

Error Analysis in Writing Tasks of Saudi EFL Students

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Abstract: ‘Error analysis’ is the field that deals with the actual errors and tries to describe them in linguistic terms and explain some of the probable sources of errors which provide an understanding of the underlying process of second language acquisition. The purpose of this current study was to assess, describe and analyze the errors committed by Saudi EFL students of Jazan University. The investigator has followed the methodology of error analysis suggested by Corder (1973). It involved recognition of errors, description of errors and explanation of errors in terms of their sources and evaluation of errors. For this purpose, a test in writing has been administered on the sample of the study. The participants comprised of 100 undergraduate students of Department of English, Girls’ Samtah campus, Jazan University. The data was analyzed in percentages on the frequency of errors. The students have committed interlingual and intralingual errors while writing in English. The findings from this study indicated that the participants do not have the desired knowledge in morphology and syntax of English language to perform well in writing tasks. Findings of error analysis function as facilitator in their language teaching in many ways only if the teacher is aware of them and able to make use of them in the teaching process appropriately. A structured interview was conducted for 10 English teachers to know the reasons behind students’ problems and find out solutions to overcome problems while writing in English. English language teachers should take the responsibility to motivate the students in a way to create interest towards learning English and be a stress free environment. They are requested to take steps to diagnose the different kinds of errors committed by students so as to improve their proficiency in English. Orientation programs and refresher courses should be conducted to all the English language teachers in the university.

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1. Introduction

Error analysis is a branch of applied linguistics which emerged in the sixties to demonstrate that learner errors were not only because of the learner’s native language but also due to universal learning strategies. It is a reaction to contrastive analysis theory, which considered language transfer as the basic process of second language learning as what behaviorist theory suggested. Error analysis deals with the learners’ performance in terms of the cognitive processes they make use of in coding the input they receive from the target language. Keshavarz, M.H. (1997) suggests that the field of error analysis can be divided into two branches: theoretical and applied. Theoretical analysis of errors primarily is concerned with the process and strategies of language learning and its similarities with first language acquisition. It tries to investigate what is going on in the minds of language learners. It also tries to decode the strategies of learners such as overgeneralization and simplification. Finally, it regards that in the universals of language learning process, whether there is an internal syllabus for learning a second language. Applied error analysis, on the other hand, is concerned with organizing remedial courses, and devising

appropriate materials and teaching strategies based on the findings of theoretical error analysis.

Richards (1975) suggested that “language acquisition proceeds through formation of successive hypotheses about the linguistic rules involved”. Selinker (1972) refers to the linguistic system of a second language learner as ‘interlanguage’, which is different from the target language system. The interlanguage that a learner forms is said to constitute a dynamic linguistic application of rules, strategies and hypotheses. It is a fact that language learners do make errors and most of the errors are systematic to a great extent. Brown (1987) refers “it is a system based upon the best attempt of learners to provide order and structure to the linguistic stimuli surrounding them”. Corder (1973) classified the errors in terms of the difference between the learners’ utterance and the reconstructed version. Errors were of four categories: Omission of some required element; addition of some unnecessary or incorrect element; selection of an incorrect element; and disordering of the elements. He adds that this classification is not enough to describe errors. That is why he includes the linguistic level of the errors under the sub-areas of morphology, syntax, and lexicon. He also categorized errors as overtly and

covertly. Overt errors are unquestionably ungrammatical at the sentence level and covert errors are grammatically well-formed at the sentence level but are not interpretable within the context of communication. For example, "I'm fine, thanks." is a correct sentence but if it is given as an answer to the question of "How old are you?" it is covertly error. Erdogan, V (2005) is of the opinion that errors in plurals, use of articles, tenses etc. are local errors and these errors are less important than errors regarding word order, the choice of placement of appropriate connectors in terms of comprehensibility of the sentence. Therefore, he implies that priority in terms of error correction should be given to global errors in order to develop the students' communication skills. He puts emphasis on correction of errors according to the objective of learning English. He says that the response of the teacher towards errors and the type of feedback to be given is usually determined by the position of the error in the objective of the task. Errors are normally considered to be inevitable by-products of the process of learning a language. However, the major contribution of linguistics to language teaching/learning has been the shift in attitude towards errors which are no longer considered as "abnormalities and the results of faulty method" (Palmer 1917:81) or distortions "into incorrectness (of) some of the language material" (Morgan 1956:70) presented to the learner. Errors are regarded rather, as important evidence of the learner's competence. They are evidence of the existence of construction rules. Systematic errors reveal the learner's 'transitional competence' and contribute to the linguist's understanding of the nature and type of rules and the mini-grammar the learner operates with, at a point of time. The assumption underlying the study of errors is that they are evidence of a system, not the system of the target language, but the systems of a learner's inter language.

2. Rationale of the Study

English teachers play an important role in developing the proficiency in English language among the students. When the students are less motivated, it is the responsibility of the English teachers to motivate the students. Realizing the importance of English language in this global world and keeping in view the present needs, the teachers need to gear up the students to meet the competitive market. The investigator being a teacher of English is aware that the Saudi students commit a number of errors in English writing. In this study, the errors in writing tasks committed by Saudi female students have been identified, assessed, analyzed and remedial measures have been suggested.

3. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were:

- To identify errors in the writing tasks of Saudi EFL learners in English;
- To assess errors in the writing tasks of Saudi EFL learners in English;
- To analyze errors in the writing tasks of Saudi EFL learners in English; and
- To suggest remedial measures in order to rectify errors in the writing tasks of Saudi EFL learners in English.

3.1. Hypotheses

To realize the above objectives, the following hypotheses have been formulated in null form:

- i. There exists no significant difference between the errors committed by L6 and L8 learners in their English writing tasks.
- ii. There exists no significant association between the reasons that contribute to errors and the errors committed by L6 and L8 learners in their English writing tasks.

3.2. Research Questions

- i. What are the types of errors committed by Saudi EFL learners in their writing tasks?
- ii. Why do Saudi EFL learners commit errors in writing English?
- iii. How does interference of L1 lead to errors in acquisition of L2 among Saudi EFL students?
- iv. What are the strategies that can be used to improve the skill of English writing among Saudi EFL learners?

4. Literature Review

Azizi Yahya (2012) in her article "Error analysis of L2 Learners' writings: A Case study" identified, examined and analyzed errors by error analysis in two types of writings, narrative and descriptive essays, among 30 students from secondary school aged fourteen. The students' writings were analyzed via checklists in order to identify the types and patterns of errors made. The findings of the study showed that errors were unavoidable. Gaining insight into errors made would therefore throw light into areas of difficulties faced by students in L2 writing. It is suggested that students must have adequate exposure and practice in L2 to be able to internalize language rules and reduce the tendency of committing errors in their writings. Teachers must contribute effectively to ensure students' ability in using L2, accurately and fluently in writing.

Maha Alhaysony (2012) has conducted a research study on "Analysis of Article Errors among Saudi Female EFL students: A Case Study". The results of her study showed that Arabic interference was not the only source of errors, but also English a major source of errors being a foreign language. The

findings showed that 57 % of the errors were inter-lingual and 42.56% were intra-lingual errors. It indicated that L1 interference strongly influences the process of second language acquisition and having a negative effect on the learning process. She suggested that English teachers should point out the differences in the usage of articles between L1 and L2.

Mahdiye Barzegar (2013) in the article “Persian EFL Students’ Error Analysis” has described, analyzed and evaluated errors made by Intermediate level students. The participants of the study were given ten Persian sentences for translation to English. These sentences have been taken from CA and EA (Keshavarz, M.H, 1999). The result of the study indicated that a majority of errors committed by the learners were syntactic morphological errors in the description of errors, substitution in the process of errors and intra-lingual in the sources of errors.

Mehdi Taghavi (2012) has conducted a study on “Error Analysis in Composition of Iranian lower Intermediate students”. This study examined errors in writing task / composition of 20 Iranian lower intermediate male students aged between 13 years to 15 years. Corder’s classification (1967) and Keshaverz’s classification (1997) of errors were used for analyzing the writing task. The results of the study showed that most of the common errors were spelling, word choice, verb tense, preposition, subject-verb agreement and word order. It has pointed that inter-lingual transfer and intra-lingual transfer were the sources of errors. Khuwaileh and Shoumalia (2000) conducted a study to examine writing errors among Jordanian students in both Arabic and English languages. The results of the study showed that the learners made different types of errors. Lack of coherence and cohesion and tense errors were the most frequent errors. Lakkis and Abdel Malak (2000) conducted a study on “Understanding the transfer of Prepositions” to investigate the usage of English Prepositions among 55 Arabic university students. The results showed that all students made similar errors in which they used their L1 knowledge in the usage of prepositions in English. The study recommended that instructors should point out differences between L1 and L2 in the use of prepositions.

Smith (2001) in his article on Arabic speakers - “Learner English: A Teacher’s guide to interference and other problems” pointed out many types of errors like consonant clusters, word order, questions and negatives, auxiliaries, pronouns, time, tense and aspect, modal verbs and articles among Arabic learners. He stated that ‘the’- indefinite article was a frequent problem as it is usually omitted with singular and plural countable.

Butler (2002) conducted a study on “An Analysis of the Meta-linguistic knowledge used by Japanese

students in acquiring the English Article system”. He made an attempt to examine acquisition of the English article system by Japanese students with varying levels of proficiency. He concluded that higher the students’ levels of proficiency the more target-like usage they could achieve, while lower proficiency level learners were strongly influenced by a set of rules that they knew.

Abi Samra (2003) has done a research study on “An Analysis of Errors in Arabic speakers’ English writing”. He classified the writing errors detected into five categories: grammatical (prepositions, articles, adjectives, etc.); syntactic (coordination, sentence structure, word order, etc.); lexical (word choice); semantic and substance (punctuation, capitalization, and spelling); and discourse errors. The results of the study revealed that one third of the students’ errors were transfer errors from the native language, and the highest number of errors was in the categories of semantics and vocabulary. The rest of the errors (64.1%) were errors of over-application of the target language.

Snape (2005) conducted a study on “Article use in L2 English: Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis (MSIH) or Representational Deficit Hypothesis (RDH)? She conducted the study on Japanese and Spanish learners of English. She found that they differed in their use of the L2 article system. Spanish learners of English replace indefinite articles for definite ones or vice versa and those Japanese learners have a ‘mapping problem’ rather than a representational deficit, while Spanish learners have neither. Bataineh (2005) has conducted an investigation by analyzing the written compositions of a number of Jordanian English language students. She claims that among all types of errors identified only the deletion of the indefinite article could be attributed to L1 interference.

Bukhari and Hussain (2011) conducted a study on “Error Analysis: Learning Articles and Prepositions among Secondary School Students in Pakistan” to investigate the errors of Pakistani students in prepositions and articles. They found that that the total number of errors made by students on the measure of articles was 152. Out of which, 127 were errors in the use of indefinite articles and 25 were errors in the use of definite articles. They also found that 52.63% of the total errors were omission errors, 19.08% were insertion errors and 28.29% were confusion errors. The study also revealed that Pakistani students faced more difficulties in learning indefinite articles in their writing.

Hasna Khanom (2014) in her article “Error Analysis in the Writing Tasks of Higher Secondary Level Students of Bangladesh” explored the various types of errors apparent in Higher Secondary level

students' writings due to which they fail to score satisfactorily in English examination. The aim of research was to improve the writing skills of Bangladeshi secondary level learners through identification and analysis of the common errors their written corpus contains. Action research procedure (plan, act, observe, reflect and revise) has been used for this research. The answer scripts of 100 Higher Secondary level students were selected for data collection. The data was then analyzed following the traditional error analysis procedure of error identification, classification, explanation and evaluation. The result of the analysis reflected the various types of inter-lingual and intra-lingual or developmental errors, learners make in their writing tasks. Based on the findings, 8 teachers of those 100 students were interviewed to seek the answers to the questions as to why learners make such errors in spite of 12 years of formal education and what can be done to improve their writing skill. All the 16 types of errors found in this study and the formal interview with the teachers provided a concrete proof that Bangladeshi young learners do have some major and unsolved difficulties in writing in English. This research aimed at the practical side of error analysis and has tried to draw attention to learners' errors of syntactic category, auxiliary system, vocabulary and at the end suggested some recommendations to treat those errors so that efforts can be made to improve the writing skills of the learners before they get fossilized due to inattention.

Xiaoli Bao (2015) in his article "Senior High School Students' Errors on the Use of Relative Words" stated that relative clause is one of the most important language points in College English Examination. Based on Error Analysis theory, this article aimed to explore the reasons why senior high school students found difficult to choose relative words and how to improve this situation. Participants in this study were 73 senior high school students from Tong Liao, Inner Mongolia. The students were given a test on using relative clause. Questionnaires have been administered to 73 students and 30 teachers. The author has found the main causes for the students' to choose wrong relative words. They were- students pay much attention to language form and apply English rules mechanically, ignoring meaning and context of the language; students' grammar knowledge is not comprehensive and systematic and students tend to neglect or forget some grammar points; students lack necessary basic English grammar and vocabulary knowledge, resulting in the difficulty in understanding the meaning of the sentence; students can't use relative clause appropriately because of language transfer. Therefore, the results of the study suggested that teachers should strengthen students' English basic

knowledge, teach grammar systematically and comprehensively with practice exercises, encourage students to use effective learning strategies to learn English, find ways to increase the input and output of English language and train students think in English. The students should learn to reflect on themselves, strive to improve their English and correct their learning attitude, and learn to use learning strategies effectively under the supervision and guidance of teachers.

5. Method and Participants of the Study

The investigator has followed the methodology of error analysis suggested by Corder (1973). It involved recognition of errors, description of errors, and explanation of errors in terms of their sources and evaluation of errors. This method has been used to analyze and describe the errors committed by Saudi EFL students of Jazan University. For this purpose, a test in writing has been administered on the sample of the study. The participants comprised of 100 undergraduate students of Department of English (level 6 and level 8), Girls' Samtah campus, Jazan University.

5.a. Instruments for Data Collection

5.a.1. Test in Writing:

A test in writing has been conducted on the spot to assess and analyze the errors in English writing tasks on the sample of the study. Test in writing comprised two parts.

Task – 1 checked the students' controlled production which consisted of 35 question items related to usage of verbs in correct tense (Q.1, 2&3), usage of modal verb (Q. 4), changing the voice of the given sentences (Q. 5 & 6), giving other degrees of comparison (Q.7), changing direct speech into reported speech (Q.8), rewriting the sentence to assertive sentence (Q. 9), transforming simple sentence to complex sentence (Q. 10), using appropriate relative pronoun (Q. 11), using articles (Q. 12), using prepositions (Q. 13), using adjective and identifying adverb (Q. 14), using -'ing' (gerund) form and identifying pronoun (Q. 15), selecting the correct word (Q. 16), usage of capital letters (Q. 17), framing sentences in correct word order (Q. 18 & 19), formation of words- blending (Q.20 & 21), acronyms (Q. 22), clipping (Q. 23), selecting the correct spelling (Q. 24 & 25), identifying affix in the given sentences (Q. 26 to 30), writing the derived words (Q. 31 & 32) and adding derivational suffix (Q. 33 to 35). The question items from 1 to 15 were on Syntax and 16 to 35 were on Morphology.

Task – 2 consisted of descriptive writing (Q. 36). The students were suggested 7 topics (Shopping, Friendship, Family, Education, Beauty and Fashion, Travel and Cooking as a Hobby). They were asked to write on any one of them in about 150 to 200 words

with the given key words. The data, thus collected, has been used for research purpose only. Please refer to the “Test in Writing” in Appendix A1.

Validity of the test:

The test satisfied the 3 criteria – Content validity (the test items measured the concept), face validity (the test measured the writing aspects, as the name suggests) and construct validity (the test tapped the concept as theorized).

Reliability of the test:

Test-retest method has been used to measure the consistency of the test. The scripts were evaluated by two teachers. The result of both the evaluations was in the same range. This showed that there was consistency/stability between the two measures by Teacher#1 and Teacher#2. The test scores indicated that the test is valid and reliable.

5.a.2. Interview for English Teachers:

The best judge to tell about the reasons for poor performance of the students and problems of students is none other than their English teacher. A structured interview was conducted to 10 English teachers who have minimum 5 years of teaching experience in Saudi Arabia. Please refer to the “Interview for English Teachers” in Appendix A2.

6. Results and Discussion

The data collected by conducting a test in writing has been analyzed. No prior information has been given to the students regarding the test. Hence, the investigator could get the existing level of proficiency in English among the students who exhibited different kinds of errors. To a certain extent the students could answer some of the questions in task 1 of test in writing as there were some clues to answer. The range of errors was from 5% to 85%. Please refer to the “Percentage of Errors” in Appendix B1.

In descriptive writing, task 2 of the test, it was quite obvious that students not only had problem in grasping the grammar rules but also the basic knowledge of successful writing described by Nunan (1989). The key words were given for all the topics but none of the students have used those words. The reason could be that they did not know how to construct sentences using those words. The interlingual errors committed by the students were: 60% of the sample committed Subject verb agreement errors, 50% of the sample misused capital letters, 48% of the sample misused auxiliary verbs, 48% of the sample misused modal verbs and 35% of the sample had confusion between ‘he’ and ‘she’. The intralingual errors committed by the students were: 86% of the sample had problem in the use of appropriate tense, 64% of the sample selected wrong words, 75% of the sample had misuse of plural form, 75% of the sample displayed omission of articles, 20% of the sample

displayed misuse of articles, 80% of the sample exhibited omission of prepositions, 20% of the sample exhibited misuse of preposition, 80% of the sample displayed omission of relative pronouns, 20% of the sample displayed misuse of relative pronouns, 60% of the sample had problem with be + verb stem for verb stem, 35% had problem with adjectives, 34% problem with adverbs, 36% problem with usage of gerund form, 62% had problem with spelling and 63% used incorrect usage of word order. The range of errors was from 25% to 86%. Please refer to the “Percentage of Errors” in Appendix B 2.

The results of the study revealed that students committed many kinds of errors and the sources were interlingual transfer and intralingual transfer. Interlingual errors were due to the interference of their mother tongue (Arabic). Intralingual errors were due to lack of basic grammar knowledge in tense and vocabulary. The findings of the study were similar with Khuwaileh and Shoumalia (2000), Abi Samra (2003), Azizi Yahya (2012), Mehdi Taghari (2012), Mahdiye Barzegar (2013) and Hasna Khanom (2014).

Interlingual Transfer

Interlingual transfer is the interference of the learner’s mother tongue. Richards (2002) in Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics defines inter-lingual errors as being the result of language transfer, which is caused by the learner’s first language. Error analysis does not regard them as the persistence of old habits, but rather as signs that the learner is internalizing and investigating the system of the new language. They may occur at different levels such as transfer of phonological, morphological, grammatical and lexic-semantic elements of the native language into the target language.

For example, some of the sentences written by the students in test in writing where in interlingual transfer errors are committed have been identified and listed.

Error identification:

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 1. | <i>My family happy.</i> |
| 2. | <i>My family and her family they help together always.</i> |
| 3. | <i>The truth meaning of friendship.</i> |
| 4. | <i>Friendships is the strong relationship.</i> |
| 5. | <i>Educations is important to persons.</i> |
| 6. | <i>Educations hard work get job.</i> |
| 7. | <i>Malls is required more money.</i> |
| 8. | <i>Online shopping easy.</i> |
| 9. | <i>Malls is crowded.</i> |
| 10. | <i>Friendship is most importance in life.</i> |
| 11. | <i>We studied together, eat together, laugh together and play together.</i> |

Error correction:

1. *My family is happy.*
2. *My family and her family help together always.*
3. *The true meaning of friendship.*
4. *Friendship is a strong relationship.*
5. *Education is important to persons.*
6. *Hard work in Education gets you a job.*
7. *Malls require more money for shopping.*
8. *Online shopping is easy.*
9. *Malls are crowded.*
10. *Friendship is most important in life.*
11. *We studied, ate, laughed and played together.*

Intralingual Transfer

Intralingual transfer is the interference of the rules of the target language in the processes and strategies of second language learning. Richards (1971) focused on many sources of error other than transfer from the mother tongue. Some of the intralingual sources of errors are: over generalization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules, false concepts hypothesized, and fossilization.

The finding of the omission of articles in the study show that 75% of students omitted the indefinite article 'a' more frequently than the other article 'an' and the definite article 'the'. It may be inferred that this could be due to interference of their mother tongue and the absence of indefinite article in Arabic language. This finding was consistent with Smith (2001), Butler (2002), Bataineh (2005), Snape (2005), Bukhari and Hussain (2011), and Maha Alhaysony (2012).

Error identification:

1. *Friendship is strong relation.*
2. *She is best friend.*
3. *Saudi family is big family.*
4. *My brother is bank manage.*

Error correction:

1. *Friendship is a strong relation.*
2. *She is a best friend.*
3. *Saudi family is a big family.*
4. *My brother is a bank manager.*

The finding of the misuse of the article in the study show that 25% of students have used the definite article 'the' a number of times in the place of indefinite article. This finding resembled with the finding of Snape (2005).

Ellis (1997) stated some errors seem to be universal, reflecting learners' attempts to make the task of learning and using the target language simpler. Use of past tense suffix '-ed' for all verbs is an

example of **simplification and over generalization**. The finding of the misuse of the tense in the study shows that students could not frame sentences in past tense.

Error identification:

1. *Friendship is the strong relationship.*
2. *Saudi family many the family members.*
3. *I love the shopping.*
4. *I love the travel very much and go the vacation.*

Error correction:

1. *Friendship is a strong relationship.*
2. *Saudi family has many family members.*
3. *I love shopping.*
4. *I love travel very much and go in vacation.*

Error identification:

1. *I goed Malaysia vacation with my husband.*
2. *I goed to Riyadh in weekend.*
3. *She is goed to Riyadh.*
4. *I sitted in flight.*

Error correction:

1. *I went to Malaysia in vacation with my husband.*
2. *I went to Riyadh during weekend.*
3. *She went to Riyadh.*
4. *I sat in the flight.*

Sometimes the learner produces errors because she fails to observe the restrictions on existing structures, i.e, she applies the rules to contexts where they do not apply. Use of prepositions on the analogy of other contexts is an example of **ignorance of rule restriction**. The finding related to omission of prepositions in this study was similar to Lakkis and Abdelmalak (2000). Some of the sentences written by the students have been given:

Error identification:

1. *I am very lucky have her.*
2. *We are from in Al tuwal.*
3. *We watch TV from at 8.00 night.*
4. *She is the closest friend for me.*

Error correction:

1. *I am very lucky to have her.*
2. *We are from Al tuwal.*
3. *We watch TV from 8.00 at night.*
4. *She is the closest friend of mine.*

Intralingual errors result from partial learning of the target language rather than language transfer. They may be caused by the influence of one target language item upon another, leading to **incomplete applications of rules**. For example, learners attempt to use two tense markers at the same time in one sentence since they have not mastered the language yet.

Error identification:

1. *I do not have too many friends.*
2. *She is a dear to me friend.*
3. *My friend is oldest than me.*
4. *I want that she comes college every day.*
5. *Malls is required more money.*
6. *When I comparing shopping malls and online little money cheap.*

Error correction:

1. *I do not have many friends.*
2. *She is my dear friend.*
3. *My friend is older than me.*
4. *I want her to come to college every day.*
5. *Malls require more money.*
6. *Online shopping is cheaper when I compare to shopping in malls.*

Intralingual errors occur as a result of learners' attempt to build up concepts and hypotheses about the target language from their limited experience. Due to this reason, learners may commit errors in many ways like **hypothesizing false concepts**. The finding of omission / misuse of relative pronoun of the study was in line with Xiaoli Bao (2015) and students did not have proper understanding of the basic grammar rules in English.

Some of the examples from this study were:

Error identification:

1. *My friend is good friend when helped me in difficulties.*
2. *Sara is best friend she is always when help in study.*
3. *She always shares me joys and sorrows.*
4. *She is a dear to me friend.*

Error correction:

1. *My friend is a good friend who helps me in difficulties.*
2. *Sara is my best friend who always helps me in study.*
3. *She always shares her joys and sorrows with me.*
4. *She is my dear friend.*

Selinker (1972) suggested that in second language learning certain linguistic items become '**fossilized**', i.e. the learner stops learning after acquiring some erroneous forms because he is able to communicate with erroneous forms. He discussed a few processes which contributed to fossilization of certain erroneous linguistic items, namely,

a. **Language transfer-** i.e., transfer from the learner's first language;

b. **Transfer of training-** i.e., transfer from certain teaching procedures;

c. **Strategies of second language learning-** i.e., the learner's strategies to the material to be learned;

d. **Strategies of second language communication-** i.e., the learner's strategies to communicate in the target language;

e. **Over generalization of the target linguistic materials-** i.e., the learner over generalizes the rules of the target language.

On review, the students' manuscripts of the test in writing, revealed, that most of the students still made other kinds of errors like incomplete sentences and run-on sentences in their test in writing.

The hypotheses that have been formulated in null form to realize the objectives have been accepted after the analysis of data.

i. There exists no significant difference between the errors committed by L6 and L8 learners in their English writing tasks.

ii. There exists no significant association between the reasons that contribute to errors and the errors committed by L6 and L8 learners in their English writing tasks.

7. Findings based on Interview responses of English Teachers

All the English teachers felt that the students should possess basic foundation skills in English language by the time they join the university courses. So English should be taught by well trained English teachers at the school level. Based on interview responses of English teachers, the reasons behind students' problems have been listed:

7.1. Problems of students

i. Students have phobia towards English language;

ii. They do not have intrinsic motivation;

iii. They do not have exposure towards reading English texts;

iv. They do not have enough practice in receptive and productive skills and hence their output is very poor;

v. Lack of vocabulary and no proper understanding of grammar rules at the school level is a major problem in promoting English learning at the college level;

vi. The classrooms are overcrowded;

vii. The teachers are not in a position to give home assignments as there will not be any time for script checking and feedback; and

viii. The teachers cannot pay attention to individual student problems.

7.2 Recommendations by the English teachers

i. Dictation should be given to the students so that they improve spelling in English;

ii. Rote memory should not be entertained at the college level;

iii. Dialogues and role plays should be taken up in the classrooms to make students participate and interact in the class;

iv. While teaching writing in English to the students, English teachers should focus on process writing rather than product writing;

v. Feedback should be given to the students constantly;

vi. Technology should be used to teach and promote English learning in the classes;

vii. Teaching should promote critical thinking and analytical thinking among the students;

viii. Testing system should be reformed to test critical and analytical thinking among the students at the college level.

7.3. Suggestions by the investigator

The investigator suggests that:

➤ Feedback would be helpful to rectify both interlingual and intralingual errors.

➤ Teachers need to treat errors as a sign of development and encourage the learners to identify the errors for themselves;

➤ Rules and conventions of writing in different contexts should be reinforced by English teachers.

8. Conclusion

Errors provide feedback to the teacher; they indicate how far teaching techniques and materials have been effective and what parts of the syllabus have been adequately learnt/ taught. Error analysis provides the teacher/ course designer with information for designing remedial materials. A study of errors is relevant to the problem of correction: what to correct and how to correct. Findings of error analysis will function as facilitator in language teaching in many ways only if the teacher is aware of them and able to make use of them in the teaching process appropriately. In a broader context, the research findings suggest that if students practice frequently, they will eventually be able to write well in English. If these findings can be generalized, it will greatly benefit the English Language Teaching and Learning process in the near future.

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Appendix—A1 Test in Writing

Marks : 50

Task – 1 (40 m)

Use the words given in the brackets and fill in the blanks using the appropriate tense. (3m)
1. I _____ (play) for the past four hours.
2. She _____ (teach) since 2006.
3. You should _____ (test) on your grammar.
Fill in the blanks with suitable modal verb. (1m)
4. _____ I enter the classroom, teacher?
Change the following sentence into active voice. (1m)
5. This coat should not be worn by you.
Change the following sentence into passive voice. (1m)
6. The dog killed the cat.
Write the other degrees of comparison for the given sentences. (2m)
7. Sara is the cleverest girl in the class.
Change direct speech into reported speech. (1m)
8. Noora said, "I shall finish this work by next week".
Rewrite the following sentence into an assertive sentence. (1m)
9. How cold this water is!
Transform the following simple sentence into a complex sentence. (1m)

10. Khadeeja bought a red pen.
Join the given sentences below by using an appropriate relative pronoun. (1m)
11. A thief stole my purse. He has been caught.
Fill in the blanks with the appropriate articles. (3m)
12. I saw _____ camel and _____ alligator in _____ zoo yesterday.
Fill in the blank with suitable preposition. (1m)
13. A bird _____ hand is worth two in a bush.
Fill in the blank with an adjective and identify the adverb. (2m)
14. Sara is a very _____ girl.
Adverb -
Fill in the blank with the gerund form of the word in the bracket and identify the pronoun. (2m)
15. She is _____ (play) chess.
Pronoun -
Select the correct word out of the given choice and fill in the blank. (1m)
16. The doctor advised to _____ some rest. (have/take)
Use Capital letters wherever necessary. (1m)
17. The capital city of Saudi Arabia is Riyadh.
Form sentences using given words. (2m)
18. we/interesting/found/the /some/library/books/in
19. football/Khalid/play/does/weekend/every
Write the combined words formed. (2m)
20. smoke + fog = _____
21. breakfast + lunch = _____
Give the acronym. (1m)
22. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia _____
Give the short form of the given word. (1m)
23. Laboratory _____
Select the correct spelling and fill in the blanks. (2m)
24. The sun _____ in the east. (raises/rises)
25. Where there is a will, _____ is a way. (there/their)
Underline the affix in each sentence. (5m)
26. They stood in front of the gate.
27. They worked day and night for their exams.
28. There are cats in that room.
29. She is walking in the corridor.
30. Reem's dress is very nice.
Write the derived word for the given root word. (2m)
31. Happy _____
32. Determine _____
Add the derivational suffix. (3m)
33. Modern _____
34. Act _____
35. Fail _____

Appendix—B1
Test in Writing

Table: 1, Task 1: Frequency of Errors in Percentages

S.No	Category	Questions	Percentage of errors
1	Syntax	Tense	60%
2	Syntax	Tense	75%
3	Syntax	Tense	75%
4	Syntax	Verbs	40%
5	Syntax	Action voice	70%
6	Syntax	Passive voice	30%
7	Syntax	Degrees of comparison	85%
8	Syntax	Reported speech	85%
9	Syntax	Assertive sentence	45%
10	Syntax	Complex sentence	60%
11	Syntax	Relative pronoun	76%
12	Syntax	Articles	25%
13	Syntax	Prepositions	35%
14	Syntax	Adjective & Adverb	5%
15	Syntax	Gerund & Pronoun	5%
16	Morphology	Selecting the correct word	5%
17	Morphology	Capital letters	---
18	Morphology	Word order	---
19	Morphology	Word order	55%
20	Morphology	Word formation	40%
21	Morphology	Word formation	35%
22	Morphology	Word formation	---
23	Morphology	Word formation	10%
24	Morphology	Spelling	---
25	Morphology	Spelling	10%
26	Morphology	Affixation	50%
27	Morphology	Affixation	25%
28	Morphology	Affixation	20%
29	Morphology	Affixation	20%
30	Morphology	Affixation	20%
31	Morphology	Derivation	15%
32	Morphology	Derivation	15%
33	Morphology	Derivation	15%
34	Morphology	Derivation	---
35	Morphology	Derivation	10%

Appendix---B2
Test in Writing

Table: 2, Task 2: Frequency of Errors in Percentages

S.No	Types of Errors	Percentage of Errors	Source of Errors
1	Subject verb agreement	60%	Interlingual errors
2	Misuse of capital letters	50%	Interlingual errors
3	Misuse of auxiliary verbs	48%	Interlingual errors
4	Misuse of modal verbs	48%	Interlingual errors
5	Misuse of he & she	50%	Interlingual errors
6	Misuse of tense	86%	Intralingual errors
7	Wrong use of be + verb stems	74%	Intralingual errors
8	Misuse of plural form	75%	Intralingual errors
9	Omission of articles	75%	Intralingual errors
10	Misuse of articles	25%	Intralingual errors
11	Omission of prepositions	80%	Intralingual errors
12	Misuse of prepositions	20%	Intralingual errors
13	Omission of relative pronouns	80%	Intralingual errors
14	Misuse of relative pronouns	20%	Intralingual errors
15	Wrong use of words	64%	Intralingual errors
16	Problems with adjectives	35%	Intralingual errors
17	Problems with adverbs	34%	Intralingual errors
18	Problems with gerunds	36%	Intralingual errors
19	Wrong spelling	62%	Intralingual errors
20	Wrong word order	63%	Intralingual errors

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