



## Analyzing Errors in Written Summary of Research Article: A Case Study of BS English Students at University of Gujrat, Pakistan

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### Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore, analyze, and find out the frequency of the grammatical, syntactical, and lexical errors committed by the students of the University of Gujrat in a written summary of a research article. The researcher tried to find out the frequency of errors that occurred by the male and the female students. A one-page summary of a research article written by the BS English students of the University of Gujrat was taken as the population of this study and a total of 30 summaries were chosen as a sample with the help of a systematic random sampling method. The collected data was analyzed with the help of Corder's Model of Error Analysis. The written summaries were checked by the researcher and the errors were analyzed. This research finds out seven types of errors occurred by the participants. Male students made fewer errors as compared to female students. This study recommends that the students should try to get help from computer software or online software to eradicate their errors and they should try to eradicate the structural errors on a priority basis.

**Keywords:** Error Analysis, Grammatical, Syntactical and lexical errors, Corder's Model

### 1. Introduction

In the present study, the researcher tries to examine the errors committed by the ESL students of the University of Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan. Error analysis is a subdomain of Applied Linguistics, in which the errors regarding four skills are found and their solution is also given. It helps the researchers, teachers, and students equally to eradicate their errors while learning second languages. Language is a means to communicate and interact with other human beings. It is a key source in the development and growth of a country (Iqbal, 2020).

In Pakistan, English is considered a symbol of control and power. English has a strong association with the elite class in Pakistan. Even, our first Governor-General and the Founder of Pakistan delivered his first speech in the English language to the first constituent assembly on Pakistan's independence (Mahboob, 2009; Khan, 2005). In Pakistan, the English language is considered a language of power. One who uses the English language in communication is considered from the elite class of Pakistan. People thought that the English language is helpful to get their desirable jobs. So, English is considered more powerful than Urdu which is the national language of Pakistan. English has become the lingua franca and it seems to be a tectonic driving force for social and political development in the world. According to Rehman (1999), the students of Pakistan have more passion to learn the English language as compared to their national "Urdu" language.

According to Simon & Charles (2018), two languages are used widely in Pakistan one is Urdu and the second is English language. The English language is influencing the local languages of Pakistan very penetratingly. Even in the universities of Pakistan, one cannot survive without learning the English language. English has equal importance for the students, faculty, and staff of the universities to survive there. So, it plays the role of gatekeeper to enter the highly paid jobs and the universities of Pakistan. We can say a golden key to the English language for success and get high-ranked jobs in Pakistan (Shahzad, 2020).

#### 1.1. Statement of Problem

Pakistani second language learners commit thematic and grammatical errors that are a hurdle to learning a second language properly. Especially in the students of BS at the university level. Upper-level students commit fewer errors and the students of lower level commit too many errors. In BS English classes, English is being taught as a second language and Urdu is a national language in Pakistan. The BS English students commit various types of errors that create a hurdle to learning English as a second language. The researcher tried to analyze the errors of BS English students and also tried to give possible solutions to that problem.

#### 1.2. Research Objectives

The main objectives behind this research are:

- To find out the errors committed by the BS English students of the University of Gujrat in the written summary of a research article.
- To analyze and evaluate the errors made by the BS English students of the University of Gujrat in the written summary of a research article.
- To find out the frequency of errors that occurred by the BS English students of the University of Gujrat in a written summary.

#### 1.3. Significance of Study

Writing skill is a basic need for all kinds of students. It is checked by the second agent before the grant of

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admission to the universities. Summary writing is also part of academic writing. After getting admission to the university, the students have to submit their assignments in written form even if they have to attempt their exams in written form as well. Summary writing has much importance for the preparation for exams as it is the major part of exams. So, this study helps BS level students to learn through their mistakes. The goal of this study is to enlist the errors committed by the BS English students in their one-page summary writing. The students can come to know their errors by reading this article and can get rid of their errors. This study is also helpful for male and female students as here the researcher tried to elaborate on the comparison of the errors committed by male and female students. So, the male and female students should come to know what kind of errors have been committed by them.

## 2. Literature Review

In any sentence or a part of a sentence, an error is known as an imperfection of writing comprehension. The sentence is deemed as wrong or incorrect. The students are expected to avoid errors while writing. A mistake is a result of insufficient knowledge, carelessness, or unintentional working. These unintentional mistakes produce wrong or incorrect text having the wrong sense.

When a learner learns a second language, firstly he learns the rules of that particular language and while making sentences he checks his written text and identifies mistakes to rectify. So, mistakes can be corrected by themselves but an SLL cannot identify the errors because he does not know the rules for these errors, or sometimes errors are more complex and cannot even be identified by the learner. It's very simple example is that computers, computer applications, and software do not commit mistakes. They can commit errors that are because of incapable that work as they don't have a built-in capacity of learning like a human (Penku, 2018).

The mistakes and errors are known as imperfections in written text and they are the same basically because they make incorrect the text and lose its understanding. A mistake is humanly or caused by a fault and an error is a deviation from perfection to imperfection. A mistake can be done because of the wrong application of the acquired knowledge or forgetfulness but the error is the fault related to the competence which is done in a flow as the writer is unaware of the rule (James, 2013).

### 2.1. Basic Errors

When we talk about the grounds of errors, there are just two sources known as Intra-lingual and Inter-lingual (Wang, 2020). Mother tongue interference is also the cause of errors in second language learning and it is known as an inter-lingual cause of the error. According to Fries (1945), the impact of the mother tongue or native language throws a bad impact on second language learning. Intra-lingual is the result of partial coverage of the target language and over-generalization. It is also caused by different sentence structures in a first and second language.

- Simplification

Second language learners avoid complex sentences and usually use the simple structure of sentences. They avoid using perfect continuous tenses and use them simply as indefinite, continuous, and perfect tenses. They are taught simplification as to go from simple to complex.

- Over-Generalization

The students of second language learning sometimes misuse the rules as they try to take the form of irregular verbs by using "ed". They are unaware that the forms of irregular verbs cannot be made by adding the suffix "ed". So, it is a simple example of over-generalization.

- Hyper-Correction

Sometimes, the zeal of the teacher and the realization of the second language learner becomes the cause of the error and they stimulate the learners to commit errors. According to Stenson (1978), induced errors are the outcome of hyper-correction. Hyper-correction should be avoided.

- Faulty Teaching

It is associated with hyper-correction. In faulty teaching, the teacher himself is unaware of the correct rules or sometimes he/she teaches the students the wrong rule unintentionally. So, faulty teaching is also the cause of errors committed by second language learners.

- Fossilization

Some errors are committed habitually. The learners have wrong concepts or rules they commit errors permanently and it becomes their habit.

- Inadequate Learning

Errors in the written text are improper learning of the rules of a second language. Sometimes, the learner observes that the speaker or the writer is not adding s/es with the singular third person. The learner applies it to every kind of sentence and makes wrong sentences. The same is done with the suffix "ed". The learners use it with irregular verbs and try to make the forms of the verb, which is wrong. In this way, they make wrong sentences. Second language learners of the English language try to make sentences using is and was in indefinite sentences. They think that is and was being used for present and past sentences and they make wrong sentences i.e. "He was played hockey".

## 2.2. Finding and Rectification of Error

Five steps are given by Corder (1974) to analyze the errors in his model of error analysis. The first one is to collect the sample from the learners of the target language in the form of written or audio/video recordings (specific, massive, or incidental). That should be able to analyze and must be in the target language. That collected sample is a specimen that can be analyzed.

The second step of the error analysis model is to identify the errors done by second/second language learners in the specimen. The errors should be identified in the material which is produced by second/second language learners. Those errors can be as; wrong tense, incorrect sentence structure, subject-verb agreement, wrong punctuation, wrong verb form, wrong pronunciation, etc. The errors are just highlighted to be shown prominently. The reference to the errors is given earlier.

The next step is to deal with the description of errors. Errors can be of any type or form as; local or global. As compared to local errors, global errors are threatening. The sentences having global errors fail to convey the thought or an idea. However, local errors are acceptable in some cases as they are weak in nature, and to some extent, they can transfer an idea.

The fourth step is to explain the errors in detail. There will be an explanation of the factors behind the errors. In other words, in the explanation of errors, we find out the reason behind the happening of error. So, the psycholinguistic source or social context can be the reason for an error (Al-Khresheh, 2016).

The last step is the evaluation of the errors. The rectification of errors is directly or indirectly related to the learning procedure. Global errors should be corrected firstly because they are the base of sentences and the local errors should be targeted in second language learning. According to previous studies, these errors disturb the learning process and make a hurdle for second language learners to shine in the area of communication (Londoño Vásquez, 2008).

Most of the researchers have done their research on error analysis and it has on the BS English students as well. The writing skills of the students vary throughout the world and they make different kinds of errors because of different kinds of hurdles in second language learning. So, there is a need to check the errors of BS English students of the University of Gujrat as in this area in Punjab, no one has done this work before. The researcher tried to analyze the errors done by the BS English students of UOG while writing a one-page summary of a research article. The errors of the students are highlighted and also given the solution and suggestions to eradicate the errors of BS English students.

## 3. Methodology

The focus of this study was the writing skills of ESL learners at the University of Gujrat. In productive skills, writing is more conventional. This is a case study of BS English students of the above-mentioned institute. One-page summary of a research article on “Models of World Englishes” was used as sample and 30 summaries were taken as a sample by a systematic random selection method. The errors were found and analyzed through Corder’s model of error analysis. The frequency of errors of male and female students was also compared in this research. Corder (1974) suggests that many of the researchers who carried out error analyses in the 1970s continued to be concerned with language teaching. Indeed, many of those who attempted to discover more about L2 acquisition thought the study of errors was itself motivated by a desire to improve pedagogy. That is why Corder proposes five steps in error analysis research to reach that objective. The following steps are followed to conduct error analysis:

- Collection of a sample of learner language
- Identification of errors
- Description of errors
- Explanation of errors
- Evaluation of errors

### 3.1. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework is the structure that can hold or support a theory of a research study. The theoretical framework introduces and describes the theory that explains why the research problem under study exists. According to Corder (1967), a learner’s errors represent the discrepancy between the transitional competence of that learner and the target language. This technique has the following steps that helped the evaluation:

The collection of the errors in the sample, the identification of the errors in the sample, and the description of the errors that are identified and explained.

## 4. Data Analysis

The students of BS English 8th semester were given a research article and they were asked to write a one-page summary of that research article. The students tried their best to write the sentences lexically and grammatically correct. The researcher collected those one-page summaries and separated the 30 papers as a sample. The researcher deeply checked those samples and found many types of errors.

### 4.1. Verb Errors

The students used the wrong verb in their sentences. They tried their best to use the correct form of the verb but in fluent writing, they made errors with the verb and used the wrong form of the verb in complex sentences. When there are many clauses then they forgot to use the correct forms of verbs in many clauses. Verb errors are identified in the given below sentences:

Male:

- ENL **is speak** by the majority of the population.
- The final classification that **writer try** to elaborate is EFL.
- the variety that **is speak** by all of the people is a standard variety.

Female:

- Moreover, the **model do not** suggest that....
- China **is used** this language for trade and business.
- **Writer deal** with the processes that occur in postcolonial societies.

#### 4.2. Subject-Verb Agreement

When the subject agrees with its verb that is subject-verb agreement. When they have some clash there will be some kind of error. This is a common error committed by EFL learners as they consider that the addition of s/es is applicable for plural subjects (Hourani, 2008). Most female students did this error. They misused s/es in the sentences. Where there is a need of s, they used es or did not make any addition in the verb. Male students also did this error but very less frequency was noted.

Male:

- **Mufwene distinguish** between 'trade colonies', 'exploitation colonies', ...
- **Chinese is** now choosing to use English when....
- **I focuses** solely on the developmental cycles as applied to ...

Female:

- The **use** of style **depend** on a particular motivation.
- All **speakers** of English **is** capable of being intelligible....
- **Widdowson argue** that the varieties of English used for specific purposes.

#### 4.3. Articles

There are two types of articles. "The" is used as a definite article and "A, An" is used as indefinite articles. A definite article is used to specify the objects and things or before common nouns while an indefinite article is used with countable and uncountable nouns. Article errors were also observed in the summaries written by the BS English students in the 8th semester. Shousha, Farrag, and Althaqafi (2020) also reported the presence of article errors in the writings of EFL students.

Male:

- Perhaps **(the)** most common classification of Englishes.
- English is **an second** language and .....
- This process is also **a increasing** number of situations.

Female:

- **(The)** fourth phase is marked by the use of **(the)** local variety....
- results in **an decline** in the use of **(the)** local variety...
- At this stage **(the)** new variety has emerged.

#### 4.4. Punctuation

The use of specific marks in academic writing is called the use of punctuation. It is very essential to use punctuation to make the meaning prominent and give the sentence a correct sense. These signs have a direct link to the written expressions and have importance to use in written compositions because they are very necessary for the clarity of the written text. The full stop (.), capitalization (A, a), semicolon (;), colon (:), question mark (?), the exclamation mark (!), hyphen (-), commas (,), inverted commas ("") are punctuation marks.

Male:

- There is no doubt(,) for example(,) the motivation to learn English is....
- English as a second language and **english** as a foreign language....
- The second observation about **kachru's** (') three circles model(') is that it .....

Female:

- Varities of language are used essentially in English as a foreign language **EFL** ..
- Gupta (1977: 147(-)58) has proposed a classification system.
- such as **india** multilingual contact **singapore** and ...
- other languages and through contact with non(-)standard and ...

#### 4.5. Preposition

The relationship of location, time, or manner between nouns or pronouns and other words or phrases in a sentence is shown with the help of prepositions. Different kinds of prepositions (to, on, for, at, in, and of) are used with different kinds of words and there is no proper rule for the use of prepositions. Some prepositions indicate location and time and some refer to the days and dates. Every proposition has a different meaning

with a different kind of word. The participants made errors in prepositions as well. Given below errors were made by the students of BS English:

Male:

- English is used (*in*) different ways in different countries.
- ESL refers (*to*) the countries where English is usually official language...
- English is typically learnt *in* schools. (at)

Female:

- He made English classification of English *in* three concentric circles. (into)
- It refers (*to*) the traditional, cultural, and linguistic bases of English.
- Moreover, the other reason might (*be*) the desire of people ....

#### 4.6. Sentence Structure

Sentence structure has vital importance in any composition. When the sentence structure is incorrect then there will be no sense in that sentence and that sentence will be senseless. It provides the sense and meaning to the whole. The sentence must be in the correct order in that language as in English the sentence order should be subject, verb, and object. Second language learners have much ambiguity in making correct and meaningful sentences. It is also observed by Darus and Subramaniam (2009) in their study on written errors of secondary school students. Following errors were observed in the writings of BS English students of UOG:

Male:

- *There (is)* a political debate over the spread of English.
- *This (was)* pointed out by Kachru in his call for a 'polymodel' approach to ....
- the new variety of English *starts (to) reflect* the local culture .....

Female:

- In China English *is play(ing)* very interesting role as a lingua franca.

#### 4.7. Spelling Errors

Spelling errors are done by university students less frequently. Spelling errors can be expected in complex words. The participants wrote wrong spellings of the names as they are unaware of the English writers. Some participants occurred errors due to the slip of the pen or we can say typo mistakes. Some participants used American spelling rules. Some errors were done with the wrong pronunciation of the word spell out. Spelling errors done by BS English students of UOG are given below:

Male:

- *varities* verities
- *Philipinies* Philippines
- *comercialy* Commercially

Female:

- *consentric* concentric
- *nativization* nativisation
- *enappropriate* inappropriate

#### 4.8. Miscellaneous Errors

Miscellaneous errors are those errors that don't fall under a particular category. Like, in sentence 1 the word various is wrong as it should variously. Same as in the 2nd sentence there should be the word acceptable instead of accept. So in the one-page summary of the research paper written by BS English students of UOG, miscellaneous errors were also found. However, miscellaneous errors were found made by the male participants and the female participants did these errors frequently.

Male:

- A local variety is various(*ly*) referred to as nativization...
- the local variety would be a more accept(*able*) model.

Female:

- Later writer elaborates the stage(s) through which a new ...
- Which is not that (*much*) common in use.
- People of middle east do not use English as *there* casual language. (their)

### 5. Findings and Discussion

The researcher analyzed the sample and found 252 errors in the summaries written by 30 students of BS English. 122 errors occurred by the male participants and 130 errors were done by the female participant students. The researcher found seven types of errors and the eighth one is under miscellaneous errors. 48 errors in sentence structure were found of which 25 errors were made by the male students and 23 errors were done by the female participants. Same as 27 errors of articles were recorded in which 11 errors occurred by the male participants and 16 errors were made by the female students. More detail on errors and their percentage is given in the table 1.

The table 1 shows that 20.49% of sentence structure errors were made by male participants and 17.69% done by female participants. The percentage of article errors among the male students was 9.02% and for the

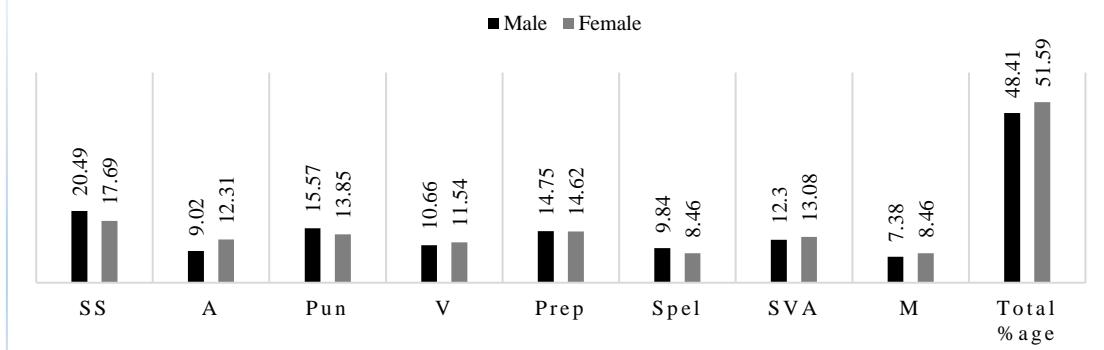
female students was 12.31%. The punctuation errors were made by male students 15.57% and by female students 13.85%. 10.66% of verb errors were made by male participants and 11.54% done by female participants.

**Table 1: Frequency of Errors Occurred by Male and Female Students of UOG**

Types of Errors	Frequency of Male	Percentage of Male	Frequency of Female	Percentage of Female
Sentence Structure Errors	25	20.49	23	17.69
Article Errors	11	9.02	16	12.31
Punctuation Errors	19	15.57	18	13.85
Verb Errors	13	10.66	15	11.54
Preposition Errors	18	14.75	19	14.62
Spelling Errors	12	9.84	11	8.46
Subject-Verb Agreement Errors	15	12.30	17	13.08
Miscellaneous Errors	9	7.38	11	8.46
<b>Total Errors</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>48.41</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>51.59</b>

The percentage of preposition errors among male students was 14.75% and the female students occurred 14.62%. Same as spelling errors occurred among male and female students 9.84% and 8.46% respectively. Subject-verb agreement errors were made by the male students 12.30 % and by 13.08%. Miscellaneous errors were made by male students 7.38% and by female students 8.46%. In the last row total errors are written by the male and female students as male students made 122 errors and the percentage was 48.41%. The female participants made 130 total errors and the percentage is 51.59%. The high frequency of sentence structure errors is noted as there is a need to teach the students' sentence structure. After that proposition and punctuation errors were noted as the students made these errors very frequently. The students are not much aware of sentence structure, prepositions, and punctuation.

**Comparison of Male and Female Errors Occurred by UOG Students**



**Figure 1: Comparison of Male and Female Errors Occurred by UOG Students**

Note: SS = Sentence Structure Errors; A = Article Errors; Pun = Punctuation Errors; V = Verb Errors; Prep = Preposition Errors; Spel = Spellings Errors; SVA = Subject-Verb Agreement Errors; M = Miscellaneous Errors

The first bar shows the sentence structure errors made by the male and female students. It shows that the male students made 20% errors as compared to the female students. The second bar shows the comparison of article errors made by the male and female students of UOG. Same as 3rd bar shows the comparison of punctuation errors of male and female students. The last bar shows the overall percentage of male and female students and shows the comparison of male and female as male students made fewer errors as compared to female students.

## 6. Conclusion

The first two objectives were to find out the errors committed by the BS English students of the University of Gujrat in the written summary of a research article and to analyze and evaluate the errors made by the BS English students of the University of Gujrat in the written summary of a research article. They collected the sample from the participants and analyzed it. The findings of this study show that the students made seven types of errors in their written composition. A total of 252 errors were made by the participants. In these errors sentence structure, article, punctuation, preposition, subject-verb agreement, and verb and spelling

errors were included. Miscellaneous errors were also made by the participants. The findings also show that the students were unaware of the sentence structure as they did most of the mistakes in sentence structure. After that, they made many mistakes in punctuation and prepositions. The students made other mistakes as well which were put under the miscellaneous category.

The third objective was to find out the frequency of errors that occurred by the BS English students of the University of Gujrat in a written summary. The findings of this research show that the errors of male participants were less than the errors made by the female participants as the male students occurred 48.41% errors and the female students made 51.59% errors. This shows that there is a need to eradicate the errors of male and female students at the university level. However, there is a need to pay more attention to female students as compared to male students in this regard. There is a need to pay more attention to minimizing the structural errors as compared to lexical errors as they are less in numbers as compared to structural errors.

## 7. Recommendations

First of all, the teacher should deliver an error-free lecture to the student. This is the responsibility of a teacher to check the errors of his/her students and try to eradicate them by telling the student the solution. The teacher is the first responsible person for these kinds of errors at the ESL level. Secondly, the teacher should teach the students by using a comparison of two things, clauses, or sentences. It helps the students to understand the other things in comparison as in a single lecture the teacher can discuss the difference between two kinds of sentences, clauses or phrases, etc. The grammar translation method can be used to make the lecture comprehensive. The students understand easily the first language as compared to the second language. To eradicate the errors software is also helpful. The students can get help from them Grammarly, MS word, etc. Pedagogical practice is also very helpful to teach a second language. The teacher should ensure the clarity of concept and then pay attention to minimize the errors. Writing skills practice can make the students perfect in academic writing. The students should first read and then write.

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