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Effect of Categorizing EFL Shaqra University Students' Writing Errors on Writing Improvement

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Abstract. This paper aims at using a strategy of categorizing EFL Shaqra University students' writing errors and identifying its effect in improving students' writing. The study hypothesized that categorizing students' errors into main headings related to the types of error, frequencies of error, examples of errors, and causes of errors will provide precise insight into the nature of students' errors. Moreover, providing students with models to read and extract the difficult vocabularies from them, understanding their meanings, and using them in their writing will improve students' writing. Hence, the researcher gave 65 female students a title to write about in lecture number one as a pre-test. The title was "women driving in Saudi Arabia", and in lecture number eleven, she gave them a post-tester in the same title after applying the hypothesized teaching strategy. The findings of students' essay analysis in the pre-test proved that students had many grammatical and lexical mistakes but in the post-test the students writing improved significantly in terms of style, diction, developing ideas, spelling, and punctuation. Even their errors decreased from 936 errors in the pre-test to 57 errors in the post-test which indicates the success of the teaching strategy adopted by the researcher. Accordingly, the researcher recommended that: firstly, instructors should categorize their students' writing errors to have a clear insight into the nature of their students' errors hence specifying much time in explaining the areas of students' weaknesses. Secondly, instructors should provide students with a well-written model to read; and then ask them to criticize those reading models. The students will learn through criticizing and imitating the style of reading models. Moreover, the instructors of Shaqraa should specify much time explaining morphology since it was the branch that the students make many errors in it.

Introduction

Writing is a vital skill in learning, if our students succeed in writing effectively, then they will be able to express their needs and ideas. To be a good writer is an objective for many students.

In terms of EFL or ESL instructions, Anchale and Pongrat (2008, p.8) write about the importance of writing by claiming that "writing helps students learn". Moreover, writing reinforces the grammatical structures, idioms, and vocabulary that are taught to students, when students write, they also have a chance to be adventurous with the language to go beyond what they have just learned to say, and when they write; they necessarily become involved with the new language. As students struggle with what to put down next or what is the way to put it

down on paper, they often discover a new way of expressing their ideas. Raimes (1983) points out that writing is a valuable part of any language course because of the close relationship between writing and thinking. She identified the different components for producing a clear, fluent, and effective writing piece: content, the writer's process, audience, purpose, word choice, organization, mechanics, grammar, and style. However, writing is a learned skill while speaking is acquired naturally, as Myles (2002, p.1) claims that "writing is not a naturally acquired skill, it is usually learned or transmitted as a set of practices in formal instructional settings or other environments." Zheng (1999) also thinks that acquiring the writing skill seems more laborious and demanding than acquiring the other three skills. As a result, a learner needs to write not only coherently but correctly and cohesively, which requires some time and effort. This difficulty in writing leads learners to be more susceptible to make errors. Although writing skill is an indispensable part of advanced English course in Saudi Universities, tasks of writing remain daunting for many students. It has been noticed that most Saudi university students make errors in their writing.

Many studies aim at categorizing students' errors to know the area which causes many difficulties for the students. But what distinguishes this study is that it incorporates the categorization and the solution at the same time. That means the study investigates the efficiency of the strategy and the solution at the same time. Since the researcher categorized her students' learning errors before giving them the reading models and then she started applying the solution throughout the weeks of the semester. Finally, she categorizes her students' errors again after applying the suggested solution to investigate its efficiency.

discovering how and why the errors are committed by Saudi EFL learners is very significant because it will provide feedback on language teaching and learning methods and practice. Moreover, it will give the instructor feedback on the nature of errors. Hence, the study attempts to Categorize students' writing errors which will contribute to understanding the nature of students' errors and their weaknesses. Accordingly, the instructors will specify much time explaining those areas of weaknesses. Moreover, the researcher thinks that providing students with reading models written cohesively and coherency to criticize and imitate will be of great benefit and a solution to students' errors.

Significance of the Study

The study is significant in many ways: firstly, it incorporates the strategy of categorizing students' errors, and the solution to the students' errors at the same time and this is distinguishing it from the studies in the same field. Secondly, it will provide the teachers feedback about the teaching and learning strategies and practices. Thirdly, it will provide feedback to the students and teachers about the areas of difficulties, hence specifying much time to it. Fourthly, it will provide instructors with practical solutions that could be adopted by them to reduce students' writing errors. Fifthly, it could be a good reference to the curriculum planner to incorporate reading and writing skills in one course since both skills are the input and output of each other. Finally, it will be a good reference for the researchers who are interested in the same field of study.

Statement of Research Problem

Writing is one of the productive skills which will enable us to do many functions such as expressing our feelings, asking for our rights, writing assignments, writing researches, answering exams, and many others. But writing is not just one step it includes many other steps such as thinking, planning, writing, and editing. And it needs a lot of knowledge such as coherence, cohesion, style, diction, good vocabulary to express ideas clearly and good knowledge about how to organize them in a clear text. Those many skills and knowledge make

writing difficult for many students and make it easy for them to make mistakes. The researcher is not against making errors because errors are mirrors that reflect how learning is going on. But the study is conducted mainly to help students write comfortably.

The role of the instructor is to help students avoid making mistakes by explaining clearly the areas of difficulties and giving much practice and exercises in such areas. One of the strategies which will help instructors identifying their students' errors is categorizing their writing errors. Hence the study attempts to categorize the students' writing errors in order to gain feedback on the nature of teaching and learning practices as well as the nature of students' errors. Accordingly, instructors could specify much time explaining students' areas of difficulties.

Research Objectives
The study aims at:
1.   Categorizing EFL Shaqraa university students' writing errors to identify the nature of their errors.
2.   Identifying the area which causes difficulty for the students to specify much time explaining it.
3.   Suggesting practical solutions to EFL Shaqraa university students' writing errors.

Literature Review
The studies have been done in the same field of the target study. All of them want to conclude the problem of students writing performance. They propose causes to the problem and suggest probable solutions for the problem and come up with findings. For example, Hamid Marashi (2015) conducted a study that aimed at using convergent and divergent tasks to improve writing and language learning motivation. The sample was 60 females intermediate EFL learners. They were taken among a total number of 90 students. The students were divided into two groups, thirty in each, the first group assigned to divergent tasks and the second one assigned to convergent tasks, 18 sessions of teaching and treatment were given to the students followed by writing a test to both groups and comparing of performances for each of them. The findings showed that the learners in the convergent group benefited significantly more than those in the divergent group in terms of improving their writing. The second null hypothesis was not rejected which means that the two treatments were not significantly different in terms of improving the learners' motivation. The study is different from the target study in the main aim, population, sample, and study time. The target study found that grammatical errors are common among university students because of a lack of practice among the students. Another study is submitted by Fawzi Eltayb Yossif (2016) of the University of King Khalid, Saudi Arabia. Its title is "An investigation of writing errors of Saudi EFL university students." The study aimed at investigating the writing errors of Saudi EFL university students of the College of Science & Arts, Tanumah at King Khalid University. The results of the study revealed that the students make errors in their writing performance as a result of some factors such as mother tongue interference, and insufficient activities, and the practice of necessary techniques of writing in addition to the lack of follow-up to the students' writing performance and some other factors. This study is similar to the target study in the main aim and findings except for the population and the date of conduction. One of the recent studies done in the field is by Amal Ibrahim Shousha, Nahed Moussa Farrag & Abeer Sultan Althaqafi.(2020) entitled analytical assessment of common writing errors among Saudi foundation year students: a comparative study. The study explored the most common writing errors of science and arts students of the

foundation year program at a Saudi University that hinder them from achieving their course goals, learning outcomes, and becoming efficient writers. The main findings of the study were: lack of exposure to English language, inadequate application of primary language and writing mechanics. Suggested remedial solutions included addressing student's common errors in a proper and timely manner, hence giving feedback in a way suitable to student's individual levels, needs, and preferences. The main recommendations were: Increase the number of teaching weeks as writing is a skill that needs time for reinforcement and practice of grammar rules and writing conventions, address common writing errors repeatedly, either anonymously in a whole class discussion or individually, to eliminate fossilized errors.

Theoretical Background

English has undoubtedly become today's international language. Apart from 350-450 million native speakers, there are also about 800 million people who speak English as a foreign language (James, 1998). It means that most of the communication in English takes place among its non-native speakers (Seidlhofer, 2005).

In Selinker's view, inter-language is "a different linguistic system resulting from learner's trials to produce the target language norm" (McLaughlin, 1987, pp.60-61). McLaughlin, (1987, p. 61) also agrees with Selinker's belief that inter-language was "the product of five central cognitive processes involved in second-language learning: (1) language transfer, i.e. transfer **from the L1; (2) transfer of training i.e. some features transferred from the training process; (3)** strategies of second-language learning i.e. an approach to the material taught; (4) strategies of second-language communication i.e. those ways learners use to communicate with L2 speakers; and (5) overgeneralization of the target language linguistic material".

Error analysis

Error Analysis (EA) is the third of the main theories dealing with errors in second language acquisition.

Definitions and Goals

Error Analysis is a theory replacing the Contrastive Analysis, which was abandoned by linguists and teachers due to its ineffective and unreliability. EA also belongs to applied linguistics, however; it has no interest in explaining the process of L2 acquisition. It is "a methodology for dealing with data (Cook, 1993, p.2 cited in James, 1998, p.7)." At the very beginning of his Errors in Language Learning and use, James (1998, p.1) defines Error Analysis as "the process of determining the incidence, nature, causes, and consequences of unsuccessful language." Later he goes on explaining that EA "involves first independently or 'objectively' describing the learners' inter-language and the target language itself, followed by a comparison of the two, as to locate mismatches (James, 1998, p. 5)."

Sources of Errors

Identifying sources of errors can be considered as a part of error classification. Error Analysis is innovative in respect to the contrastive analysis hypothesis because it examines errors attributable to all possible sources, not just negative L1 transfer (Brown, 1980).

Among the most frequent sources of errors, Brown counts (1) interlingual transfer, (2) intralingual transfer, (3) context of learning, and (4) various communication strategies the learners use. James (1998) similarly classifies errors according to their source into four diagnosis-based categories with the difference that he terms category (3) induced errors.

(1) Interlingual transfer i.e. mother-tongue influence, causes interlinguas errors. They are very common at the initial stages of L2 learning since the L1 is the only language system the learner knows and can draw on; hence negative transfer occurs (Brown, 1980:173). Brown also argues that when one is learning L3, L4, etc. transfer takes place from all the previously learned languages but, the degree of transfer is variable (1980: 173).

(2) Intralingual negative transfer or interference is the source of intralingual errors (Brown,1980, pp.173-174). Brown gives only overgeneralization as a representation of negative interlinguas transfer, but (James,1980, pp. 185-187) goes into more detail. He refers to intralingual errors as learning-strategy-based errors and lists seven types of them: False analogy arises when the learner incorrectly thinks that a new item behaves like another item already known to him or her. For example, the learner already knows that dogs are the plural form of a dog, so he or she thinks that (sheeps)are the plural form of sheep.

A wrong analysis means that the learner has formed an unfounded hypothesis in the L2 and put it into practice. James (1980) gives an example of the context when the learner presupposes that it can be used as a pluralized form of it.

An incomplete rule application happens when the learner does not apply all the rules necessary to apply in a particular situation. It is the converse of overgeneralization. Exploiting redundancy appears when there is a redundancy in the language, e.g. unnecessary morphology, and intelligent learners try to avoid those items which they find redundant to learn and communicate easier. The opposite of exploiting redundancy is over elaboration which is usually observable in more advanced learners.

Overlooking co-occurrence restrictions mean that the learners do not know that specific words go together with specific complements or prepositions for instance. An example given by (James,1998, p.186) is when the learner ignores that the verb to enjoy is followed by a gerund and not a bare infinitive. Hyper-correction, as James (1998, p.186) argues, "results from the learner over-monitoring their L2 output". Overgeneralization means that the learner uses one member of a set of forms in situations when the other members must be used which leads to overuse of one form and underuse of the others. Familiar candidates for overgeneralization are pairs as other/another, much/many, some/any, and many others. James (1998) opines that the learner uses one of them instead of distinguishing between them and using each in the appropriate situation. Overgeneralization of language rules is also common, e.g. Does she can dance? Reflects that the learner over-generalizes the use of auxiliary verbs in questions.

(3) Context of learning refers to the setting where a language is learned. e.g. a classroom or a social situation, moreover, the teacher and materials used in the lessons. These factors can cause induced errors (Brown,1980, p.174). As Brown explains, "students often make errors gives a misleading explanation from the teacher, faulty presentation of a structure or word in a textbook, or even because of a patent that was rudely memorized in a drill but not properly contextualized". James (1998) divides induced errors into the following subcategories:
   a. materials-induced errors
   b. teacher-talk induced errors
   c. exercise-based induced errors
   d. errors induced by pedagogical priorities
   e. look-up errors

(4) Communication strategies are consciously used by the learners to get a message across to the hearer. They can involve both verbal and non-verbal communication mechanisms (Brown,1980). Among the communication strategies:

i.   Negligence arises when a learner consciously avoids specific language items because he feels unsure about them and prefers avoiding them rather than committing an error. There are several kinds of avoidance, e.g. syntactic, lexical, and phonological or topic avoidance (Brown, 1980).

ii.   Prefabricated patterns are memorized phrases or sentences, as in 'tourist survival' language or a pocket bilingual phrasebook, and the learner who memorized them usually does not understand the components of the phrase (Brown 1980). However, their advantage is, as Hakuta (1976) cited in Brown (1980, p.179) notes, that they "enable learners to express functions which they are yet unable to construct from their linguistic system, simply storing them in a sense like large lexical items".

iii. Cognitive and personality styles can also cause errors. For instance, Brown (1980, p. 18) suggests that "a person with high self-esteem maybe willing to risk more errors, in the interest of communication, since he does not feel as threatened by committing errors as a person with low self-esteem."

iv.   Appeal to authority is a strategy when the learner, because of his uncertainty about some structure, directly asks a native speaker, a teacher, or looks up the structure in a bilingual dictionary (Brown, 1980).

v.   Language switch is applied by the learner when all the other strategies have failed to help him. So, the learner uses his or her native language to get the message across, even though he knows that the receiver may not know the native language. (Brown, 1980).

Procedures for Error Analysis

Error analysis involves four stages (James, 1998): The first stage is when errors are identified or detected and therefore James (1998) terms it error detection. It is spotting the error itself. First, we collect a set of utterances produced by an L2 learner. A sentence is usually considered a significant unit of analysis and then the informant, a native speaker, or the analyst himself, points out the suspicious or potentially erroneous utterances and decides if the utterance in question is erroneous or not. However, this may not be so easy since there are many factors involved. It is easier, for instance, to spot someone else's error than one's own or to find the error in written language than in spoken (James, 1998).

The following stage is called error location. It occurs when the informant locates the error. James argues that some errors are difficult to locate because they can be diffused throughout the sentence or the whole text and appear after the whole text is carefully examined (1998). Burt and Kiparsky call such deviances global errors (opposite to local errors): "the sentence does not simply contain an error: it is erroneous or flawed as a sentence" (cited in James 1998, p.93).

The third stage is called an error description. Naturally, a learner's language has to be depicted in terms of some language system. The Inter-language hypothesis would suggest that the "learner language is a language in its own right and should, therefore, be described *sui generis* rather than in terms of the target (James 1998, p.94)." If we take Corder's idea of idiosyncratic dialect, which is the learner's version of the target language, we can compare it to the native speaker's code since both the codes were considered dialects of the same language and therefore "should be describable in terms of the same grammar" (James, 1998, p. 94). Also, a learner's language should be characterized in terms of the TL because error analysis is, by its nature, target language-oriented (James, 1998).

James (1998) also argues that the grammar used for the description must be comprehensive, simple, self-explanatory, easily learnable, and user-friendly. For these reasons, he rejects scientific and pedagogic grammars and recommends descriptive grammars,

particularly Crystal's (1982) Grammar Assessment Remediation and Sampling Procedure (also known as GRARSP). There are, in James's opinion three significant purposes of the description stage: (1) to make the errors explicit, (2) it is indispensable for counting errors, and (3) it is a basis for creating categories since it reveals which errors are different or the same (James,1998).

Finally, the last step in EA is error classification or categorization (James, 1998). We can categorize errors into dictionaries or taxonomies. Dictionaries of errors are organized alphabetically and contain both lexical and grammatical information.

Dictionaries of 'false friends' represent another kind of dictionaries. According to (James, 1998, p. 101), "relevant to learners of a specific L2 who speak a particular mother tongue". For Czech learners of L2 English, there is Sparling's English or (Czenglish, 1991) that contains the most popular false friends and other items that usually cause trouble for L1 Czech learners.

The Importance of Learners' Errors

The powerful and innovative feature of EA is that it is quite error-friendly, which means that errors are not looked at as something negative or pathological anymore. However, as Corder claims, "a learner's errors … are significant in [that] they provide the researcher evidence of the way language is learned or acquired, what methods or procedures the learner is applying in the discovery of the language (Corder, 1967, p.167 cited in Brown 1980, p. 164)."

At the very beginning of Errors in Language Learning and use, James stresses the uniqueness of human errors: "Error is likewise unique to humans, who are not only sapiens and loquats but also homo errands (1998, p. 1)." He supports the idea of the importance of learners' errors by claiming that "the learners' errors are a register of their current perspective on the TL."

James (1998) gives Corder's five crucial points, primarily published in Corder's seminar paper titled 'The significance of learners' errors': (p.12).

1.   L1 acquisition and L2 learning are parallel processes; both are governed by the same mechanisms, procedures, and strategies. Learning an L2 is probably facilitated by the knowledge of the L1.

2.   Errors reflect the learners' inbuilt syllabus or what they have taken in, but not what the teachers have put into them. So, there is a difference between 'input' and 'intake.'

3.   Errors reveal both learners of L1 and L2 improve an independent language system - a 'transitional competence.'

4.   The terms 'error' and 'mistake' must not be employed interchangeably.

5.   Errors are necessary because they (a) tell the teacher what he or she should teach, (b) are a source of information for the researcher about how the learning proceeds, and (c) allow the learners to test their L2 hypotheses. Moreover, Harmer (1995) states a brief history about errors in the classroom Transforming difficulty into success always seems to hinge on how learners perceive their ability, how they process feedback around them, and how they manage to make their errors work for them not against them. Historically error treatment in classrooms has been a hot topic. In today's time of the audio-lingual method, errors are viewed as a phenomenon to be evaded by over learning, memorizing, and getting it right from the start, then some methods to error, under the assumption that natural process within the learner will eventually lead to acquisition.

The Academic Writing Function

 Every student as a new college learner may have much anxiety and many questions about the writing he will do in college. The word "academic," especially, may cause

considerable anxiety for the students. However, with this first-year composition class, students begin one of the only classes in their entire college career to focus on learning to write. According to (Harmer, 1995) writing is hard, and he thinks that writing in college may resemble playing a popular game by wholly new rules (that often are unstated). Academic success in academic writing depends on how the students better understand what they are doing as they write and then the way they approach the writing task. Early research done on college writers discovered that whether students produced a successful piece of writing depended entirely upon their representation of the writing task. The writers' mental model for picturing their function made a massive difference.

Methodology
1.   The approach of the study.
The study used the descriptive analytical approach based on Corder's model (1981) for EA as follows:
1. Identifying the common writing errors by analyzing the students' writing samples.
2.   Classifying the errors into different linguistic types and categories.
3. Computing the frequency of these errors.
4. Exploring the causes behind these types of errors in the light of teachers' and student's perspectives.
 5. Suggesting possible solutions for these errors.
The researcher chose this model because it ensures a comprehensive and precise categorization of students' errors.

2. Research Design
The descriptive quantitative research design is used in this study to collect and analyze data. The researcher asked her students to write an essay about "women driving in Saudi Arabia in week number one of the second semester of 2017. Then she collected their papers corrected them and Categorized the students' errors according to Corder model (1981). From week number two till week number eleven the researcher provided her students with cohesive and coherent reading models with different topics to criticize them and to imitate them at the end of each lecture. So, the students writing improved gradually because while criticizing students pay more attention to the area of strengths of writing and then they try to imitate them, moreover, they gain new vocabulary which enabled them to express their ideas much comfortably. In week number twelve the researcher asked her students to rewrite about "women driving in Saudi Arabia" the result showed great improvement in Student grammar and mechanics, organization of ideas, diction, and style. The total number of errors reduced to 57 in week number twelve from a total of 936 in week number one.

3. Participants
The population of the study was EFL level seven female students in Saudi Universities who are studying advanced writing in the second term of 2017. The number of participants was 65 students because this was the total number of level seven students who were studying the course of advanced writing in Shaqra University, College of Science and Humanities, Department of English language in Dawadmi in 2017. So, the researcher selected her sample purposefully.

4. Tools of Data Collection and Corpus of Students' Work

Students target (65) group of level seven asked to write five paragraphs about "women driving in Saudi Arabia, "as a pre-test. In week number one of the second term of 2017. The researcher then collected their essays and graded them and analyzed their errors finally categorized them. The result showed many grammatical, punctuation, spelling, and style errors. As a result, the researcher decided to design and adopt two strategies, one for teaching and the other for analyzing the students' errors. As for the former, the researcher provided her students with reading models about ten reading models in ten respective lectures. Then, she asked them to extract the main idea, the areas of cohesion and coherence, the areas of rhetoric if any, the appeals which the writer used to argue his/ her audience. And the difficult vocabulary. Then they translated that new vocabulary studied them for 10 minutes and rewrote the reading model from their memory using the new repertoires as much as possible. Then the researcher corrected their models and categorized their errors of the ten weeks. The result was that the students' writing style, diction, spelling, and punctuation improved gradually each week. In week ten, the researcher asked her students to rewrite about "women driving in Saudi." The results will be presented, analyzed, and discussed in detail in the coming section.

5. Students' Essays Analysis

The researcher believes that errors are mirrors by which a teacher, a syllabus designer, a researcher, or even the student himself/ herself can see the weak points in his/her written work and find out the barriers that affect his/her performance. Depending on this view, the researcher collected (65) samples of essays written by the students; then, she checked them and categorized the errors in the pre-test and post-test. Hence, comparing the students' performance in both tests. The researcher's adopted strategy for categorizing her students' errors depended on the following steps.

6. Data collection, Correction, Categorization, Description, and Explanation.

The initial step required selecting a corpus of (65) samples of the free composition written by students; then, the researcher corrected and categorized the errors. The researcher divided the errors that she identified into two main categories: grammatical errors and lexical errors. Within the grammatical errors, there are two main categories of structural errors and function word errors. Structural errors include morphological errors, syntactical errors, word order errors, and tense errors. Function word errors include preposition errors and article errors. The Lexical category includes lexical items wrongly use in place of others, idiomatic mistakes in the scripts, and exotic meanings used in lexical items. Each one of these categories will be depicted and explained in detail in the following section.

7. Explanation of Errors: Explanation of errors is believed to be one of the main significant goals of error analysis, so a serious attempt was made to explain the plausible cause of the students' errors. They could attribute to many sources: mother tongue interference, intralingual interference, teachers' strategies, false analogy, and the familiarity of the appropriate collections. Analyzing the collected data will indicate the sources of these errors.

Presentation and Discussion of Data Analysis
The main questions of the research are:
1.	Is Categorizing EFL Shaqraa university students' writing errors will help in identifying the nature of their errors?
2.	What is the writing area which causes difficulty for the students?

3.　　　What are the most practical solutions to EFL Shaqraa university students' writing errors?

after categorizing the students writing errors in week one, the total number of errors in the (65) essays of the students in the pre-test was (936) errors. While the total number of errors in the post-test in week eleven was just (57). The results are presented under the following headings:

1. The number of errors of each type: function words, structural errors, and lexical errors.

2. Hierarchical typologies of errors according to the main categories.

3. Hierarchical typologies of errors within each category.

4. The total number of errors.

5.Explanation of the sources of errors.

The table below presents numbers, examples, and possible causes of these errors for each category in the pre-test.

Table (1): Frequencies of Errors

Category	Type of error	Number of errors	Examples	Causes& interpretation
Function words errors				
Prepositions	Omission	40	1. *When we want- speak about women. The traditions-Muslims is clear.	1.Incomplete rule application. Here the writer does not apply all the rule and omits the preposition (to),(of)
	Confusion	39	1. * I agree to women driving in Saudi.	1. Ignorance of rule restrictions. In this example, the student is ignorant of the real usage of the preposition in.
	Insertion	34	1. *In Saudi we have many cultures *of* customs.	1**.** False analogy. Here the student mistakenly thinks that we can add the preposition (of) after the word (cultures) because he previously knows that we can use *of* after many.
	Total number of errors	**114**		
articles	The Omission of the definite article(the)	36	1. *The most important thing is- low.	1. Incomplete application of the rule. The writer did not apply the rule and omitted (the).
	The Omission of the indefinite article(a)	24	1. *Both adults and kids males drive-car.	1. mother tongue interference. Because in the Arabic language we do not have the article(a).

	Addition of definite article(the)	13	1. *She and her **the** females friends.	1.. mother tongue interference. A direct literal Translation from Arabic with the addition of (the)
	Addition indefinite article(a)	19	1. *They invite strangers to drive **a** car.	1.Overgeneralization the learner knows that we can use (a) before nouns; hence she overused it in a situation where it should not be used.
	Total number of errors	**92**		
Structural errors	An omission of the main verb	51	1.*Arabs -different traditions.	1. Incomplete application of the rule. Maybe because some sentences in Arabic do not have verbs.
	An omission of the verb to be	34	1.*may be the husband- ill.	1.. Arabic interference. A Literal Translation from the first language is clear what leads the learner to omit the verb.
	An Omission of the subject	31	1. * – has different traditions in different areas.	1. Incomplete application of the rule. The learner omits the subject, which makes the sentence is redundantly incomplete.
	The sequence of tense	21	1. *After that they will not do more accidents people to share them, at that time the girls should forbid driving.	1. Ignorance of rule restriction. The writer here did not know that the sentences should be written in sequential order.
	repetition of the subject	21	1. *The driving it is not dangerous.	1. exploiting redundancy. There is an unnecessary repetition of the subject.
	passive voice	13	1. *After a three months which is call permission.	1. ignorance of rule restrictions. The student does not know the rule of passive voice construction.
	An omission of the object	9	1. * He comes with his permission to present-	1.incomplete application of the rule. Here the student omits an indispensable part of sentence structure; hence he did not convey a thought in this sentence.
Morphology	Irregular verbs	77	1. *He giving allowed with her.	**1**. Ignorance of rules & restrictions. Fragment sentence.
	Lack of agreement between subject and verb	71	1. *Some tribes have a good rule to play.	**1.**overgeneralization.the writer here overuses the verb *has* and under uses the verb *have*
	Using erroneous part of speech	57	1. *Saudi is a Muslim country where customs have been passed down.	**1.** False concept**.** because of the mismatch of English spelling and its pronunciation, which is not there in Arabic, the writer mistakenly used the verb were instead of the relative pronoun where.

	Number agreement	62	1. *We have different tradition.	**1**. Ignorance of rules restrictions. This student does not know that the adjective different indicates plural so it should be followed by a plural noun.
	Addition of suffix to infinitive	35	1. *When a Saudi women has car his entire friend collaborate and cooperation.	1. Exploiting redundancy. Instead of writing cooperate, the writer adds an unnecessary suffix, which changes the meaning. His is being used by the writer instead of her.
	Demonstratives	26	1. * The driving of women will not end there.	1. False concept. The writer wrongly hypothesized that(their) is the right form. Hence, avoid using (there). And this is a spelling mistake due to the homophones of English that is not there in Arabic.
	Inappropriate plural ending	11	1. *Some of the Saudian traditions.	1. Misanalysis. The learner formed an unfound hypothesis about the spelling of the word Saudi and put it into practice.
	An Omission of the relative pronoun	8	1. *Any woman- would drive tells his husband.	1. Incomplete application of the rule. The learner did not apply the rule and omitted the relative pronoun that made the sentence fragment. Moreover, he used the pronoun His instead of the pronoun her.
	Model auxiliary within simple past or wrongly used	6	1. Driving * Which should be written about.	1. Hypercorrection. Results from the learner over monitor her L2 output.
Word order	Errors associated with nouns: two nouns, one of which was used attributively	67	1. * The women and the children at that day with the very traditionally Saudian way dress in.	1. Arabic interference. The Literal Translation into English.
Tenses	Confusion of tense	35	1. *They pay to the stranger after that they be driving.	1. ignorance of rules restriction. Fragment sentence.
	Past instead of the present	10	1. * At that time they are singing and the girls were very happy.	1. Ignorance of rules restriction. The learner started with present progressive and then changed the second part of the sentence to the past. Instead of using the present.
	Present instead of the past	1	1. * They prepared themselves for driving of the car.	1. Ignorance of rules restriction. The learner used the present tense instead of using the natural sequence of past tense.
	Total number	**646**		2. Arabic interference. The Literal Translation into English.
Lexical errors	Lexical items wrongly used	68	1. * They present the sweets and made the car.	1.false analogy. The student falsely interpreted the verb made

	in place of others			as to the verb prepare. Maybe because of her lack of vocabulary.
	Exotic meanings used in lexical items	14	1. * According to tribal tradition, there are many things to do.	1. Misanalysis. Here the learner formed an unfounded hypothesis in the L2 and put it into practice when she used the word tribal instead of a tribe.
	Idiomatic mistakes	2	1. * The women then will take congratulation.	1. Overlooking co-occurrence. Here the student does not know that specific words go together with specific complements; hence, she used the verb take with congratulation and it is also referring to a direct translation into Arabic.
	Total number	**84**		

Table(2) Total Number of Errors

No	Area	Number of errors
1	Grammatical errors	852
2	Lexical errors	84
Total number of errors		**936**

Students Essays Analysis after the Post Test
Table (3): Frequencies of Errors.

Category	Type of error	Number of errors	Examples	Causes& interpretation
Function Words errors				
Prepositions	Omission	5	1. *driving a car is a prestige – of a woman.	1.Incomplete rule application. Here the writer does not apply all the rule and omits the preposition (to),(of)
	Confusion	3	1. * Saudi Arabia is a country that is governed in	1. Ignorance of rule restrictions. As the example shows, the student is ignorant of the real usage of the preposition in.
	Insertion	3	1. * Saudi Arabia judicial system derives its basis from the Quran and from the Sunnah.	1. Hypercorrection.
	Total number of errors	**11**		
articles	An Omission of the definite article(the)	2	1. *two documents are considered to be the constitution of the kingdom.	1. Incomplete application of the rule. The writer did not apply the rule and omitted (the).
	An Omission of the	3	1. *In that case, - woman is always supposed to be under the custody of a male person	1.mother tongue interference. Because in Arabic we do not have the article(a).

	indefinite article(a)			
	Addition of definite article(the)	2	1. *this paper will look into the banon women to drive on the public roads.	1. mother tongue interference. A literal translation from Arabic with the addition of (the)
	Total number of errors	**7**		
Structural Errors	An omission of the main verb	5	1.*The rule that women should not drive on public roads is not - on any written penal code.	1. Incomplete application of the rule. That is because some sentences in Arabic do not have verbs.
	An omission of the verb to be	3	1.*it- mutually agreed according to the traditions and cultures of the Islamists in Saudi Arabia	1.Arabic interference. A Literal translation from the first language is obvious and leads the learner to omit the verb.
	A sequence of tense	9	1. * However, it's only in Saudi Arabia where women are not allowed to drive in public. Islamists' clergies claimed that women driving would expose them because they would be having to uncover their face, and that is contrary to Prophet Mohamed's direction that required all Muslim women to covering their bodies while in public.	1. Ignorance of rule restriction. The writer here did not know that the sentences should be written consecutively order.
	An Omission of the subject	0	-	-
	A repetition of the subject	0		-
	passive voice	1	1. * began The struggle by women to have equal rights as their male counterparts began in the 1970s.	1. Ignorance of rule restrictions. The student does not know the rule of passive voice construction.
Morphology	Irregular verbs	1	1. * They did this after they supervised American women driving military vehicles.	**1**. False concept, the student used the verb supervised instead of observed.
	Lack of agreement between subject and verb	9	1. * one of the renowned human right activists that campaigned for women's freedom to drive on public roads are Manal al-Sharif.	**1.**overgeneralization.the writer here overuses the verb *has* and under uses the verb *have*
	Using erroneous part of speech	2	1. * this campaign encourages all women to just get in the car and driving on October 26th	**1.** False concept**.** Again because of the mismatch of English spelling and its pronunciation which is not there in Arabic, the writer mistakenly used the verb were instead of the relative pronoun where.
	Number agreement	3	1. * This campaign has started a huge debate whether women should drives in Saudi Arabia or not	**1**. Ignorance of rule restrictions. This student does not know that the adjective different indicates plural and it should be followed by a plural noun.

	An Addition of suffix to infinitive	4	1. * Anyone who's been raised in the west would ask why are they not driving?	1. Exploiting redundancy, instead of writing cooperate the writer adds an unnecessary suffix which changes the meaning. the pronoun(His) instead of the pronoun (her) was used in the sentence.
	Demonstratives	0		
	An Omission of the relative pronoun	1	1. * I mean imagine - all cars are not following the traffic laws	1. Incomplete application of the rule. The learner did not apply the rule and omitted the relative pronoun *(who)* which makes the sentence fragment. And he used the pronoun His instead of using the pronoun her.
Word order	Errors associated with nouns: two nouns one of which was used attributively	0		-
Tenses	A Confusion of tense	0	-	-
	Past instead of the present	0	-	-
	Present instead of past	0	-	-
	Total number	**38**		-
Lexical errors	Lexical items wrongly used in place of others	0	-	-
	Exotic meanings used in lexical items	1	1. * Religious police's role is simply to make sure no one hits any woman and roads stay safe.	1. False concept. She uses hits instead of harasses
	Idiomatic mistakes	0	-	-
	Total number	1		

Table(4) Total Number of Errors

No	Area	Number of errors
1	Grammatical errors	56
2	Lexical errors	1
Total number of errors		**57**

Discussion of Findings with Relation to Literature.

The above tables show the presentation of students' errors frequencies, causes, interpretations and give some examples of each type of error both in the pre-test and the post-test.

It is clear from table one that the total number of errors related to prepositions is 114 and the number of errors in articles is 92. As for structural errors omission of the main verb is the area in which most of the students (51) made mistakes. Followed by the omission of the verb to be (34). This incomplete application of the rule may refer to mother tongue interference because some sentences in Arabic do not have verbs. While just 9 students omit the object in their essays. There are 77 mistakes related to morphology due to ignorance of rule restriction. And the researcher recommends specifying much time explaining morphology. There are 67 mistakes related to word order and also, they are due to ignorance of rule restriction that is why the researcher recommended paying more attention to such kinds of errors too. Most of the mistakes (35) related to tenses are of the type of confusion of tenses. As for the second type of mistake which is lexical one. Most of the errors (68) made by the students are related to lexical items wrongly used in place of others and this could refer to the false analogy which is a result of lack of practice.

Table two shows the frequencies of grammatical errors (852) which are more than the lexical ones (84).

After adopting the researcher teaching strategy of giving students well-written essays to be analyzed by them and then imitate the style of those essays. Their writing improved greatly and table three shows frequencies of errors of students after analyzing their essays in the post-test. It is clear from the table that the number of errors reduced enormously to be just 18 function word type of errors (11 prepositions errors+ 7 article errors) from 206 as shown in table one (114 prepositions errors+ 92 article errors). Table number 4 shows that the total number of grammatical errors reduced to be 56 and lexical words reduced to be just one. This means the success of the strategy especially in the area of lexical errors. Accordingly, the researcher encourages using this strategy as a solution to writing problems. So, the target study is different from the study of Hamid Marashi (2015) that aimed at using convergent and divergent tasks to improve writing and language learning motivation. In its purpose and findings. However, there is a similarity in the treatment of students' errors using a teaching strategy. In Marashi study, for example,18 sessions of teaching and treatment were given to the students followed by writing a test for both groups and comparing performances for each of them. The findings showed that the learners in the convergent group benefited significantly more than those in the divergent group in terms of improving their writing. Also, if we look at the study of Fawzi Eltayb Yossif (2016) of the University of King Khalid, Saudi Arabia. "An investigation of writing errors of Saudi EFL university students." We will find one difference which is the main purpose of the study. Since the target one looks at Categorizing students' errors to identify the most common type of errors and the causes of these errors to suggest the possible solution accordingly while Yossif's study aimed at investigating writing errors. Although both studies were done in Saudi Arabia, the year of conduction as well as the population of the study are different. The results of Yossif's study revealed that the students make errors in their writing performance as a result of some factors such as mother tongue interference, and insufficient activities, and the practice of necessary techniques of writing in addition to the lack of follow-up to the students' writing performance and some other factors. Those findings are similar to the target study. One of the recent studies which conducted in 2020 by Amal Ibrahim Shousha, Nahed Moussa Farrag & Abeer Sultan Althaqafi. entitled analytical assessment of common writing errors among Saudi foundation year students: a comparative study. The study explored

the most common writing errors of science and arts students of the foundation year program at a Saudi University that hinder them from achieving their course goals, learning outcomes and becoming efficient writers. The main findings of the study were: lack of exposure to English language, inadequate application of primary language and writing mechanics. So, the main similarity between it and the target one is the findings and the main difference is in the purpose since they only assess the students writing errors to identify the causes but the target study incorporates the solution to the problem as well.

Conclusion

From the researcher's experience in teaching writing courses inside and outside Saudi Arabia, she noticed that many writing errors that hinder students from achieving their purpose of writing. During writing, the writers should communicate using proper sentences, i.e. grammatically and semantically proper. From this point of view, the researcher chooses to analyze the grammatical and lexical errors which will hinder students from writing proper sentences subsequently being understood. To do this, the researcher analyzed her students' essays before and after adopting her strategy of teaching writing. She gave them a writing assignment then she collected her students' essays, corrected them, categorized their errors, and described them. Then she explained the probable causes of these errors. After the analysis of data, the main findings showed that the grammatical errors were the most typical types of error among students, besides lack of practice was responsible for most learners' errors so the intense practice could be one of the solutions to students' problems in writing. Moreover, the researcher found out that providing students with reading models before writing to analyze and criticize it will develop students' style of writing and enrich their vocabulary. As a result of the findings, the researcher suggested some recommendations; the most prominent one is that teachers should pay more attention to grammatical errors, especially morphology since it is the area in which most of the students make errors. Furthermore, teachers should provide their students with reading models to learn from them ideas organization skill, the function of each paragraph in the essay, and the location of the thesis statement. Teachers should give their students many writing exercises after explaining the basic writing skills. moreover, teachers should analyze their students' errors after each essay writing and compare their performance. The researcher also suggested the effect of providing students with reading models to enhance writing learning as a further study.

There are some challenges the researcher faces during the study: firstly, the absence of some students during the weeks of the study, so the researcher should have a good rapport with her students and ask for the reason of absence and give them their task to be finished before the coming lecture. Secondly, the challenge to establish a need for the study since there are many studies that conducted in the same field. So, the researcher should come with something new such as using a strategy that will help the researcher identify the most common errors of the students and the reason for such errors. And adopting the solution at the same time. Thirdly, the challenge of finishing correction and categorization of all the 65 papers during mid exams which needs correction too. Hence, it needs much effort and time from the researcher to organize her time to finish all the tasks on time.

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