

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE SYNTACTIC ERRORS THAT
STUDENTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KAJIADO COUNTY
COMMIT IN ESSAY WRITING**

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ABSTRACT

Syntactic errors can form a major barrier when it comes in essay writing. The study seeks to examine the syntactic errors that students in secondary schools in Kajiado County commit in essay writing. The objectives of the study are:

- (i) To find out the syntactic errors that students in selected secondary schools commit in essay writing.
- (ii) To establish the frequency of occurrence of syntactic errors that students commit in essay writing.
- (iii) To describe how syntactic errors affect students' language competency.

In order to meet the desired research objectives, two secondary schools namely; Kitengela International Girls' and Ole Kajiado High School was be sampled as the areas of case study. The researcher used naturalistic design which entails studying the phenomena as they naturally occur in the field. The target population was restricted to secondary schools. The researcher used a sample of 42 respondents, that is, 24 from Ole Kajiado and 18 from Kitengela International. The researcher used non probability method of sampling in selection of schools. In the selection of learners the researcher used random sampling to select the students who would write the essay. The researcher used an essay test as the data collection instrument because it gathers data over a large sample. Data collected was sorted out according to the objectives that guided the study. Data was analysed using frequency distributions and percentages. The frequencies per category was determined and emerging patterns tabulated. The findings of the study were that just like any other learners, students in secondary schools commit syntactic errors in essay writing. Errors of omissions, additions, misordering and misinformation were evident in essays that students wrote. Some of the recommendations were: students should do more practice in essay writing and read more novels and story books to improve on their sentence structure. Recommendations for further research could be adopted by other educationist in an effort to improve on errors that students commit in utterances or sentences.