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Investigating the Grammatical Errors in EFL students ' Essays: the case of Master One Students of English at Mohamed Kheider of Biskra

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate my work

To my dearest parents for their incomparable love, patience and support

To my beloved sister and brothers

To all members of my family “Boudjemline” and “Djenidi”

To all my best friends

To all those, I know and love

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Abstract

Mastering a foreign language means mastering its four skills, which are reading, listening, speaking and writing. The latter is considered as the most difficult one. EFL learners when writing face some problems with its main elements such as grammar. The present study aims to investigate the grammatical errors in EFL students' essays. The participants in this study were Master One students of English at Mohamed Kheider university of Biskra. To achieve this aim, a descriptive method was employed, whereby data were collected through teachers' questionnaire to know their observations and perceptions about grammatical errors committed by students as well as an error analysis of twenty randomly selected essays. The results revealed that the majority of students make grammatical errors which are categorized into five types: omission, misinformation, addition, misordering and blends. The most frequent error was omission; students omit some items such as articles, prepositions, verbs and pronouns. Overgeneralization and incomplete application of rules were highlighted by teachers as the major sources behind these errors. In addition, teachers suggested reading and practice to overcome these errors. Based on these findings, students are advised to practice and read more as well as teachers should pay more attention in teaching grammatical aspects.

Key words: EFL, grammatical errors, omission, misinformation, addition, misordering and blends.

List of Acronyms

EA: Error Analysis

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

i.e : Id est

RH: Research Hypothesis

RQ: Research Question

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

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General Introduction

Introduction

EFL learners seek to be skillful at the four skills which are listening, speaking, reading and writing and each one of them has its own value. One of these important skills is writing which is a skill that helps writers express their ideas into words in a meaningful form and allows them to communicate clearly with others. It has different formats; the essay is one of them. Essay writing is a piece of writing which presents a specific topic. Writing academically is very important however, it is considered as one of the most difficult skills. EFL learners encounter several difficulties when writing essay. They encounter problems arrange words and phrases to create well-formed sentences and so on. Thus, Master One students at Biskra university face problems in grammar and they make some grammatical errors in essay writing.

1. Statement of the problem

Essay writing is a skill that needs considerable practice due to its difficulty. Most of EFL learners in general and Master one students at Biskra university are required to write an essays in different modules. Based on simple observation EFL Master One students at Biskra university when they are writing an essay they encounter several types of difficulties. One of them is the linguistic difficulties. Even though they have some ideas in their minds but they are not able to develop it in form of paragraphs which is the essay form. And also they cannot find the right vocabulary. In addition to that they make some errors is grammar. The last one plays an important role and it is considered as one of the most difficult aspect. Even though they have received lessons in grammar in the previous years, they still face problems that hinder them from writing an effective essay. These problems can be result of the lack of grammatical knowledge, lack of reading, lack practice and so on. And that it is the purpose of this study which is to investigate the grammatical errors and their sources.

2. Aims of the study

This study aims to:

- Present a brief description of writing skill specifically essay writing.
- Investigate the grammatical errors that EFL Master One learners face in essay writing.
- Attempt to suggest some recommendations for this issue.

3. Research Questions

The current research aims to answer the following questions:

RQ1: What are the grammatical errors that are made by Master one EFL learners in essay writing?

RQ2: What are the sources of grammatical errors?

RQ3: What can EFL students improve their essay writing?

4. Research Hypothesis

To answer the previous research questions we hypothesized that:

RH1: Master one of English department of Mohamed Kheider university of Biskra make grammatical errors when writing their essays.

5. Research Methodology

5.1. Method

In order to achieve the aim of this study and to confirm the hypothesis; a descriptive method was used. This study had collected Master One students' essays and analyzed their errors to identify their common grammatical errors. In addition, a questionnaire was submitted to written expression teachers and analyzed to identify their opinion about students' errors.

5.2. Population and Sample

This research was focused on Master one students of English department at Biskra university because they are required to write an essays in each module and they face difficulties. Thus, we had determined them by choosing 20 students from the population randomly. In addition, 07 teachers of written expression were chosen to identify their observation and what they think about the common grammatical errors of their students

5.3. Data gathering tools

To gather data, this research had used two tools. First, we had collected students' essays and analyzed their errors in order to identify their common grammatical errors they used to make. Second, a questionnaire was submitted to teachers of written expression to identify their observation about this topic and suggest some solutions

6. Significance of the study

The present study will reflect on Master One students of Biskra University. First, they will benefit from the findings of this research to know how to write an essay. In addition, they are going to be more aware of the grammatical errors they used to make and how to avoid making them

7. Structure of the study

The present research is divided into three chapters. The first two chapters represent the theoretical part, whereas the third chapter is devoted to practical part. The first chapter dealt with the key concepts concerning the writing skill in general and essay writing in particular (its definition, form, types...). The second chapter is devoted to a general overview of grammar, grammar teaching and its approaches, grammatical errors and sources of these errors. The third chapter tackled the analysis of students' errors, teachers' questionnaire and also the interpretation of the findings.

Chapter One: EFL Essay Writing

Introduction

In learning English as a foreign language, EFL learners are required to master the four skills such as listening, reading, speaking and writing. The latter is most crucial thus; EFL learners strive to learn how to write effectively and correctly. EFL learners when writing they face difficulties and make errors. This chapter is going to define writing and mention its importance, its components and stages as well as essay writing, its definition, parts and types. In addition, it is going to present teaching writing approaches, strategies and challenges. Finally, it will discuss the common writing difficulties

1.1. Writing definitions

Writing is a productive skill of language learning as it is a form of combining words together to present and share ideas. In addition, it is an act of communication where the writer expresses his ideas in a meaningful message. According to Olshtain in Celce-murcia (2001), writing is an act of communication between the writer and the reader in form of text in an interactive process.

Many linguists have considered writing as a crucial skill and they have interested in its concepts. For Tarigan (as cited in Faisal and Krisna, 2013), writing skill is a language skill that is used to communicate indirectly, without being face to face with other people.

Furthermore, Hutchinson (2005) stated that writing is just another form of expression; skill develops with practice by putting words on paper and by processing thought and grammatical structures. In addition, Nadler et al. (2004) state that writing is how to use an appropriate letters according to the standard usage of a given language.

Moreover, writing can be defined as a series of contrasts as what Nunan states. According to Nunan (2003) writing is a mental and physical act which means it is about discovering ideas, thinking about how to communicate by developing them into statements and paragraphs that will be comprehensible to reader. In addition, writing has dual purposes which are to express and impress. This means that writers must select the best form of their writing. And each type of their writing has different level of difficulty which are determined by its objectives. Besides writing process and product. To clarify, the process is when the writer creates and writes various drafts, revises, edits and publishes and the product is when the reader reads.

1.2. The importance of writing

Despite the fact that writing is a fundamental skill for learning any language and a means of communication, it is often overlooked in our daily lives. A large number of scholars have emphasized this point. On the basis of statistical calculations, Allen (1995) emphasizes this point. That the majority (40%) of our everyday communication is devoted to listening, with 35% to speaking, 16% to reading and barely 9% to writing. As a result, it is crucial to emphasize the necessity of raising learners' awareness of this skill in the process of learning the target language.

In fact, writing is crucial in our lives because it provides numerous benefits. Writing according to Chapell (2011), aids in the expression of one's individuality, facilitates communication and fosters the developments of thinking. Furthermore, Kilmova (2013) emphasizes the advantages that can be derived through writing. According to her, writing as productive skill helps to create logical and persuasive arguments, provide a person a chance to subsequently reflect on and re-evaluate his or her ideas provide and receive feedback and prepare for school and career.

Additionally, Walsh (2010) also emphasizes the importance of writing stating that is widely used in academic and professional contexts. In fact, writing is the main means of communication in our personal and professional lives. This crucial skill is demonstrated in a variety of situations including writing proposals, memos, reports, applications, emails and more cases where written messages are necessary. Thus, if students do not know how to clearly explain their thoughts to their instructors and peers, they will struggle later in interacting with their employers and colleagues because the message will not reach its intended audience.

Maley (2009) enumerates the several advantages that creative writing can provide. It helps language development at all levels (grammar, vocabulary, discourse, phonology...). It requires learners to manipulate language in interesting ways as they to convey their feelings and ideas. Similarly, creative writing helps to increase self-esteem and confidence of the learners who have a tendency for uncovering hidden aspects of language and also themselves. Thus, they will be more motivated to continue writing because of their linguistic and personal growth.

1.3. The main components of writing

According to Heaton (1975), good writing requires a variety of skills that can be divided into five components or key areas.

- **Language use:** the ability to construct correct and appropriate sentences.
- **Mechanical skills:**the ability to accurately apply written language conventions such as punctuation and spelling...
- **Content treatment:**the ability to think creatively and generate ideas while excluding irrelevant information.
- **Stylistic skills:**the ability to manipulate sentences and phrases as well as effectively use language.
- **Judgement skills:**the ability to write for certain purposes with a specific audience in mind as well as the ability to choose, organize and order important information.

Moreover, Raimes (1983) outlines the fundamental components of a good piece of writing. First of all, writers should answer some questions which are to whom (audience), why (purpose) and what to write (content). In addition, there are other crucial elements they should determine such as grammar, syntax, mechanics, organization and word choice. In this regard, he presents the graphic below which summarizes these components.

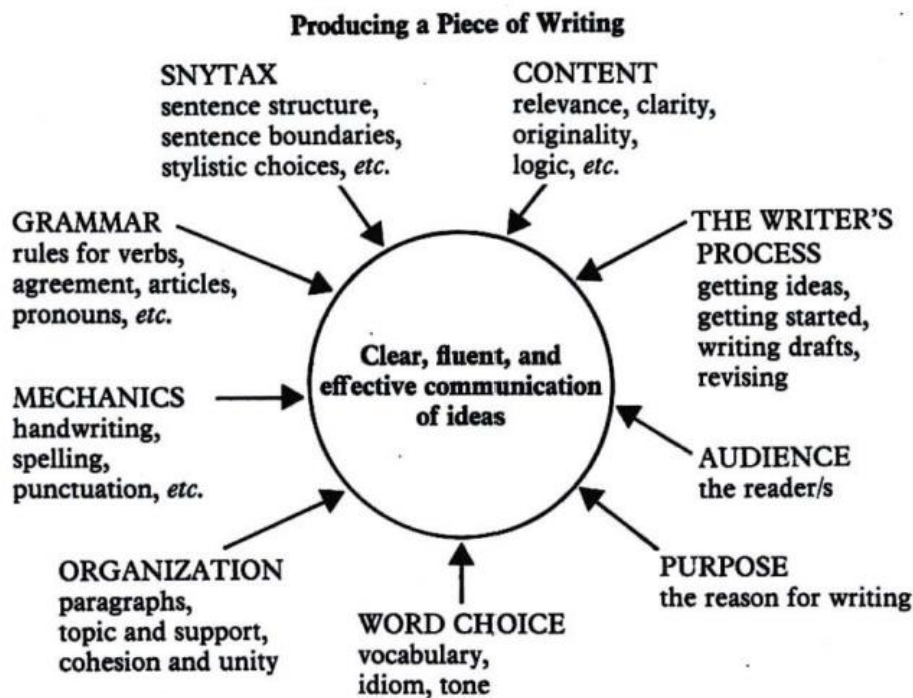


Figure 01: Producing a piece of writing (Raimes, 1983, p.6)

1.4. The characteristics of writing skill

There are eight characteristics of writing skill, according to Ur (1996):

1. Permanent, it means that the discourse form is fixed and stable; although, we can read it in any condition we need.
2. Explicit, means that there must be no ambiguity regarding the context or the reference. The writer must be careful to arrange the words in such a way that all the readers have the same interpretation of the written work.
3. Densities, or the amount of information offered to the reader are effectively translated. In written form, the use of repeating terms is common. It differs significantly from the spoken language.
4. Detachment, the writer must be capable of predicting the reader's reaction about their writing because the writer does not interact directly with the reader.
5. Organization, before the written work is available to be read, the writer normally has the opportunity to modify it. As a result, the written work is usually well-organized and purposed.
6. Slowing of production, speed and reception are slower than production.
7. Standard language is generally accepted for a wide range of languages.
8. It is a learned skill that must be learned and thought about in order to be acquired.

1.5. Writing Stages

Writing is to present ideas into various forms. And presenting these ideas requires some stages or steps. Moreover, Harmer (2004) states that the process of writing consists of four steps: planning, drafting, editing and final version.

1.5.1. Planning

The first step that writers do is to plan what they are going to write. Thus, they try to classify what they are going to convey and say. In other words, they try to know what they want to write. At the same time, they take into consideration three main aspects. First aspect is the purpose. The writers should know properly why they are writing that piece of writing. Second, readers or audiences, the writers should know to whom they are writing. It is related to the language use. Third aspect is the content structure. The writers should know how they are going to arrange the text for better understanding from the reader.

1.5.2. Drafting

This step is the first version of the piece of writing. The writers gather their thoughts that they were previously in their minds which will be amended later. On the way to the final version, a number of drafts may be produced or the writing process progresses into editing. As a result, it can aid the writer in writing by allowing them to visualize and design what they want to write.

1.5.3. Editing (reflecting/ revising)

In this step, the writers edit their draft by reading it out loud to check their errors. Reflecting and revising will assist the editors in making suggestions and comments. In addition, it will assist the writers in making necessary modifications.

1.5.4. Final version

This is the last step in which the writers fulfill their thoughts in the final document. The last is normally different from the first draft due to the changes during the editing process. Nonetheless, the writers' written product is ready to be read.

The following is the wheel of writing process presented by Harmer (2004), it summarizes the four previous steps

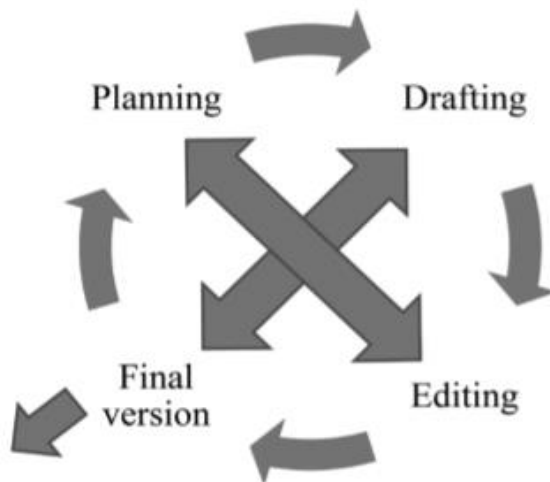


Figure 02: the writing process wheel (Harmer, 2004, p.46)

1.6. Academic Writing

In general, there are different types of writing that writers use in their writing; academic writing is one them. Simply, academic writing is a style of writing that it is used in universities, scholars and so on. It can be defined in different ways; one of these definitions is that academic writing is “ clear, concise, focused, structured, and back up by evidence. Its purpose is to aid the readers’ understanding” (University of Leeds, 2019 as cited in Sheehy, 2019).

Sheehy (2019) states that academic writing a formal style of writing which is also structured and logical. In addition, it is important for writers when writing to convey a message clearly and concisely by providing evidences and facts.

Academic writing is a kind of writing that is used in universities and scholars and it has different forms. According to Shields (2010), there are types of writing at university which means a university student is required to produce different types of writing which are as follows:

- summaries;
- essays;
- project reports;
- portfolios of work;
- laboratory reports;
- a dissertation;
- research papers/articles;
- exam answers;
- journal articles;
- book/chapter reviews;
- case study analyses;
- reflective journals and essays;
- reflective diaries and logs.

Figure 03: Types of writing at university (Shields, 2010, p.10)

1.7. Essay writing

An essay is a piece of writing that writers use to present their ideas, inform or persuade and so on. According to Oshima and Hogue (1998), an essay is a piece of writing that contains lengthy paragraphs. Just like a paragraph, it is about an topic. Because an essay’s topic is complex to be discussed in a single paragraph, it is divided into several paragraphs. One for each main point. Then, by including an introduction and a conclusion these paragraphs would be tied together.

Furthermore, Langan (2008) defined an essay as a piece with multiple paragraphs rather than just one. Subjects should be handled more thoroughly in an essay than they would be in a single paragraph paper. The thesis statement or thesis sentence is the primary idea or point developed in an essay (rather than, as in a paragraph, topic sentence). The thesis statement appears in the first paragraph and it is developed in the following supporting paragraphs. Then, the essay is finished with a short conclusion paragraph.

Writers aim when writing an essay is to develop their ideas and concepts. Therefore, they are required to be concise and clear in presenting their ideas. They should write their ideas in an appropriate way that let the reader get their message by taking into consideration some important elements.

1.8. Parts of an Essay

Writing an essay requires some steps. First, the writer is going to introduce the topic then present it by giving more details and examples and at the end s/he gives a conclusion. These steps are considered as the main parts of an essay Oshima and Hogue (2007) classify the essay into three main parts which are an introductory paragraph, body paragraphs and a concluding paragraph.

First, an introductory paragraph is the first paragraph in an essay. It has two functions which are attracting readers attention and introduce the topic. In addition, it consists of two parts: general statements which introduce the general topic of the essay; and thesis statement which states the specific topic of the essay.

Second, body paragraphs are one or more paragraphs that present more details about the main topic. Each body paragraph has a topic sentence and several supporting sentences. In addition, each paragraph supports the thesis statement. To clarify, each body paragraph present an idea with an explanation and examples.

Finally, the concluding paragraph is the last paragraph of an essay. Writers in this part are going to remind what they have mentioned, summarize their main ideas or paraphrase their thesis (Oshima and Hogue, 2007).

The following is a diagram of the three main parts of an essay:

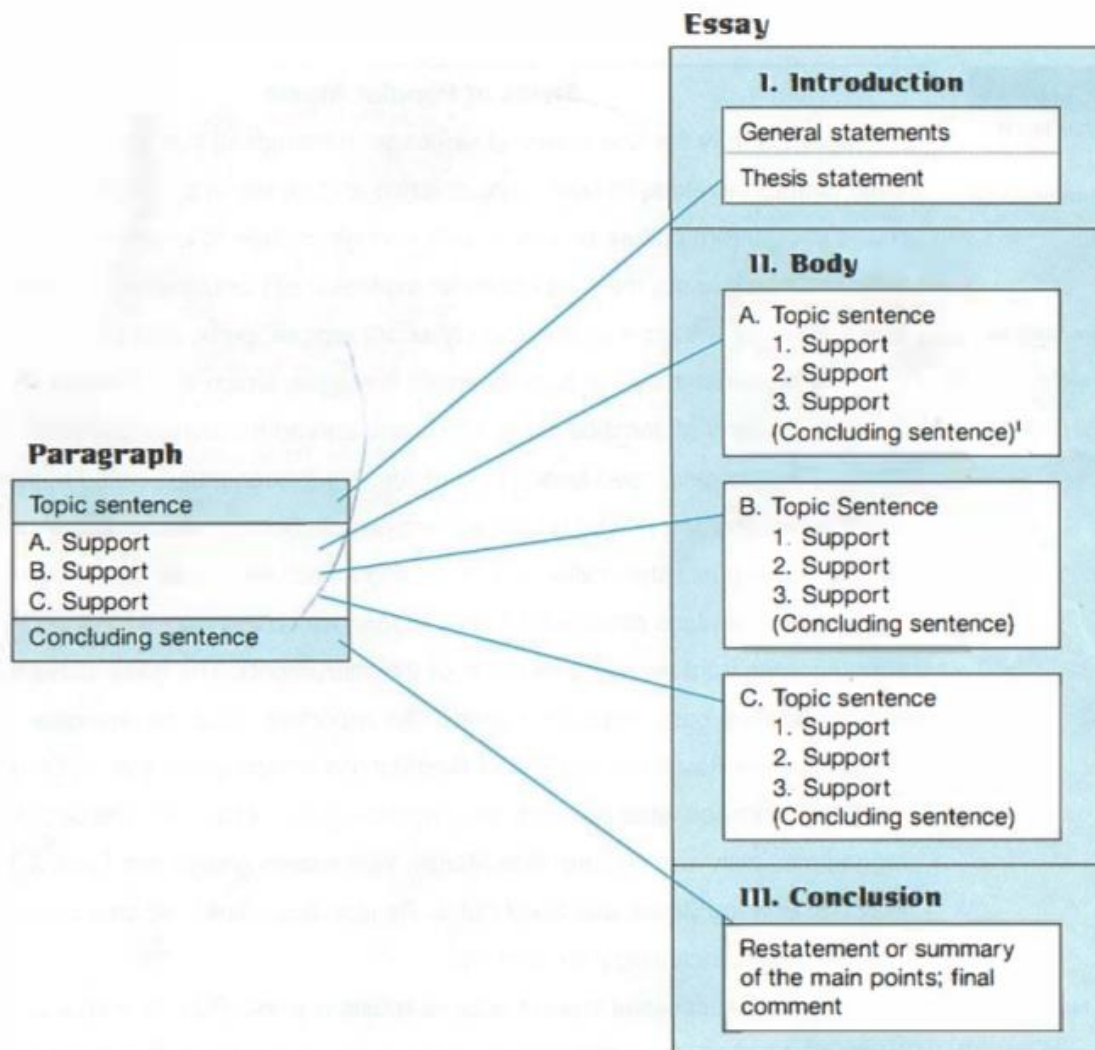


Figure 04: the main parts of an essay (Oshima and Hogue, 2007, p.147)

1.9. Types of Essays

As an essay has a specific structure and main parts it has also different types. Essays are categorized into six main types: argumentative, expository, narrative, descriptive, compare and contrast and cause and effect essays.

1.9.1. Argumentative essays

Argumentative essays are a type of essays that are objective and they are used to convince the reader about some facts and provide logical arguments. Caulfield (2020) defines an argumentative essay as a piece of writing that presents an extended, evidence-based argument. A strong thesis and a clearly stated position on the writers' topic are required. Writers are

required to convince the reader of their thesis by using evidence (such as quotations) and analysis.

Moreover, MasterClass staff (2020) state that an argumentative essay is also known as a persuasive essay. A strong argumentative essay tries to persuade readers to comprehend and support writers' specific point of view in a topic by explaining their reasoning and proving it with facts.

1.9.2. Expository essays

Expository essays are essays that define and explain the topic. According to MasterClass staff (2020), expository essays are the most basic type of essays and they are also known as definition essays. They are written to explain or define a concept rather than to make an argument. In addition they are generally shorter compositions that directly answer a question for example "how is paper made?".

Caulfield (2021) claims that an expository essay explains a topic in a concise and focused manner. It does not require a specific argument. Simply, a well balanced and well organized perspective on the subject. It assesses writer's knowledge of a topic as well as his or her ability to arrange and communicate information.

1.9.3. Narrative essays

Narrative essays are type of essays that aim to tell a story or talk about an events. MasterClass staff (2020) state that narrative essays also known as personal essays or reflective essays and they mix between a personal narrative with academic argument. These essays type allow the writer to use personal experience to convey a point or teach a lesson. In addition, they are characterized by being always non-fictional, usually autobiographical and often written in the first person. They are written in a more creative style compare to the academic and journalistic which are more objective and fact- based. Moreover, narrative essays can be structured in any way the writer sees fit to highlight the main point. They can be found in many personal statements, college application essays and scholarship essays.

1.9.4. Descriptive essays

Descriptive essays are type of essays that describe a certain event, object and so on. Just like narrative essays, descriptive essays are written in a creative style but they do not tell a story. According to Caulfield (2020), a sensory description of anything is provided in

descriptive essays. They are like the narrative ones, allow the writer to be more creative than typical academic writing, although they are more narrowly focused. Rather than telling a complete story, the writer may describe a specific location or object.

In addition, descriptive essays can be quite loosely structured but they should normally start with an introduction to the object of the writer's description and end with a summary. The main point in describing is to be careful in choosing the words and figurative language.

1.9.5. Compare and Contrast essays:

They are type of essays that aim to discuss similarities or differences between two or more things. MasterClass staff (2020) claim that a compare and contrast essay compares and contrasts two objects and highlights their similarities and differences usually to demonstrate a wider point. Body paragraphs in compare and contrast essays are usually into two sections (a comparison section and contrast section).

1.9.6. Cause and effect essays:

They are type of essays that explore the causes behind something happens and its consequences. MasterClass staff (2020) state that cause and effect essays are like the compare and contrast essays; they try to demonstrate the relationship between things. In particular, how something was influenced by something else. For example: how unfair law cause a riot. This type of essays is frequently ordered chronologically with cause being explained first, followed by the result.

1.10. Teaching Writing

EFL students are required to write paragraphs, compositions, essays and so on. Thus they should be able to have a better understanding of the mechanisms by employing a variety of writing techniques. To have a better understanding of writing techniques and elements, EFL teacher role is very important. At the same time teaching writing is not an easy task. According to Kirby and Crovitz (2013), "teaching writing can be frustrating and challenging, but it can also be rewarding of fresh air in a rather stagnant educational context" (p.9).

Moreover, teaching writing as a productive skill entails some steps in terms of more practical procedures. Dragomir and Niculescu (2020) point out these steps as follow:

1. Presenting a model of the target written product.
2. Working on the model with a particular focus on meaning and form by assisting the students to analyze the text in order to discover some important elements like the language, organization patterns, register features.
3. Rehearse for a similar exercise by imitating the form and the language (spelling, structure, vocabulary and layout)
4. Creating a new answer to another task that includes personalizing the form and the content.

1.11. Teaching writing approaches

The way of teaching writing has a big role in students' writing competence. Teachers try their best to make teaching writing as effective as possible. Thus they use some approaches to achieve that aim.

1.11.1. Product based approach

Product based approach is an approach that aims to see the final product. The students are going to imitate a model that it has been provided by the teachers. Steel (as cited in Selvaraj and Aziz, 2019.) reported that there are four stages to follow in order to utilize this approach. First, students should read the model composition and take note of the distinctive elements of a composition that includes arrangement of ideas, language use and writing mechanics. Second, students practice the aspects indicated in the model text in a controlled environment. Third, students try to replicate the model essay by structuring a set of pre-determined ideas to fit the model. Fourth, students complete the task by composing the predicted text using their skills, sentences structure and various level of vocabulary.

According to Tangpermoon (as cited in Selvaraj and Aziz, 2019.) there are some advantages of this approach which include students learning how to employ specific pattern-product methods in writing composition in a systematic way, particularly in narrative, descriptive and persuasive essays. Moreover, students learn to correct vocabulary and sentence structures for certain text formats as well as enhance their grammatical awareness.

1.11.2. Process based approach

The process-based approach emphasizes the process obtaining the final product. It focuses on the four stages involved in writing which are planning, drafting, revising and editing. The process approach as defined by Kroll (as cited in Selvaraj and Aziz, 2019) is that students write through some stages such as drafting and receiving feedback on their drafts, it can be from peers or teachers followed by editing of their changing texts. This method allows writers to back and forth in order to improve their writing. As well as, it encourages creativity when the writers compose their own piece.

In addition, the feedback of the teachers or peers helps students to be better at writing. As what is stated by Maarof et al. (as cited in Selvaraj and Aziz, 2019) “ teacher feedback is regarded as a main requirement for improvement in students’ essay writing” (p:30). As well as, it improves creativity and the process of thinking.

1.11.3. Genre based approach

Genre based approach is the most recent of the three approaches and it shares many parallels with the product approach (Harmer as cited in Eliwarti and Maarof, 2014). According to Paltridge (as cited in Eliwarti and Maarof, 2014) genre approach to teaching writing focuses on teaching certain genre like essays, assignments and other types of writing that students need to be able to produce in academic settings. This could include an emphasis on language and discourse elements of the texts as well as the context of the produced text.

Badger and white (as cited in Eliwarti and Maarof, 2014) assert that the proponents of genre approaches are rarely explicit about their learning theory. On the other hand, The usage of model texts and the concept of analysis implies that learning is a combination of imitation and intentionally applying the rules. Thus, genre-based approaches regard writing as primarily concerned with language knowledge and strongly related to the social purposes, whereas the progress of writing is mostly seen as the analysis and imitation of input provided by the teacher in the form of texts.

1.11.4. Process-genre approach

As its name, this approach is a combination of the process approach and genre approach. Eliwarti and Maarof (2014) conclude that the process genre approach integrates the strengths of each approach. The process approach to teaching writing includes planning, drafting,

conferencing, editing and peer viewing. The genre approach, on the other hand, includes factors such as understanding and considering the aim, audience and context.

The main advantages process-genre approach are not about the writing pedagogies but also about another sides. Matsua and Bevan (as cited in Eliwarti and Maarof, 2014) note that emphasizing the notion of genre in writing enhances not only the linguistic competence and self-expression but also the rhetorical awareness. As a result, using a process genre approach will aid students in developing their understanding of various text types such as essays, editorials and business letters as well as various organizational structures of essay developments such as description, narration, exposition, argumentation and writing process itself. Furthermore, by using the recursive processes of planning, drafting and revising, students can investigate the relationship between purpose and form of certain genre.

1.11.5. Eclectic approach

This approach integrates the principle of several language teaching methods and approaches depending on the students' differences and on the lesson objectives. Gao (as cited in Mwanza, 2019) defines the eclectic approach as “not concrete, single method, but a method, which combines listening, speaking, reading and writing and includes some practice in the classroom” (p: 1). Furthermore, Gao (as cited in Mwanza, 2019) claims that teaching using this approach requires being ensure of every decision about the classroom instruction and activities based on an inclusive understanding of all the learning theories related to pedagogies as well as determining the purpose, context of language teaching and learning, learners' needs, materials and so on.

Moreover, Ali (as cited in Mwanza, 2019) outlines certain eclectism principles. First, teachers are given the option of using a variety of teaching strategies to achieve the lesson's objectives during the lesson period. Second, teachers have the option to choose any aspect or method that they believe it is appropriate for teaching during the session. Third, learners can observe various teaching techniques as well as various teaching aids that help to make lesson more stimulating and ensure better understanding of material. Fourth, resolving any problem that may arise during textbook materials' presentation. Finally, it reduces the amount of time and effort required to present linguistic exercises.

1.12. Teaching Writing Strategies

Teaching writing is an essential element that is required in every teaching process. As well as, it is considered as a challenging task especially for EFL teachers. EFL teachers are aware of this difficulty thus they strive to apply some approaches and strategies for an effective teaching. There are various strategies teachers use to achieve that aim.

1.12.1. Collaborative writing

This type of strategy is when students work together in writing task. EFL teachers find this strategy more effective because it makes them easily monitor the activity. Not only for them but also for students, most of the students prefer to work in groups. The aim of this strategy is to facilitate students in completing a writing task because students have various abilities (Jurianto et al., 2015). Storch (as cited in Jurianto et al., 2015) stated that a group work strategy helps to improve the quality of writing and provide an opportunity to generate ideas and feedback for each other. Moreover, this strategy is an effective strategy to motivate students, encourage them to learn actively and develop communication and decisions making skills.

1.12.2. Prewriting strategy

Prewriting is a strategy of generating ideas before writing. Jurianto et al. (2015) note that prewriting is a strategy of teaching writing that includes activities for students that help them generate their ideas for the writing task. This strategy is conducted to make students have an idea about the material they will learn or the task they will work. Prewriting forms are brainstorming, elicitation, teacher-led questions and answers about the content or text' genre they will be discussed. Moreover, in this strategy, teachers are going to give students a topic and ask them to generate ideas in a group or individually. Thus, this strategy is crucial for the teachers because it facilitates their work and also for students develops and explores their ideas.

1.12.3. Writing instruction strategy

A writing instruction strategy is a strategy that teachers conducted by providing models. Jurianto et al. (2015) write that writing instruction strategy is a study of models. After providing a model, they ask the students to read this model, analyze it then imitate it. Analyzing the text model means analyze it in terms of the structure , linguistic features and so on. In addition, this strategy is beneficial for teachers because it easy for them provide models

from textbooks available to them. As well as, for students which is effective in helping them to improve their writing style.

1.13. Teaching writing challenges

Teaching writing is important but at the same it not an easy task. EFL teachers face some challenges in teaching this skill. These challenges could be problems concerning the students themselves or problems concerning the environment and so on. Hidayati (2018) classifies the challenges according to the type of factors that contribute to them. There are two types which are internal factors that are about the students themselves (students' level, motivation...) and external factors (classroom condition, availability of time...).

1.13.1 Internal factors

The factors that appear in the learners themselves which means problems with students themselves for example when they are not motivated or their level is low that will affect the process of teaching.

1.13.1.1. Students' level in writing

The issue of students' level in writing contributes to the teachers difficulties in teaching writing. The English competence is a term that includes learners' grammatical competence, vocabulary competence or how to organize a good paragraph (Brown as cited in Hidayati, 2018). When students have problems with grammar or vocabulary they would not be able to form a paragraph. Harmer (as cited in Hidayati, 2018) states that students becomes frustrated when doing an activity and they do not have word or grammar they need to express themselves.

In addition, teacher encounter challenges in teaching writing when they have various levels in classroom. Different levels of students will make tough for teachers to cater to all levels at the same time (Asep as cited in Moses and Mohamed, 2018); teachers will need to take different approaches depending on the students' writing abilities. As a result, teachers find difficulty to design lessons and prepare appropriate students activities.

1.13.1.2. Students' motivation

Students' lack of motivation is considered as an issue that is faced by EFL teachers. There are several factors that demotivate EFL students to achieve certain levels in writing. According to Harmer (as cited in Ghodbane, 2010) the factors that hinder students from writing. First, they have a fear of failing or not be able to achieve their objectives especially in situations where they are asked to reflect their language knowledge and their ability to apply it to different situations. Another factor that prevents individuals from writing is their fear of making mistakes. They are uncomfortable with certain structures of an essay or they are not sure about it thus they fail. In addition, they can not share their productions because they do not want to show their weaknesses.

1.13.2.Externatl factors:

The factors that appear in learning environment, and they are not related to learners themselves but to what is around them. In other words what affects the learner externally for example classroom environment, time availability and so on.

1.13.2.1.Class condition

This factor is concerned with the class environment. Class condition affects on teaching writing. To clarify, teaching a few number is more effective than huge one. Hidayati (2018) insists that teaching a big group of students is always controversial especially in places where English is a foreign language (EFL). Some of the issues faced by teachers in large class include: physical discomfort for both teacher and students, intimidating atmosphere, paying individual attention becomes difficult and teacher's feedback is insufficient. In addition, Hayes (1997) points out five problems that occur in big classes: physical constraint, difficulty to control students, inability to pay attention to students individually, difficulty to assess the work of students and achieve effectiveness in learning.

1.13.2.2.Time management

The availability of time is an important external factor. Teachers should have enough time to complete the whole teaching process. In other words, to teach effectively writing, EFL teacher need time to present the lesson, practice and apply all the approaches they need. Not having the required time would affect negatively on the writing process. Hidayati (2018) proves that by providing some comments of Indonesian teachers. They explained that

students need longer time to practice than what is provided. This is because they need to explain to students what to write first, ask students to practice and then assess their writing at the end.

1.14. Writing problems

Writing problems, like any learning problems, can be catastrophic to students' education. According to Heaton (1975), writing is a complex skill that could be difficult to teach. Not only grammatical and rhetorical devices but also conceptual and judging aspects should be mastered. Students are increasingly expected to explain what they know about a variety of areas through writing as they progress. If a student is not able to develop certain basic skills, he will not be able to write with speed and fluency required to excel as the demands increase. Indeed, when students have a writing problem, the writing process itself could obstruct learning. Other challenges are related to several aspects of language including punctuation, spelling and grammar (Raimes, 1983).

1.14.1. Coherence

In writing, coherence refers to "the sense of wholeness or interconnectedness that exists between phrases and ideas within a paragraph or among paragraphs within any piece of a connected discourse" (Latief, 1990:66). In order to achieve the sense of wholeness, an essay should generate a unified notion, a main topic that is supported by all the essay's smaller topic ideas. A sense of wholeness is lacking in an essay that develops two or more different concepts or contains thoughts unrelated to the main topic idea (Solikhah, 2017). Furthermore, for more connection, all paragraphs and paragraphs must be effectively related. For example, the ideas flow effortlessly from one sentence to the next, and from one paragraph to the next (Latief, 1990).

1.14.2. Vocabulary

Vocabulary is an important aspect of effective writing and the ability to use the words that is appropriate to the topic. Solikhah (2017) defines vocabulary as the word choice made to explain ideas effectively. The vocabulary contains sufficient arrangement and order, effective words or idiom choice and usage, correct word form mastery, for example: accurate prefixes, compound words, word classes and suitable register. Moreover, Wilkins (1972) claims "without grammar, little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed" (p:14).

1.14.3. Syntax

Syntax is the way putting words together to form phrase, sentence. Hudson (1992) defined syntax as the study of how words are chosen and combined as well as how they are ordered to form a cohesive and comprehensible sentence. According to Solikhah (2017), in syntactic problem, students struggle with constructing sentences as well as they make tenses and agreement errors.

1.14.4. Punctuation

Punctuation is considered as a crucial element in writing skill. As well as it can be challenging to master. Punctuation is defined by Gerhard and Margret (1914) as a suitable mechanical device for demonstrating or ensuring unity and coherence.

Punctuation, on the other hand, is hindrance in writing. Carroll and Wilson (1993) outline three problems concerning punctuation. The first is that punctuation rules are not completely accurate, punctuation is complex, and the meaning is determined by one's style. Because each punctuation mark is a unique way of understanding the content. The way a learner punctuates a text can radically change the meaning. As a result, students should pay attention to how they punctuate which is often a source of frustration for them.

1.14.5. Grammar

In general, grammar is a set of language rules. Nelson and Greenbaum (2002) define grammar as “ a set of rules that allow to combine words of a language into a large unites” (p:1). The way a writer handles basic writing rules including parallelism, pronoun reference and double negative is known as grammar (Solikhah, 2017). According to Latief (1990) grammatical errors includes: tense, word order, article, pronouns, prepositions and other parts of speech.

Conclusion

To conclude, writing is an important productive skill. It has different forms; essay is one of them. Essay is a piece of writing that contains a lengthy paragraphs and it has three main parts and different types. In addition, EFL teachers when teach this skill, they use different approaches and strategies as well as they face some problems. Not only EFL teachers face challenges but also their students.

Chapter Two: Grammatical errors

Introduction

In today's EFL classrooms, students frequently have difficulties when writing essays. Grammatical errors are among these difficulties as mentioned in the previous chapter. Grammar is frequently viewed as a source of support in helping EFL students improve their writing but its application can add complexity to the writing process. As a result, during the later decades of the twentieth century, this issue of grammatical difficulties drew a lot of attention. The main focus of this chapter is on an overview of grammar as well as its difficulties and EFL grammatical errors when writing essays. It is going to introduce grammar by giving its definitions and its main elements, classifying its types and mentioning its relationship with teaching by providing the grammatical teaching approaches. Then moving to error analysis and its significance will be discussed. Finally, this chapter is going to present the grammatical errors and their sources.

2.1. Grammar definitions

Grammar is a system of language rules which is considered as a fundamental aspect of language. It has different definitions. The Oxford American dictionary (1980) defines it as: "the study of words and the rule for their formation and their relationship to each other in sentences; the rules themselves; speech or writing judged as good or bad according to these rules" p:282

According to Harwell (1985) Grammar is categorized into five definitions. First definition is that grammar is set of formal patterns of words arranged to convey a large meaning. Second, it is considered as a branch of linguistic science which studies how to describe, analyze and formulate the formal language. The third definition is that people use grammar as linguistic etiquette. The forth one is school grammar which means the grammars used in the schools. The last one is stylistic grammar which is defined as grammatical terms used in the interest of teaching prose.

Moreover, Huddleston (1984) states that grammar is consisting of morphology and syntax. The first one deals with forms of words while the second one deals with ordering those words to form a sentence. And he does not focus only on the description of the

linguistic units and their relationship but also on the explanation of the relevant aspects of meaning as well.

2.2. Elements of Grammar

In grammar, there are many elements that are considered as important pieces in the sentence. And they are called also parts of speech which involve eight categories in English grammar such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions and determiners.

2.2.1. Nouns: noun is a word for person, place, thing or idea etc. they have an innumerable roles in sentence. According to Scrivener (2010) nouns are defined as a meaning or way of referring to person, thing, place, quality, concepts, etc. Examples of nouns: Mohamed, Japan, table, and so on.

Scrivener (2010) classified nouns as follows:

2.2.1.1. Common nouns: nouns that refer to people or things in general for example: bus, chair, school, religion and so on.

2.2.1.2. Proper nouns: are nouns that identify a specific people, places, things. They start with capital letters for example: Mary, London, Biskra and so on.

To clarify, a proper noun is the name of the common noun for instance: 'Japan' is a proper noun for the common noun 'country'. Another example 'Aya' is a proper noun for the common noun 'girl'.

2.2.1.3. Countable nouns: nouns that can be counted and they can be a singular or plural for example: pencil/pencils, apple/apples and so on.

2.2.1.4. Uncountable nouns: nouns that cannot be counted and they cannot take a plural form for example: milk, music, water, food, hair and so on.

This table classifies the difference between countable and uncountable nouns

| | |
|--|--|
| Countable Nouns can be counted with numbers. | Uncountable Nouns cannot be counted with numbers. |
| Countable Nouns take both singular and plural form. | Uncountable Nouns takes the singular form. |
| Countable Nouns can be made plural. | Uncountable Nouns cannot be generally made plural. |
| Countable Nouns use the interrogative expression 'how many.' | Uncountable Nouns use the interrogative expression 'how much.' |

Figure 05: Countable versus Uncountable noun (Difference between Countable and Uncountable nouns, 2016)

2.2.1.5. Concrete nouns: nouns of something that a person can perceive with his/her five senses. For example: chocolate, cat, flower, song...

2.2.1.6. Abstract nouns: nouns of something that person can not perceive with his/her five senses. For example: love, belief, sadness, happiness; pride...

2.2.1.7. Singular nouns: nouns that refer to one person, place, thing, etc. For example: cat, car, man...

2.2.1.8. Plural nouns: nouns that refer to more than one person, place, thing, etc. For example: cats, cars, men....

2.2.1.9. Collective nouns: nouns that refer to a group of things as one whole for example: group, family, audience...

2.2.1.10. Compound nouns: nouns that are made up of two smaller words for example: snowman, sunflower, lipstick...

2.2.2. Pronouns: pronoun is a word used in place of a noun. Scrivener (2010) states that a pronoun is a word that replace an noun or noun phrase and it has eight types:

2.2.2.1. Subjective pronouns: I, you, he, she, it, we, they.

2.2.2.2. Objective pronouns: me, you, him, her, it, us, them.

2.2.2.3. Possessive pronouns: mine, yours, his, hers, its, ours, theirs.

2.2.2.4. Reflexive pronouns: myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, oneself, ourselves, themselves, yourselves.

2.2.2.5. Indefinite pronouns: somebody, nobody, anything, etc.

2.2.2.6. Demonstrative pronouns: this, that, these, those.

2.2.2.7. Question pronouns: who, whose, whom, which, where, whoever, whichever, whatever.

2.2.2.8. Relative pronouns: that, who, which, what, whom, whoever, whosoever, whomever, whomsoever, whatever.

2.2.3. Verbs: a verb is a word that shows an action and it has a big role in a sentence just as nouns. Nordquist (2020a) defined a verb as part of speech that describes an action or occurrence or state of being. It can display differences in tense (present, past...), mood (indicative, imperative, subjective), aspect (progressive, perfect), number (singular, plural), person (first, second, third) and voice (active, passive).

Scrivener (2010) classified verbs into nine types:

2.2.3.1. Main verbs: verbs that describe an action or state for example: walk, dance, think, hit...

2.2.3.2. Auxiliary verbs: ‘auxiliary verbs’ or ‘helping verbs’ which help the main verb to make a sense or structure and they go together with them. For example: have, was, did, am...

2.2.3.3. Modal verbs: verbs that add a function to the main verb like: advice, obligation, permission and so on. For example: you should study, you can go, you must have...

2.2.3.4. Action verbs: they are also called ‘dynamic verbs’ which they show an action or event. For example: run, play, break...

2.2.3.5. State verbs: ‘state verbs’ or ‘stative verbs’ describe the condition or ongoing state for example: love, think, be...

2.2.3.6 Reflexive verbs: a reflexive verb is a verb that has a reflexive pronoun. It is when the subject and the object are the same for example: I cut myself shaving.

2.2.3.7. Multi-word verbs: generally, they are phrasal verbs, prepositional verbs and phrasal-prepositional verbs. They made up of 2 or 3 words and act like one singular verbs. For example: give up, cheer- up, look at ...

2.2.3.8. Intransitive verbs: verbs that do not need an object which means that the action does not need an object to occur. For example: she sleeps for 8 hours every night. This means that the sleeping is happen but is not being done to something.

2.2.3.9. Transitive verbs: verbs that need one or more objects. For example: she writes her lessons (she writes what? 'Her lessons' here is the object and the verb 'write' needs an object).

2.2.4. Adjectives: an adjective is a word that describes a noun or pronoun. According to Page (2011) adjectives are categorized into different types such as limiting adjectives (articles, demonstratives, possessives) and descriptive adjectives. In addition they usually come before the words they describe.

First, limiting adjectives are also divided into these categories:

Numbers: one, two, three, first, second, third, etc.

Quality: some, any, much, few, little (with uncountable noun).

Demonstratives: this, that, these, those. These are the same as pronouns but they must precede a noun not replace it. For example: this cat, that boy...

Articles: a, an, the

Possessives: my, your, his, her, its, our, your, their.

Second, all other adjectives are descriptive adjectives which are classified as the following:

| | | |
|------------|-----------|-----------|
| scholastic | beautiful | sorrowful |
| slow | loving | honest |
| early | hot | solid |
| future | frigid | fast |
| plain | happy | colored |
| colorful | watery | angry |

Figure 06: Descriptive adjectives (Page, 2011.p.27)

2.2.5. Adverbs: an adverb is a word that describes a verb, an adjective or another adverb. It gives more information in a sentence. Like the nouns, adjectives and verbs, adverbs have six common types (Six types of adverbs used in English language, 2021).

2.2.5.1.Conjunctive adverbs: they are adverbs that act like a conjunction and they are used to connect two sentences together for example: she went to the library to read her favorite book; however, the library was closed when she got there.

2.2.5.2.Adverbs of frequency: adverbs that describe the frequency of the event such as: constantly, frequently, occasionally, sometimes, usually, never, always, rarely, daily, monthly, yearly, etc. An example in a sentence: I usually eat chocolate when I get nervous.

2.2.5.3.Adverbs of time: adverbs that describe when something happens and they can refer to specific or general periods of time.For instance: today, tomorrow, yesterday, soon, late, forever, now, etc. An example in sentence: I am going to watch a movie tomorrow.

2.2.5.4.Adverbs of manner: adverbs that describe how the actions or events happen. The form is: adjective + ly. For instance: nicely, loudly, angrily; slowly. An example in a sentence: he bravely rescued a kitten from a tree.

2.2.5.5. Adverbs of degree: adverbs that describe the quality or intensity of an action such as: very, really, extremely, too and so on. an example in sentence: I really like watching movies.

2.2.5.6. Adverbs of place: adverbs that describe where something happens such as: here, there, somewhere, anywhere, in, inside, outside and so on. An example in a sentence: she cannot find her cat anywhere.

2.2.6. Prepositions: according to Wolden University (n.d.) a preposition is a word that used before a noun, pronoun or noun phrase to show direction, time, place, location, spatial relationships. As well as Scrivner (2010) defined prepositions as words that are used to show the relationship between things in terms of place, movement, time or ideas. He classified them into four types.

2.2.6.1. Preposition of place: above, against, across, at, behind, below, beneath, between, by, in, next to, on, on top of, outside, over, underneath, upon.

2.2.6.2. Preposition of movement: across, along, around, between, over, past, through, to, under.

2.2.6.3. Preposition of time: at, on, in, for, since.

2.2.6.4. Preposition showing relationship between ideas: despite, except, owing to.

2.2.7. Conjunctions: words that are used to connect words, phrases, clauses. The oxford dictionary of English Grammar defined conjunction as a word used to join words, phrases, clauses or sentences. It has two main types:

2.2.7.1. Coordinating conjunctions: ‘Fanboys’ which are: for, and, nor, but, or, yet and so. They join words, phrases and clauses together.

2.2.7.2. Subordinating conjunction: also called ‘Subordinators’ words that link a dependant clause to an independent clause for instance: because, although, since, if and so on.

2.2.8. Determiners: words that come before a noun to specify quantity (two girls, ten cats) or to clarify what the noun refers (his hat, her dress). This category according to Scrivener (2010) includes:

2.2.8.1. Articles: a, an, the.

2.2.8.2. Quantifier: some, all, few, any, each, no...

2.2.8.3. Demonstrative: these, that...

2.2.8.4.Number: seven, hundred...

2.2.8.5.Possessive adjective: my, your, his, her, its, ours, their...

2.3.Types of Grammar

Grammar is a system of a language and way of arranging words to make proper sentences. Many linguists state that there are varieties of grammar because of the different ways of describing and analyzing the structures and the functions of the language. Nordquist (2018a) stated that descriptive grammar and perspective grammar both are concerned with rules but they are different. The difference is the first one examines the rules whereas the second one tries to enforce rules about what the correct uses of language are.

Nordquist (2018a) classifies grammar into ten types:

2.3.1. Mental Grammar

It is the generative grammar stored in the brain that enables a speaker to make a language that it is understandable to the others. In his seminal work “Syntactic Structure” the American linguist Noam Chomsky (as cited in Nordquist, 2020b) popularized the concept of mental grammar. Then Binder and Smith (Nordquist, 2020b) stated that the work of Chomsky is important in their work “Language Phenomenon” and they considered that the focus on grammar as mental entity allowed a great progress to be made in characterizing the structure of the language. Universal grammar or the brain’s predisposition to learn complexities of grammar from an early stage without being implicitly taught all of the rules is related to this work

2.3.2. Pedagogical Grammar

Pedagogical grammar according to Davies (as cited in Nordquist, 2019) may be based on grammatical description of the language, a specific grammatical theory and the study of the learners’ grammatical problems or on a combination of approaches. Moreover, Taylor (as cited in Nordquist, 2019) assumed that pedagogical grammar is a description of the language’s grammar made for teaching and learning purposes. In other words, it is made for effective teaching and learning processes.

2.3.3. Performance Grammar

Performance grammar is a description of the English syntax as it is used by speakers in conversations and it focuses on language production. Carroll (as cited in Nordquist, 2018a) assumed that problems while language production must be dealt with before the problems of reception and comprehension can be investigated.

2.3.4. Reference Grammar

It is a description of language's grammar, including an explanation of the rules that govern the formation of words, phrases, clauses and sentences. It is used to teach someone about the language by giving the reference tools for looking up specific details of the language. Some examples of a reference grammar in English are given by Nordquist (2018a): A Comprehensive Grammar of English Language, by Randolph Quirk et al. (1985), the Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English (1999), and The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language (2002).

2.3.5. Theoretical Grammar

It is the study of the components that made up any human language. In terms of a general theory of human language, theoretical grammar or syntax is concerned with making totally clear the formalisms of grammar, as well as offering scientific arguments or explanations in favor of one account of the grammar over another (Renouf and Kehoe, cited in Nordquist, 2018a).

2.3.6. Comparative Grammar

It is the study and comparison of the grammatical structures of related languages. According to a current comparative grammar research done by Freidin (as cited in Nordquist, 2018a) a comparative grammar is concerned with a faculty of language that gives an explanatory basis for how a human being might acquire a first language. In this manner, the theory of grammar is the theory of human language which studies the relationships among all the languages.

2.3.7. Generative Grammar

It is a grammar theory that claims that human language is formed by set of fundamental principles found in the human brain (and even present in the brain of small children). Linguists like Chomsky believe that our natural language faculty is responsible for this “universal grammar”. According to Parker and Riley (as cited in Nordquist, 2018a), generative grammar is a type of unconscious knowledge that permits a person to construct ‘proper’ sentences regardless of the language they speak.

2.3.8. Traditional Grammar

Nordquist(2020c) defined traditional grammar as a set of perspective rules and principles regarding language structure that are frequently taught in schools. Traditional English grammar is commonly known as school grammar and it is mostly based on Latin grammar principles rather than recent English linguistic research. It establishes what is and is not right in the English language disregarding culture and modernization in favor of tradition. In addition, it is frequently regarded archaic and regularly questioned by specialists because it is fairly inflexible and entrenched in the traditions of the past. Despite this, many children nowadays are taught this appropriate, historical version of grammar.

2.3.9. Transformational Grammar

It is a grammar theory that accounts for linguistic changes and phrases in the construction of a language. According to Bornstein (as cited in Nordquist, 2018a) The term “rule” in transformational grammar refers to a principle that it is unconsciously but consistently followed in the construction and understanding of sentence, rather than a precept imposed by external authority. A rule is a guidance for producing a sentence or component of a sentence that the native speaker has internalized.

2.3.10. Universal Grammar

It is hypothetical or theoretical set of categories, processes and principles that all human languages share and it is seen to be innate. The term has been capitalized frequently since the 1980s. The Universal Grammar Theory is another name for this concept. Chomsky (as cited in Nordquist, 2018b) assumed that universal grammar is a set of features, conditions, or conditions that create the ‘initial state’ of the language learners. Thus, the base on which knowledge of a language develops.

2.4. Grammar Teaching

2.4.1. Grammar Teaching Definition

Grammar is a system of language rules and teaching grammar is teaching how these rules work. Thus, it guides learners to use the language correctly. Ellis (2006) defined grammar teaching as: “Grammar teaching involves any instructional technique that draws learners' attention to some specific grammatical form in such a way that it helps them either to understand it metalinguistically and/or process it in comprehension and/or production so that they can internalize it”p:84.

Furthermore, Ellis (2006) points out some key concepts. First, some grammar sessions may consist with the presentation only (i.e., no practice), whereas others may include just a practice (i.e., no presentation). Second, grammar teaching might encourage students to discover grammatical rules by themselves (i.e., no presentation and no practice). Third, grammar instruction can be as simple as exposing students to information that is designed to provide several exemplars of the target structure. There is no presentation and no practice, at least not in the sense of eliciting structure production. Finally, grammar instruction can be delivered through corrective feedback on learner errors that occur during the performance of the communicative task.

2.4.2. Reasons for Grammar Teaching

Grammar teaching is important and it cannot be ignored because without good grammar knowledge learners' language will not develop. Azar (2007) believes that grammar teaching helps the learner to discover the nature of language and without grammar humans will not be able to arrange words, sentences and so on. They would have just individual words, sounds, pictures and non-verbal communication to communicate.

Moreover, Richards and Renandya (2002) point out two good reasons for teaching grammar. First, comprehensibility, which is knowing how to construct and apply particular structures allows to communicate effectively typical sorts of meanings. It is impossible to construct understandable sentences without these elements. As a result, discovering these structures and effectively teaching them is crucial. Second, acceptability is that serious deviance from native speaker norm can inhibit integration and incite bias in some social

context –a person who speaks ‘badly’ may not be taken seriously, or may be perceived as uneducated or unintelligent.

Furthermore, learners should study grammar to be good language users because grammar skills will help learners order words and messages and make them meaningful. Tabbert (1984) states that grammar is very important simply as: “It is frequently point out that students confuse lie and lay, do not choose who and whom correctly, say infer instead of imply, mismatch subjects and verbs, mix up pronoun reference, use double negatives, etc., and that these mistakes are an evidence of their need to study grammar”p39.

2.4.3. Grammar Teaching Approaches

In general, there are two main approaches in teaching grammar which are deductive and inductive approaches. These approaches are related to the second language acquisition theory (SLA).

2.4.3.1.Deductive Approach

Deductive approach is an important approach that starts with the general going to the specific. Widodo (2006) defined it as an approach that derives from deductive reasoning, where the concept goes from general to specific. First, rules, principles, concepts or theories are presented. Then they will be applied and treated. As well as, this approach is called rule-driven learning. The grammar rule in this approach is explicitly presented to students and it is followed by practice to apply the rule. In other words, in deductive approach, the teachers are required to present the grammar rules with examples. When students understand the rules, they are required to apply these rules to various examples. By giving the grammatical rules, learners’ attention to the problem will be directed. According to Eisentein (as cited in Widodo, 2006), learners with deductive approach are more in control during the practice and they have less concern of forming a wrong conclusion about how the target language works. To conclude, the deductive approach begins with an explanation of a rule, followed by examples of how the rule is implemented. Learners are expected to engage with it in this way by studying and manipulating the examples.

The following is an example of deductive approach:

Nouns, adjectives and adverbs

1 *
Subject and object pronouns

Subject pronouns

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|----|-----|----|----|-----|------|
| I | you | he | she | it | we | you | they |
|---|-----|----|-----|----|----|-----|------|

Object pronouns

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|-----|-----|----|----|-----|------|
| me | you | him | her | it | us | you | them |
|----|-----|-----|-----|----|----|-----|------|

- The subject is the person or thing doing the action.
I left early.
She went home.
We said goodbye.
- The object is the person or thing receiving the action
She telephoned me
I hit him.
We saw her.

Write the correct *pronouns* for these sentences.

- 1 . telephoned yesterday. (she)
She telephoned yesterday.
- 2 We watch . . . for hours (he)
We watched him for hours.
- 3 Hasn't . . . arrived yet? (she)
- 4 . . don't understand. (I)
- 5 Are you talking to . . . ? (I)
- 6 Don't ask . . . doesn't know (she/she)
- 7 This is Julia . . have known . . for years (we/she)
- 8 Nobody told . the bus was leaving (they)
- 9 Why didn't . ask to come? (she/they)
- 10 Don't ask . . Ask . . (I/he)
- 11 . . think . doesn't like . . (I/he/I)
- 12 . . asked . . to invite . . (they/he/we)




Figure 07: an example of deductive approach (Walker and Elsworth in Thornbury, 2002.p.31)

2.4.3.2. Inductive approach

Unlike the deductive approach that starts with a presentation of the rule the examples; inductive approach is an approach that starts with examples to know the rule. Thornbury (2002) defines it as: “an inductive approach starts with some examples which rule is inferred”p.29. Widodo (2006) states that inductive approach starts with specific to general. In short, in using induction, first, it starts with an observation of a number of specific

instance. At the end, there would be a general principle or concept. Moreover, Eisentein (as cited in Widodo, 2006) maintains that the inductive approach aims to take the advantages of high reward value of giving order, clarity and significance to events. This method entails learners taking an active role in their own instruction. Furthermore, the technique enables the learner to construct her or his own mental set of task solving strategies. In other words, this strategy tries to emphasis grammatical principles without explicitly stating them and learners are encouraged to draw their own conclusions from the rules provided by the teacher.

The following is an example of inductive approach:

5
Find the rule
Look at these sentences:
You **know** Norma and Joe, don't you?
They **work** every day.
Joe **talks** to tourists, and Norma **writes** letters.
We always **go** to their travel agency.
The agency **offers** tours to many different countries.
I **like** the service there too.

► There is a final **s** on the verb only with certain subjects. What are they?
 I you he she it we they

Now apply the rule!
Circle the right verb.
I **see/sees** Norma almost every day, or
she **call/calls** me. She and Joe sometimes
come/comes to my house on weekends.
Joe usually **tell/tells** us some funny stories.

Figure 08: an example of inductive approach (Maple, 1988 in Thornbury, 2002.p.53)

2.5. Errors

2.5.1. Error definition

In the learning process of any language, learners and second language learners specifically do the same thing which is making errors. It is natural that L2 learners make errors because the language they are learning is different from their L1. Linguists present various definitions of this single term. Basically, these definitions have the same meaning while the difference is only on formulating them.

Norrish (1987) defined the term as: “a systemic deviation when a learner has not learnt something and consistently gets it wrong”. As well as, Cunningsworth (1987) considered error as a systemic deviation from the norms of the language being learnt. Thus, what is noticed in these two definitions that ‘systemic deviation’ is the key word. To clarify, error as systemic deviation means that unwanted form happen more than one time.

Furthermore, second language learners make errors in learning either in spoken or written form. Dulay et al. (1982) believed that error is the student’s error in learning language, whether spoken or written, as a part of conversation or composition, resulting in deviations.

2.5.2. Error and Mistake

Error and mistake seem to be the same but they differ from each other. According to Corder (1967), error is a systematic deviation of the learners from which we might recognize their language knowledge. Whereas, a mistake has an unsystematic characteristic that signals performance error in second language learners and native speakers.

Moreover, Brown (2007) states that errors are obvious deviation by native speakers that reveal the learners’ competency levels. On the other hand, mistakes refer to a native speakers’ or second language learners’ inability to produce speech due to a failure to understand the system correctly and it is linked to learners’ performance failures.

To conclude, an error happens because of a lack of knowledge. Also, it is considered as something is hard to fix and needs further study to understand. Whereas, mistake is something happens during the language performance and it is considered as an important part during the learning. In addition, it can be fixed as the knowledge that learners already learned.

2.5.3. Types of errors

Corder (1971) classifies errors into two types. First type is error of competence. It is a type of error that occurs when rules are applied and do not conform to the target language norm. In addition, it occurs when EFL learner do not have a sufficient understanding of the target language’ rules. The second type is performance errors which are the result of linguistic errors such as a wrong starts or slips of the tongue. And it occurs when students are stressed , indecisive, conflicted and tired

The first type is divided into two kinds. The first kind is interlingual error which is traditionally understood as interference problem that is caused by the linguistic discrepancies between L1 and the target language. The second kind is intralingual error. It is a universal phenomenon in any language learning process and it refers to a specific interpretation of the target language. And it is mainly an overgeneralization that is a common occurrence in both the L1 and the target language learning.

2.5.4. Error Analysis

L2 learners make errors when learning. Thus, analyzing their errors is required to reduce them. Crystal (1987) defined error analysis as: “a technique for identifying, classifying and systematically interpreting the unacceptable forms produced by someone learning a foreign language using any of the principles and procedures provided by linguistics.”(p112).

Error analysis is defined as a study of errors conducted through observation, analysis and classification in order to demonstrate how a system operates within learners (Brown, 1980). Moreover, EA according to Richard and Schmidt (2002) is a study that focuses on analyzing the errors produced by L2 learners. It can be considered as a method of determining and identifying the causes of learners’ errors.

All in all, Error analysis can be considered as a helpful way to determine which aspect of language students should pay more attention to. As a result, the knowledge obtained from error analysis can be used to improve learning processes in spoken or written language.

2.5.5. Error analysis procedures

There are five steps to conduct an error analysis according to Corder (as cited in Ellis and Barkhuizen 2005):

1. Collection of a sample of learner language: here, the researcher will need to collect a sample of learner language. Now, the researcher can take a control of the data by tightly defining the sample he or she wants to collect.
2. Identification of error: is the comparison of the learners’ sentences and native utterances in the same context. Then, the researcher would be able to determine where a section of the learners’ sentences is different from the “reconstructed version”.

3. Description of error: to describe the differences between learners' sentences and native speakers' sentences, linguistic taxonomy or surface structure taxonomy are typically used.
4. Explanation of error: in order to account for why the errors were committed. It is necessary to determine their sources. Due to the difficulty in accessing their L2 knowledge in communication, learners frequently make errors.
5. Error evaluation: error evaluation in the error analysis process is optional. It entails assessing the gravity of various errors in order to determine which one should be addressed.

2.5.6. Error analysis significance

The significance of errors made by second language learners have emphasized by many educators and theorists in the field of error analysis. According to Corder (as cited in Hourani, 2008), errors are relevant in these ways. First, to the teachers, who are informed of how far the students have progressed toward the goal and what they still need to learn. Second, they provide researchers with evidence how language is learned or acquired, as well as the techniques or procedures that learners apply in their language discovery. Third, they are essential to the learners themselves because making errors can be viewed as a tool that learners utilize to learn. Carter (as cited in Hourani, 2008) writes: "knowing more about how language works is to understand more about how grammar is used and misused". Students must realize the significance of the errors in their writing and thoroughly comprehend the nature of errors made. This required English language teachers being better equipped, more attentive and cognizant of the grammatical errors the students encounter (Hourani, 2008). In other words, it is a way for the learners to put their hypotheses about the nature of the language they are learning to test.

2.6. Grammatical errors

EFL learners in writing, they face several difficulties in different aspects of a language. The grammar is one of them. They make grammatical errors which mean they make errors in its main elements. Thus they add, omit, disorder, misinform and so on. In other words, they make a change in the surface structure in a sentence. The surface strategy taxonomy proposed by Dulay, Burt and Krashen (as cited in Ellis and Barkhuizen, 2005) is used in this work to

analyze errors. They identify errors into four types, namely, addition, omission, misinformation and misordering.

2.6.1. Addition

It is a form of error marked by the presence of unneeded item in a sentence. To put it in another way, students add an item to their sentences that is not necessary. As a result, errors appear in their writing. When learners overuse particular grammatical rules in the target language, this happens. For example: my friend and I goes to the beach together. Since the pronoun or subject become plural then adding-s to the base verb is unneeded in this sentence. The correct form is my friend and I go to the beach together.

2.6.2. Omission

It is the opposite of the first type (addition). This type of errors is indicated by the absence of the needed item in a sentence. For instance: I not sleep last night. This sentence needs an auxiliary. The needed item is “did”. Thus the correct form is: I did not sleep last night.

2.6.3. Misinformation

This type of error occurs when students write a wrong form of certain morphemes or structures in a sentence. For example: yesterday, I go to the gym. Since it is the past action because there is “yesterday” in sentence which means action is already happened. Then the verb should be in the past tense. Thus the correct form is: yesterday, I went to the gym.

2.6.4. Misordering

It is an error that occurs when there is incorrect arrangement of morpheme in a sentence. For instance: she bought a dress her friend. There is incorrect arrangement which leads to a confusion. The correct form is she bought her friend a dress. Another example: I do not remember what is her name instead of I do not remember what her name is.

James (1998) suggested one category is added.

2.6.5. Blends

It is a type of error when two or more morphemes with same function exist in a sentence. For example: the only one person I trust is my mother. Here the “only one person” more than

one morpheme with the same function in one sentence. The correct form is: the only person I trust is my mother or the only one I trust is my mother.

2.7. The Sources of the Grammatical errors

In this part, it is established that EFL learners face a variety of grammatical problems. The source of these problems could be caused by various sources. Many linguists argued about the reasons of these problems. Richard (1970) shows that there are four causes for errors in his theory “ a Non-contrastive approach”

1. Overgeneralization

It refers to when a student constructs a deviant structure based on his prior knowledge of the structures in the target language. The learner use “he can sings” or “she can play” instead of “he can sing” or “she can play” which is due to the false overgeneralization. Here, the learner uses the wrong form after the modal verb.

2. Ignorance of restriction

It entails applying rules to situations when they do not apply. For instance: “the man who I met him” instead of “the man who I met”. This type of error occurs because the learner previously learnt that the English sentence form is: Subject+Verb+Object. Thus he or she would add “him” as an object because he or she thinks that without adding the object “him” the sentence is not complete but in this case is not.

3. Incomplete application of rules

It occurs when a structure is not fully developed. For example, The learner uses the declarative word order in questions such as “you understand” instead of “do you understand”.

4. False concepts hypothesized

It occurs when learners do not properly understand a distinction in the target language. For instance, the confusion between the use of simple present tense or present continuous tense to describe an event in the present. For example: “I am taking the egg, now I am adding the flour” where the appropriate one is “I take the egg, now I add the flour”.

Moreover, Brown (1980) points out four categories of the source of errors. They are as follows:

1. Interlingual transfer

It is the negative effect of the learners' mother tongue. For example: when the learners think in Arabic language and write in English, they make errors in ordering words in a sentence. Because in Arabic the sentence structure is different from the English one. In English there is "subject+verb+object" whereas in Arabic it starts with a verb. For instance, in English "Mohamed eats the bread" but in Arabic "اكل محمد الخبز". As we see the structure is different.

2. Intralingual transfer

It is when learners do not master the target language yet. They generalize one rule from another. In other words, when the learners think that the new item behaves like an item they already know. For example that "cats" is the plural of the word "cat". Thus, they think that "tooths" is the plural of the word "tooth" which is wrong. The correct plural is "teeth"

3. Context of learning

It refers to the classroom or social situation in which a language is learned as well as the teacher and the materials. Students often make errors because of the teachers' false explanation, poor presentation of a structure or term, or simply because of a parent that was rotely remembered in a drill but not properly contextualized.

4. Communication strategies

Learners consciously employ communication strategies to convey a message to the audience. Both verbal and non-verbal communication strategies may be used. There are five communication strategies. First, Avoidance is when a learner deliberately avoids a language item because he or she is unsure about it. He or she prefers to avoid it rather than commit that error. Second, prefabricated pattern is memorizing stock phrases or sentences without knowing the components of the phrases or sentences. Third, cognitive and personality styles can be a source of error. For example, a person with high self-esteem is not afraid of making errors unlike the person with low self-esteem. The next strategy is the appeal to authority. When a learner is unsure about an item he or she can ask a native speaker or a teacher and so on. The last strategy is the language switch which is done when the other strategies have

failed to aid the students. They can use it. Thus, the learners communicate in their mother language to get the message.

In addition, Norrish (1983) classifies the sources of errors into three types.

1. **Carelessness:** it is a source of errors that occurs when the learners are not motivated.
2. **First language interference:** it is when the learners try to learn new habit by letting the old ones interfere the new ones. In other words, it is matter of habit formation.
3. **Translation:** it is when the learners translate their first language into the target language word by word.

Conclusion

To conclude, grammar is a system of language rules and it is very crucial aspect. In addition, it has many elements and types. Teaching grammar is very important thus, teachers seek to use some approaches to teach this aspect effectively. Students do their best to master this aspect however, they face some difficulties and make errors. They omit, add, misinform and disorder some of items in a sentence. As well as they put more than two items that function the same. Moreover, they commit these errors because of some reasons.

Chapter Three: The practical part

Introduction

The previous chapters reveal the study's two main variables; they highlighted the main elements in writing especially essay writing as well as various writing problems in general and grammatical errors in particular. On the other hand, this chapter is entirely devoted to practical fieldwork, which is a descriptive investigation into grammatical errors in EFL students' essays. A teachers' questionnaire was used to determine their perspectives on their students' essays and their errors in order to achieve the study' aim. In addition, error analysis of EFL students' essays were done to examine their grammatical errors. This chapter covers a description of participants and research instruments that include an analysis of teachers' questionnaire and error analysis in Master one students' essays. As well as, this chapter includes a discussion of the findings.

3.1. Population and instruments

This dissertation aim is to investigate the grammatical errors in EFL learners' essays. Master One at the department of English at Mohammed Kheider university of Biskra, during the academic year 2021-2022, were chosen to be the population of this study. To conduct this research, 07 teachers of written expression were chosen to identify their observation and opinion about students' grammatical errors when writing. In addition to 20 students from population were chosen randomly because at this level they are required to write essays in different modules and they are expected to face some problems and make some grammatical errors. They were asked to write an argumentative essay about becoming an academic writer. These samples were selected because normally they have achieved an advanced level in writing. Besides, they have received lessons on how to write an essay as well as they have knowledge about different aspects especially grammar which they studied as a module in the previous years. Furthermore, two data tools were employed for this study, a questionnaire for teachers and error analysis of students' essays.

3.2. Methodology

This research is based on a questionnaire to teachers and error analysis of Master one students' essays. Teachers' questionnaire is designed according to the literature review of the first and second chapters of this dissertation. The initial draft of this questionnaire was revised by an expert (the supervisor of this study) in order to check its validity. Then, the correct version of the questionnaire was submitted by hand to 07 teachers of writing expression as

well as they are teachers of Master One of different modules. This questionnaire consists of 19 questions. The majority of them are close-ended questions, which are multiple choice and rank items questions. The first one is required choosing the correct item whereas the second one is about reordering the items. It also includes open-ended questions where teachers are invited to give justifications.

Moreover, the questionnaire is divided into three sections; the first section is for personal information. The first question is multiple choice question which is about teachers' degree. For the second question, it covers how long teachers have been teaching.

The second section is entitled as "EFL Essay writing", which contains 09 questions; it covers teachers' point of view of the writing skill in general and essay writing specifically as well as their teaching writing strategies, approaches, challenges, their opinion about students preferable skill, difficult skill and so on.

The third section is entitled as "Grammatical errors" and it contains 08 questions. This section covers the teachers' opinion about grammar teaching, students' grammatical errors, the source of these errors, error correction importance as well as some suggestions to avoid grammatical errors and improve students' written productions.

This study used the error analysis as a second tool, several students' essays have been collected and analyzed to identify grammatical errors they have been made. In this study, twenty (20) copies of Master One students' essays were gathered and selected randomly. The students were asked to write an argumentative essay about becoming an effective academic writer.

3.3. Results

3.3.1. An analysis of teachers' questionnaire

Section one: General information

Item one: Teachers' degree

Table 1: Teachers' degree

| Degree | BA (License) | MA (Master/ Magister) | PHD (Doctorate) | Total |
|-------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| Number | 00 | 03 | 04 | 07 |
| Percentage | 00% | 43% | 57% | 100% |

In this question, the respondents were asked about their degree in teaching English. According to the table and figure above, (57%) of teachers have PHD degree, whereas 43% percentage of teachers have MA degree. As a result, It will help to get common opinions about the subject of this research.

Item two: how long have you been teaching written expression?

Table 2: teachers' years of experience in teaching writing

| Period | 1 to 4 years | 5 to 10 years | Total |
|-------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Number | 03 | 04 | 07 |
| Percentage | 43% | 57% | 100% |

As what it is shown in the table 2, there are 4 teachers (43%) who have been teaching writing expression module for a period between 1 to 4 years. The majority of teachers (53%) have been teaching writing from 5 to 10 years which means that the majority of them are expert. As a result, this will help this study to reach its aim.

Section two: Essay writing

Item three: according to you which of the following four skill is the most difficult?

Table 3: the most difficult skill according to teachers

| Skill | Listening | Speaking | Reading | Writing | Total |
|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| Number | 1 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 7 |
| percentage | 14% | 0% | 0% | 86% | 100% |

The results of this questionnaire indicate that (86%) of teachers consider the writing skill as the most difficult one and only (14%) of teachers think that listening is the most difficult skill.

Item four: which of these skills do you think your students prefer to use?

Table 4: Students' preferable skill

| Skill | Speaking | Writing | Total |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|
| Number | 7 | 0 | 7 |
| Percentage | 100% | 0% | 100% |

As indicated in the table above, (100%) of teachers assert that their students prefer to use speaking skill over the writing. That is to say, the majority of students find difficulties in the writing skill rather than speaking. Thus, they prefer to use the speaking instead of writing.

Item five: in your opinion, do your students follow the main stages of writing?

Table 5: Following the main stages of writing

| Option | Yes | No | Total |
|-------------------|------------|-----------|--------------|
| Number | 0 | 07 | 7 |
| percentage | 0% | 100% | 100% |

This question is about if the students follow the main stages of writing or not. The table 5 shows that (100%) of respondents agree that their students do not follow the main steps of writing.

Within this question. 3 teachers explain that their students skip the main writing stages because they do not have enough time to follow them all. Whereas 2 teachers justify the skipping of these stages by their students by the lack of methodological way of writing and intensive training. Moreover, the other two teachers state that not following the writing processes is related to incorrect way of teaching of previous years.

Item six: in your opinion, which type of essays your students find easy to write in?

Table 6: Types of essay

| Essay type | Narrative | Argumentative | Descriptive | Expository | Total |
|-------------------|-----------|---------------|-------------|------------|-------|
| Number | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 7 |
| Percentage | 14% | 43% | 29% | 14% | 100% |

An essay has different types and each type has its own characteristics. the table illustrates that (43%) of respondents believe that argumentative essay is easy for their students to write in. while 29 percent of teachers state that their students find a descriptive essay is easy to write in. Narrative and expository essay are easy to write in according to teachers with (14%) percentage for both.

Item seven: is your students' level: a-good, b- average, c-bad?

Table 7: Students' level

| Level | Good | Average | Bad | Total |
|-------------------|-------------|----------------|------------|--------------|
| Numbers | 0 | 6 | 1 | 7 |
| Percentage | 0% | 86% | 14% | 100% |

When teachers were asked to rate their students 'level, the majority of them (86%) said that their students' level is average. Only (14%) who answered with bad level.

Item eight: which strategy do you use in teaching writing?

Table 8: Teaching writing strategy

A: Group work strategy, **B:** Writing instruction strategy, **C:** Prewriting strategy.

| Strategy | A + C | B | C | B + C | Total |
|-------------------|--------------|----------|----------|--------------|--------------|
| Number | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 7 |
| Percentage | 14% | 29% | 14% | 43% | 100% |

The analysis of the results reveals that 43% of the respondents prefer to use both strategies, which are prewriting strategy and writing instruction strategy. However, 29% of teachers claim that they use only the writing instruction strategy. And when it comes to the other two teachers, one of them uses only the prewriting strategy whereas the other one uses the prewriting strategy and group work strategy. As what is observed that the majority of teachers

use the prewriting strategy by giving the topic to their students to generate ideas for their writing.

Item nine: what approach of teaching writing do you use?

Table 9: teaching writing approaches

A: Product approach, **B:** Process approach, **D:** Process-genre approach, **E:** Eclectic approach

| Approach | E | E+A | E+D | B | B+A | B+D | Total |
|-------------------|----------|------------|------------|----------|------------|------------|--------------|
| Number | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 7 |
| Percentage | 29% | 14% | 14% | 14% | 14% | 14% | 100% |

As indicated in the table 9, 29% of teachers use the eclectic approach only. Whereas 14% of respondents use the eclectic approach either with process genre approach or product approach. With the same percentage, teachers use the process approach only or either with process genre approach or product approach. To conclude, most of teachers consider that process approach and eclectic approach are the useful ones or they combine between these main approaches with others as it shown above.

Table 10: Teaching writing challenges.

A: Students' level in writing, **B:** Students motivation, **C:** Time management

| Difficulty | A + C | A + B | B + C | Total |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Number | 3 | 2 | 2 | 7 |
| Percentage | 43% | 29% | 29% | 100% |

EFL teachers face some difficulties in teaching writing. (43%) of teachers indicate that students' level and time are really hard to deal with. To clarify, having students with different levels will hinder the way of teaching. The same with time constraints, not having enough

time to explain the lesson and practice will affect on sufficiency of teaching process. However, (29%) of respondents consider not having enough time and motivating their students were problems they face in teaching. With the same percentage (29%) of teachers assert that they have problems with students' motivation and level.

Item eleven: which of the following aspects your students face problems with?

Table 11: the aspects of difficulties in writing

| Aspect | Grammar | Coherence | Total |
|------------|---------|-----------|-------|
| Number | 5 | 2 | 7 |
| Percentage | 71% | 29% | 100% |

According to the table above, (71%) of teachers claim that the hardest aspect for their students is grammar. Whereas, coherence is with percentage of (29%).

Section three: Grammatical errors

Item twelve: do your students have problems with grammar?

Table 12: Grammar difficulty

| Option | Yes | No | Total |
|------------|------|----|-------|
| Number | 7 | 0 | 7 |
| Percentage | 100% | 0% | 100% |

As indicated above, 100% state that their students have problems with grammar aspect.

Item thirteen: in teaching grammar, which approach do you think is better?

Table 13: Grammar teaching approach.

| Approach | Deductive | Inductive | Total |
|-------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------|
| Number | 1 | 6 | 7 |
| Percentage | 14% | 86% | 100% |

There are some approaches in grammar teaching, the table 13 above shows that (86%) of teachers use the inductive approach which starting with examples to know the rules. Whereas 14% of teachers use the deductive one by starting with the rules first then examples.

Item fourteen: reorder the types of errors according to their appearance in your students' essays

Table 14: Grammatical errors.

A: addition, **B:** omission, **C:** misinformation, **D:** misordering, **E:** blends

| Errors | B-C-A-D-E | C-B-A-D-E | A-C-B-D-E | Total |
|-------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------|
| Number | 4 | 2 | 1 | 7 |
| Percentage | 57% | 29% | 14% | 100% |

According to the data displayed in the table 14 , the majority of teachers (57%) claim that grammatical errors appearance in their students' essays are ordered as the following: omission, misinformation, addition, misordering then blends. However, 29% of respondents assert that their students make misinformation errors a lot then omission, addition, misordering and finally blends. Moreover, 14% of teachers ordered grammatical errors of their students as the following; firstly, addition, misinformation, omission, misordering and finally blends. As what is observed, teachers agree that the three major errors made by

students are omission, misinformation and addition whereas blends and misordering are the less appeared ones.

Item 15: in your opinion, what is the source of the grammatical errors? you can choose more than one.

Table 15: Grammatical errors' sources

A: overgeneralization, **B:** ignorance of restriction, **C:** incomplete application of rules, **D:** false concept hypothesized, **E:** carelessness, **F:** L1 interference, **G:** translation

| Sources | A+B+C+E | A+C+D+F | A+B+C+D+E+F+G | Total |
|------------|---------|---------|---------------|-------|
| Number | 3 | 2 | 2 | 7 |
| Percentage | 53% | 29% | 29% | 100% |

According to the results of this questionnaire, 53% of teachers point out sources of grammatical errors as the following: overgeneralization, ignorance of restriction, incomplete application of rules and carelessness. Whereas, 29% of respondents assert that overgeneralization, incomplete application of rules, false concept hypothesized and first language interference are the reasons why students make grammatical errors. As well as, 29% also consider all what is mentioned as sources of these errors. Thus, overgeneralization and incomplete application of rules are sources that all the respondents agree about.

For the justification, 3 teachers assert that making grammatical errors is related to the way of teaching grammar which means that how the grammar is taught affects learners' writing. Moreover, 2 teachers claim that students make errors in grammar because of the lack of practice. In addition, the other two teachers state that not correcting students' errors and not providing a feedback will cause these errors.

Item sixteen: do you give much importance to error correction? Please explain.

Table 16: Error correction' importance

| Option | Yes | No | Total |
|-------------------|------------|-----------|--------------|
| Number | 5 | 2 | 7 |
| Percentage | 71% | 29% | 100% |

The results of the table above illustrates that the majority 71% of teachers give the importance to error correction. However, 14% of respondents who answer with “No”, they do not pay attention to error correction.

Their justification as the following:

Teachers who said “Yes” propose some comments as the following:

- Making marginal notes on errors, it helps students to know these errors and try not to do them again.
- It is very important to provide students with feedback
- Error correction helps to improve their writing level
- Grammar errors lead to misunderstanding of the message thus, error correction is crucial
- Error correction develops students' language competence.

However, teachers who answer with “No”, explain that:

- There is no time for error correction
- Giving students the chance to correct themselves, which is a part of their autonomous learning.

Item seventeen: why do you your students fail to achieve accuracy in writing?

Table 17:the failure of students’ writing accuracy.

| Participants | Responses |
|---------------------|---|
| T1+T2+T3 | lack of practice and reading |
| T4+T5 | Students concentrate only on vocabulary more than other aspects |
| T6 | Lack of grammatical knowledge |
| T7 | Lack of concentration and motivation |

The table 17 shows that three teachers claim that students fail to write effectively because of the lack of practice and reading. Moreover, two teachers assert that students concentrate on vocabulary more than the other aspects. To clarify, they focus on what to write more than how and in what way. One teacher considers that the lack of grammatical knowledge is the reason for students’ writing failure. The other teacher states that the reason behind students’ inability to be accurate in writing is the lack of concentration and motivation

Item 18: is it possible to overcome these errors?

Table 18: the possibility to overcome making errors

| Option | Yes | No | Total |
|-------------------|------------|-----------|--------------|
| Number | 7 | 0 | 7 |
| Percentage | 100% | 0% | 100% |

As it is shown in table 18, 100% of teachers answered with “Yes” which mean that there is a possibility to overcome these errors.

For justifications, Almost, all teachers agree with the possibility of overcoming these errors and they explain why it is possible. Three teachers assert that practice and teacher’ feedback are very crucial. In addition, two teachers state that the teaching process is very important, thus teachers should find appropriate strategies to teach effectively. Whereas, one teacher

states that students should revise their grammar lessons and find the appropriate learning strategies. The other teacher suggests the modelling strategy to minimize these errors.

Item 19: as a teacher, feel free to make any suggestions or propose some strategies on how to avoid these grammatical errors to improve students' writing skill.

Table 19: Suggestions to overcome grammatical errors and improve students' writing skill.

| Participants | Responses |
|---------------------|--|
| T1 | Making an intensive workshops from time to time focusing on errors correction |
| T2 | Applying peer work and peer-feedback is beneficial in some ways |
| T3 | Doing some extra practice on common errors and explaining how these errors may affect negatively their written productions |
| T4 | Frequent practice of free writing could be a solution to reduce errors as well as reading also helps |
| T5 | More practice and exposure will help reducing the errors |
| T6 | Reading, practice and correcting errors will minimize making them |
| T7 | Reading and using models as references and applying them before generating works. |

For this question, the majority of teachers claim that practice and reading are the most crucial ways to avoid making errors. The more the students read the more they write and the more they practice the more they write correctly. In addition, one strategy is correcting their errors and giving them some notes about their errors as well as explaining their effectiveness on their productions. Another strategy is peer work and peer feedback, in some ways it helps to improve their writing. Moreover, presenting a model and analyzing it is good method to enhance their writing.

3.3.2. Error Analysis of Students' Essays

This table shows grammatical errors made by Master One students.

Table 20: the Grammatical errors

| Grammatical errors | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Addition | 60 | 24% |
| Omission | 108 | 42% |
| Misinformation | 70 | 27% |
| Misordering | 12 | 5% |
| Blends | 5 | 2% |
| Total | 255 | 100% |

The table above shows the grammatical errors in students' essay. According to this table and figure, the highest frequency in students' essay is omission with a percentage of (42%). Then, misinformation and addition errors come in second and third, respectively, with a percentage of (27%) and (24%). The fourth one is misordering with a percentage of (5%). However, the less frequent error was blends with a (2%) percentage.

Omission

It is a type of error that occurs when students omit a needed item in sentence (Dulay, Burt and Krashen as cited in Ellis and Barkhuizen, 2005). It is the highest frequent error in students' essay with a percentage of (42%). Those errors are omission of articles, verbs, pronouns, prepositions. The table below shows some examples and the correction of these errors.

Table 21:Sample of omission error.

| Error type | Error identification | Error Correction |
|-----------------|--|--|
| Omission | Formality is essential point to write an academic essay. | Formality is an essential point to write an academic essay. |
| | When he writing his essay, he should be formal. | When he is writing his essay, he should be formal. |
| | The student has to avoid the use subject “I”. | The student has to avoid the use of subject “I”. |
| | Students face problems when write an academic essay | Students face problems when they write an academic essay |

Misinformation

Is a type of error when students write a wrong form of certain morphemes (Dulay, Burt and Krashen as cited in Ellis and Barkhuizen, 2005). There were 70 errors of this type with a (27%) frequency in students’ essays. The majority of misinformations were on verbs, pronouns, adjectives, and articles. The following table provides some examples with correction of this type of errors.

Table 22: Sample of misinformation error.

| Error Type | Error identification | Error Correction |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| Misinformation | Students always use full forms when he write something. | Students always use full forms when they write something. |
| | On conclusion, formality, objectivity and evidence are three main steps in essay writing | In conclusion, formality, objectivity and evidence are three main steps in essay writing |
| | The focus have to be on evidence. | The focus has to be on evidence |
| | Essay is an piece of writing | Essay is a piece of writing |

Addition

It is a form of errors when students add unnecessary item in a sentence (Dulay, Burt and Krashen as cited in Ellis and Barkhuizen, 2005). There are 60 (24%) addition errors in the students' essays. These errors are on articles, verbs, prepositions and pronouns. The examples and correction of these errors are shown in the table below.

Table 23: Sample of addition error.

| Error Type | Error Identification | Error correction |
|-------------------|---|--|
| Addition | An effective academic essay is depends on how to be formal | An effective academic essay depends on how to be formal. |
| | For to be objective is to be logical. | To be objective is to be logical. |
| | Students try to be an effective writers. | Students try to be effective writers. |
| | At university, teachers gives the students all courses they need. | At university, teachers give the students all courses they need. |

Misordering

It is a type of errors when there is incorrect arrangement in a sentence (Dulay, Burt and Krashen as cited in Ellis and Barkhuizen, 2005). This type of errors appeared in students' essay with a percentage of (5%). They were mostly misordering between verbs and adverbs, adjectives and nouns as well as a wrong placement of prepositions. The examples and correction of this error are shown in the below table.

Table 24: Sample of misordering.

| Error type | Error identification | Error correction |
|--------------------|---|---|
| Misordering | If a student is to write about an essay | If a student is about to write an essay |
| | They should involve evidences in writing essay | They should involve evidences in essay writing . |
| | They should not include issues personal . | They should not include personal issues . |
| | The writer only wants the information. | The writer wants only the information. |

Blends

This type of errors that occurs when two or more morphemes with the same function exist in a sentence (James, 1998). Blends error is the less frequent one with a (2%) percentage. The examples and correction are in the following table

Table 25: Sample of blends error.

| Error Type | Error identification | Error correction |
|-------------------|--|---|
| Blends | Students may can understand the topic. | Students can understand the topic or Students may understand the topic |
| | There a lot of various ways to write an essay | There are a lot of ways to write an essay or There are various ways to write an essay |
| | They just only have to follow some rules. | They just have to follow some rules or They have only to follow the rules |
| | The only one thing you need to know | The only thing you need to know or The one thing you need to know |

3.4. Discussions and Interpretation of Findings

In this part, we are going to deal with the interpretation of results' discussion we have found in teachers' questionnaire and Master One students' written productions.

Starting with analysis of teachers' questionnaire, section one revealed that the majority of teachers have PHD degree whereas the remained ones have MA degree. For their teaching experience, most of them have been teaching written expression for more than 5 years. Thus, the majority of them are experts which will help this study to reach its aim. Regarding section

two, the results showed that 100% of teachers assert that their students prefer speaking over writing because the last one is harder. Moreover, the majority of teachers believe that argumentative essay is easy for their students to write in, because they prefer to outline their point of view about certain topics. In addition, teachers use some approaches and strategies in teaching writing. The findings revealed that eclectic and process approach are the most used ones. Because the first one allows them to use any method they believe it is appropriate for their lessons whereas the second one allows them to collaborate with their students in writing. For the strategies, the results revealed that most of teachers use the prewriting strategy because in this strategy teachers give a topic and ask students to generate ideas thus, this will facilitate their work. In addition, teachers face difficulties in teaching writing. The findings demonstrated that students' level and time management are considered as challenges for the majority of teachers. Section three is concerned with grammatical errors. The results illustrated that all teachers claim that their students face problems with grammar. When teachers were asked to reorder the grammatical errors according to their appearance in their students' written productions, omission error was ranked first because students escape to the omission as a solution rather than writing items in a wrong way. Moreover, for errors' sources, all teachers assert that overgeneralization and incomplete application of rules are sources of their students' errors. For error correction, the majority of teachers claim its significance and they justified that it helps students to know their errors to avoid them as a result, this will develop their written productions. Besides, according to the majority of teachers, students fail to achieve accuracy in writing because of lack of reading and practice. Finally, they provided some suggestions to improve students' written productions and avoid making errors. Most of them suggested reading and practice. Moreover, other teachers claimed that teacher's feedback will also develop students' writing skill.

The analysis of students' essays revealed that the highest frequent error in students' essay is omission with percentage of 42%. Misinformation and addition errors come in second and third, respectively, with a proportion of 27% and 24%. The fourth one is misordering error with percentage of 5 percent and the last error is blends with 2% percentage. As is shown omission is the most appeared error in Master One students' essays. Students omit some items when they are not sure about them. For example, they omit an article because they are not sure if it should be put in that place or not.

3.5. Limitations of the study

There are several limitations which cause the results to be less accurate. One of these limitations is related to time; the given period may not be sufficient to investigate all grammatical errors that are made by students in writing an essay. And the most important one is generalization the whole population from the existing sample is not valid. Therefore, this study concerns only the case study of Master One students at Biskra university.

3.6. Suggestions for further research

There are some suggestions for further research about the same topic. First, further studies can conduct the same research to identify other types of grammatical errors. Second, for data gathering tools, the researcher can use other different tools such as students' questionnaire, students' interview and class observation. Third, the researcher can find some strategies to avoid making grammatical errors.

3.7. Recommendations

Regarding our findings, we suggest the following recommendations:

For students:

- Students should do an extra practice in order to improve their written productions.
- Students should focus more on the main stages of writing to write well-structured essays.
- Students should read more to improve their writing skill

For teachers:

- Teachers should devote more sessions for error correction and provide their students with their feedback.
- Teachers should use more interesting strategies that attract their students
- Teachers should provide their students with interesting topics to write essays in

Conclusion

To conclude, this research used two tools which are teachers' questionnaire and error analysis of students' essays. The analysis of teachers' questionnaire revealed that teachers use

different approaches and strategies in teaching writing. They also use some approaches in grammar teaching. Moreover, teachers face some difficulties in teaching writing such as students' level. Furthermore, the analysis of research instruments showed that students commit grammatical errors; omission error is the most appeared one. In addition, students make these errors because of some reasons. Then, reading and practice were suggested by teachers to overcome these errors.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

To Master any foreign language, EFL learners seek to master its main aspects; grammar is one of them. Grammar is a set of rules of language which make it a very essential aspect. Moreover, mastering this aspect is not an easy task. EFL learners when writing they make some grammatical errors. They add or omit a needed item in a sentence, write these items in a wrong way, misplace them and put more than two items or more with the same function. The present study was conducted to investigate the grammatical errors in EFL learners' essay as well as present the sources behind them.

In order to confirm the hypothesis of this study, a descriptive method was used to identify the grammatical errors made by Master One students of the department of English at Biskra university. This was done through a questionnaire to written expression teachers. As well as, error analysis of students of Master One essays was used as a second tool.

The findings of this study show that Master One students of English department at Mohamed Kheider university of Biskra face some problems in grammar, thus they make some grammar errors. Both teachers' questionnaire and error analysis of students' essays reveal that students make errors which are omission with the highest frequent then misinformation and addition are in second and third rank, respectively. For the sources of these errors, teachers' questionnaire reveals that students make errors because of overgeneralization and incomplete application of rules. In addition, there were some suggestions teachers provide in the questionnaire to avoid making these errors which are practice, reading and error correction.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Teachers' s questionnaire

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear Teachers,

We are conducting a research that is about investigating the grammatical errors in EFL students' essays in general and specifically Master One students at the English Department of Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra. This questionnaire is designed to acquire some information about your opinion towards the grammatical errors made by EFL students, which hinder their writing achievement. We would be so grateful if you provide us with your answers.

Please tick the appropriate answer whenever is necessary

Personal information

1. Your degree :

- a. BA (License)
- b. MA (Magister/ Master)
- c. PHD (Doctorate)

2. How long have you been teaching written expression?

.....

Section one: EFL Essay writing

1. According to you, which of the following four skill is the most difficult?

- a. Listening
- b. Speaking
- c. Reading

d. Writing

2. Which of these skills do you think your students prefer to use?

a. Speaking

b. Writing

3. In your opinion, do your students follow the main stages of writing?

Yes

No

Why?

.....
.....

4. In your opinion, which type of essays your students find easy to write in?

a. Narrative

d. Expository

b. Argumentative

e. Compare and Contrast

c. Descriptive

f. Cause and Effect

5. Is your students writing level:

a. Good

b. Average

c. Bad

6. Which strategy do you use in teaching writing?

a. Group work strategy

b. Writing instruction strategy (giving students a model)

c. Prewriting strategy (give them a theme or topic for generating ideas for their writing)

Others

.....

.....

7. What approach of teaching writing do you use?

- a. Product approach
- b. Process approach
- c. Genre approach
- d. Process genre approach
- e. Eclectic approach

8. What are the challenges that you face in teaching writing?

- a. Students' level in writing
- b. Students motivation
- c. Time management
- d. Class condition

Others

.....

.....

9. Which of the following aspects your students face difficulties in?

- a. Vocabulary
- b. Punctuation
- c. Spelling
- d. Grammar
- e. Syntax
- f. Coherence

Section two: Grammatical errors

1. Do your students have problems with grammar?
Yes No
2. In teaching grammar, which approach do you think is better?
 - a. Deductive approach (starting with rules then examples)
 - b. Inductive approach (starting with examples to know the rules)
3. Reorder the types of errors according to their appearance in your students' essays.
 - a. Addition (adding an unneeded item)
 - b. Omission (absence of the needed item)
 - c. Misinformation (wrong form of certain morpheme)
 - d. Misordering (incorrect arrangement of morpheme in sentence)
 - e. Blends (more morpheme with same function in sentence)
4. In your opinion, what is the source of the grammatical errors? You can choose more than one.
 - a. Overgeneralization (when a student constructs a deviant structure based on his prior knowledge in the target language)
 - b. Ignorance of restriction (applying rules to situations when they do not apply)
 - c. Incomplete application of rules (it occurs when a structure is not fully developed)
 - d. False concepts hypothesized when students do not properly understand a distinction in the target language)
 - e. Carelessness
 - f. First language interference

g. Translation

Why?

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.....

5. Do you give much importance to error correction?

Yes

No

Please, explain

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.....

6. Why do your students fail to achieve accuracy in writing?

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.....

7. Is it possible to overcome these errors?

Please, explain

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.....

8. As a teacher, feel free to make any suggestions or proposes some strategies on how to avoid these grammatical errors to improve students' writing skill.

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Thank you for your cooperation

Appendix B: Sample of a Student essay

Read the short essay introduction about becoming an effective academic writer. Then, write ONE body paragraph to develop the thesis statement and a brief conclusion.

Becoming an Effective Academic Writer

Learning how to write an academic essay is essential for students who are planning to attend college. Most teachers require critiques of books, research papers, and formal reports related to the content of their courses. Students are excited about facing these challenges and pursuing their majors. To achieve this goal, they have to focus on three points: formality, objectivity and evidence when writing.

According to students or learners learning how to become an effective academic writer is a big deal or challenge for them to achieve or obtain their goals & formality, objectivity and evidence when writing. First, the primary goal is formality. student should be formal in their writing style however the writer must respect the subject matter (topic) and strategies of how to write essays. Second, the objectivity when writing, the students should have a good attitude towards making a piece of writing or essay. Moreover, they have to organise their specified ideas to evolve information on essay also to show that information would be an addition to this writing essay. Third, students have to focus on evidence.

to write an essay for exempt students ^{opinion} to write essays
to be good writers to achieve or write books, stories,
novels or just to improve their writing skills. In
addition the student of any level (primary, secondary,
university) of education should follow these steps
to have a good writing style.

In conclusion, students ^{consist} desire to face challenge to
improve their level of proficiency and achieve this goal
of formality, objectivity, evidence when writing, ^{mentioned}
make them an effective writers.

What is written without effort is read without pleasure.

Samuel Johnson

الملخص

اتقان لغة اجنبية يعني اتقان مهاراتها التواصلية الاربعة وهي القراءة، الاستماع، التحدث والكتابة. اخر مهارة تعتبر اصعبها. متعلمي اللغة الاجنبية عند الكتابة يواجهون عدة مشاكل في عناصرها الاساسية كالقواعد النحوية مثلا. تهدف هذه المذكرة الى دراسة الاخطاء النحوية في مقالات طلاب اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية. المشاركون في هذه الدراسة هم طلاب سنة الاولى ماستر فرع الانجليزية بجامعة محمد خيضر بسكرة. لتحقيق هذا الهدف تم استخدام دراسة وصفية حيث تم جمع البيانات من خلال استبيان لاساتذة مهارة الكتابة لمعرفة ملاحظاتهم ورأيهم حول الاخطاء النحوية التي يرتكبها الطلاب. اضافة الى ذلك، تم استخدام وسيلة ثانية و هي تحليل عشرين مقالا للطلبة الذي تم اختيارهم عشوائيا. كشفت النتائج ان اغلبية الطلبة يرتكبون خمسة انواع من الاخطاء النحوية وهي: الحذف، التضليل، الاضافة، التحريف الخاطى و الخلط. الخطأ الأكثر ظهورا في المقالات هو الحذف. قام الطلبة بحذف عناصر اساسية في النحو كحروف الجر، ادوات التعريف والتكبير، الافعال والضمائر. كما اتفق الاساتذة على ان التعميم المفرط والتطبيق غير الكامل للقواعد على انها المصادر الرئيسية وراء هذه الاخطاء. اضافة الى ذلك اقترح الاساتذة بعد الحلول كالممارسة والقراءة للتغلب على هذه الاخطاء. بناء على النتائج لتجنب هذه الاخطاء ينصح الطلاب بالممارسة والقراءة المستمرين كما ينصح الاساتذة كذلك ايلاء المزيد من الاهتمام في تدريس القواعد النحوية.