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**Investigation L1 Transfer through Error Analysis Procedure: A
Case Study of
First Year EFL Learners' Grammatical Errors in Writing.**

*A Dissertation Submitted as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of
Master in Didactics*

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Dedication

In the Name of Allah the Most Gracious the Most Merciful

*In the memory of my dear brother **Younes** (may **Allah** have mercy on him)*

*To my beloved mother (**Taleb Meriem**) who patiently tolerated all my misgivings with a smile and stood by me in times of despair. Her prayers, moral support and kind words were of great inspiration during my piece of research. "To you Mum, I dedicate this humble work,"*

*To my father (**Khamkham Tayeb**) to whom I forever remain indebted. My father who was there for me and provided assistance when needed. "The fruit of this work would not be possible without your upbringing"; "You taught me to trust myself to achieve what I wish. I am proud to be your daughter and lucky to live with you. Thanks to you Dad."*

*To all my dear brothers, **Khaled**, and **Abed Rahim**. No word in any language would represent your favor on me or express my feelings towards you.*

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To all my teachers who have always pushed me to hold on and never to give up.

To all those who kept encouraging me throughout these months. I do not have the words to fully express to any of them how I appreciated their incredibly generous support that helped me get through this phase of my life.



Dedications

In the name of Allah

I dedicate this work to all my family, especially my sisters Afia, Fatima, Omeria, my mother (may Allah have mercy on her), and my teachers who supported us in our academic journey, Zeroug Meriem from Constantine, ziad from wad souf, Ismail Ga3fazi from Blida, Belarbi Khaled from Tiaret, and to all my friends in general.

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List of Abbreviations

%: Percentage

CA: Contrastive Analysis

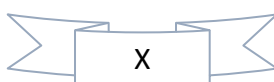
EA: Error Analysis

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

L1: mother tongue, or first language (Arabic in this study)

L2: Second language, or foreign language (English in this study)

LMD: License, Master, Doctorate



Abstract

Subject:

Investigation L1 Transfer through Error Analysis Procedure. A Case Study of
First Year EFL Learners' Grammatical Errors in Writing.

Producing error-free paragraphs and essays is the ultimate aim of learners and teachers. However, a lot of first year learners of English language at the English section of Ibn Khaldoun University in Tiaret are incapable to write effectively because they commit a number of grammatical errors in their written works. It is believed that these errors are happened as a result of the interference of their mother tongue (Arabic). Hence, the main aim of the current research work is to investigate if EFL learners' grammatical errors in their writing are due to their first language transfer (Arabic) or not, through error analysis procedure. To achieve this aim, a questionnaire is administrated to twenty (20) teachers (most of them are teachers of grammar and written expression) at the English section in Tiaret University to ask them about the main causes behind the problem and the different types of grammatical errors committed by first year EFL learners. Twenty (20) paragraphs written by first year learners were collected and analyzed to determine the main common error types. The data analysis of both teachers' questionnaire and students' paragraphs revealed that students commit different types of errors which are mainly due to their mother tongue interference (inter-language). The results confirmed that EFL learners write less effectively with a lot of grammatical errors because of the influence of their first language negative transfer.

Key Words:

Error Analysis–Interlanguage– Language transfer/interference



*General
Introduction*

Topic

Writing has largely attracted the attention of researchers as being a crucial skill that contributes in learning any language, and without it further education may be broadly impossible. It is more important than ever; today more communication takes place in the written mode rather than oral one, especially in researches and academic studies. However, writing is not an easy task, but it is a higher complex process than other skills (reading, speaking, and listening) that requires an amount of efforts, takes a lot of time, and necessitates excessive attention. Thus, writing effectively became the ambition of any EFL learner, but they tend to make grammatical errors when they create a piece of writing. The major reason behind the occurrence of these errors is believed to be the transfer of their mother's tongue (Arabic) rules and structures.

The current research work aims to explore the grammatical errors that first year EFL learners commit in their writing, and to investigate whether their mother tongue negative transfer /interference is the main reason behind the occurrence of their errors, or there are other reasons which should be taken into consideration too. And the best way to discover such a transfer is through error analysis (Sridhar, 1980). Furthermore, the study seeks to find out the strategies and solutions to tackle this issue.

Motivation

Our previous experiences in learning English inspired us to design this research work to examine errors made by Algerian EFL university learners and investigate whether those errors are, in fact caused by L1 transfer.

Observation

This study is conducted in order to elaborate and clarify the errors which EFL learners commit in their written works, and which are attributed to the learners' reliance on their native language (Arabic) to produce English constructions, consciously or sub-consciously.

Most of the time, learners transfer items and structures from the first language (Arabic) into the second language (English) which are not the same in both languages due to their unawareness of the huge differences between the rules of L1 and L2.

Research Questions

This research work tries to answer the related questions:

1. Is L1 'Arabic transfer/interference' the major cause for errors in EFL learners' writing production?
2. What are the common frequent grammatical errors in learners' writing?
3. What are the reasons that make EFL learners commit grammatical errors in their writing?

This paper will attempt to:

1- Provide a theoretical background for:

a) Error Analysis.

b) Sources of Errors.

(It will also examine related terms such as interlingual errors, negative L1 transfer/interference, and intralingual errors);

2 - Identify, describe, and categorize EFL learners' errors in their written works in order to find the sources of those errors and a way for remediation.

Hypothesis

The following hypotheses are tentative answers to the research questions:

- 1) EFL learners' errors in writing may be attributed to L1 negative transfer.
- 2) EFL learners commit a considerable number of grammatical errors such as: misuse of articles, misuse of prepositions, wrong use of tenses...
- 3) Other than Arabic interference, there are other reasons that make EFL learners commit grammatical errors in their writing such as: lack of reading, lack of vocabulary and practice, overgeneralization of rules...

Objectives

EFL learners' errors should be carefully analyzed because they show the progress in the process of learning English. Thus, the objectives of the current study are:

- 1- To identify and analyze the grammatical errors repeatedly happening in the EFL learners' written works.
- 2- To identify the sources and the types of the most common errors made by EFL learners which contribute to their writing errors and their deficiency in their writing.
- 3- To suggest suitable solutions for this issue.

Methods

The current study employs a mixed method design including both quantitative and qualitative research, to provide a much more detailed and comprehensive results.

This study was designed by using a descriptive research because it tries to describe the influence of the mother tongue (Arabic) on first year EFL learners in writing at the English section of Ibn Khaldoun University in Tiaret. Concerning data collection, this research is based on two main tools which are:

Teachers' Questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of ten (11) questions which are devoted to 20 teachers at the English Section of Ibn Khaldoun University in Tiaret, with the aim of gathering teachers' opinions and ideas concerning the influence of the mother tongue 'Arabic' on EFL students' writing as well as the types of grammatical errors and their sources.

Students' Written Test (Students' Paragraphs)

Since this study is based on error analysis procedure, the analysis of first year EFL learners' written paragraphs as a corpus to discover the common grammatical errors to verify whether these errors are due to the L1 transfer and to confirm or infirm the hypothesis stated above.

Process

The present research is basically divided into a general introduction and three main chapters (the first and second chapter are devoted to the theoretical part, whereas the third one is devoted to the practical part):

The general introduction is assigned for the sake of clarifying the aims of the research and to briefly discuss the subject.

Chapter one illustrates language transfer as a main issue through two main approaches: contrastive analysis as a predictor of errors and error analysis as a means of

analyzing learners' errors. In addition, it provides the sources of learners' errors and explains the different steps that should be followed by foreign language teachers how to deal with these errors properly.

Chapter two focuses on various approaches of teaching writing, and its types that should be handled by learners both in and outside the classroom. Moreover, it discusses the numerous factors which contribute to students' poor writing production made by teachers or students themselves. In addition, it provides the role of the teacher before, during, and after the writing activity that students are engaged in.

Chapter three: is concerned with analyzing and interpreting data gathered from both teachers' questionnaire and an analysis of students' paragraphs.



Chapter One

*Theoretical Approaches to
Language Transfer*

Introduction

The process of teaching and learning a foreign language is considered to be the most difficult task for both teachers and learners due to a variety of factors such as language differences (a foreign language and native language). This distinction limits learners' understanding and application of certain grammatical rules and structures. As a result, a variety of grammatical errors are made by EFL learners in their writing. Furthermore, these issues are believed to be the outcome of divergences between the learner's native language and the target language. Many studies have shown that when learners are unable to apply the appropriate rules and structures of a foreign language in their speech or writing, they simply refer to their native language system. This is what is known as language transfer or mother tongue interference which is believed to be the major reason of FL learners' grammatical errors.

As the case of Arab students, who find learning English as a foreign language extremely difficult. This challenge derives from the big difference that exist between the grammatical systems of Arabic and English. It has been observed that when Arab EFL learners have difficulty in using a grammatical rule in their English writing, they tend to return to their previous knowledge of Arabic and use it in their writing. The transfer of Arabic knowledge into English writing causes EFL learners to make various grammatical errors, which is the focus of this research.

This chapter discusses language transfer as a main issue through two main approaches: contrastive analysis as a predictor of errors and error analysis as a mean of analyzing learners' errors. In addition, it provides the sources of learners' errors and explains the different steps that should be followed by foreign language teachers and researchers when dealing with these errors.

I.1 Definition of errors

The term “error” has numerous definitions. Errors are systematic, according to Corder (1967), they are caused by learners’ lack of second language understanding. Troike (2006, p. 39). According to Ellis (1997, p.17), errors are gaps in a learner’s knowledge. A word that can be used to describe the assumed they happen because the learner is not sure what’s right. In his book “introducing Applied linguistics». Corder (1973, p.283) states that “errors are a result of partial knowledge because the teaching-learning process extends over time”. This definition means that the learner cannot process all the information at once because the learning process needs too much time to be covered. Moreover, teachers could not grant their learners with all the information they need at a limited. Another definition of errors provided by Corder (1981, p.10), in which he stated that errors are systematic and they enable the teachers or the researchers to assess the learners’ knowledge of the language at a given point during the learning process. Norish (1987, p.7) defined errors as “a systematic deviation when a learner has not learnt something and consistently gets it wrong, quoted in Ridha (2010, p.25). According to Gass and Selinker (1994, p.68), errors are “red flags” that provide evidence of the learner’s knowledge of the foreign language Al-Hassan (2013, p.258).

It is essential to distinguish between the terms error and mistake. Several academics have defined the term mistake in a variety of ways, but all of them have the same meaning. According to Corder (1967, p.10), a mistake is a performance fault that might be an arbitrary guess or a slip. It is well-defined as a failure to apply what has been learned appropriately. Similarly, Ridha (2010, p.25) and James (1998, p.32) distinguished between a mistake that can be self-corrected and an error that cannot (cited in Al-Hassan, 2013, p.256). According to Ellis (1997, p.17), mistakes are caused by the learner’s inability to perform a recognized system. According to Ellis (1997, p.17), there are two methods to distinguish between

learners' errors and learners' mistakes. The first method is to examine the learner's consistency of performance. It is a mistake if s/he uses the right form on occasion but makes a mistake on another occasion. On the other hand, if he consistently uses the form improperly, it is an error. The second method is asking the learner to try to rectify his own unexpected utterances. Errors occur when the student is unable to do so. However, when he is able and successful, the deviant utterances are mistakes. However, according to Corder (1981, p.10), to decide between learner's mistake and error is difficult. It needs a much more complicated study and analysis to be realized.

I.2 Language Transfer

It is most commonly discussed in the context of English language learning and teaching. In the light of many studies and researches about language transfer, the latter has gained a great focus from the part of many researchers (Lado 1957; Corder 1975; Ellis 1994; Selinker 1972)

I.2.1 Definition of Language Transfer

Language transfer, also known as language mixing, linguistic interference, cross-meaning, and language interference refers to speakers or writers applying knowledge from one language to another. The term transfer originates from the behavioristic school, which believes that second language learning is a habit formation that is based mainly on imitation and reinforcement. Thus, according to the behaviorists transfer is seen as old habits that appears in L2 and they are either "helpful" which means help in the learning a foreign language or "harmful" which means harm the learning of a foreign language. However, Oldlin (1989, p. 7) disagrees with the behaviorist view which considers habit formation as a cause of transfer. He does not relate the term transfer with interference, claiming that the latter only contains negative transfer while the positive one is ignored. He says "transfer is the influence

resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and the other languages that has been previously (and perhaps) imperfectly acquired”.

I.2.2 Types of Transfer

There are two types of Language transfer which are as follows:

I.2.2.1 Positive Transfer

Positive transfer, also known as facilitation; transfer results in something correct, it happens when knowledge of a native language helps in the acquiring of a target language. Yule (2006, p. 167) asserts that “if the first language and the second language have similar features (e.g. marking plural at the ends of nouns), then, the learner may be able to benefit from the positive transfer of the L1 knowledge to L2”. In the same vein, Oldlin (1989) claims that the less the distinctions between the first and second languages, the more beneficial and helpful for learners to acquire the knowledge about the target language and function it correctly and effectively. For example, English and French share a large amount of vocabulary which have the same form and meaning such as, situation, organization, simple...

I.2.2.2 Negative Transfer

Negative transfer for certain linguists refers to “language interference”, that happens when students make errors. Troike (2006,p.200) defines negative transfer as “the inappropriate influence of an L1 structure or rule on L2 use”. In the same vein, Yule (2006, p. 168) asserts that negative transfer is “transferring a first language feature which is really different from the second language (e.g. putting the adjective after the noun) results in negative transfer and it may make the second language expression difficult to understand”.

Based on the definition above, Corder (1971, p. 112) claims that there will be positive transfer or facilitation if the two languages have the same features. However, if the two systems have not, negative interference or negative transfer will happen.

I.3 Approaches to the study of errors

There are two major approaches to the study of learner's errors, namely contrastive analysis and error analysis

I.3.1 Contrastive Analysis approach

Contrastive analysis is a method used in the study of second language learning. It emerged between the 1940s and the 1960s, influenced by structuralism and behaviorism. Charles Fries and Robert Lado were the first to introduce the contrastive analysis method. These two scholars are regarded as pioneers in the subject of Language transmission that is based on studies of contrastive analysis. This approach deals mostly with language transmission which is the following point.

Contrastive analysis entails examining the similarities and differences between the mother tongue and the target language to anticipate and explain learners' issues (Troike, 2006, p.34). Contrastive analysis, according to Richard and Sampson (1974, p.6) and Ellis (1994, p. 47), anticipates learners' mistakes by contrasting language systems of both the target language and the native tongue According to Troike (ibid), the major purpose of contrastive analysis is to "increase efficiency in L2 teaching and testing". According to Al-Sibai (2004, p. 2) claimed that "when similarities and differences between an L1 and an L2 were taken into account, pedagogy could be more effective and useful". Furthermore, comparing two languages might be useful for L2 teaching materials. Interlingual errors are the subject of contrastive analysis. According to the contrastive analysis theory, errors occur when learners transfer first-language habits to second-language habits. It also maintains that Interference

occurs anytime when there is a difference between the native and target languages, according to the theory (Maicusi et al., 2000,p.169). As a result, they defined contrastive analysis as “the knowledge of difficulties arising from differences between first and target language structures, allowing the development of effective strategies to deal with error” (ibid, p.170). As a result, they defined contrastive analysis as “the understanding of challenges arising from differences between first and target language structures that allows the creation of effective methods to deal with mistake” (ibid, p.17).

As previously said, contrastive analysis is concerned with the similarities and contrasts between the native language and the foreign language, as Lado (1957) showed that learning a second language may be highly effective when the two languages (L1 and L2) are similar. However, it can be difficult or unsuccessful if they are different (cited in Al-Sibai, 2004,p. 3). Moreover, Lado(1957) stated that “elements that are similar to learner’s native language will be simpler for him and those elements that are different will be difficult” (quoted in Alam-Khan, 2011,p. 107). When it comes to the problem of linguistic similarity and difference, Odlin (1989) gave the example of Arab learners omitting the form of the verb “be” when speaking in English because it is not accessible in Arabic. On the other hand, Learners of Spanish do not ignore it since the grammatical structure of Spanish is similar. Many researchers have proposed similar theories on how contrastive analysis works, such as Lock (1996), who defined four stages of language analysis: phonology, lexis grammar, and semantics. Grammar is also split into word order, structure of words, and components of speech (quoted in Al-Hassan, 2013, 258). However, Troike (2006,p.35) pointed out that lexis and discourse should be ignored. James (1998) provided a different framework for contrastive analysis, in which he split contrastive analysis into three phases: (1) Language is divided into three parts: phonology, lexis, and grammar. (2) The use of language descriptive categories such as “usage,” “structure,” “class,” and “system.”

(3) A contrastive analysis use description to arrive at the same language model (Cited in Al-Hassan, 2013,p. 257).

I.3.1.1 Some Grammatical Differences between Arabic and English Grammar

It is a critical component of any language. Learners of foreign languages should build a firm foundation in the target language's grammar in order to utilize it effectively in a way that is appropriate in their writing Arab EFL students, on the other hand, frequently confront difficulties in the classroom. The majority of English grammatical features are being learned. As a result, certain clarifications are required.

a) Prepositions

They are considered as the most of challenging among Arab EFL students because of cross-linguistic incompatibilities in the prepositional systems of Arabic and English ("Contrastive Analysis"). Prepositions are a challenging concept for EFL students to grasp since English has a variety of prepositions with the same purpose. The prepositions "in," "at," and "on," for example, denote a location with some deference in usage (Diab, 1996, p.76).As a result, when students are unsure about which preposition to employ in a sentence, in certain circumstances, they will attempt to translate it into Arabic and provide an Arabic equivalent when writing in English language. As a result, learners may substitute "in" for "at" and "for" instead of "to," and so on (Al-Hassan, 2013,p. 259). Scott and Tucker (1974, p.85) "an Arabic preposition may be translated by several English prepositions while an English usage may have several Arabic translations" (quoted in Diab, 1996,p.76).

b) Article

The definite article “the” and the indefinite article “a” and “an” are the two types of articles in English. “A” and “an” are articles. However, Arabic has one type of article: the definite article. The article “Al” is comparable to the English word “the.” Diab (1996, p.74) claims that in Abstract terms in English, such as concepts, traits, or traits that apply to everyone or everything is employed without the presence of a definite article. Students, for example, write friendship instead of a friendship as an example. On the other hand, Kinneavy and Warriner (1983, p.607) asserted that in English, when abstract nouns are followed by the article “the,” they become specific, indicating ownership of a certain person, organization, or thing. Possession is indicated by a statement beginning with the words “of,” “to,” or “for.” As an example, you should study the culture of English. In contrast, Arabic does not use an article before abstract terms when they refer to the possession of a specific person or object (cited in Diab, 1996, p.75).

c) Adjectives

Adjectives in Arabic agree in number with the nouns they modify. However, in English, the issue is different since adjectives do not agree in quantity. Except for some adjectives like “this-these” and “that those,” they modify nouns. As a result, Arab EFL students make mistakes while using adjectives in their writing composing (Diab, 1996, p.74).

d) Word order

The sequence of words varies from one language to the next. In Arabic, for example, adjectives and adverbs follow the nouns or verbs they modify, according to Kinneavy and Warriner (1993, p.606). In English, however, they come before them (quoted in Diab, p. 80, 1996). Because of the differences in word order norms, Arab EFL students make Errors like as: there are four tasks easy instead of there are four easy tasks.

e) Singular Vs plural

Learners cannot discern between single and plural forms based on the form of English words alone. Some English words have the same single or plural form, while others are single in character but end with an “s.” in its multiple form this numerical intricacy prompted EFL students to revert to Arabic To identify if a word is single or plural in English. For instance, the word “statistics,” which is a plural word in Arabic but a singular word in English, ends in the plural forms. As a result, students are perplexed by such forms and utilize them incorrectly in the wrong way (Diab, 1996, p.77).

f) Capitalization and punctuation

Because the Arabic script lacks capitalization, EFL students seldom utilize capital letters in their English writing. Punctuation is important in addition to capitalization. From Arabic to English, there are differences in convents. As a result, pupils make mistakes in punctuation marks (Al-Hassan, 2013, p.260)

g) Coordination

In English, commas are used to divide things in a series with the conjunction “and” shortly before the last word, according to Diab (1996, p.81). In Arabic, the conjunction “wa” which is equal and precedes each item in series is used instead. The as a result, EFL students utilize the conjunction “and” with each item in a series, resulting in connector usage mistakes. This type of mistake is explained in the following example: Instead of I enjoy football, basketball, and swimming, I prefer football, basketball, and swimming.

There are a lot of grammatical problems as a result of the differences between Arabic and English. The following sections discuss various topics regarding mistakes and how teachers should handle them.

I.3.2 Error analysis approach

Error analysis is defined in the Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics as “the study and analysis of errors made by second language learners.” In addition, EA is as described “a set of procedures for identifying, describing and explaining learners’ errors” (Ellis, 2005, p. 51). The term “Error Analysis” refers to errors, Its reasons and precautions were taken by both EFL and ESL students. In this regard, Jiang (2009, p.116) states that EA allows teachers to use pedagogical techniques to identify distinct origins of L2 mistakes.

According to Corder (1967) EA serves a valid evidence for teachers to come up with answers to the issues that EFL learners experience in their learning process, as well as providing students with a strong support system for learning the target language’s norms. He also adds “a learner error is significant in that he provides evidence how language is acquired”. That is to say, errors, they argue, aren’t a sign of inevitability, but they are an essential part of learning and a sign of progress, without mistakes, it is impossible to increase a student’s development. In this regard Corder (1967) maintains that errors are significant in three ways: they have a pedagogical purpose; in that they show the teacher what their students have mastered. For research purpose; by giving proof of how languages are learnt. They have a learning purpose; they assist learners in discovering language principles and receiving feedback. More precisely, this method provides researchers, instructors, and students with techniques for overcoming, minimizing, and diagnosing learners ‘errors, as well as making them aware of the problems they may face. As a result, Sharma (1980) claims that “Error analysis can thus provide a strong support to remedial teaching.”

On the other hand, Richard (1972) asserts that “the field of error analysis may be defined as dealing with the differences between the way people learning a language speak, and the way adult native speakers of language use the language” (p. 12).

I.4 Models for Error Analysis (steps in analyzing learners' errors)

There are several steps which must be followed when conducting an error analysis (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005:57), which are: Collection of a sample of learner language, identification, description, explanation, and evaluation of errors.

I.4.1 Collection of a sample of learner language

Ellis (1994) acknowledges that it is important to collect a well-defined sample of learner language in order to make clear statement concerning the kinds of errors learners make and under what circumstances they occur. Therefore, when collecting the data should take into account the purpose of the study or the aim, answering the research questions, and regarding learners' L1 and background (Ellis and Barkhuizen, 2005). According to Ellis (1994, 58) there are some factors which should be taken into consideration when collecting sample of learner's language.

| Factors | Description |
|---|---|
| <p>A. Language</p> <p>-Medium</p> <p>-Genre</p> <p>-Content</p> <p>B. Learner</p> <p>-Level</p> <p>-Mother tongue</p> <p>-learning experience</p> | <p>.....</p> <p>-Learner production can be oral or written</p> <p>-Learner production may take the form of a conversation, a lecture, an essay, a letter...</p> <p>-The topic the learner is communicating about</p> <p>.....</p> <p>-Elementary, intermediate, or advanced</p> <p>-The learners' L1</p> <p>-This may be classroom or naturalistic or the mixture of the two.</p> |

Table I.1: Factors that should be take into consideration when collecting a sample of learner's language

I.4.2 Identification of Errors

Before analyzing learners' errors, it is necessary to identify them in the sample then to compare them with what is grammatically correct in English grammar books. According to Ellis (1997) "to identify errors we have to compare the sentences learners produce with what seem to be "correct" sentences in the target language which corresponds with them". For instance: My brother is watching movie. However, determining the exact error is considered as a complicated step, but it is not hard to see that the correct sentence should be: My brother is watching a movie.

I.4.3 Description of Errors

According to Ellis (1997, p. 18) after identifying the errors they can be described. That means that there is no description without identification. Moreover, he points out (2008, p. 50) that "the description of learner errors involves a comparison of the learner's idiosyncratic utterances with a reconstruction of those utterances in the target language or, more recently, with a baseline corpus of native- speaker language". As a result, describing errors is mainly similar to identifying them by comparing learners' utterances with others in the target language. Therefore, a categorization of the grammatical errors needs to be developed. In this context, Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005, p. 61) define the categories drawn below to identify the way learners' utterances differ from target-language utterances.

a) Errors of Omission

It occurs when the learner omits a required word or item for an utterance from a sentence that he/she constructed. For example, John happy.

b) Errors of Addition

It occurs when the learner has added a word or an ending to another word which is grammatically incorrect. For example, I have eaten my launch.

c) Misinformation

It occurs when the learner uses the incorrect form of a morpheme or structure. For instance, the wrong use of prepositions, e.g. I am angry from you.

d) Misordering

When the learner uses a word in an utterance in the wrong order or place; he misplaces a morpheme. For example, He fights all the time his brother.

e) Blends

When the learner is unsure of which word to use, he mixes two phrases together. For instance, the only one thing I need. Even though, these concepts seem to be clear and easy to apply. Yet, sometimes determining which type of error has occurred can be difficult since a sentence can have two or more different type of errors.

Furthermore, errors can be categorized by word class, such as verb, subject, or adjective, as well as further categories can be developed within each word class, For instance, verb related errors can be divided into errors of aspects, errors of tense etc. (Ellis &Barkhuizen, 2005:60).

I.4.4 Explanation of Errors

To figure out why the error was made in the first place, one must first to explain it. This is the most crucial step in EA (Error Analysis) after identifying and describing of

learners' errors since it explains what factor has affected the learner to make such an error, as Ellis (1997) point out "the identification and description of errors are preliminaries to the much more interesting task of trying to explain why they occur". (p. 18)

However, distinguishing between an error and a mistake can be hard which makes errors' explanation more difficult. Furthermore, researchers when trying to understand foreign language (FL) learners' errors, they most likely use different factors to categorize the various types of errors. According to Ellis (1997, p. 19) these factors are categorized as follows:

a) Transfer errors

This factor involves all errors where the EFL learner has used his/her mother tongue language to create a sentence or new rule which has led a him/her to make the error.

b) Overgeneralization Error

The overgeneralization error occurs when learners incorrectly apply grammatical rules and structures where they shouldn't be applied, and this overuse can lead to such an error. For example: childrens are happy. (the overgeneralization of the rule of plural formation) Ellis (1994) claims that "learners over generalize forms that they find easy to learn and process". (P. 19)

I.4.5 Evaluation of Errors

The final step in Error Analysis process is to evaluate and draw a conclusion based on the information obtained. According to Ellis (1997), since the objective of error analysis is to learn FL correctly then errors must be evaluated. He also adds, the evaluation of errors should focus on the impact of errors on people in. In this step, teachers should pay more attention to errors that affect learners' communication and understanding, such as global errors.

The following example and table (I.2) below, provide a quick overview of how to analyze errors using Error Analysis steps: I woke up immediately when my alarm ringed.

| Errors Identification | Errors Description | Errors Explanation | Errors Evaluation |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|--|--|
| Ringed | Addition | The learner has used the wrong form of the verb. He has used ringed instead of rang because he overgeneralized the rule of the past tense formation. | Most students have problems with irregular verbs, however as we can see in this example even regular verbs can be problematic for learners. This might happen when the learner has not yet mastered the different tense forms. |
| Immediately | Misordering | The learner has used the adverb in the wrong order. He has placed it after the verb instead of placing it before the verb. | Problems with adverb ordering are very common in written production of EFL learners, mainly because they have trouble in identifying the right order of the adverb in a sentence. |

Table I.2: Example of Error Analysis Steps

As shown in the table above, error analysis composed of various steps which are used when analyzing the students' written productions. However, the errors that teacher find should not be presented as detailed as table (I.2) shows, but in a general way. Table (I.2) only gives an idea of how to work with error analysis steps.

I.4.6 Error Correction

EA is concerned with how teachers handle their students' errors and the necessity of error correction for both students and teachers. According to Maicusi et al., (2000, p.172), when a teacher finds an error, he or she automatically corrects it and takes the student's hesitancy as a request for assistance. However late correction of errors allows learners to correct their errors themselves.

The teacher's job is to make his or her students aware of their errors and enable them to correct them on their own. Learners should also figure out what caused their errors so that they don't make them again. However, when a teacher corrects his or her students' errors, he or she makes them reliant on others' correction and prevents them from developing autonomous learning.

According to Erdogan (2005, p.21), the process of error correction is not only giving the correct form to the students and show it through a series of exercises. In contrast, the teacher should be aware of the causes behind his or her students' errors in order to assist them in finding a suitable solution. Errors must be corrected concerning their impact on Students' productions. As a result, certain errors must be corrected more than others, such as global errors versus local errors, because the former type has an impact on the learners' communication while the latter does not. Erdogan (2005,p.63)

The teacher should put marks on written products which allow learners to identify the error and enable them to discover the correct form by themselves instead of giving them the correct one. The teacher can use symbols to indicate the kind of error, such as "rw" for sentences that should be rewritten, "sp" for a spelling error, and so on. Erdogan (2005,p.14).

I.5 Sources of Errors

One of the main focuses of error analysis is to investigate the reasons of errors that EFL learners make when they are learning. According to a number of studies that have been prepared on this issue, the learners 'errors occur due to two main reasons which are:

I.5.1 Inter-lingual (interference) Errors

This kind of errors is the major concern of this study, they are termed inter-lingual because they are caused by the impact of the native language or mother tongue interference and they are called "interlingual" as well as they are termed "transfer errors" because they occur as a result of the negative transfer of rules or structures from the native language into the target language. Interlingual means between languages and it was first proposed by the linguist Selinker (1972). He used this it to refer to foreign language's system knowledge, which is independent of the learner's L1 and target language (AbiSamra, 2003, p.5). While the term "transfer," which is derived from the Latin word "transfere," refers to "bearing," "carrying," or "printing" a copy from one surface to another (Webster's third new world international dictionary, 1986). Sachachter and Celce-Murcia (1977) defined them as "those caused by the influence of the learners' mother tongue on production of the target in presumably those areas where languages clearly differ." (p. 443)

In the sense that the mother tongue transfer leads to errors, Richard and Sampson (1974,p.5) assumed that language transfer is the major factor that influences second language learners' system and it is seen as a main reason for the errors of learners in foreign language learning . Besides, Dullay (1982) emphasized that "L2 errors are often the result of learners' relying on carrying out word-for word translation of native language surface structures" (p. 163). Moreover, according to Zobl (1980), those errors have the following characteristics:

-Learners make hypothesis about the target language using their mother tongue.

-Learners cannot tell the difference between L1 and L2 rules and structures.

-L1 habits are the source of learners' errors.

I.5.2 Intralingual Errors

Intralingual means within language. They are called as well “developmental errors” and they are defined as those errors which result from faulty or partial learning of the target language rather than language transfer (Keshavarz, 2003:62). That is to say, these errors are caused by the target language itself apart from resorting to L1 transfer. Erdogan (2005, p 266) inserted that “intralingual errors occur as a result of learners’ attempt to construct concepts and hypotheses about the target language from their limited experience with it”. Thus, intralingual errors occur as a result of negative transfer or interference of the target language when learners do not fully acquire the knowledge and try to build up hypotheses about the foreign language he/she is learning based on their narrow experience. Moreover, According to Richard (1974, p. 174), intralingual errors have many causes which are as follows:

a) Overgeneralization

It is one of the common and major causes that lead to the occurrence of intralingual errors. It happens when a learner constructs an incorrect structure based on his knowledge of other structures in the target language. Richard (1971) defined it as “the use of previously available strategies in a new situation” (p. 174).

Overgeneralization is a trusted strategy used by EFL learners to guide and assist them in learning and acquiring a language. Basically, it refers to learners extending rules and structures in TL situations where they should not be applied. For instance, the learner writes: ‘I can speaks Spanish’ rather than ‘I can speak French.’ Furthermore,

Ellis (1997, p.19) asserted that learners overgeneralize forms that they find easy to learn and process, such as the use of “ed” in past tense forms even for irregular verbs such as “writed” instead of “wrote.”

b) Ignorance of Restriction

It is similar to overgeneralization; however, it means the failure to take into account the restrictions that govern an existing structure. In this regard, Richard (1974) asserted that “this is again a type of generalization of transfer, since the learner is making use of previously acquired rule in a new situation” (p. 175). For instance, if a learner learns this sentence structure “He played basketball last Sunday,” which is right, he may then utilize this rule and form in different situations, such as “he bought a new car,” which is clearly incorrect.

c) Incomplete Application of Rules

This type of intra-lingual error happens when a learner fails to gain a complete understanding; he fails to use a fully developed structure and rule that he previously learned to produce well-formed sentences. For example, EFL learner may produce this sentence: when you will pass your exam? Instead of saying: when will you pass your exam?

According to Richard (1974,p.177), incomplete application of rules refers to “occurrence of structures whose deviancy represents the degree of development of the rules required to produce acceptable utterances”.

d) False Concepts Hypothesized

It occurs as a result of insufficient or faulty understanding of the different rules in the target language. Therefore, Al-Tamimi (2006) argues that this kind of intra-lingual error is caused by “poor gradation of teaching items” (p. 44). For instance,

EFL learner can use the form 'did or was' to indicate the past tense; a result, he or she might say, 'It was happened last night.'

Differentiating between interlingual and intralingual errors is the concern of contrastive analysis because it necessitates comparative knowledge of first and second languages (Troike, 2006,p.39).However, Ellis(1994, p.59) asserted that distinguishing transfer errors from developmental errors is a difficult task, and distinguishing the various types of developmental errors is even more difficult because they are similar and related to each other.

I.6 Classification of Errors

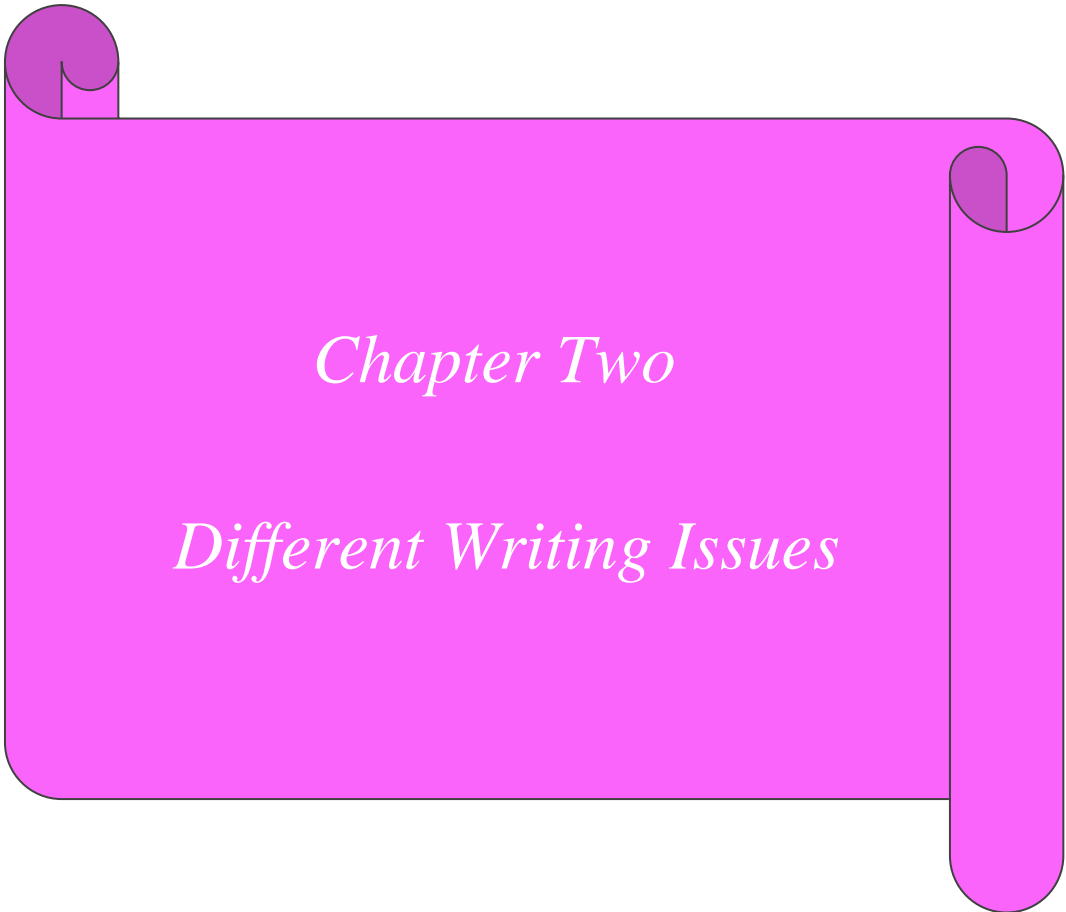
Different classifications of errors have been identified. According to Corder (1971), errors can be classified as "overt" or "covert." Overt errors are those that are grammatically incorrect at the sentence level, whereas covert errors are well-formed and grammatical, but do not express the intended meaning within the context. On the other hand, Ellis (1997) distinguished between "global" and "local" errors. Global errors "violate the overall structure of a sentence and for this reason may make it difficult to process". In addition, Erdogan (2005, p. 264) maintained that "global errors hinder communication". That means that this type of errors prevents the comprehension of the message and result in a misunderstanding because the whole structure of the sentence is wrong. However, local errors as what Ellis (1997, p. 20) said "affect only a single constituent in the sentence". Therefore, the message is comprehended here, and they do not interfere with the speaker's intended meaning which means they do not prevent the intended meaning of the speaker.

Conclusion

To conclude with, Language transfer has been a major subject in many disciplines of research, including applied linguistics and second language acquisition, It emerged as a major concept in language teaching and learning in the 1940s and 1950s as a result of the contrastive

analysis methodology. The goal of this technique is to clarify the similarities and differences between a native language and a foreign language, because it is thought that language transfer occurs either because L1 and L2 are similar or because they are different. To put it another way, transfer may be either positive or negative. Negative transfer (interference), according to the contrastive analysis, has a negative impact on the second language acquisition process since it is caused by the differences in linguistic structures between a first and second language. The grammatical differences between Arabic as a native language and English as a foreign language demonstrate that Arab EFL students in general make grammatical errors because of these disparities; these variances are most noticeable in writing tasks.

When it comes to error analysis, there are two types of errors: interlingual and intralingual. Furthermore, the error analysis methodology presents a set of methods for instructors or researchers to follow in order to systematize the investigation of learners' errors. Error analysis also emphasizes the necessity of error repair since it may be extremely beneficial to students.



Chapter Two

Different Writing Issues

Introduction

Learning English requires the integration of four abilities: hearing, speaking, reading, and writing. The latter occupies a unique place in language teaching since its acquisition necessitates the knowledge and practice of the other three language skills. It also demands a significant amount of effort and practice. Therefore, writing is viewed as a complex and difficult skill to be mastered for both native and non-native learners, particularly for EFL learners since they write in a language other than their native one.

This chapter covers the definition of writing and its importance, the various approaches of teaching it, and its types that should be handled by learners both in and outside the classroom. Last but not least, it discusses the numerous factors which contribute to students' poor writing production, which can be come from teachers or students themselves. Finally, it provides the role of the teacher before, during, and after the writing activity that students are engaged in.

II.1 Definition of writing

Writing is the expression of ideas via the use of graphic codes and symbols. To put it another way, writing is the production of sentences as instances of usages in one sense, as what Widdowson (2001) says “writing is the use of visual medium to manifest the graph logical and the grammatical system of language” (p. 56). Moreover, Collins (2003) claims that “writing is a group of letters and symbols linked together to form a piece of communication”. This indicates that writing is an important means of communication, a system of symbols, codes, letters, and words that convey meanings in different contexts. On the other hand, Writing is more difficult than just converting symbols and codes; it is a difficult and complex skill (Tribble, 1997). However, it is considered as both a physical and mental process; when we write, we utilize both mental and physical efforts, and we are

engaged in a process of discovery. Furthermore, Brown (2001) claims that “writing is a thinking process...writing represents what we think” (p. 336). Besides that, if learners do not know how to express themselves in writing, they cannot communicate with others, so learning how to write is a necessary tool in foreign language communication. In addition, writing is described as the capacity to learn a language system, such as applying grammar rules and vocabulary. In this regard, Lado (2000) asserts that “we mean by writing in a foreign language the ability to use structure, lexical items, and their conventional representation in an ordinary-matter of writing”.

Indeed, writing is considered as a tool of expressing strength because a person with high writing skill or competence in it is always powerful and successful when it comes to expressing himself/herself. As Mc Arthur, Graham, and Fitzgerald (2008, p. 1) claim “although writing is not this explosive, it is one of the human kind’s powerful tool”.

Based on the definitions above, Writing is more than just writing down sums of symbols and combining letters; it is a fundamental skill and a tool of communication through which students can express their ideas and communicate. However, it is a complex cognitive process that necessitates an amount of efforts and a careful concentration.

II.2 Second language writing

The capacity to properly write in a second or foreign language is becoming significant in our global community and a prerequisite for educational success.

There is a clear distinction between writing in a foreign language and writing in one’s own mother tongue. According to Dullay et al... (1982), the structures of the first language differ from those of the second language, which can lead to making errors. Furthermore, both EFL and ESL students face social and cognitive difficulties that are related to second language acquisition. These problems are believed to have an impact on the output quality,

by limiting learners' ability to express their ideas and making it harder for them to transfer L1 writing strategies to L2 writing situations. In addition, Hayes claims that (2001) "L2 texts are often of lower quality than L1 texts; not only in terms of language use, but also in terms of content and organization". Moreover, Hyland (2006, p.4) maintains that EFL Students lack self- confidence in their L2 writing, as opposed to L1 writers who have self-confidence when they write in their native language. According to Silva (1993) writing in a second language is more limited, harder, and less effective than writing in a first language. He also adds that "second writers plan less, revise for content less, and write less fluently and accurately than first language writers" (cited in weigle, 2002, p. 36). That is why, Weigle affirmed that second language writers are not fluent and quick as native speaker ones (2002, p.37). Furthermore, Silva, Canal and Swain (cited in Nation, 2009) maintain that L2writing activity necessitates the writer to have a set of competencies classified as follows:

- Grammatical competence: knowledge of the language system (grammar, vocabulary).
- Discourse competence: knowledge of genre and rhetorical patterns.
- Sociolinguistic competence: the capacity to communicate effectively in a variety of social contexts.
- Strategic competence: the capacity to use a set of communicative strategies.

Therefore, the difference between languages is illustrated by Kaplan (1972) who argues that "each language and each culture has a paragraph order unique itself". (Cited in Mohan and Lo, 1985)

Based on a review of certain studies comparing L1 and L2writing, Kaplan (1972) asserts that learners of English employ more nominalization and pronouns in their writing. Besides that, Myles (2002, p.1) asserts that writing in a foreign language presents a great challenge to foreign language learners especially if they are asked to write an essay

because it requires more knowledge of a foreign language than paragraph writing does (ibid).

II.3 The importance of writing

Learning a foreign language entails learners to write. According to Hyland (2003, p. 69) “writing is one of the main ways that we create a coherent social reality through engaging with others”. Moreover, he believes that good writing skill can help learners to succeed (2008). From another point of view, Harmer (2004, p. 31-33) claims that writing is significant for a variety of reasons, one of which is that writing motivates students to focus on accurate and faultless language use because they are writing what comes to their minds: “When writing, students frequently have more time to think than they do in oral activities.” On the other hand, Writing is often used as a preparation for other some tasks and it is employed as well in question-and-answer activities because it allows students to express their thoughts, feelings, and opinions in a written form.

According to Mc Arthur et al. (2008, p. 11), writing is an efficient communicative skill for conveying ideas, emotions, and feelings. It is an important aspect of learning language, and it has great power to influence and persuade others. They also assert that “The power of writing is so strong, that writing about one’s feelings and experiences can be beneficial psychologically and physiologically because it can reduce depression, lower blood pressure, and boost the immune system”.

II.4 The most approaches for teaching writing

Certain theorists and researchers have recommended a variety of approaches for teaching writing because it is viewed as a difficult skill to acquire for both learners and teachers, which are classified as follows:

II.4.1 The product approach

As the title indicates, this approach concentrates on the final result of the learning process, through mastering the language system and imitating the teachers' model; students are expected to create sentences and develop paragraphs by imitating already prescribed texts, models, or exemplars (Harmer 2001, p. 157). In this regard, Zamel (1992, p. 32) claims that learning by imitation is indeed appropriate and useful. However, Still, Badger, and White assert that this approach prioritizes "language structure" over "meaning." In the same vein, Pincas (1982) believes that writing in this approach is about language knowledge and the appropriate use of vocabulary and syntax. Furthermore, Hyland (2003, p. 3) points out that there are four primary stages which are required in order to learn how to write in this approach and they are classified as follows:

II.4.1.1 The Familiarization stage

Learners read the model text, such as an essay provided by the teacher as a model for them; the goal here is to make them aware of certain features of a text.

II.4.1.2 The controlled writing

In this stage, learners frequently work alone to manage particular patterns and genres. Hence, they are expected to make connections between certain paragraphs, conclusions, and thesis statements based on the example in the first stage.

II.4.1.3 Guided writing

It is a crucial stage where learners are asked to imitate a model text, and teachers should concentrate on how their learners develop and organize their thoughts in a piece of writing rather than the thoughts themselves.

II.4.1.4 Free writing

Learners produce an essay or a paragraph using the patterns they've developed, which are based on the teachers' model. This approach has been criticized because it ignores learners' or writers' actual processes. It necessitates constant error correction, which may have an impact on students' motivation, self-esteem, and reduces their creativity.

II.4.2 The process approach

This approach came as a reaction to the product approach. Thus, the teaching of writing has shifted from focusing on the written product to emphasize the writing process. According to Badger and White (2000), the teacher in this approach mainly facilitates the learner's writing. Moreover, Silva (1993) claims that "this approach calls for providing a positive, encouraging, and collaborative workshop environment within which students, with ample time and minimal interference, can work through their composing progress." (Cited in Sadek, 2007, p. 232)

As it is known, writing is a complex process, so in order to write effectively it requires some stages that facilitate and improve the writing skill. In this regard, Blanchard and Root (2004) claim that the writing process involves three major steps which are classified as follows:

II.4.2.1 Planning (pre-writing)

This step includes activities that help learners to activate their schemata about the topic. According to White and Arndt (1991, p. 3) "...writers rarely know at the outset exactly what is they are going to write, because many ideas are only revealed during the act of writing itself". They claim that "pre-writing is a way to warm up your brain, just as you warm up your car's engine before you drive."

Indeed, experienced writers are those who plan what they are going to write. According to Hedge (2005) writers must first think about the “purpose” of their writing, the “audience” for whom they are writing, and finally the “content structure” of a piece of writing.

II.4.2.2 Drafting

It is the second stage in writing where the formal writing begins. According to Harmer (2004, p. 5) the writer may produce many drafts until he produces the final piece of writing. However, Starkey (2006) claims that “It is the student initial trial to write his/her ideas in the form of paragraphs”. According to Hedge (2005, p. 217), writers should focus on the meaning and the organization of thoughts. That is to say, the writer should concentrate on producing meaning, using thoughts obtained through prewriting processes, and getting the right content.

II.4.2.3 Editing

This is the last stage where the writer or learner reads and tries to figure out what is unclear or ambiguous. According to Johnson (2008) good writers are those who edit their writing by checking, discussing and evaluating grammar, spelling, and punctuation. He also claims that it is too important for writers to edit their work in order to produce a well, meaningful piece of writing (p. 80).

II.4.3 The Genre approach

Badger and White describe this approach as “an extension of the product strategy” (2000, p. 155). They also claim that this approach emphasizes the social context and purpose of writing. Writing in this approach, unlike earlier approaches, involves the use of language and its social functions to reach some goals. In the same vein, Harmer (2001) asserts that “a genre approach is especially appropriate for students of English for specific purposes” (p.

257). From a different point of view, Hyland (2003, p. 18) claims that the main idea here is that we do not write for no reason, but for a reason. However, Badger and White (2000) believe that in this approach, the writer has his own goal, and writing differs depending on the social context in which it is produced, because texts are almost related to certain social contexts. Moreover, Cope and Kalant (1993, p.11) claim that the genre approach is divided into three stages:

II.4.3.1 Modeling

Teachers give students a sample text and ask them to create a written text that is similar to it.

II.4.3.2 Construction

In this phase, both teachers and students think about the construction of the new text based on the knowledge gained from the model one.

II.4.3.3 Independent construction

Here, the students are required to write by utilizing information from the preceding model as a guide (text).

II.4.4 The creative approach

This approach encourages learners to write imaginatively, such as stories, poetry, and plays. However, they may find imaginative writing challenging because they lack ideas for what to write about (Harmer, 2007, p.259).

II.4.5 The Cooperative Approach

The cooperative approach encourages students to work together. According to Harmer (2007, p.260), in this approach, teachers should ask their learners to make group and each group is responsible for producing one piece of writing. This approach is significant because, as Hedge (2005, p.14) said, collaborative writing among learners generates discussion between them which allows weak writers to benefit from the efforts of good ones. Furthermore, Harmer (2004, p.73) asserted that collaborative writing could be very beneficial to students because it allows them to learn from each other and share knowledge and thoughts. He also stated that cooperative writing helps learners in improving their knowledge of drafting, reflecting, and revising of a piece of writing in order to make a good one (ibid). This approach enables the teacher to provide feedback more effectively (Harmer, 2007, P.260), because he/her deals with a small group of learners rather than each one individually.

II.5 Types of Writing

According to Hedge (2005, p. 86), there are six major types of writing, which are as follows:

II.5.1 Personal Writing

It refers to writing for oneself, which includes memories, diaries, and journals. These writing activities are mostly used in the first language.

II.5.2 Study Writing

It's for "academic" or "educational" purposes, and it covers all of the tasks and activities that students should do, such as taking notes or summaries for themselves, or writing essays, reports, and reviews.

II.5.3 Public Writing

It is writing for public, as well as for organizations and institutions. There are usually steps to follow, which include activities like writing letters of inquiry and application.

II.5.4 Creative Writing

It can include writing poems, stories, and rhymes, and all of which can be done individually or in groups. It helps to develop learners' personality, increases their creativity, and builds self-esteem. This type of writing works well with adults in English language classes.

II.5.5 Social Writing

It includes personal letters, invitations, and personal emails, as well as any other piece of writing that aim at establishing and maintaining social relationships with family and friends. It is quite useful for EFL learners who really need to learn about the different types of writing and their functions.

II.5.6 Institutional Writing

It is related to professional roles of writing such as agendas, minutes, and memos. Each profession has its own language which means that there are various types of texts under this writing type (Hedge, 2005, p.87).

II.6 Factors behind Students' Poor Writing

There are numerous factors that contribute to students' poor writing production, which can be come from teachers or students themselves.

II.6.1 Lack of Adequate Techniques for Teaching Writing

Teaching writing is a challenging and complex process in the sense that the teacher has to make it less difficult for his students. Unfortunately, most teachers focus more on “what” to teach in writing and neglect the more essential question which is “how” to teach it. The question “what” is regarded as a hidden problem for both teachers and learners, causing teachers to lose the main techniques for teaching writing. As a result, some researchers, such as Raimes (1983), propose seven questions for teachers to ask before class:

1. “How can writing help my students learn their second or foreign language?”
2. How can I find enough topics?
3. How can I help to make the subject matter meaningful?
4. Who will read what my students write?
5. How are the students going to work together in the classroom?
6. How much time should I give my students for their writing?
7. What do I do about errors?”

II.6.2 Teacher as a Source of De-motivation (External Factors)

It is known that there is a strong interaction between teachers and their student, each one has a positive or negative impact on the other. Hence, teachers must be characterized by some features that make them effective teachers. The external motivation is important for learners to produce a good piece of writing, as Harmer (2007) says that “the main task of the teacher is to motivate and provoke students”. However, Teachers who are unmotivated create an uncomfortable environment in which students do not feel at ease to write.

II.6.3 Lack of Motivation to Write (Internal Motivation)

Internal motivation is crucial because it is a desire that comes from the learners themselves; this desire drives them to fight all of the obstacles that they face. Bascolo and Hidi (2008) claim that “there are two main questions that language skill teacher frequently poses to writing. First, why are students so often not motivated to write? .Second, how can their motivation to write be increased?”

II.6.4 Lack of Reading

A famous proverb says that “good readers are good writers”. Hence, poor readers are poor writers. According to Esterhold (1997) “better writers tend to be better readers, better writers read more than poorer reader”. Most learners neglect reading, despite the fact that reading improves writing and produces good writers; these two skills are interrelated. In this sense, Byrne (1991) argues that “reading of course can be a goal in itself and in any case is likely to be more important one than writing, but the two skills can and should be developed in close collaboration”. Moreover reading is a key to better writing as Raimes (1994,p.46) says “the more our students read, the more they become familiar with the vocabulary, idiom, sentence patterns, organizational follow, and cultural assumptions of native speakers of the language.” This means that writing goes hand in hand with reading

II.6.5 The Influence of the First Language on Writing in English

Many foreign language students find it really hard to write in their second language without referring to their first language. Friedlander (1997) argues that “writers do any of their work in their first language”. They transfer from their first language because they feel that they cannot write without it. He adds that “writers will transfer writing abilities and strategies, whether good or deficient from their first language to their second or third

language”. Moreover, Blanchard and Root (2004) claim that writing conventions differs from one language to another because each language has its own rules and principles. This difference causes interference, which makes students to write poorly. Blanchard and Root describe writing conventions as driving a car, they say: “It is like driving a car, if you have ever driven in another country, you know that some of the rules of the road may be different. Just as the rules of driving differ from country to another, the conventions of writing may change from language to another”.

II.7 Teacher’ Role

The teacher plays a variety of roles, before, during, and after the writing activity that students are engaged in.

II.7.1 Responding Students with Enough Information

The teacher should make his/her students aware about the various writing requirements and features. They should give their students whatever they need to begin a task. They should provide them with precise information on the topic, as well as the layout of the text and the language used (Harmer, 2004, p.41,63). In the same sense, Hedge (2005, p.55) argued that teachers should assist their EFL Learners with the linguistic form and organization of the text because these conventions change from one language to another.

II.7.2 Helping Student to Get Ideas

Many students may struggle to come up with ideas when they are requested to write especially in creative writing tasks. They frequently answer by saying, “We don’t have anything to say.” In this case, the teacher can assist them in getting ideas so that they can complete their work on time (Harmer, 2004, p.41). Moreover, according to Hedge (2005,

p.55), teachers can play a crucial role in assisting learners in generating ideas. This can be accomplished through exposing them to texts, images, interviews, and so on.

II.7.3 Knowing Students' Needs

Writing tasks and activities should be carefully selected in order to satisfy the needs of learners. They should be appropriate for each learner's level. This is done when teachers are aware of the kind of writing that learners prefer and enjoy. As a result, teachers should take the differences between learners into account (Harmer, 2004, p.62). Teachers should also focus on each learner's needs and learning styles when helping them to get ideas to complete their writing activities. According to Harmer (ibid), teachers can help students come up with ideas for writing tasks by having them listen to music (auditory input), look at pictures (visual input), or write on the board (kinaesthetic input).

II.7.4 Responding and Evaluating Students' Work

When it comes to classroom writing, the teacher should always be there to encourage his learners and help them in overcoming the challenges they confront at each phase of the writing process (Harmer, 2004, p.42). In addition, Before the students create their final drafts, the teacher may respond to the content and structure of the previous drafts and, if necessary, make suggestions for changes. Furthermore, at the end of the process in which learners create their final writing work, the teacher should evaluate their work to tell them what they did well and what they did poorly (ibid). Moreover, the way teachers construct writing tasks for their students and how they correct their work are both depended on the type of writing they are doing (Harmer, 1998, p.112). The most important element in learners' effective development as writers is the feedback they receive from their teachers and classmates (Ferris, n.d., in kroll, 2003, p.119).

II.7.5 Building the Writing Habit

Learners are positively affected by teachers who have the habit of writing and love it (Hedge, 2005, p.15). Teachers, according to Harmer (2004, p.61), should assist learners in building the writing habit by make them feel confident and comfortable when they are asked to write. This includes the selection of appropriate tasks and giving them all the information they need. Many studies have also shown that students will develop the writing habit if they are exposed to writing extensively. To support that idea, Hedge (ibid) focused on that teachers should encourage their learners to write outside the classroom such as ‘personal’ writing activities. Extensive writing is very important to learners, since it allows them to develop their confidence as well as their writing skill.

Conclusion

To sum it up, writing is a crucial and highly valued skill that develops learners’ communicative abilities. On the other hand, it is regarded as the most difficult and complex skill for EFL learners to master among the other skills (speaking, listening, and reading). Thus, both teachers and students must be familiar with the essential approaches that make the writing skill process easier. Besides, learner should be knowledgeable about its different types to be an effective writer. This is primarily the teacher’s role, in which he should give his/her learners the required information and constructive critique so they can create a good piece of writing. Moreover, it requires that the student to be aware of the conventions that govern foreign language writing, which are completely different from those that regulate writing in his/her own mother tongue in order to convey the exact meaning. Furthermore, the learner should apply and practices foreign language writing intensively so he/she can master writing and be successful writer.



Chapter Three

*Data Interpretation and
Analysis*

Introduction

The previous chapters were devoted to a review of the literature on the interference of the mother tongue (Arabic) and writing skills issue. The purpose of this chapter is to investigate the impact of Arabic on EFL learners' writing production. As a result, this section will focus on the analysis and discussion of the findings gained from the teachers' questionnaire and the students' test, as well as some recommendations and restrictions.

Section one: Teacher's Questionnaire (Analysis and Discussion)

III.1 The Teachers Questionnaire

This section focuses on the analysis of teachers' questionnaire.

III.1.1 Administration of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered to twenty (20) teachers in the department of English at the University of Ibn Khaldoun in Tiaret, during the academic year of 2020-2021. Most of teachers who were chosen are teachers of written expression and grammar because they are more aware of the importance and development of the writing skill. All twelve questionnaires were completed and returned.

III.1.2 Description of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of eleven questions which are designed for teachers to collect opinions and ideas about the investigated subject. The main purpose of the teachers' questionnaire is to investigate the effects of Arabic interference on EFL learners' writing production.

The eleven questions are composed of six closed-ended questions, three open-ended, and two the combination of them. Moreover, the questionnaire is divided into three sections

which are interrelated. These sections are as follows: The first section contains two questions which are about the «personal information» that aims to know their degree as such. Section two, entitled «causes of learners’ errors and the influence of L1 transfer », contains six questions; in this section, we would like to prospect the main reasons that make students commit error. The final section entitled « teachers error correction », contains four questions which are about the teachers’ ways and strategies of error correction that would be helpful for students in developing their writing; it also includes the best solutions for avoiding the grammatical errors.

III.1.3 Analysis of the Questionnaire

Section One: Personal Information

Question 01: Degree held:

| Options | Number of Teachers | Percentage (%) |
|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| BA (license) | 0 | 0 |
| MA (master, magister) | 6 | 30 |
| PhD | 14 | 70 |
| Total | 20 | 100 |

Table III.1: Teachers’ degree

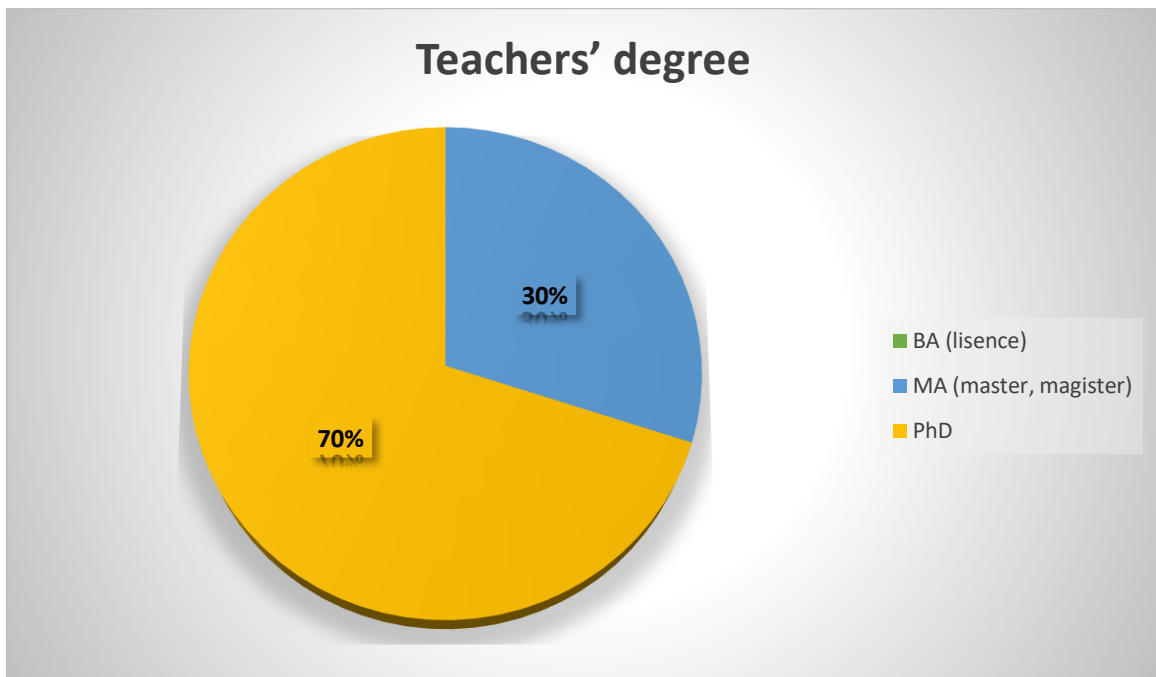


Figure III.1: Teachers' degree

In this question, respondents were asked about their degree. The results are organized in the table above. We notice that the majority of teachers (70%) have the PhD (Doctorate) degree in teaching English. Hence, it assists in the gathering of common perceptions and viewpoints on the subject under investigation. Whereas, (30%) of them have MA (master/magister) degree.

Question 2: a) Teachers' experience in teaching English:

| Options | Number of Teachers | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Less than 5 years | 5 | 25 |
| More than 5 years | 15 | 75 |
| Total | 20 | 100 |

Table III.2: Teachers' experience in teaching English

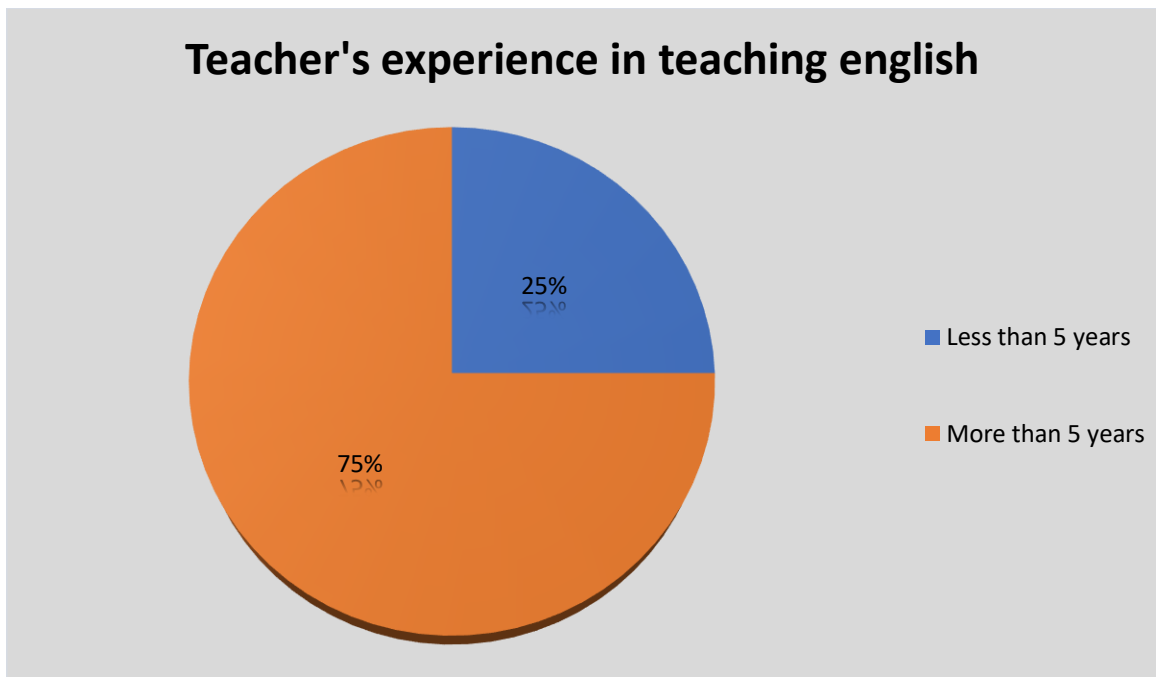


Figure III.2: Teachers' experience in teaching English

Among the 20 teachers who were questioned, (25%) have been teaching for less than five years; who are novice teachers. However, (75%) of those teachers have been teaching English more than five years; this will make a significant contribution to reach the purpose of the research.

b) Teachers' experience in teaching written expression:

| Opinions | Number of Teachers | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Less than 3 years | 11 | 55 |
| More than 3 years | 9 | 45 |
| Total | 20 | 100 |

Table III.3: Teacher's experience in teaching written expression

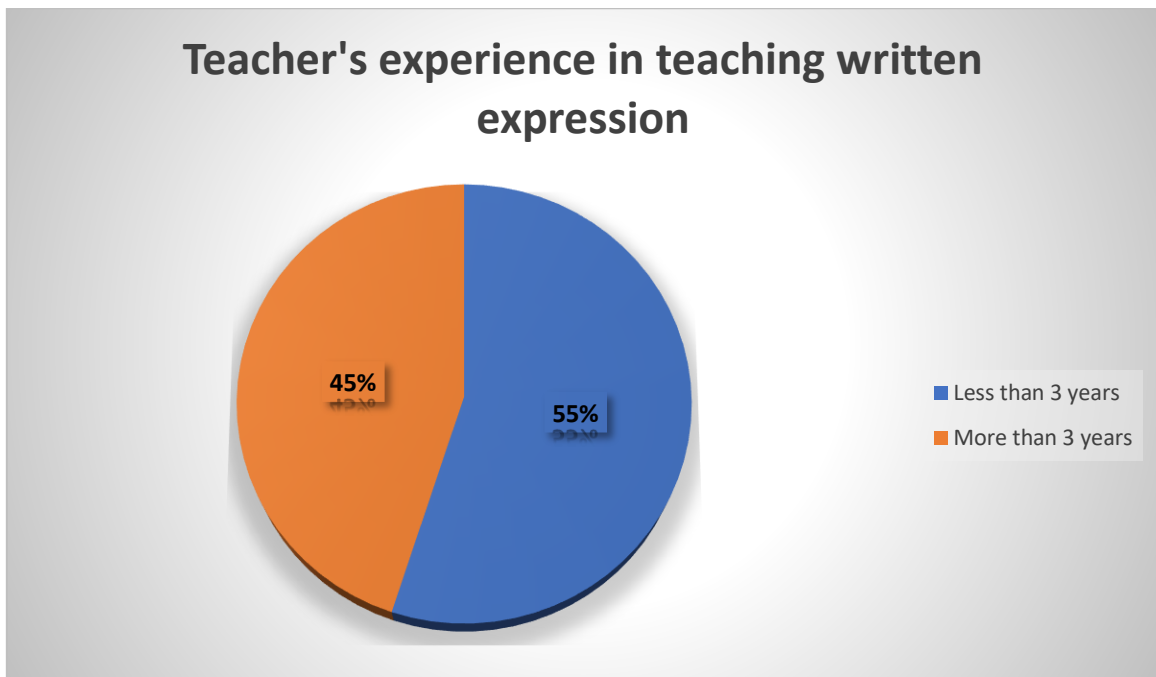


Figure III.3: Teacher’s experience in teaching written expression

Not all of the teachers are teaching written expression module, yet they all ask students to write depending on the activity. (55%) of them have been teaching for less than three years. However, (45%) of them have been teaching for more than three year which means that they are expert teachers who can assist us in solving our issue.

Section Two: Causes of learners’ Errors and the Influence of L1 Transfer

Question 03: Do EFL learners make a lot of grammatical errors in their writing?

| Options | Number of Teachers | Percentage (%) |
|---------|--------------------|----------------|
| Yes | 20 | 100 |
| No | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 20 | 100 |

Table III.4: Teachers’ Attitudes towards the Amount of Errors Committed by First Year students

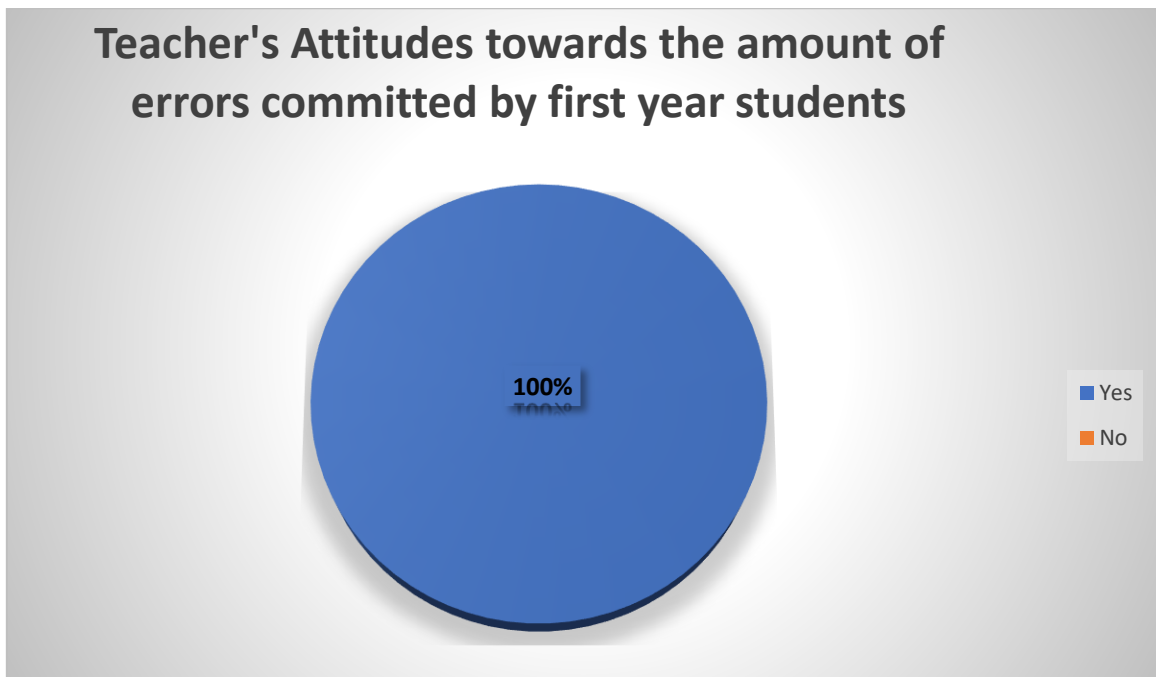


Figure III.4: Teachers' Attitudes towards the Amount of Errors Committed by First Year students

Results obtained from the table III.4 show that all the representative sample (100%) confirm that there is a number of grammatical errors in first year students' writing. Whereas, none of them denied that students do not make a lot of errors. This means that the majority of students are unable to produce an organized and error-free piece of writing.

Question 04: what kind of the errors do they make?

| Types of Errors | Number of Teachers | Percentage (%) |
|--------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Misuse of capitalization | 0 | 0 |
| Misuse of connectors | 0 | 0 |
| Misuse of articles | 0 | 0 |
| Misuse of prepositions | 0 | 0 |

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|----|----|
| Subject-verb agreement | 0 | 0 |
| Wrong use of tenses | 0 | 0 |
| Wrong use of singular and plural form | 0 | 0 |
| a + b +c +d +f | 2 | 10 |
| a + c + d +e +f +g | 4 | 20 |
| a + c + e + f +g | 11 | 55 |
| All | 3 | 15 |

Table III.5: Types of Errors

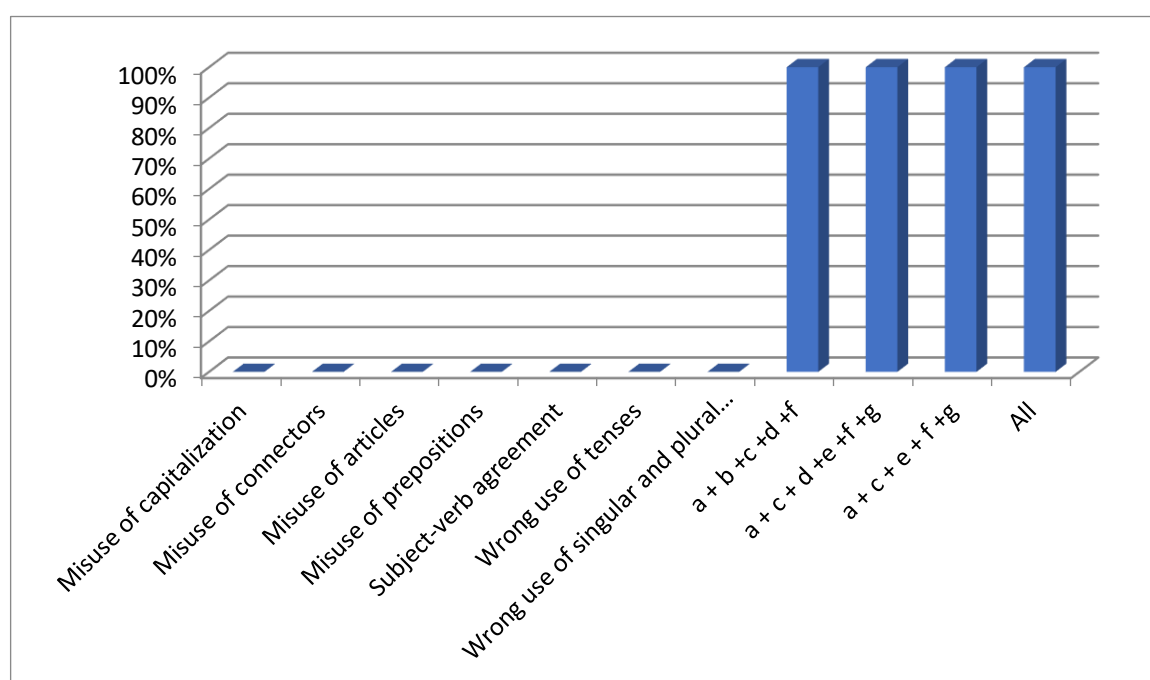


Figure III.5: Types of Errors

As the table above III.5 indicates, there are various responses concerning types of errors students tend to commit during their writing. First, the majority of the respondents

(55%) opted for misuse of capitalization, misuse of articles, subject-verb agreement, wrong use of tenses as well as wrong use of singular and plural form. Followed by (20%) of them opted misuse of capitalization ,misuse of articles, misuse of prepositions, subject-verb agreement, wrong use of tense and singular and plural form. In addition, (15%) of them chose all the types mentioned in the table (III.5). Moreover, (10%) of them chose misuse of capitalization, misuse of Connecters, misuse of articles, misuse of prepositions and wrong use of tenses. However, some teachers add that there are other types of grammatical errors such as word order, modal auxiliaries followed by verbs, condition, sentence structure, subordination and coordination. Based on the results above, it can be said that these errors may cause obstacles for learners and prevent them from being good writers. Hence, teachers have to correct such types of errors as possible as they can in order to develop their writing due to the fact that all language areas need to be further improved.

Question 05: Do you think that Arabic transfer/interference is the major cause of grammatical errors in EFL’s writing?

| Options | Number of Teachers | Percentage (%) |
|----------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Yes | 19 | 95 |
| No | 1 | 5 |
| Total | 20 | 100 |

Table III.6: Teachers’ attitudes towards L1 transfer as a main reason for students’ errors

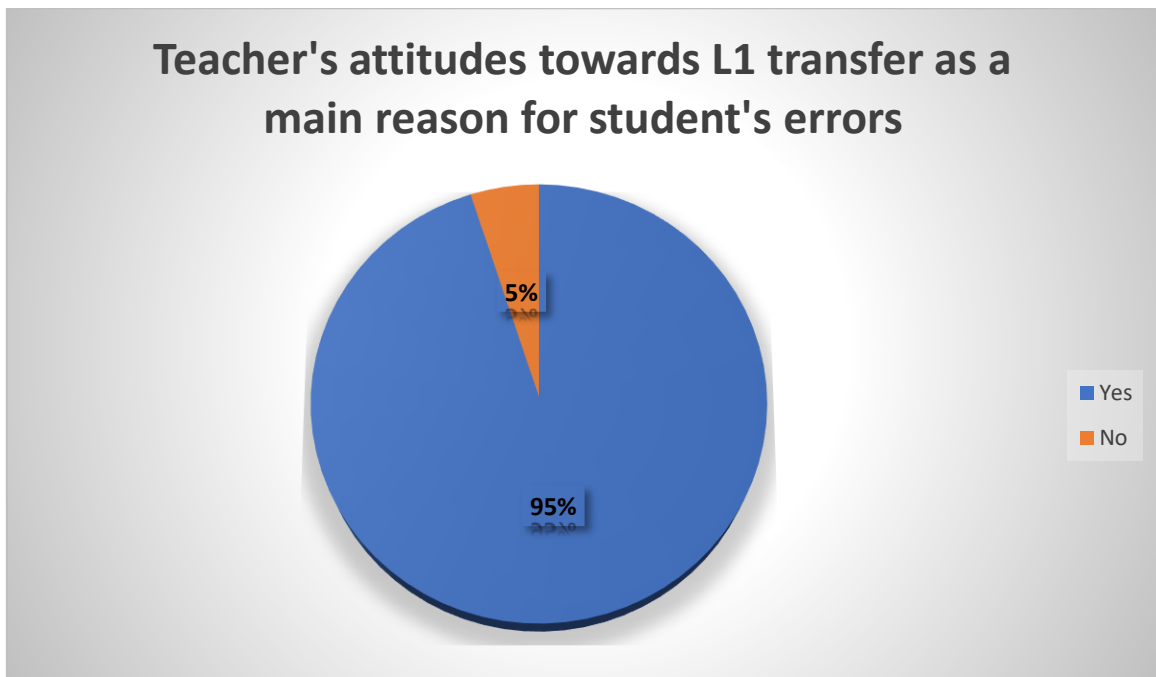


Figure III.6: Teachers' attitudes towards L1 transfer as a main reason for students' errors

The purpose of this question is to investigate whether the L1 (Arabic) transfer is the major cause behind EFL learners' grammatical errors in their writing or not. The table above reveals that (95%) of respondents choose the option "Yes". That means they agree that Arabic interference is the major cause behind their grammatical errors. However, one teacher representing (5%) select "No; the reported that the negative transfer has a great influence on students' writing, but it is not the major cause behind their grammatical errors.

Justification:

The teachers who selected "yes" claim that the interference of L1 (Arabic) is the major cause for errors in EFL learners' writing because the grammatical system of foreign language (English) is different from that of the first language (Arabic); it leads them to make a number of grammatical errors such as: wrong use of tenses and singular and plural form. However, the teacher who selected "no" asserts that L1 transfer is a possible cause of errors in EFL

learners' writing, but it is not the major one. Learners are suffering from more prominent issues such as lack of vocabulary and lack of knowledge of the different steps of writing.

Question 06: what are the other reasons behind the occurrence of those errors?

In the answer of this question, teachers have proposed many reasons of grammatical errors in first year students' writing. These reasons are arranged in the table below according to their occurrence in the teachers' answers:

| Causes of grammatical errors | Number of Teachers | Percentage (%) |
|---|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Lack of reading | 18 | 90 |
| Lack of vocabulary | 14 | 70 |
| Lack of practice | 19 | 95 |
| Lack of grammatical rules acquisition | 14 | 70 |
| Insufficient grammar and written expression | 13 | 65 |
| Overgeneralization of rules | 12 | 60 |
| Inability of some teachers to be a good model of language with regard to the way he speaks, writes, or teaches the language (i.e some teachers can be a source of errors) | 8 | 40 |

Table III.7: Causes of Errors

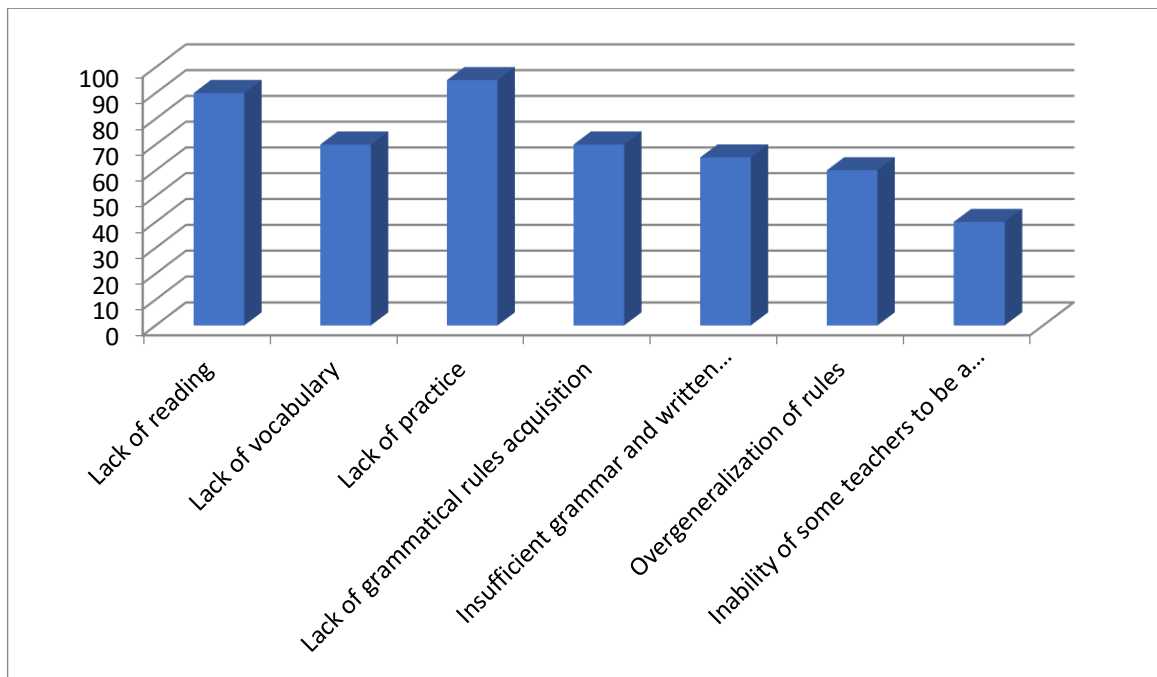


Figure III.7: Causes of Errors

Question 07: According to your experience, how the grammatical errors affect EFL learners' writing?

All the professors admit that grammatical errors affect students' writing development. They claim that these errors impede communication because they prohibit them from transmitting their written messages effectively. In other words, students are unable to effectively express themselves. Furthermore, these errors mislead and confuse the reader, making them seem to be poor writers. In addition, they make students' writing less accurate and the meaning less clear. Besides that, some teachers also added that grammatical errors give bad impression on students' level; therefore, they receive bad marks on their tests and exams.

Section Three: Teachers' errors correction

Question 08: Do you give much importance to error correction?

| Options | Number of Teachers | Percentage (%) |
|----------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Yes | 17 | 85 |
| No | 3 | 15 |
| Total | 20 | 100 |

Table III.8: The Importance of Error Correction

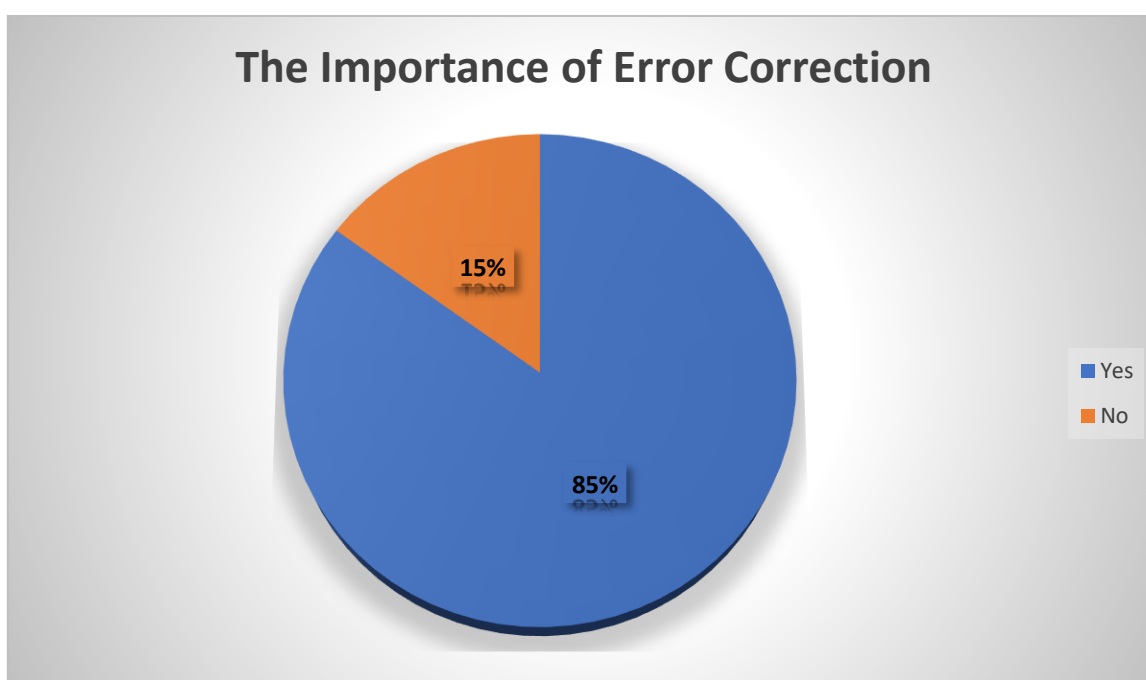


Figure III.8: The Importance of Error Correction

Findings obtained from the table III.8 reveal that the majority of the respondents (85%) believe about the importance of error correction since it helps them to improve their writing. However, only (15%) of them do not give much importance to error correction.

Question 09: Do you prefer the errors to be corrected by:

| Options | Number of Teachers | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| The learner himself | 11 | 55 |
| His classmates | 1 | 5 |
| The teacher | 2 | 10 |
| a + b | 6 | 30 |
| Total | 20 | 100 |

Table III.9: Teachers' Preference to Correct Errors

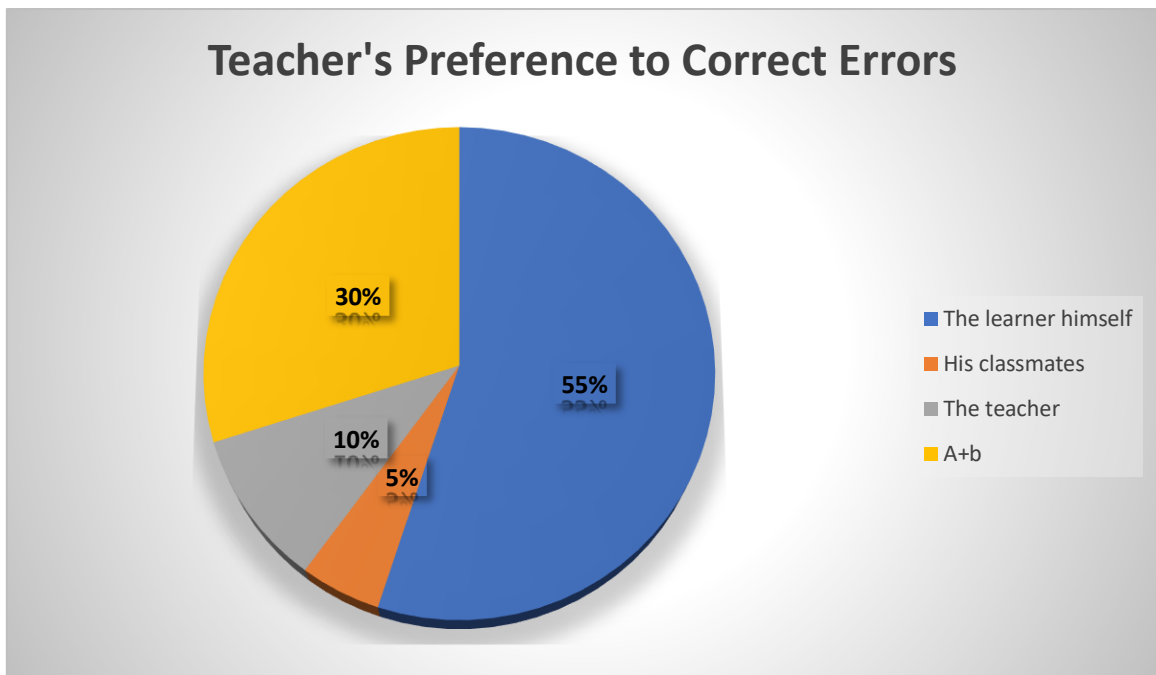


Figure III.9: Teachers' Preference to Correct Errors

The results obtained from the table III.9 clearly show that the majority of respondents (60%) prefer the errors to be corrected by students' themselves because self correction would help them to internalize the correct rule, this would improve their writing skill. None of them

prefer the errors to be corrected by their classmates. (30%) of them reported that the errors should be corrected by the teacher as well as the student himself/herself. And only two respondents (10%) prefer the errors to be corrected only by the teacher. Consequently, error correction is done for the sake of improving their language, and not in order to determine their weaknesses.

Question 10: Do EFL learners benefit from your error correction?

| Options | Number of Teachers | Percentage (%) |
|---------|--------------------|----------------|
| Yes | 17 | 85 |
| No | 3 | 15 |
| Total | 20 | 100 |

Table III.10: Benefits of error correction

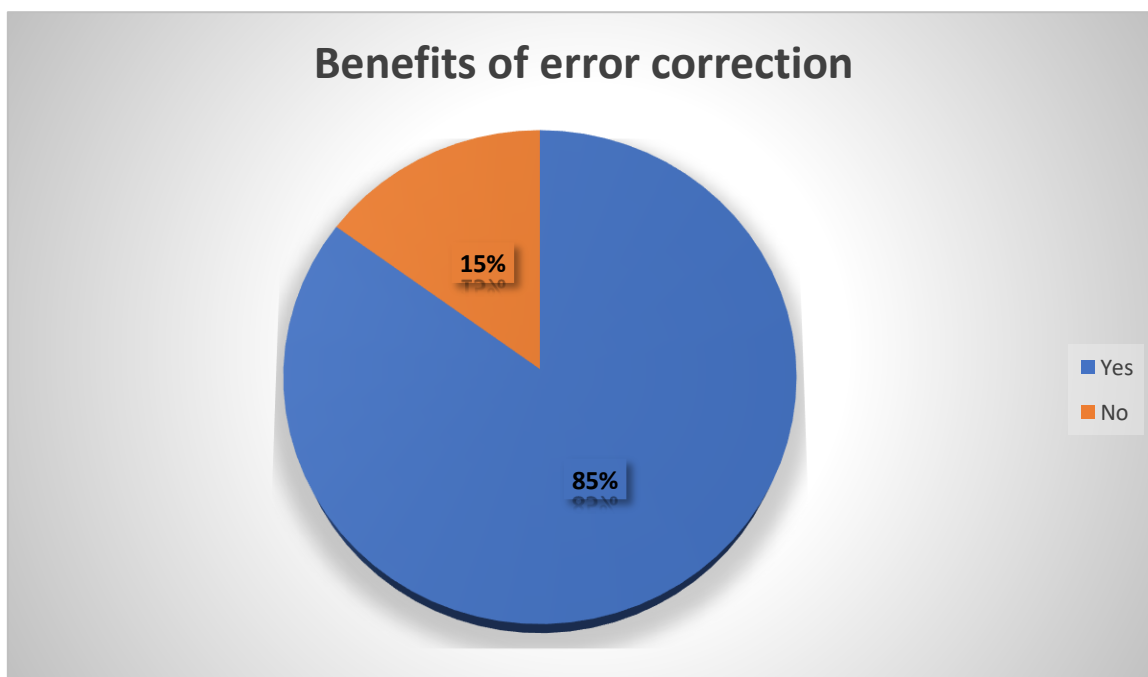


Figure III.10: Benefits of error correction

As the table III.10 shows, the majority of the teachers (85%) affirmed that their students benefited from the error correction. However, (15%) of them answered “no” which means that their students do not benefit from the error correction.

Explaining why:

Teachers who answered « yes » justify their answers by saying that: Many students do not repeat the committed errors in their coming written work because it helps them to understand more and identify their weaknesses. However, teachers who answered “no” assert that: They do not even read their remark and they do not give much attention to error correction.

Question11: Do you have some solutions to enable learners avoid grammatical errors while writing in the foreign language?

In order to avoid the interference of the mother tongue teachers suggest that students should be aware of academic writing. Furthermore, they need to read to learn more vocabulary as well as to be aware of how sentences are structured to develop their writing and to forget their mother tongue by using FL as the first system of reference; besides that, a good reader is a good writer and the more students read the more they acquire the language. Moreover, they propose practicing writing every single day, reading books, articles, or newspapers as strategies to avoid L1 transfer. furthermore, first year students should write as much as possible, not only when they are asked to write but also as habit of writing. Last but not least, they suggest that learners should practice the foreign language outside the classroom so they can improve their productive skills. Finally, they should communicate with native speakers on the social media if it is possible.

III.1.4 Discussion of Results

The results of teachers' questionnaire reveal that first year learners commit a lot of grammatical errors in their writing. According to the teachers' answers, the grammatical errors are of different types such capitalization, article, tense, subject-verb agreement errors, etc. Concerning teachers' attitudes towards students' errors as a result of Arabic interference, almost all of them (95%) consider that the interference of the mother tongue as the major cause for errors in EFL learners' writing. They also proposed a number of causes for learners' grammatical errors, especially lack practice and reading.

When it comes to error correction, the majority of the teachers(85%) have the same views and believe that it is significant since it allows learners to improve their learning. In addition, most of them prefer the errors to be corrected by learners themselves because it would help them to internalize the correct rule, this would improve their writing skill. Nevertheless, the remaining teachers view that errors should be corrected by the teacher. Concerning the benefit of error correction, the majority of the them (85%) affirm that their students benefited from the error correction since they do not repeat the committed errors in their coming written work, because it helps them to understand more and identify their weaknesses. However, the remaining teachers assert that they do not benefit from error correction because they do not even read their remarks and they do not give much intention to the correction of their errors.

Moreover, grammatical errors affects negatively learners' writing. Teachers claim that these errors impede communication because they prohibit them from transmitting their written messages effectively . In other words, students are unable to effectively express themselves. Furthermore, these errors mislead and confuse the reader, making them seem to be poor writers. In addition, they make students' writing less accurate and the meaning less clear.

Besides that, some teachers also added that grammatical errors give bad impression on students' level; that is why, they receive bad marks on their tests and exams. Therefore, teachers have suggested various solutions to avoid these grammatical errors such as: students should be aware of academic writing, they need to read to learn more vocabulary as well as to be aware of how sentences are structured to develop their writing, they should communicate with native speakers on the social media if it is possible, and they need to practice write as much as possible; not only when they are asked to write but also as a habit of writing.

Section Two: Students' Written Test (Analysis and Discussion)

III.2.1 Administration of the Students' Written Test

The participants of this study are EFL first year LMD students at the English Department in Tiaret university. They are selected for the purpose of analyzing their errors. Since they learnt about how to write paragraphs and they are able to write them. They are chosen to find out whether they refer to their mother tongue (Arabic) when writing in English or not.

III.2.2 Data Collection Procedure

The ultimate aim of this research is to investigate if first year EFL learners' grammatical errors in their writing are due to the first language transfer (Arabic) or not at English Department in Tiaret University. For this reason, they were asked to write a short paragraph about what they liked and disliked about the university so far. However, because of the long program which written expression teachers should complete, they refused to give us some time to ask first year learners to write a paragraph about the suggested topic. Instead, they accepted to give us the paragraphs which were written by third year students as a homework. Thus, twenty paragraphs were selected randomly and analyzed carefully.

III.2.3 Data Analysis

The data are analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively using descriptive statistics with frequency and Percentage. Grammatical errors are categorized following the Ellis Road research (1997). The types of grammatical errors used by learners due to the mother tongue interference are provided then; the number of errors are calculated and converted to percentage %. In addition, examples for each type of grammatical errors are provided by identifying and explaining them. Finally, their possible corrections were presented.

III.2.4 Analysis of The Written Test

| Type of Grammatical Errors | Frequency | % |
|----------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Punctuation | 82 | 31.48 |
| Capitalization Errors | 78 | 29.88 |
| Verb Tense and Form | 29 | 11.11 |
| Articles | 20 | 7.67 |
| Singular & plural forms | 19 | 7.28 |
| Subject-verb agreement | 19 | 7.28 |
| Prepositions | 10 | 3.83 |
| word order | 4 | 1.53 |
| Total | 261 | 100% |

Table III.11: Total Number of First Year Students' Grammatical Errors

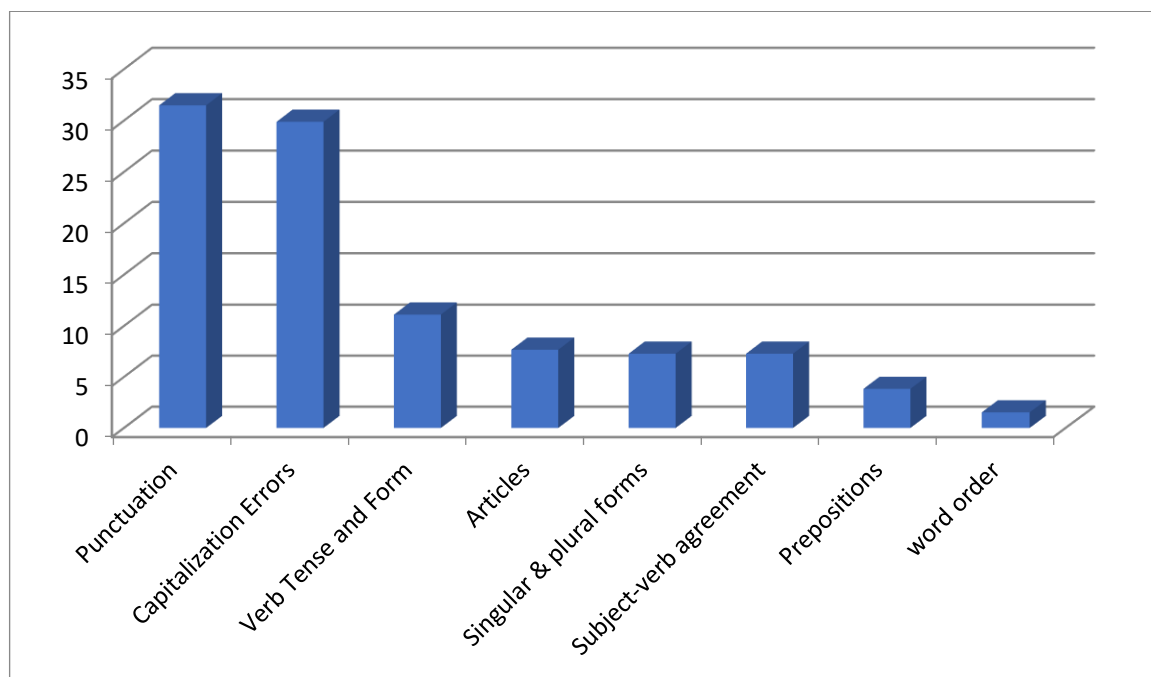


Figure III.11: Total Number of First Year Students' Grammatical Errors

The results obtained in the table (III.11), show that first year learners at the English Department in Tiaret University make a lot of grammatical errors. The total number of these errors is (261) errors calculated in twenty (20) short paragraphs which are classified as follows:

Punctuation 31,48% (82), capitalization 29,88% (78), verb tenses 11,11% (29), articles 7,67% (20), subject-verb agreement and singular plural/forms 7,28% (19), prepositions 3,83% (10), and last of errors is word order 1,53 (04). It is clear from the frequency of grammatical errors that the Punctuation and capitalization errors are the most frequent errors in learners' writing, followed by verb tenses. In the fourth place comes articles errors, then prepositions, singular and plural form and the least frequent ones are word order.

a) Punctuation Errors

According to the table (III.11), Punctuation marks is one of the most common types in first year students' paragraphs. It comprised (82) errors of the total number of errors

with frequency rate of (31.48%). The results obtained reveals that These errors occurs because the punctuation rules in Arabic differ from that in English, especially in the use of comma. The table below shows some examples of punctuation errors in students' paragraphs

| Errors Classification | Errors Identification | Errors Correction |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| Punctuation | -However I dislike ... -for example I like ... -I like university because, it is large ... -University is a whole different level of education and culture in the same time here is what I liked... | -However, I dislike ... - For example, I like ... -I like university because it is large ... -University is a whole different level of education and culture in the same time .Here is what I liked ... |

Table III.12: Punctuation Errors

b) Capitalization Errors

The findings of this survey have shown that the majority of first year learners did no to write capital letter at the beginning of a sentence and even when a sentence is the beginning of a new paragraph. In addition, some of them started some nouns with a capital letter in the middle of a sentence (nouns that should not be started with a capital letter); whereas, others forgot to start some nouns with a capital letter (nouns that should be started with a capital letter). This type of errors is repeated 78 times in students' paragraphs, it represents 29,88% of all grammatical errors. There is one explanation for this type of errors which is mother

tongue (Arabic) interference. Unlike in English, Arabic does not contain capital letters; which means that first year EFL learners tend not to use capital letter in English writing because they are still influenced by their mother (Arabic). Some examples are given in the table below:

| Error Classification | Error Identification | Error Correction |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Capitalization | -the university in Algerian ... - Education is one of The most important ... -our department of english ... -sometimes, I dislike university ... | - The University in Algerian ... -Education is one of the most important... -our department of English ... -Sometimes, I dislike university ... |

Table III.13: Capitalization Errors

c) Singular & Plural Errors

Making singular and plural form is regarded as one of the problems that EFL students' face in their writing. This type of error was repeated (19) times in students' paragraph, it constitutes (7.28%) of all the grammatical errors. The findings obtained show in the table below that EFL students confuse in plural form of words. They think that all the plural nouns end with an "s". For instance, the word "information" is a plural word in Arabic, but the students add an "s" to it because they think that "information" is a singular noun. They tend to translate from their mother tongue (Arabic) into English. The table below shows some examples of this type of errors:

| Error classification | Error Identification | Error Correction |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| Singular & plural forms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -I like many thing ... - I like to join all this informations ... - I disliked these idea ... - It has a lot of benefit ... | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -I like many things... -I like to join all this information ... -I disliked these ideas ... - It has a lot of benefits ... |

Table III.14: Singular &Plural Errors

d) Verb Tense and Form Errors

One of the difficulties that first year students faced in their writing is choosing the proper verb tense. The results obtained in the table below reveals that the verb tense error is another category of common grammatical errors. It is comprised (29)errors with frequency of (11,11%). These errors happened because English tenses are more complicated than Arabic ones. First-year students made more errors in utilizing the simple past, present perfect, and present continuous tense incorrectly. As in the examples of the table below:

| Error Classification | Error Identification | Error Correction |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Verb Tenses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -I Choose the English ... - I have makes ... -...we are oblige ... -Good things is happen... | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I chose the English ... - I have made ... - ...we are obliged ... - Good things is happening ... |

Table III.15: Verb Tense and Form Errors

e) Prepositions Errors

The results obtained from the table (III.11) reveals that prepositions are another

difficulty for students when writing in English. It comprised (10) errors with a frequency of (3, 83%); since there are various prepositions in English that have the same function, such as the preposition “in”, “at”, and “on”. Therefore, they often translate from Arabic into English when they are confused about what preposition that should be used. Some examples are given in the table below:

| Error Classification | Error Identification | Error Correction |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Preposition | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - University is a whole different level of education and culture in the same time. -I arrive in the university in time. -...get sick from ... - ... in force ... | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -University is a whole different level of education and culture at the same time. -I arrive at the university on time. - ... get sick of ... - ... by force ... |

Table III.16: Preposition Errors

f) Articles Errors

The table (III.11) above clearly shows that the errors of the misuse of articles were repeated 20 times with a frequency rate of (7.67 %). That means a lot of first year students are unable to use the articles appropriately. They are confused with the use of definite and indefinite articles since; in English abstracts, terms that may refer to ideas, concepts, or attributes are used without the definite article "the." However, in Arabic, such abstract terms are followed with a definite article "Al," which is comparable to "The" in English (Diab, 1996: 74). As a result, the deletion and addition of these articles due to the mother tongue interference.

| Error Classification | Error Identification | Error Correction |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| Article | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The university should be a good place for ... -I have a answers ... -After I studied in university ... -I meet a new friends... | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - University should be a good place for ... -I have answers ... -After I studied in the university ... -I meet new friends |

Table III.17: Articles Errors

g) Agreement Errors

The table (III.11) shows that many students of the first year make errors in their writing, because of the influence of their mother tongue (Arabic). This type of errors is repeated 19 times with a frequency of (7.28%). They do not know when to add the “s” of singular. They generally include the “s” of the third person singular when the subject is plural and deleted when the subject is singular. For example, In English; there are just a few adjectives agree in number with the nouns, Whereas, in Arabic adjectives agree in number with the noun.

| Error Classification | Error Identification | Error Correction |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Agreement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -But everyone have their opinions. -Good things is ... - It is large and contain ... - ...person have responsibilities ... | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -But everyone has their opinions. - Good things are ... -It is large and contains ... - ... person has responsibilities ... |

Table III.18: Agreement Errors

h) Word order Errors

Word order recorded less significantly concerning errors with a total number of (04) and frequency rate of (1,53%). Based in the table (III.11), first year students are still impacted by the Arabic word order system. They usually tend to make the adjective after the noun. Whereas, in English the adjective should come before the noun. Furthermore, adverbs are commonly misused in students' paragraphs; they are used as an adverb that modifies an adjective or another adverb. However, this case does not exist in Arabic.

| Error Classification | Error Identification | Error Correction |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| Word order | - ... period exam ... -I every winter get sick ... - ... level high ... -Every person almost has a reason for ... | - ... exam period ... -Iget sick every winter ... - ... high level ... - Almost every person has a reason for ... |

Table III.19: Word order Errors

III.2.4 Discussion of the Results

The results obtained from the analysis of students' written test clearly show that first year LMD students at the English Department in Tiaret University. These errors are divided into eight types, which are: punctuation (31.48%), capitalization (29.88 %), verb tense and form (11.11%), articles (7.67%), singular and plural form as well as subject-verb agreement (7,28%), prepositions (3,83%), and the last type is word order with a frequency rate of (1,53%).

According to the results above, some types of errors occur more than others in students' writing paragraphs; especially punctuation, capitalization, and verb tense form which constitute the highest percentage. Moreover, the findings reveal that grammatical errors in students' paragraph are due to two causes, which are: inter-lingual (Arabic interference) and intra-lingual transfer (overgeneralization, incomplete application of rules, false concepts hypothesized...).

All in all, the current study's findings clearly show that first year students are influenced by their mother tongue. They tend to think in Arabic and write in English. This problem led them to make different grammatical errors. Hence, we can say that our hypothesis "if EFL learners are influenced by their first language (Arabic), they will make a number of grammatical errors in their writing", is correct.

Conclusion

This has described the research tools used to conduct this study, which are teachers' questionnaire and learners' written test. It also includes an analysis with a discussion of the obtained results. The findings reveal that many errors are made by third year learners in different areas. In addition, it shows that first year EFL learners are due to the mother tongue interference. Because of the distinction between the Arabic and English grammatical systems, many EFL students face different difficulties while learning the correct use of grammar. Therefore, the major cause of such difficulties is based on the degree of the distinction between the native language (Arabic) and the foreign languages (English) grammatical systems. Therefore, teachers should help learners to be aware of the difference between Arabic and English language as they need to be exposed more to the appropriate structure with more practice in order to be able to write correctly.

General Conclusion

The current research work sheds light on the influence of L1 transfer on first year EFL learners in their writing in English. The purposes of this conducted study are to see if student's mother tongue (Arabic) has an impact on their writing or not, as well as to determine the main causes of these errors. According to data acquired from first-year EFL learners through teachers' questionnaire and an analysis about 20 paragraphs of students' written work, several different grammatical errors were discovered and categorized into eight different categories, which are: articles, tenses, subject-verb agreement, prepositions, punctuation, singular and plural form, capitalization, and word order. After analyzing these errors, it has been found out that they are made due to two main causes, which are inter-lingual (Arabic interference) and intra-lingual transfer (overgeneralization, incomplete application of rules, false concepts hypothesized...). As a consequence of the findings, it shows that learners' low fulfillment in writing is due to the interference of their mother tongue. More specifically, the grammatical errors that were found in the short paragraphs of EFL learners have a negative influence on their writing production because they make the message incomprehensible. As a result, the students will be poor writers.

The current conducted research, consists of three chapters: first chapter and second chapter are concerned with the theoretical part which is purely descriptive that includes a review of related literature, whereas the third chapter is about the practical part. First chapter illustrates language transfer as a main issue through two main approaches: Error Analysis and contrastive approaches. The second chapter discusses a variety of topics related to writing skill, such as its importance and approaches, factors behind student's poor writing, its approaches, and so on. However, the third chapter is purely concerned with analyzing and interpreting data gathered from both teachers' questionnaire and an analysis of students' paragraphs.

According to what has been said, all the research questions in this study were answered, and the hypothesis which states that “if EFL learners are influenced by their first language (Arabic), they will make a number of grammatical errors in their writing ” can be confirmed, because the analysis of students’ short paragraphs and teachers’ questionnaire reveal that L1 (Arabic) transfer is the major cause of EFL learners’ grammatical errors in their writing.

Recommendations

The present conducted study attempts to highlights the influence of the mother tongue (Arabic) interference on EFL learners' writing production. Therefore, the current study presents the following recommendations:

Teacher should be aware of the areas of expected difficulty resulting from the mother tongue (Arabic) interference in order to help their students to overcome such difficulties and should lead them to avoid most of the mother tongue's transfer errors.

Teacher should consider error analysis as an effective strategy to identify and diagnose learners' difficulties in the foreign language (English) learning.

Teacher should shed light on the grammatical differences that exist between English and Arabic to make learners aware of these differences.

Teachers should aim to improve learners' confidence in their writing by their teaching Strategies; giving them correction, feedback, and making them aware that making grammatical errors should not discourage them from writing.

Teachers should encourage learners to read books, articles, or newspapers because the more they read the more they acquire the language.

Learners should enrich their knowledge in English and differentiate between the grammatical system of the mother tongue (Arabic) and the foreign language (English).

Learners should read widely inside and outside the classroom in order to enrich their vocabulary and improve their writing performance.

Learners who get shy and fear of making errors in the classroom, they should correct their errors by themselves to master the skill of writing easily.

Limitation of The Study

During the preparation of this research work, we faced a number of challenges. First and foremost, time constraints was a huge issue, especially when it comes to the analysis of the written test; which was very time consuming. Another challenge that has been encountered while conducting this research was the lack of the primary sources at the Library of the English Department in Tiaret University.

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Appendices

Appendix I: Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teacher,

This questionnaire is designed for the purpose of gathering information about the Interference of L1 (Arabic) on first year LMD students' writing production at the Department of English at Ibn Khaldoun University in Tiaret, with a focus on grammatical errors. Your co-operation to respond to this questionnaire will be of great help to accomplish the aims of this study. We will be so grateful for your aid.

Thank you in advance for your time and for your cooperation!

Section One: Personal Information

1. Degree (s) held:

- BA (license)
- MA (master /magister)
- PhD (doctorate)

2. Your experience in teaching:

a) How long have you been teaching English (work experience)

b) How long have you been teaching written expression

Section Two: Causes of Learners' Errors and The Influence of L1 transfer

3. Do your students make a lot of grammatical errors when writing?

Yes

No

4. What kind of errors do they make?

- Misuse of capitalization
- Misuse of connector
- Misuse of articles
- Misuse of prepositions
- Subject-verb agreement
- Wrong use of tenses
- Wrong use of singular and plural form
- Others.....
.....

5. Do you think L1 transfer/ interference is the major cause of grammatical errors in EFL learners in their writing?

Yes

No

Please, explain.....
.....
.....

6. In your point of view, what are the other reasons of those errors?

.....
.....
.....
.....

7. According to you experience, how can grammatical errors affect EFL learners' writing?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Section Three: Teachers' Error Correction

8. Do you give much importance to error correction?

Yes

No

9. Do you prefer the errors to be corrected by:

- The learner himself /herself
- His/her classmates
- The teacher

10. Do your students benefit from your error correction?

Yes

No

Please, explain

.....

11. Do you have some solutions to enable them to avoid grammatical errors while writing in the foreign language?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Thank you for your collaboration!

Appendix II: Some of Students' Paragraphs

Education is one of the most important things that the human should practice in life. I'm a student at college. Actually university is the highest level of studying. But the pupil can reach case university is a whole different level of education and culture at the same time. and here's what I've liked most about college is. First, it's a gate to the actual real world that shows you the social culture and society abstract. Second, university progresses your level of knowledge through researches, it gives. Third, it gives you the chance to meet new people and teach you how to be social and how to give the perfect speech in a case you were in a group of people.

The University is a part of my own life that I can't deny and like every student I have some points that I liked and disliked about it.

Firstly, I've always liked my written teacher and some other teachers that have a nice learning methods and I also disliked our department and the way it looks.

Second, so far, I admit that there are some teachers that makes you love learning and coming here. On the other hand there are some teachers that can make you hate it. But everyone have their own opinion.

Finally, I also like hanging out with my friends and meeting and talking about studying and other stuffs too!

I hope our universities level will get higher soon.

University is place where we complete our high studies and take diplomas in different Pilliers.

In university we are free to attend lessons, you oblige to attend only to it. I like university because it is large and contain about a lots of specialities. In university you met a lot of friends from certain regions. I love her foyer. Sometimes, I dislike university because of studying, it is some difficult and the changing of program especially, when you pass from one year to another.

..... I am student at university, I have many difficulties
when I gain my baccalaureat. So, the University, it is a big
word contain many meanings. In the beginning of my
studies, I hate this term, and the place and how I can
study there. The University is the big problem in my life
in the first time, but after that, I like the university, and
the study at. So, the University is a dream and wish to
realise to finish the studies and take place to travel.
The study at the university, the person became another person,
person have responsibilities and a weak person who have
the different culture. The person a student who obtain the
knowledge, he is a good person than a person in outside. ?

§ For my part, I prefer the university near my house

because it is much better than the ones so far.

The university is another world, a new stage in our life

when we go in the university we feel that we are not good

we have to face many obstacles as a girl in the society...

we miss our family we miss your parents

There is many things I liked in the University...
more than thing that I hate.

First, I like that while studying I have met really
a very good friends (2) and I had make lot of (friend)
friendship while this two years of studying.

than, I adore that teachers were taking
care of our lessons and attendance even when we were
in negative position (corona virus 19).

finally, (I hate) the most thing I hate in the
University is the period exams, because it makes me so
angry.

really we pass a brillan moment in the University,
I hope that we never forget it.

University is place where we complete our high studies and take diploma in different Pilliers.

In university we are free to attend lessons, you oblige to attend only to. I like university because, it is large and contain about a lots of specialities. In university you met a lot of friends from certain regions. I love her foyer. Sometimes, I dislike university because of studying, it is some difficult and the changing of program especially, when you pass from one year to another.

Abstract

Producing error-free paragraphs and essays is one of the important goals that all English language teachers and learners alike strive to achieve. However, a lot of first year learners of English language at the English section of Ibn Khaldoun University in Tiaret make a lot of grammatical errors in their writing. It is believed that these errors are occurred as a result of the interference of their mother tongue (Arabic). Hence, the main aim of the current research work is to investigate if EFL learners' grammatical errors in their writing are due to their first language transfer (Arabic) or not, through error analysis procedure. To achieve this aim, a questionnaire is administrated to twenty teachers (most of them are teachers of grammar and written expression) at the English section in Tiaret University to ask them about the main causes behind the problem and the different types of grammatical errors committed by first year EFL learners. Moreover, twenty paragraphs written by first year learners were collected and analyzed to determine the main common error types. The results obtained after the analysis indicated that learners commit different types of errors which are mainly due to their mother tongue interference. The results confirmed that EFL learners write less effectively with a lot of grammatical errors because of the influence of their first language negative interference.

Résumé

Créer un paragraphe ou un article exempt d'erreurs grammaticales est l'un des objectifs importants que tous les professeurs d'anglais et les étudiants s'efforcent d'atteindre. Cependant, de nombreux étudiants de première année du département d'anglais de l'université Ibn Khaldoun de Tiaret font de nombreuses erreurs grammaticales dans leur écriture. On pense que ces erreurs sont dues à l'interférence de leur langue maternelle (arabe), donc le but de la recherche actuelle est de savoir si les erreurs commises ne sont que le résultat de l'interférence de leur langue maternelle à partir de et analysées. Pour atteindre cet objectif, nous avons distribué une vingtaine de questionnaires au professeur d'anglais (en particulier aux professeurs de grammaire et d'expression écrite) de l'Université de Tiaret pour connaître les principales causes et types d'erreurs que les étudiants commettent habituellement. En plus de cela, nous avons collecté vingt questionnaires. Il a été créé par des étudiants de première année afin de l'analyser pour découvrir les erreurs courantes parmi les étudiants. Les résultats obtenus après l'analyse ont indiqué que les étudiants commettent différents types d'erreurs en raison de l'interférence de leur langue maternelle. Les résultats ont confirmé que les étudiants écrivent moins efficacement avec beaucoup d'erreurs grammaticales en raison de l'influence de l'interférence négative de leur langue maternelle.

ملخص

إنشاء فقرة أو مقال يخلو من الأخطاء النحوية هي إحدى الأهداف المهمة التي يسعى لتحقيقها كل أساتذة و طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية على حد سواء. لكن العديد من طلبة السنة الأولى في قسم اللغة الانجليزية بجامعة ابن خلدون المتواجدة بتيارت يرتكبون العديد من الأخطاء النحوية في كتابتهم. يعتقد أن هذه الأخطاء تحدث بسبب تدخل لغتهم الأم (العربية). لهذا فإن الهدف من البحث الحالي هو معرفة إذا كانت الأخطاء المرتكبة ما هي إلا نتيجة لتدخل لغتهم الأم عن طريق تحليلها. لبلوغ هذا الهدف، قمنا بتوزيع حوالي عشرين استبيان على أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية (خاصة أساتذة قواعد اللغة والتعبير الكتابي) بجامعة تيارت لمعرفة أهم أسباب و أنواع الأخطاء التي يقع فيها الطلاب عادة. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، قمنا بجمع عشرين فقرة تم إنشاؤها من طرف طلبة السنة الأولى وذلك من أجل تحليلها لمعرفة الأخطاء الشائعة بين الطلاب. وقد أشارت النتائج المتحصل عليها بعد التحليل أن التلاميذ يرتكبون أنواعا مختلفة من الأخطاء بسبب تدخل لغتهم الأم. هذه النتائج أكدت أن الطلبة لا يكتبون بشكل فعال مع الوجود الكثير من الأخطاء بسبب التدخل السلبي للغتهم الأم.