

Water Mill EAL Grammatical Error Diagnostic and Support Tool

Name: _____ **Class:** _____ **Date:** _____

In line with the latest research, Water Mill staff have a solid understanding of the process of language acquisition for Multilingual Children. Part of this understanding ensures a realisation that masses on input and a focus on effective vocab development at the most important strategies for supporting children learning a new language.

Our priority is for children to initially develop the ability to express meaning before they master grammatical structures. That said, there is an argument in research for the explicit teaching of grammatical skills to Multilingual Children.

Children learning a second language often struggle with these common grammatical issues due to a combination of factors, including the transfer of rules from their first language, overgeneralisation of grammatical rules in the target language, and the natural process of acquiring new structures. Addressing these errors through targeted instruction, practice, and exposure can help learners develop greater proficiency in their second language.

This tool is designed to be used to inform additional support or intervention that may be put in place for Multilingual Children for whom English Acquisition seems significantly slower than most peers and may support in teacher’s understanding of specific needs that might be harder to identify.

It can also be used to inform classroom teaching and learning more broadly.

Error Category	Broken down	Specific examples	In Speech	In Writing
Verb Tense Errors	Overgeneralization of regular past tense**: Applying the regular past tense rule (“-ed”) to irregular verbs.	Example: *goed* instead of *went*; *eated* instead of *ate*.		
	Mixing tenses**: Confusion between past, present, and future tenses.	Example: *He go to school yesterday* instead of *He went to school yesterday*.		
	Omission of auxiliary verbs**: Forgetting auxiliary verbs such as *is/are* in the present progressive tense.	Example: *She playing* instead of *She is playing*.		
	Incorrect use of the future tense**: Using present or past tense to talk about future events.	Example: *I go tomorrow* instead of *I will go tomorrow*.		
Subject-Verb Agreement	Third-person singular errors**: Failure to add an “-s” for third-person singular subjects.	Example: *He play* instead of *He plays*.		
	Plural subject disagreement**: Mismatch between plural subjects and verb forms.	Example: *The dogs runs fast* instead of *The dogs run fast*.		
Articles and Determiners	Omission of articles (a, an, the)**: Articles are often omitted, especially by learners whose first language does not use articles.	Example: *I saw dog* instead of *I saw a dog*.		
	Misuse of definite vs. indefinite articles**: Using “the” when “a” or “an” is needed, or vice versa.	Example: *I saw the elephant* (when it is not a specific, known elephant) instead of *I saw an elephant*.		
	Overuse of articles**: Inserting articles unnecessarily in front of proper nouns.	Example: *The Mary went to the school* instead of *Mary went to school*.		
Pronouns	Subject-object confusion**: Confusion between subject and object pronouns.	Example: *Him go to school* instead of *He goes to school*.		
	Gender pronoun errors**: Incorrect use of “he” and “she” due to lack of gender markers in the first language.	Example: *She is my brother* instead of *He is my brother*.		
	Omission of pronouns**: Leaving out pronouns when they are required in English.	Example: *Is going to the store* instead of *She is going to the store*.		
Word Order	Incorrect sentence structure**: Errors in basic word order (Subject-Verb-Object) due to L1 influence.	Example: *Is very cold today* instead of *It is very cold today*.		

	Adjective placement**: Misplacing adjectives either before or after the noun.	Adjective placement**: Misplacing adjectives either before or after the noun.		
	Inverted question structure**: Using declarative word order in questions.	Example: *You are going?* instead of *Are you going?*		
Prepositions	Omission of prepositions**: Skipping necessary prepositions.	Example: *I go school* instead of *I go to school*.		
	Overuse or misuse of prepositions**: Incorrectly inserting or choosing the wrong preposition.	Example: *She is in the bus* instead of *She is on the bus*.		
	Direct translation of L1 prepositions**: Using L1 prepositional patterns that don't apply in L2.	Example: *I dream with you* instead of *I dream about you*.		
Pluralisation	Overgeneralization of plural forms**: Overextending regular plural rules to irregular nouns.	Example: *childs* instead of *children*.		
	Omission of plural markers**: Forgetting to add "-s" to plural nouns.	Example: *Two cat* instead of *Two cats*.		
Negation	Incorrect placement of negation**: Misordering negative sentences.	Example: *I not like it* instead of *I do not like it*.		
	Double negatives**: Using two negative markers in one sentence.	Example: *I don't know nothing* instead of *I don't know anything*.		
	Overuse of "no"**: Using "no" in place of "not" or "don't."	Example: *I no want that* instead of *I don't want that*.		
Conjunctions	Omission of conjunctions**: Omitting conjunctions in compound sentences.	Example: *I like to swim I go every day* instead of *I like to swim, and I go every day*.		
	Incorrect use of conjunctions**: Misusing conjunctions, especially "and," "but," and "because."	Example: *I am happy but I got a gift* instead of *I am happy because I got a gift*.		
Possessives	Omission of possessive markers**: Forgetting to use possessive apostrophes.	Example: *This is John book* instead of *This is John's book*.		
	Overuse of possessive pronouns**: Using possessive pronouns unnecessarily.	Example: *This is hers book* instead of *This is her book*.		
Auxiliary and Modal Verbs	Omission of auxiliary verbs**: Leaving out necessary auxiliary verbs in questions and negations.	Example: *You going?* instead of *Are you going?*		
	Misuse of modal verbs**: Incorrectly using modals like *can*, *will*, *must*.	Example: *He must can go* instead of *He must be able to go*.		
Gerunds and Infinitives	Incorrect use of gerunds and infinitives**: Misusing the gerund or infinitive form after certain verbs.	Example: *I want going* instead of *I want to go*.		
	Overuse of gerunds**: Using the gerund form instead of the base form.	Example: *I enjoy to swim* instead of *I enjoy swimming*.		
Passive Voice	Errors in forming the passive**: Misunderstanding how to form passive sentences.	Example: *The ball was kick by him* instead of *The ball was kicked by him*.		
	Omission of the auxiliary in passive**: Leaving out the auxiliary verb in passive constructions.	Example: *The ball kicked* instead of *The ball was kicked*.		
Adverb Placement	Misplacement of adverbs**: Placing adverbs in incorrect positions.	Example: *She runs fastly* instead of *She runs fast*.		
	Overuse of "very"**: Adding "very" where it's unnecessary or unnatural.	Example: *I am very very tired* instead of *I am extremely tired*.		
Word Form Errors (Morphology)	Incorrect derivation of word forms**: Using incorrect forms of words, particularly with adjectives and nouns.	Example: *She is beauty* instead of *She is beautiful*.		
	Confusing comparative and superlative forms**: Using the wrong form for comparisons.	Example: *She is more smart* instead of *She is smarter*.		