

Common Errors of Level Three Students' Writing at the English Department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University

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Abstract: This research aimed to find out the common errors in third level writing at the English Department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University during the academic year 2019-2020. It also aimed to highlight the causes of such errors. This research was quantitative research in which its results were calculated quantitatively. For the purpose of achieving the aims of the research, two data collection tools were used (an evaluation sheet for analyzing the test papers and a close ended questionnaire to highlight the errors behind the students' errors in writing. The sample of this research was %29 of the whole population (137 participants) selected randomly to do the questionnaire (40 participants) and 20 essays booklets from the final exam papers of Advanced Writing were chosen also randomly to be as the sample of error analysis. The results showed that errors in capitalization, S-V agreement and spelling were not common because the percentage of errors was not higher than %25 The results also showed that some reasons of making errors in writing as mother tongue interference, lack of vocabulary and the traditional methods of teaching writing.

Keywords: common errors, writing, university students, English language, Sana'a University.

الأخطاء الشائعة في كتابة طلبة المستوى الثالث بقسم اللغة الإنجليزية

- كلية التربية - جامعة صنعاء

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المستخلص: هدف هذا البحث إلى إيجاد الأخطاء الشائعة في كتابات طلبة المستوى الثالث، قسم اللغة الإنجليزية، بكلية التربية جامعة صنعاء خلال العام الأكاديمي 2019-2020م. كما هدفت أيضا إلى استكشاف الأسباب الكامنة وراء تلك الأخطاء الشائعة في كتابات الطلبة. ولغرض تحقيق أهداف البحث، اتبع الباحث المنهج الكمي الوصفي في جمع وتحليل البيانات. واستخدم أداتين لجمع بيانات الدراسة (استمارة التقويم، وذلك لتحليل الأخطاء التي ارتكبتها الطلبة في الكتابة؛ وأيضا استبانة مغلقة؛ لغرض استقصاء الأسباب التي تكمن وراء تلك الأخطاء). وقد تكونت عينة الدراسة من (40) طالبا وطالبة تم اختيارها بالطريقة العشوائية المنتظمة (%29) من إجمالي عدد طلبة المستوى البالغ عددهم (137) طالبا وطالبة، وقد بينت نتائج البحث أنه لا توجد أخطاء كثيرة في المحاور الثلاثة التي تركز عليها (توافق الفعل والفاعل، والإملاء، والحروف الكبيرة في كتابات الطلبة، حيث لم يتجاوز عدد الأخطاء نسبة %25 في كل المحاور). كما وضحت الدراسة أن من أهم الأسباب التي قد تجعل الطلبة يرتكبون أخطاء كثيرة في كتاباتهم هي تداخل اللغة الأم، ونقص المفردات لديهم، وأنه في الغالب تنطق كثير من الحروف ولا تكتب والعكس. الكلمات المفتاحية: الأخطاء الشائعة، الكتابة، طلبة الجامعة، اللغة الإنجليزية، جامعة صنعاء.

Introduction.

In teaching languages, the main purpose is to help students develop the four skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) and main areas of the language. Among these skills, writing is considered as one of the most complicated skills that must be mastered by the students. Writing in general presents the greatest challenge to the students in different stages, especially writing essays because it's more demanding than writing short paragraphs. Due to the complication of this skill, most students commit errors in writing when studying English as a foreign language.

English teachers say that most students are familiar with the rules of grammar and writing. However, they face problems in applying that knowledge. In most cases, students are still translating word by word and sentence by sentence from Arabic to English. In addition, they may overgeneralize the rules of a Second Language (henceforth, L2), and this leads to committing lots of mistakes, since the English language is full of exceptions to its rules. The challenge that teachers face is to make students apply their knowledge in their writing as well as to help them overcome the negative interference of a first Language (henceforth, L1). Thus, teachers need to understand the influence of language 1 on the learning process of English as a foreign language EFL in order to be aware of the students' difficulties in learning English. This may help students to produce good pieces of writing (Hourani: 2008).

Tricia Hedge (1998) in Hourani (2008) elaborates on the requirements of effective writing:

Effective writing requires a number of things: a high degree of development in the organization of ideas and information; a high degree of accuracy so there is no ambiguity of meaning; the use of complex grammatical devices for focus and emphasis; and careful choice of vocabulary, grammatical patterns, and sentence structures to create a style which is appropriate to the subject matter and the eventual readers.

In other words, the best way to help learners become good writers is to write more so that they can overcome the errors they do.

So, this research tries to explore as well as analyze the major writing errors done by level three students at the English Department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University. In addition, to investigate the reasons behind committing such errors.

1- Statement of the research:

Although recent curriculum and methods of teaching pay attention to writing skill, students at the Department of English, Sana'a University according to the researcher's experience in teaching them still make errors in their writing regarding the use of tenses, articles, prepositions, pronouns, etc. These errors affect the quality of their writing. This matches what has been concluded by many other researchers and writers as Akhter (2011) and Hourani (2008). They concluded that EFL students commit many errors in their writing, more than any other skill. Thus, the current research is done to analyze the common errors that are frequently made by EFL students in the English Department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a

University and the possible reasons behind those errors, so that appropriate recommendations can be introduced.

2- Research Objectives.

This research aims at:

1. Finding out the common errors that level three students commit in their writings at the Department of English, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University.
2. Highlighting the reasons behind these errors.

3- Research Questions:

This research seeks to find the answers to the following questions:

1. What are the common errors made by level three students at the Department of English, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University?
2. What are the reasons behind these errors?

4- Research Significance:

This research is significant in the sense that it:

1. Makes students realize the errors they make in their writings for the purpose of avoiding repeating them.
2. Helps teachers know the reasons and try to improve and vary their teaching methods when teaching writing skill.
3. Makes university officials and curriculum designers be aware of these errors, so that, they may focus on the points of weaknesses when designing writing textbooks in future.

5- Research Limitations:

This research is limited to:

1. Level three students, at the English Department, Faculty of Education. Sana'a University (2019-2020).
2. Errors in spelling, capitalization and subject verb agreement.

6- Research Definitions:

1. An Error: it is defined by Houran (2008) as "the use of a word, speech, act, or grammatical items in such a way it seems imperfect and significant of an incomplete learning".

It can be defined in this study as "a wrong form that is produced by the learner unconsciously when they don't know that it's not correct because they are not introduced to the language item.

2. Writing Skill:

Jabeen I. & et al (2021). defined writing skill as "the ability to write coherent and cohesive texts in English language which give a good sense to the reader"

In this study, writing skill is the ability to write essays without making errors in spelling, capitalization, and subject verb agreement.

7- Review of Literature.

Introduction:

This part of the research presents the theoretical background which the researcher refers to in the current research. It includes two main parts: the first one is the review of literature and the second one is the previous studies related to this research.

7.1: Section One: The Theoretical background:

7. 1.1 Behaviorism:

In the teaching process, teachers always don't want errors to occur by learners, and they want everything to be perfect. This belief was first introduced by the behaviorists in the 1950s. Tajareh (2015) mentioned that Behaviorism school dominated the field of linguistics till the end of 1960s. As a psychological school, "Behaviorism emerged from empiricism, the philosophical doctrine that all knowledge comes from experience" (Tajareh, 2015). Learners form habits by repetition and practice. Those habits are formed when particular stimuli are linked with particular responses. They believed that learning language is as any other skill. It becomes perfect with repetition. "The complex skill was broken down into a series of habits, which were drilled until they became automatic and unthinking" Ibrahim and Ibrahim (2018).

However, the theory of behaviorism was criticized by Chomsky in 1950s. According to Chomsky, learners can create new things rather than apply what they practice. Also, he mentioned that learning process is not as simple as behaviorists believe. It's a complex and abstract process. There are other things that can't be learnt through introducing a stimulus and responding to that stimulus. In addition, he rejected the idea of perfection in every utterance by the learners, and the role of error correction is not to a great extent effective because rules of L2 become correct by internalizing them in the mind not by repeating responses to stimuli. (Francis, 2011)

7.1.2 Contrastive Analysis:

The field of contrastive analysis was based on the Behaviorism beliefs. This field was proposed by Jabeen I. & et al (2021). He believed that the difficulty learners face in learning a foreign language is not

because of the new language features but because of the first language itself. According to them, *Linguistics Across Cultures*, they wrote:

Learning a second language Constitutes a very different task from learning the first language. The basic problem arises not out of any essential difficulty in the features of the new language themselves but primarily out of the special "set" created by the first language habits. Ibrahim and Ibrahim (2018)

Contrastive analysis contains the main assumption that Jabeen I. & et al (2021) came up with. CA claims that errors which are made by L2 learners are definitely because of the interference of the mother tongue (MT). Thus, theoretically, it was accepted to predict what errors would be made by making a careful detailed comparison between the native language (NL) and the target language (TL). Through this comparison, differences and similarities will be identified. Those differences are believed to be the essential source of errors, so what should be learnt is the different area not the similar one.

It can be inferred that contrastive analysis works as a predictor to expect the errors before they occur. It also works as a helper which helps the second language teachers to determine what errors will be done so that they provide their learners with appropriate teaching materials.

7.1.3 The Theory of Transfer:

The main assumption of CA is dependent on the Behaviorism school. To learn L2, a learner should change the old habits of L1 and replace them with new ones because L1 rules will hinder the process of learning L2. "This interference is the subcategory of a more general process called transfer" (Tajareh, 2015). Transfer has been a very common concept in CA, which emphasizes the influence of the MT on learning L2.

Transfer is usually divided into two types: positive transfer and negative transfer. Positive transfer happens when the two languages are similar. When learners learn rules in L2 which are similar to their MT, those rules will be transferred positively. Jabeen I. & et al (2021) said that "the basic premise of CAH is that language learning can be more successful when the two languages- the native and foreign- are similar". On the other hand, negative transfer occurs because of the differences between L1 and L2. They mentioned that the difficulty in learning L2 will be caused by the differences between the two linguistic systems. He said, "Those structures that are different will be difficult because when transferred they will not function satisfactorily in the foreign language and will therefore have to be changed".

7.1.4 Micro-Linguistics vs Macro-Linguistics.

Micro-Linguistic:

Rami D. (2013) mentioned that the early contrastive analysis studies focused on what has been described as micro-linguistic contrastive analysis. This level of analysis concentrated on phonology, grammar and lexicon. For example, an analyst may ask:

What are the consonant phonemes in languages? How do they differ from each other?

What's the tense system of the NL and FL?

How prepositions are used in the two languages?

Grammatical Level:

Halliday (1961) cited in Zaki (2015) set four grammatical categories of analysis: unit, structure, class and system. These four categories are considered universal, needed to describe any language. Unit means that the sentence is the biggest unit of analysis which consists of clauses, phrases, words; and then morphemes. Structure means that this category refers to the order of the components in the sentence, structurally (e. g. SVO or VSO) or phonologically (e. g. CCVC, CCCVC, CVCC). Class category refers to a specific place a unit can occur in the sentence. For example, in English, any phrase that occurs before the verb is a noun phrase. System refers to a variety of choices of the same element that can be in the same place in the sentence (e. g. plurality and singularity nouns in English and duality in Arabic).

Phonological Level:

In this level, CA tries to find out the differences and similarities in the sound systems of the two languages. Sometimes, two allophones in one language (e. g. [g], [ʒ] in Arabic) are considered to be two different phonemes in the other language (e. g. /g/, /ʒ/ in English). (Zaki, 2015)

Macro-Linguistics:

Johnsson (2008) pointed out that when there was a general development in the field of linguistics studies in the 1970s and 1980s, there was a more general movement toward making CA which was called macro-linguistic contrastive analysis. This analysis gave the priority to the text and discourse analysis. It turns to analyze bigger units of language, and how they are organized in a text. Johansson (2008) mentioned some questions that can be answered in this type of analysis are:

How is coherence expressed in the two languages?

What are the expressions of requesting or apologizing in L1 and L2?

How can we open and close conversations in L1 and L2?

Zaki (2015) mentioned two approaches that can be used in this analysis. The first one is textual characterization. In this analysis, data are collected according to the preference of specific features that achieve coherence in the text. For example, Wonderly (1968) cited in Zaki (2015) pointed out that the use of ellipsis or substitutions promotes the style, cohesion and coherence of texts in English while repetition is the preference of the Mayan languages of Central America. The second approach is text typology. This approach is used when comparing how different languages use a specific type of texts of the same function such as comparing reports, letters, etc. this analysis of discourse and pragmatics is helpful and beneficial for learners of L2. they can interact and use the language effectively with L2 native speakers.

Gass and Selinjer (2008) mentioned that CA predicts errors that may not be committed by the learners. Also, it doesn't predict some errors that really occur in the process of L2 learning. At the same

time, teachers have not always gotten that much benefit from the studies that contrastive analysis makes because they experience the practical part of teaching, and this makes them able to determine what areas of difficulty their learners may face. Al-Khresheh (2015) mentioned that in CA and EA were both criticized. CA predicts only interlingual errors which are not the only difficulty that faces second language learners (SLL). Also, most of its prediction is in the phonological and grammatical level. It shows no predictions in the syntactic level. This leads to the emergence of Error Analysis as a reaction to What is called Contrastive Analysis.

7.1.5 Error Analysis:

After the attack on CA, Error Analysis appeared as an alternative method to investigate errors of L2 learners. This was in 1967 when Stephen Pit Corder published his article 'The Significance of Learners' Errors'. CA believed that the only source of learners' errors is their mother tongue. As a result, the differences should be studied carefully so that to help learners avoid making errors. However, some analysts such as Corder believed that it is possible to study the errors when they occur. Then it's possible to make a contrastive analysis to determine whether L1 is the cause of those errors or there are other causes. (Wardhaugh, 1970)

The proponents of EA don't deny the interference of L1, but what they criticized is that CA predicts only the errors that are caused by L1 interference and ignores other errors, such as overgeneralization. Al-Khresheh (2016) mentioned that CA is considered as a predictive power that predicts the errors before they occur while the weak version is considered as an explanatory power that explains the errors when they occur and find out the sources of those errors. After collecting the errors, contrastive analysis is done as a secondary step to determine whether L1 interference is the cause of those errors, not to predict them. Yok (2006) summarized the main assumption of EA as:

It also enables us to predict errors in language learning, An Error Analysis presupposes a Contrastive Analysis. In EA, errors are due to a lack of linguistic competence and carelessness. What we are studying is a mixture of the performance and pedagogical problems that arise. We are in fact testing the individual as well as the teacher himself. The situation (context) will enable us to understand the source of the error.

7.1.6 Mistakes and Errors:

In Error Analysis, it's important to differentiate between a mistake and error. A mistake is defined as "a performance error that is either a random guess or a slip in that it's a failure to utilize a known system correctly" Brown (2000). This means that mistakes are made due to carelessness and lack of attention. On the contrary, "an error is a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker reflecting the interlanguage" Al-Jermozi (2005). Errors are committed due to a lack of knowledge in a particular area of language.

Sources of Errors.

7.1.7 Sources of Errors:

According to Hourani (2008), Simpson identifies seven sources of errors.

- 1- Language Transfer (interlingual source) in which errors are caused by L1 interference. Learners transfer the rules of L1 into L2.
- 2- Intralingual interference: this source of errors can be of four types
 - a. Overgeneralization: in this type of errors, the learner creates a new structure based on what he has experienced in other types of the language structures. For example, he/ she may say 'the mans, the womans, childs, etc.
 - b. Ignoring the rule restrictions in which the learner uses rules to context that can't be applied in this context.
 - c. Incomplete application of rules
 - d. Semantic errors as building false concepts/ systems.
- 3- Sociolinguistic situation: motivation and settings for language learning (compound or co-ordinate bilingualism) may influence second language learning.
- 4- Modality: modality of exposure to the target language and modality of production.
- 5- Age: Learning capacities vary with age.
- 6- Successions of approximative systems: since the circumstances of learning language vary from one learner to another, the same thing happens with acquiring new grammatical, lexical, phonological and syntactic items.
- 7- Universal hierarchy of difficulty: this factor has not got much attention in second language acquisition literature. Its main concern is that some language items are more difficult than other items.

Al-Khresheh (2015) highlighted that EA concentrates only on the wrong output of the learners and ignores their correct output. The criticism against EA was in 1972 when a third method was proposed by Selinker which he named it as Interlanguage.

7.1.8 Interlanguage:

Interlanguage appeared as a solution that can interpret the errors occurring in L2 learning process. Since contrastive analysis and error analysis failed to cover the overall depiction of learners' errors, interlanguage tries to explain this problem. Interlanguage was established by Selinker in 1972. In this year, he published an article called "The Significance of Learners' Errors". It concentrates on the learner's output whether it's correct or not. then errors are investigated. It is an independent field that doesn't attribute learner's errors to neither L1 nor L2. Interlanguage (IL) describes the actual language of learners and their knowledge regarding their language. It is considered as a transitional process that occurs between L1 and L2. Al-Khresheh (2015) pointed out:

Jabeen I. & et al (2021) defined Interlanguage as “the separate linguistic system evidenced when adult second-language learners attempt to express meaning in a language they are in the process of learning”. This proved that Interlanguage is a system that describes the language of students, regardless how many or what kinds of errors they make.

7.2 Section Two: Previous Studies:

Sermsook, Liamnimitr & Pochakorn (2017) conducted a research in a Thai University. The aim of study was to identify the major errors in the English writing of Thai EFL learners as well as the reasons behind these errors. The study focused mainly on sentences. The researchers analyzed 104 pieces of writing from Writing II course. The results were that the most frequent errors were in using punctuation, articles, subject-verb agreement, spelling, capitalization, and fragment. They also found that the main causes of these errors were interlingual interference, intralingual interference, limited knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary, and carelessness of the students. According to the limitations and the results of this study, it is clear that it is very similar to the current research.

Akhter (2011) carried out a study which aims to find out the common errors that elementary level students usually commit in their written work, how the second language teachers address them and how feedback can help our learners. He used a sample of students' writing and a questionnaire for teachers. The sample writings were administered in order to find out the errors and the questionnaire aimed to find out teachers' attitudes towards errors and the techniques they used to provide feedback. The results of the study revealed that the common grammatical errors committed by the learners were in sentence structure, tense and in preposition. Students also committed errors in article, number and subject verb agreement. Moreover, spelling errors were obvious in their writings.

Francis (2011) also conducted a research in error correction in second language writing in Queensland University, Faculty of Education. It investigated the beliefs of EFL teachers and the preference of learners regarding error corrections. Two EFL teachers and two groups of intermediate L2 students. Were interviewed to elicit answers. The results showed that teachers believe that error correction helps learners to improve their writing, but it's time consuming. On the other hand, the focused groups say that they expect their teachers to give them feedback in order to help them improve the quality of their writing.

Al-Jarmuzi (2005) carried out a quantitative descriptive research to investigate the common errors in using prepositions in writing that are made by student teachers of English at Sana'a University. the population is the students of English at the English Department, Faculty of Education. He used a written test to find out the errors, an interview with level four students, and a close and open-ended questionnaire to collect data about the reasons behind committing errors in using prepositions in writing. The results showed that errors were made by students in using prepositions. The reasons were neither interlingual nor intralingual. They might be attributed to the wrong way of teaching writing.

Al-Zubairy (2001) conducted a study on the analysis of errors in prepositions and verb groups made by Yemeni students. The sample was level two students of English, Al-Mahweet Faculty of Education. He used a classroom observation to investigate the errors in using prepositions. The results showed that errors that were made were unnecessary addition of preposition, wrong use of preposition and omission of preposition.

8- Research Methodology.

This part describes the methodology and procedures of the research. It consists of two sections. The first section includes the description of the research method, the population and the sample of the study. The second section offers an explanation of the research instrument and its validity and reliability. The third section deals with the research procedures followed in this study: (a) the research process, (b) the data collection and (c) the data analysis.

8.1 Research Design:

The research is a quantitative descriptive research that aims to investigate the errors of level three students in using capitalization, spelling and S-V agreement and the causes of those errors.

8.2 Population and Sample of the Research:

a. Research Population:

The population of the research is level three students at the English Department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University the total number is 140.

b. Research Sample:

The research sample is 29% of the whole population was selected randomly. Thus, the total number of the sample is 40 students Out Of 140. This is the sample of the close ended questionnaire. Regarding the analysis of the test, only 20 papers out of 140 papers were chosen as a sample to be analyzed (about 15%).

8.3 Research Instrumentation:

For achieving the aims of the research, two data collection tools were used:

7.3.1 An Evaluation Sheet:

This tool was used to analyze the written tests by third level students in advance writing course. The criteria of such tool was (Frequency and percentages of the correct and incorrect answers of three variables of the research).

7.3.2: A Close ended Questionnaire:

This too was purposed to highlight the reasons behind students' errors in writing course. It was designed by the researcher himself. It Consisted of only 16 items. The scale of the questionnaire was as (strongly agree- agree –neutral – disagree – strongly disagree).

8.4 Data Analysis Tools:

The data of this research was collected by means of: 1) an evaluation sheet to analyze level three students' test papers of advance writing to find out their errors related to spelling, subject verb agreement, and capitalization; 2) A close ended questionnaire to highlight the reasons behind their errors, This means that numbers were used when analyzing the collected data of the two tools. So, the following data analysis tools were used:

1. Frequencies and percentages were used to calculate the evaluation sheet. So, the frequency of the correct and incorrect answers of each one of the three variable (spelling, subject verb agreement, and capitalization) under investigation in this research were calculated. Then, the number of the correct answers and the incorrect ones were calculated manually.
2. Means and standard deviations were used in analyzing the data collected via questionnaire. The data was coded by following this criteria (strongly agree =5, agree = 4- neutral = 3- disagree = 2- strongly disagree = 1). After coding the collected data via the close-ended questionnaire, the mains and standard deviations were calculated.

9- Findings of the Research.

Introduction:

This part of the research specified for the analysis and discussion of its findings.

9.1 Presentation and Discussion of Question One:

The first question of the research is: " What are the common errors committed by third level students at the English Department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University in their writing? The data of such question was collected by means of an evaluation sheet. The percentages and frequencies of the correct and incorrect errors were calculated. After coding and analyzing the data of this question, a criteria for discussing its results was followed. Such criteria was as: (.1-20% = Very Low Rate, 21 – 40% = Low Rate, 41 – 60% = Medium Rate, 61 – 80 = High, 81- 100% = Very high Rate)

Table (1) Frequencies and Percentages of the incorrect and Correct Errors Committed by Third Level Students at the Department of English, Faculty of Education – Sana'a

No.	The Variable	Incorrect		Correct		Total	
		Freq.	Perc.%	Freq.	Perc.%	Freq.	Perc.%
1	S-V Agreement	78	18%	351	82%	429	100%
2	Capitalization	73	17.7%	338	82.3%	411	100%
3	Spelling	117	10.5%	991	89.5%	1108	100%

It is obvious from table (1) above that third level students at the Department of English, Faculty of Education – Sana'a subject commit mistakes mostly in verb agreement variable in which the incorrect answers were (18%). Then, comes capitalization in the second rate of errors (17.7%), and spelling comes in the last rate. It noticed that the percentage of errors in all the three variable was less than 20%. This means that the level of errors committed by students in these three variables was very low. This might be

the three variables under investigation are not difficult that much for students in level three. This was supported by Akhter (2011) when he said that capitalization and spelling errors are rarely committed by high level learners because they are basics that can be mastered easily. Also, Hazem (2015) classified students' writing errors in using the cohesive marjers and coherence of the text are nore than spelling and subject verb agrreement. Bagheri & Hedari (2012) mentioned a study conducted by Sattayatham and Honsa (2007). They mentioned that one of the errors done by students was S-V agreement. Though, this type of error was ranked the third one among the ten types of errors, it was not the commonest.

9.2 Presentation and Discussion of Question Two:

The second question of the research is: " What are the reasons behind the students errors in their writings? The data of such question was collected by means of a close ended questionnaire. The means and standard deviation of the correct and incorrect errors were calculated. After coding and analyzing the data of this question, a criteria for discussing its results was followed. Such criteria was as: (.01- 1 = Strongly disagree, 1.1 – 2 = Disagree, 2.1 – 3 = Neutral, 3.1 – 4 = Agree, 4.1 – 5 = Strongly Agree)

Table (2) Shows Means and Standard Devaition of the Close ended Questionnaire

No.	Item	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
3	Mother tongue interference affects the way students think while writing.	40	4.2250	.94699
5	Students suffer from lack of vocabulary.	40	4.1500	1.12204
16	Spelling errors occur because English is a phonetic language (what is said is not the same as what is written).	40	4.0750	1.22762
13	Students rarely practice writing outside class because of their heavy work doing other things.	40	3.90000	1.150251
7	writing classes are not enough	40	3.8750	.91111
1	Methods of teaching writing are traditional.	40	3.8250	.87376
15	Students commit spelling errors because spelling is not actually taught as an aspect/sub skill of English language.	40	3.8000	.93918
14	unsatisfactory reading skill resulted in poor language writing output.	40	3.6750	.79703
4	There is lack of motivation.	40	3.6500	.83359
2	There are technical problems in the textbooks of writing.	40	3.5750	.90263
9	Lack of practice in writing classes.	40	3.5750	1.03497
6	Teachers rarely check students' assignments.	40	3.5500	.90441
12	Errors in using punctuation marks are committed due to their several uses.	40	3.5500	.74936
8	Capitalization errors are due to the inability of students to differentiate between common and proper nouns.	40	3.2500	1.00639
10	If there is feedback, it is not clear and understandable.	40	3.2250	1.20868
11	Grammar rules are not emphasized in writing classes.	40	2.9750	1.25038
	Valid N (listwise)	40		

It is clear from table (2) above that the most important reasons behind students' writing errors are mother tongue interference and lack of vocabulary in which the means of these two items are rated as

(4.2250 and 4.1500). This means that students strongly agree on these two items as reasons behind their errors. This might be because students sometimes interfere with their mother tongue. It is also obvious from the table above that the reason related to the grammar rules was viewed to be the lowest reason behind students' errors in writing.

Spelling errors occur because English is a phonetic language (what is said is not the same as what is written). This is what is seen through the results shown above in which the mean is (4.0750). This means that it is very important reason as the previous two. This might be because of the differences in pronunciation and writing of sounds. Akkter (2011) supported this idea when he says that learners face problems in the areas where silent letters are located.

The students agreed upon most of the items of the questionnaire to be reasons. These reasons are ordered according to their importance from the highest to the lowest, though all of them are agreed upon by the students. But, they are not very important as the previous three. These are No.(13, 7, 1, 15, 14, 4, 2, 9, 6, 12, 8, and 10). Their means are between (3.90000 and 3.225). This means that the reasons behind students errors in writing are as: the lack of practice writing outside class and the lack of practice in writing classes. This is important and reasonable reason that lead students to commit errors in their writing. RAMLI (2013) ensured that the lack of practice inside and outside classroom could major reasons behind students errors in writing. Ibrahim and Ibrahim (2019) said that in order to make learners avoid writing errors, they are supposed to be exposed to a huge exposure in class and outside classroom, and should be given feedback by their teachers.

According to the results in table (2) above, more reasons that was agreed upon by the students to be important reasons behind students' errors in writing as: writing classes are not enough, methods of teaching writing are traditional, students commit spelling errors because spelling is not actually taught as an aspect/sub skill of English language, unsatisfactory reading skill resulted in poor language writing output, lack of motivation, technical problems in the textbooks of writing, teachers rarely check students' assignments, errors in using punctuation marks are committed due to their several uses, capitalization errors are due to the inability of students to differentiate between common and proper nouns, if there is feedback, it is not clear and understandable, So, it can be said that they are many things important share in students' errors in their writing. These are lack of teachers' feedback, traditional methods of teaching, lack of motivation (students are not motivated enough, unsatisfactory reading skill, sometimes, if found, feedback of writing teachers could be vague.

Such reasons affect students' writing. Ibrahim and Ibrahim (2019) suggested that teachers should use modern and varied methods of teaching when studying writing, should give their students feedback continuously, and use interesting textbooks that help in motivating their students to write more and more. Ramli (2013) also ensured on students' textbooks and said the these textbooks should include interesting and varied exercises of writing to make students be motivated to write more either inside or outside classroom.

10- Summary of the Findings:

The following findings were concluded:

- 1- The students errors in subject verb agreement are the highest.
- 2- The findings revealed that the errors of learners are ordered as: subject verb agreement, capitalization, then spelling.
- 3- It has been concluded that the most important reasons behind students' writing errors are mother tongue interference. lack of vocabulary, and silent letters.
- 4- It has been concluded that there are some other reasons, but they are not as important as the previous three ones. These are:
- 5- Writing classes are not enough.
- 6- Traditional methods of teaching writing.
- 7- Spelling is not actually taught as an aspect/sub skill of English language.
- 8- Unsatisfactory reading skill resulted in poor language writing output.
- 9- Lack of motivation.
- 10- Technical problems in the textbooks of writing.
- 11- Teachers rarely check students' assignments.
- 12- Errors in using punctuation marks are committed due to their several uses.
- 13- Capitalization errors are due to the inability of students to differentiate between common and proper nouns.
- 14- These is lack of teachers' feedback, if found, it can be vague.

11- Recommendations.

In the light of the findings of the study, the following recommendations are suggested:

- 1- Teachers and curriculum designer should give focus for there variables according to the following order: subject verb agreement, capitalization, and spelling comes at the end.
- 2- Teachers should focus on the areas that are similar to the students' mother tongue, silent letters and vocabulary.
- 3- Students should be given more writing classes, should be motivated, and given feedback continuously.
- 4- Teachers should use various and modern methods of teaching.
- 5- Textbooks should be interesting and include a lot vocabulary.
- 6- Students should practice writing slot inside and outside classroom.

12- Suggestion for Further Studies:

In the light of the study findings and recommendations, it is suggested to study the following topic in future:

1. Common errors in using the cohesive markers.
2. Common errors in using conjunction in students' writings.

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