leaders and curriculum developers to guide in the development of teaching materials, learning units as well as curriculum policies on supporting students writing. Furthermore, the results of the study would serve as a reference for further investigation into the relationship between syntactic competence and academic writing.

### 1.7 Definition of Terms

The following terms presented the conceptual and operational definition of the study:

**Expository Writing.** This term refers to the writing that seeks to explain, illuminate, or 'expose' (which is where the word 'expository' comes from)

**Syntactic ability.** This term refers to a crucial aspect of linguistic proficiency. It involves understanding, applying, and manipulating syntax rules in a language, ensuring clear and coherent communication.

**Syntax.** This term refers to studies of how words are combined and arranged to form phrases, clauses, and sentences.

**Sentence complexity.** This term refers to the structural sophistication of a sentence, including the use of various sentence types (simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex) and grammatical constructions such as subordination and coordination.

**Grammatical accuracy.** This term refers to the correct application of grammatical rules, including subject-verb agreement, verb tense consistency, word order, and overall sentence correctness.

**Sentence cohesion.** This term refers to the logical connection between ideas within and across sentences, achieved through the use of cohesive devices such as conjunctions, pronouns, and transition words. Sentence clarity pertains to the ease with which a reader can understand the intended meaning.

## 2. Review of Related Literature

Expository writing is an essential part of the Department of Education standards, providing students opportunities to make their thinking clear and logical, explain their thinking clearly, and organize their thinking. This type of writing allows students to communicate what they know effectively in essays, reports, research papers, and the like, all of which are essential for success in school. Therefore, with the help of expository writing, students demonstrate their understanding of a subject by building their ideas on a solid foundation [6]. In contrast, Anisia Kemala et al. has revealed that [7] most students face challenges in writing quality expository text due to their lack of syntactical knowledge. Ambiguous and incomprehensible writing can be the result of a number of factors, including bad sentence construction, grammatical errors, or negative transitions between sentences. The above problems manifest some significance of meaning that we must teach the students some language-based writing technique so as to enhance their writing of the academic paper.

Syntactic competence is defined as the extent to which a learner is aware of, and able to use, the grammatical rules and sentence structures that enable them to produce well-formed and meaningful sentences. This involves producing various sentence types, maintaining grammatical accuracy and semantic consistency, as well as cohesion (i.e., referencing) in both within-sentence and text-level. In consequence, powerful syntactical skills enable students to express their ideas clearly and seamlessly connect arguments throughout a composition [8].

Strong syntactic awareness is essential for good expository writing. These abilities contribute to the organization of explanations in a logical manner and consequently increase the intelligibility of the text. Advanced students in terms of complex sentence production, grammar accuracy and cohesion at the sentence-level are more likely to write expository texts that are clear in content and form. Thus, enhancing students' syntactic ability is regarded as a crucial aspect in raising the quality of their writing in the academic context.

### **2.1 Understanding Syntactic Ability**

Students who learn a new language need excellent syntactic ability because it lets them build and understand complex grammatically proper sentences. According to Friederici [9], syntactic ability requires knowledge about sentence construction rules together with word sequence principles, which make up the essential foundation needed for successful communication. Syntactically competent students can successfully write and produce readable and professional essays in academic contexts. Good syntax allows you to use correct grammar and to have smooth transitions between sentences in a piece of writing. Each component of grammar and sentence structure serves as an essential tool for clear logical exposition in expository writing. The writing of students who lack syntactic skills becomes less effective because they create sentences that remain ambiguous or confusing to the reader. Strong syntactic abilities create clear and precise expressions of ideas because writers can easily organize their thoughts in straightforward ways [9]. Academic pieces require a strong understanding of syntax to build persuasive and coherent work. The ability to utilize syntax serves as a direct factor in producing clear ideas within written content. Students who excel in syntax can express complicated thoughts effectively, which results in better readability together with a stronger impact on their expository essays. Educational writing is and should be about writing: in order for students to be prepared for writing, they need to understand how writing works; thus, academic writing instruction should include information about syntax as it is a vital part of the foundation. In choosing this approach, students learn the basics of academic writing which are necessary to complete academic writing tasks.

## **3. Research Methodology**

The following serves as the research methodology conducted in this study. This chapter presents and describes the research design, research participants, research instrument, data gathering procedures, and statistical analysis of data.

### **3.1 Research Design**

This study employed a quantitative correlational research design to determine the relationship between students' syntactic ability and their expository writing skills. A correlational design is used to examine the degree and direction of relationships between variables without manipulating them (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Quantitative data were obtained from students' written outputs and analyzed using appropriate statistical tools to identify the association between the variables.

### **3.2 Research Participants**

The participants in this study were Grade 12 students from Aloran Trade High School. They were all enrolled in the English for Academic and Professional Purposes course. The participants for both the survey and the in-depth interviews were chosen using a purposive sampling method. Using this specific sample strategy made sure that all the important characteristics were included, which helped us study this problem in depth.

### 3.3.1 Research Instrument Structure

This research utilized a writing task designed by the researcher and a structured scoring rubric as the main tools of data collection. In order to get the required information, the respondents were asked to write one or two paragraphs on “What is Unique About Your Family.” This writing prompt was developed to measure the syntactic skills and expository writing abilities of the students. The written responses enable the researcher assess how effectively participants could write sentences, put together their thoughts, and explain things properly in an expository way.

A rubric was used to grade the participants’ writing. This rubric was made to test certain parts of their syntax skills and their ability to compose writings that explain things. The syntactic dimension encompassed sentence complexity, grammatical precision, sentence cohesion, and clarity. The assessment of expository writing skills, on the other hand, investigated coherence and mechanical accuracy.

The rubric offered a structured method for evaluating the quality of students written work according to the specified criteria. To establish validity of the research instrument, the writing task and the evaluation rubric were reviewed by experts in linguistics and language teaching in terms of face and content validity. Their evaluation allowed “to verify that the syntactic competence and the writing skill necessary to be analyzed could be analyzed appropriately by this instrument in expository writing”. The suggestions of the validators were incorporated to further enhance the instrument and to make the assessment criteria clearer and more relevant.

A 5-point scale was used to evaluate the written answers to assess the respondent’s writing ability to write in a clear and direct manner and their syntactic skills. The scale is given below:

**Table 1. 5-Point Proficiency Scale**

Points per Level	Description
4.5 – 5.0	Excellent
3.5 – 4.49	Proficient
2.5 – 3.49	Satisfactory
1.5 – 2.49	Developing
1 – 1.49	Needs improvement

### 3.4 Validity and Reliability

Validity of the contents of the instrument was established through expert judgment, which also affirmed its validity and reliability. Two linguists and language educators reviewed the instrument for its clarity, appropriateness, and consistency with the aims of the study. With integration of their comments and suggestions the items were revised and this ensured what its capacity to accurately measure the students’ syntactic proficiency and expository writing skills. After the validation process, the reliability of the instrument was established through statistical analysis. Cronbach’s Indicator was used to evaluate the internal consistency of the dimensions of the instrument. The computed analysis yielded a Cronbach’s Alpha value of 0.930, indicating a good reliability, and the homogeneity of the individual components to measure the latent construct. This value exceeds the commonly accepted reliability threshold of 0.70, demonstrating that the instrument is dependable for data collection [10].

### 3.5 Data Gathering Procedure

Before collecting the data, the researcher obtained the necessary permissions from the concerned educational authorities. An approval letter was given by the Schools Division Superintendent (SDS) and

the Public Schools District Supervisor (PSDS) and then the Principal of the chosen school was the next door where the holder of the research employment was conducted.

Following these approvals, the research tool was sent for content validation to experts in the field of linguistics and language education. Their suggestions were taken into consideration in finalizing the instrument in terms of its clarity, relevancy, and alignment with the study objectives.

A pilot testing was also conducted among students who were not part of the actual study but had similar characteristics as the participants. This was to ‘check on the clarity and reliability of the instrument’ for the main study. After piloting, the researcher began the main data collection process. To assess grammar and writing abilities, they wrote one or two paragraphs to the prompt “What’s Special About Your Family?”. The data were collected in accordance with accepted ethical research practices, which meant that participation was voluntary, informed consent was provided, and the identification of the participants was kept anonymous.

### 3.6 Statistical Analysis

The Shapiro–Wilk test was used first to check if the data followed a normal distribution. This step was taken to determine the most appropriate statistical methods for the following analysis. The results indicated that the data were not normally distributed; therefore, Spearman’s rank correlation coefficient was employed to determine the relationship between students’ syntactic ability and expository writing skills. In addition, descriptive statistics were used to summarize the relevant variables in the study. All statistical analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics version 20.

## 4. Results and Discussion

**Problem 1: What is the syntactic ability of students in terms of Sentence complexity, Grammatical accuracy, and Sentence cohesion?**

**Table 2**  
*Statistical Results on the Syntactic Ability of Students in Identified Parameters*

Parameter	Mean	Standard Deviation	Description
Sentence Complexity	3.62	0.94	Proficient
Grammatical Accuracy	3.23	0.88	Satisfactory
Sentence Cohesion	3.33	0.97	Satisfactory
Syntactic Ability	13.43	3.47	Proficient

Results showed the students performed best on sentence complexity ( $M = 3.62$ ,  $SD = 0.94$ ), which was at the proficient level. This would imply that they were able to use different types of sentences to express their ideas efficiently. This observation aligns with the research of Yang, Cushing, and Yu [11], which established syntactic complexity as a key determinant of writing quality, especially within expository contexts.

Besides, the studies of Kyle, Crossley, and Verspoor [12] illustrate that the syntactic complexity (measured through length T-unit and clausal density) is a strong predictor of development of language

proficiency. The advanced score in sentence complexity found in this study indicates that students are able to use different syntactical forms in their writing, which is in line with expected language growth. Year [13] corroborated this observation, indicating that L2 writers with advanced proficiency exhibit increased syntactic complexity, specifically in terms of mean T-unit length and the utilization of complex nominal structures. The mean score for grammatical accuracy was 3.23 (SD = 0.88), which is considered acceptable. Consequently, this implies that although the students possess a satisfactory command of grammar, certain aspects warrant further refinement.

According to Park [14], grammatical accuracy particularly correct article usage and verb forms is a strong predictor of writing quality. The study also noted that intermediate learners often balance syntactic complexity and accuracy, which may explain why students in this study showed higher sentence complexity but only satisfactory grammatical accuracy.

For sentence cohesion, the mean score was 3.33 (SD = 0.97), which was interpreted as deemed satisfactory, and this showed that students were capable of functionally employing cohesion markers such as coordinating conjunctions and transition signals to tie up ideas. Zhou and Wang [15] revealed that cohesive devices play a major role in writing quality, particularly in expository text where clear logical progression is a prerequisite. This hopeful result implies that while students have a basic understanding of cohesion, more explicit instruction may enhance their capacity to use cohesion-words more effectively and diversely.

Research by Trüb et al. Cohesion and coherence, as [16] observed, frequently present significant challenges in EFL writing, often exhibiting greater variability in evaluation than syntactic elements. The current investigation's standard deviation of 0.97 in sentence cohesion suggests substantial disparities in students' proficiency with cohesive devices, thereby corroborating Trüb et al. The idea that cohesion is a complex skill, and that its development varies among learners, is widely accepted.

Furthermore, the overall syntactic ability score (M = 13.43, SD = 3.47) was deemed proficient, signifying that students exhibit sufficient syntactic competence within the context of expository writing. This finding supports the view that syntactic development is multidimensional. Jaya and Susyla's [17] study showed that teaching methods, like sentence combining, significantly improve syntactic skills. This is seen in longer average T-units and more complex clauses. The high skill levels found in this study suggest a strong base, which could be further developed by using specific teaching methods.

Trinh [18] proposed that changes in how complex language is, including its grammar, vocabulary, and how it's used in conversation, are a fundamental part of how we learn language. The standard deviations found in this study, which ranged from 0.88 to 3.47, highlighted the differences in the participants' syntactic abilities. This indicates that individual variability can still exist within talent groups. Therefore, this observation highlights the importance of teaching methods that can address specific syntactic weaknesses on the part of the students and that can also build on the competencies they already have.

**Problem 2: What are the students' expository writing skills in terms of coherence and mechanics?**

**Table 3**

*Statistical Results on the Students' Expository Skills in terms of Coherence and Mechanics*

Parameter	Mean	Standard Deviation	Description
Coherence	3.33	0.97	Satisfactory

Mechanics	3.26	0.92	Satisfactory

The results indicate that students did well on expository writing. Coherence had a mean score of 3.33 (SD = 0.97) and mechanics had a mean score of 3.26 (SD = 0.92). These findings indicate that students have good command of arranging ideas and applying conventions of writing, although the former is more accentuated. The SDs indicate that there was some variability within the cohort, with some individuals being better writers than others.

The satisfactory coherence found in this study indicates that students can express their ideas in a logical order with clear structural features. As Grabe and Kaplan [19] have posited, coherence in academic writing necessitates the logical arrangement of ideas and the employment of transitional devices that augment readability. In addition, the Council of Writing Program Administrators [20] declares that productive writing is characterized by organization and cohesion, and organization is related to the presence of a clear overall structure, logical progression of ideas, and use of appropriate connectors.

The acceptable coherence score indicates that students have a basic ability to structure expository texts, but they might still need more guidance for higher levels of writing competence. In terms of writing conventions, students applied them well as shown by the score of mechanics (M = 3.26, SD = 0.92) which includes grammar, punctuation and spelling. As the National Council of Teachers of English (2018) posits, mechanics encompasses grammatical control and the correct application of writing conventions, while the Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing (Council of Writing Program Administrators et al. [20] emphasizes adapting to the rules of Standard English appropriate to context.

Programs in teacher education recognize the importance of mechanics as an essential writing skill. The International Literacy Association (hereafter cited as ILA) states that a knowledgeable writing teacher needs to have writing instruction in all the following aspects: grammar, spelling, punctuation, syntax, word choice, coherence, transition, and overall organization [21]. The results of this study suggest that although students exhibit adequate mechanical proficiency, further development is needed to attain mastery in these writing proficiencies.

The small difference in means of coherence (3.33) and mechanics (3.26) indicates that these writing traits in expository writing are mutually inclusive. Writing well requires both a coherent organization of ideas and an appropriate use of the conventions of written language. Students are required to create clear sentence and paragraph structures and use appropriate punctuation and mechanics (College Board [22]). The similar scores suggest that students are developing both coherence and mechanical skills at the same time.

Considerable variability in student writing ability can be inferred from the standard deviations of 0.97 and 0.92. This difference highlights the individual nature of writing development. The WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition, as described by the Council of Writing Program Administrators [20], emphasizes the importance of writing instruction in helping students create organized and fully developed expository texts, while also considering their unique learning needs. The variability observed suggests the importance of differentiated instruction to support students who need improvement in coherence or mechanics.

The positive results in cohesion and mechanics imply that the students are capable of writing an expository essay, but they still need further instruction. The importance of expository writing is stressed by the

National Writing Project [24], which views it as a core skill in lifelong learning and in intellectual development. Similarly, Graham and Harris [25] support writing instruction that focuses on structure, organization, and writing conventions.

These observations suggest that focused instructional interventions are necessary to improve students' coherence and mechanical accuracy. These results are consistent with the Common Core State Standards Initiative [26], which emphasizes the importance of students' ability to write coherent essays with clear thesis statements and follow the established writing conventions. The observed satisfactory ratings suggest that students are making progress toward these anticipated benchmarks, although they have not yet achieved an advanced or exemplary level of proficiency.

**Problem 3: Is there a significant relationship between students' syntactic ability and their expository writing skills?**

**Table 3**  
**Statistical Results on the Significant Relationship Between Syntactic Ability and Expository Writing**

<b>Analysis</b>	<b>Spearman's Correlation Coefficient, rho (<math>\rho</math>)</b>	<b>p-value</b>	<b>alpha</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Syntactic Ability to Expository Writing Skills	.978	.000	.05	Reject H <sub>0</sub>

A Spearman's rho correlation was run to check whether students' syntactic competence was statistically related to their capacity to write expository texts. This non-parametric technique was selected since the data was not normally distributed.

The analysis showed a very strong, almost perfect, positive relationship between syntactic skill and how well the participants did in expository writing ( $\rho = .978, p < .001$ ). The strong correlation coefficient indicates a strong relationship between syntactic competence and writing skill. This suggests that students who are better at sentence structure and grammar are more likely to produce better expository writing. This observation is consistent with the work of Yang, Cushing, and Yu [11]. They further concluded from their multigenre investigation with second-language writers that complexity, accuracy, and fluency measures together accounted for about 70% of the variance in scores on expository writing tasks. The authors reported that fluency was a significant predictor for performance on both narrative and expository writing tasks at this level, underscoring the importance of language skills when writing well in different genres. The table also reveals a strong correlation between syntactic knowledge and expository writing, highlighting the importance of syntax for expository writing. Therefore, students, regardless of their cognitive abilities, might struggle to express their ideas effectively if they don't have a strong grasp of syntax.

**5. Conclusion**

The study's results indicated that students generally understood syntax well. Specifically, their sentences were considered complex enough, and their grammar and sentence structure were deemed satisfactory.

The data suggests that students are skilled at using different sentence structures. In contrast, the students' writing showed a good level of coherence and mechanical accuracy. However, they needed to improve their grammar and the logical connection of ideas. This indicates an elementary level of ability to arrange ideas and to use writing conventions properly. However, it isn't good enough for the next stage of writing. Additionally, a strong positive association was observed between syntactic skill and expository writing ability ( $\rho = .978$ ,  $p = .000$ ) which is significance at the 0.05 level. The results indicate that students with higher syntactic skills tend to write better expository writing. Consequently, syntactic competence is a crucial factor in the cultivation of students' writing proficiency. The study's results indicated that students generally understood syntax well. Specifically, their sentences were considered complex enough, and their grammar and sentence structure were deemed satisfactory. The data suggests that students are skilled at using different sentence structures. On the other hand, the writing of the students was sufficiently coherent and mechanically accurate. But their grammar and logical cohesion of ideas were not perfect. This indicates a rudimentary level of organization of ideas and correct use of writing conventions.

## 6. Recommendations

Based on the study's findings and the conclusions drawn from them, the following recommendations are offered:

1. **Teachers** are encouraged to include teaching methods that improve students' grammatical accuracy and the flow of their sentences. This can be achieved through guided writing exercises, sentence-building exercises, and direct grammar instruction.
2. **Students** should encourage to write often since it is a crucial part of learning. This will help them improve their ability to organize ideas logically and use the right writing techniques in expository essays.
3. **School administrators** could offer training initiatives, workshops, or writing enhancement activities designed to foster the development of students' syntactic and writing abilities.
4. **Curriculum planners** might reinforce writing elements within language courses to cultivate students' syntactic competence and expository writing proficiency.
5. **Future researchers** could use larger sample sizes or examine other language features that might affect how well students write expository texts.

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