



Error Patterns in Undergraduate English Writing: A Comparative Analysis of Learner Corpora

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the error patterns in the argumentative writing of undergraduate ESL learners through a comparative analysis of two intact student sections at a public-sector university in Pakistan. The learner corpus analyzed in this study was made up of 67 argumentative essays produced by a group of students comprising Section A (n = 32) and Section B (n = 35). Corder's Error Analysis framework is employed in this study and the error diagnosis is done by identifying, classifying, quantifying and explaining the errors based on error analysis rubric involving a set of fourteen error classes. The total number of the errors identified in the corpus is 1712; Section A students made 677 errors while Section B students incorporated 1035 errors. The most frequent types of errors made by the students in the corpus are Subject-Verb Agreement error (290; 16.94 % error), Verb Tense error (232; 13.55% error), Spelling error (212; 12.38% error), and Noun Plural Endings (-s/-es) (201; 11.74%). The findings reveal that undergraduate ESL learners continue having difficulties in grammatical accuracy, and morphology, to which interlingual transfer and intralingual learning processes contribute. Overall, the findings highlight the value of systematic error analysis for diagnosing recurrent difficulties in undergraduate ESL writing and for informing areas requiring focused writing instruction and practice in the Pakistani university context.

1. Introduction

Academic writing is an integral aspect of higher education as it allows students to express ideas adequately in academic, professional and research settings. In English as a Second Language (ESL), writing is known as one of the most difficult skills since it requires learners to include grammar, vocabulary, sentence structure, organization into their writing, and discourse coherence. Despite being taught English formally for a long time, many undergraduates experience great troubles in producing grammatically accurate and coherent texts.

In the case of Pakistani ESL context, students face different issues connected to grammar, spelling, sentence structure and word choice. The cause of those issues may be connected with the influence of the students' native language as well as with the incomplete learning of the grammar of English language. Error Analysis is a method which provides teachers with

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knowledge of how to identify errors made by students and how to analyze the processes happening in the language while learning it.

Researchers have previously identified both grammatical and lexical errors made by Pakistani ESL students, but there have been very few studies that actually compare and contrast the writing performances of two similar undergraduate student sections. Furthermore, there has been little effort made in studies to examine both learners' errors and their causes within one study. Solving this issue will clarify undergraduates' writing challenges and help to devise better teaching techniques.

The present study implements Corder's (1967) Error Analysis framework in order to assess the written performance of two undergraduate classes at a public-sector university in Pakistan. Using a diagnostic framework with fourteen pre-determined categories of errors, the study identifies and classifies the most common types of errors students make in their argumentation essays. The study explores possible sources for the errors based on the established classifications of learners' errors.

2. Literature Review

Writing in a second language (L2) is a complicated process that involves the simultaneous attention of learners to grammatical accuracy, vocabulary, sentence organisation, and cohesion. With English as a Second Language (ESL) students, written production demonstrates both the use of their developing knowledge of the English language and that of their native language. Since writing involves the simultaneous integration of various language skills, the errors of learners can show basic information about the language acquisition process. Hence, Error Analysis (EA) has become one of the most used methods for investigation of the written output of learners and for the definition of common language problems.

The theoretical basis of Error Analysis was created by Corder (1967), who claimed that students' errors must not be seen as failures, but rather as manifestations of a developing language system, which means that error analysis can provide useful evidence about the level of language development of students.

Richards (1974) built upon Corder's (1967) work, differentiating between interlingual errors and intralingual errors. While interlingual errors occur due to the influence of first language elements on the target language, intralingual errors stem from generalization, incomplete application of grammatical rules, and the misunderstanding of structures of the target language. James (1998) advanced Error Analysis by giving it a structure that helps locate, describe, classify, and explain learners' errors. These models still work as the basis for current research in ESL writing teaching.

A number of empirical studies conducted recently show that grammatical errors usually present difficulties for ESL students at the undergraduate level. In Pakistan, Nazim et al. (2024) investigated writing errors among undergraduate students from three public universities. Through error analysis of students' essays, the study identified 635 errors across 18 categories, with tense, punctuation, inappropriate word use, and spelling errors emerging as the most frequent problems. The findings highlighted the need for systematic identification of recurring writing errors to help instructors provide focused instruction and feedback for improving students' writing accuracy.

Fatimah et al. (2025) investigated the errors in undergraduate students' argumentative essays. Their analysis revealed that inappropriate vocabulary use, grammatical inaccuracies, mechanical errors, and sentence structure problems were the most common issues affecting the quality of students' writing. San et al. (2025) examined essays written by second-year university students using the Error Analysis framework. Their findings revealed that learners experienced a wide range of grammatical difficulties in written English, and that both intralingual and interlingual factors contributed to these errors.

Although the previous research provided evidence of different types of grammar errors made by university students, there have not been many attempts to compare the corresponding groups of undergraduate individuals within one educational context using a comprehensive diagnostic approach. Most of the studies are aimed at identifying existing error categories without comparing students in similar learning conditions. The present research will fill the gap. The research utilizes the framework of Corder's Error Analysis (and the diagnostic classification of fourteen different types of linguistic errors). The study aims to discover the errors made by the learners, and to reveal the frequency of errors and their possible causes. The results of the study will help in understanding the difficulties faced by ESL learners in writing and will allow to provide recommendations on how to improve the teaching of writing in Pakistani universities.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

The current study employs a descriptive quantitative design with a comparative component, grounded in Corder's (1967) Error Analysis (EA) framework, to examine and compare grammatical, morphological, and lexical errors in undergraduate students' argumentative writing. Error Analysis provides a systematic approach for identifying and analyzing learner errors and for understanding features of learners' developing interlanguage (Corder, 1967; James, 1998). The comparative component of the study focuses on examining the distribution and frequency of linguistic errors across two intact student sections, Section A and Section B.

3.2. Participants

The participants in this study were N = 67 undergraduate ESL students enrolled in a mandatory Functional English course at a public-sector university in Pakistan. The sample consisted of two intact classes designated as Section A (n = 32) and Section B (n = 35). Intact class sampling was used to preserve the natural classroom setting without disturbing regular course enrollment. All participants reported Urdu as their first language (L1) and English as their second/target language (L2). The learner corpus comprised 67 argumentative essays, with one essay contributed by each participant.

3.3. Data Collection

Data were collected through an in-class argumentative writing task administered during a regular 60-minute class period. Each student wrote one argumentative essay on a general topic, with a target length of approximately 250 words. The task was completed individually under controlled classroom conditions, without access to dictionaries, grammar-checking software, or other digital resources. The completed writing scripts were collected immediately at the end of the allotted time to ensure that the corpus represented the students' independent writing performance.

3.4. Analytical Framework and Research Procedure

The research procedure was guided by the principles of Error Analysis described by Corder (1967) and subsequent error classifications developed by Richards (1974), Dulay et al. (1982), and James (1998). The analysis was conducted through the following sequential steps:

- i. **Data Collection:** The study collected 67 handwritten argumentative essays from the 67 participating students under controlled classroom conditions.
- ii. **Identification of Errors:** Each essay was carefully examined to identify deviations from standard English usage and writing conventions.
- iii. **Classification of Errors:** The identified errors were categorized according to a predefined diagnostic framework comprising fourteen error sub-types adapted from Richards (1974), Dulay et al. (1982), and James (1998). The categories included spelling, punctuation, capitalization, wrong word choice, collocations, noun plural endings, past tense verb endings, third-person singular endings, subject-verb agreement, verb tense errors, article errors, preposition errors, pronoun errors, and word order.
- iv. **Quantification of Errors:** The frequency of each error category was recorded and the relative percentages were calculated separately for Section A, Section B, and the combined corpus using Microsoft Excel. The distributions of the fourteen error categories were then compared across the two sections.
- v. **Explanation of Error Sources:** The possible sources of the identified errors were interpreted in terms of interlingual and intralingual influences, including first-language transfer, overgeneralization, incomplete rule application, and ignorance of rule restrictions, drawing on the error-analysis perspectives of Corder (1967) and Richards (1974).

3.5. Analysis of Data

Each essay underwent systematic examination to ensure that the linguistic errors were identified and categorized consistently within the fourteen diagnostic classes. The frequency and percentage of each error type were calculated separately for Section A and Section B and for the combined corpus. The resulting distributions were compared to identify similarities and differences in the error patterns of the two sections. Representative student errors were presented alongside target reconstructions for qualitative interpretation, and their possible sources were discussed in terms of interlingual and intralingual influences.

3.6. Ethical Aspects

The students participated in the study as part of their regular educational activities. Participant anonymity was maintained throughout the analysis by removing student names and other personally identifying information from the writing scripts and the resulting learner corpus.

4. Results and Discussions

The findings of the error analysis of the written works of undergraduate students from the ESL Section A (n=32) and Section B (n=35) students are presented. The analysis is made in accordance with Corder's (1967) error analysis framework as a result of which the learners' errors have been identified, classified, and interpreted based on the fourteen types of the linguistic errors. The analysis does not only include a detailed description of the errors but also illustrates the different types of errors using the examples taken from the students' scripts, their intended forms, and the sources of errors as presented by Richards (1974) and James (1998).

The overall distribution of errors in both sections is shown in Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1.

Table 4.1

Frequency Distribution of Linguistic Error Types

No.	Error Type	Section A	Section B	Combined
1	Spelling Errors	70 (10.34%)	142 (13.72%)	212 (12.38%)
2	Punctuation Marks	19 (2.81%)	24 (2.32%)	43 (2.51%)
3	Capitalization Rules	11 (1.62%)	15 (1.45%)	26 (1.52%)
4	Wrong Word Choice	26 (3.84%)	57 (5.51%)	83 (4.85%)
5	Bad Word Combinations	32 (4.73%)	35 (3.38%)	67 (3.91%)
6	Noun Plural Endings (-s/-es)	90 (13.29%)	111 (10.72%)	201 (11.74%)
7	Past Tense Endings (-ed)	74 (10.93%)	86 (8.31%)	160 (9.35%)
8	Third-Person Singular Endings (-s/-es)	73 (10.78%)	104 (10.05%)	177 (10.34%)
9	Subject-Verb Agreement	101 (14.92%)	189 (18.26%)	290 (16.94%)
10	Verb Tense Errors	86 (12.70%)	146 (14.11%)	232 (13.55%)
11	Article Errors	20 (2.95%)	41 (3.96%)	61 (3.56%)
12	Preposition Errors	20 (2.95%)	22 (2.13%)	42 (2.45%)
13	Pronoun Errors	5 (0.74%)	9 (0.87%)	14 (0.82%)
14	Word Order	50 (7.39%)	54 (5.22%)	104 (6.07%)
Total	Overall Errors	677 (100%)	1,035 (100%)	1,712 (100%)

The data in Table 4.1 indicates the distribution of fourteen types of errors found in the written works of ESL students pursuing undergraduate studies with regard to Sections A and B. Errors in the students' corpus totaled 1,712, with 677 errors from Section A and 1,035 from Section B. The larger number of errors in Section B shows that students from this section had more trouble producing grammatically correct written pieces than students from Section A.

The most frequently occurring error category was Subject-Verb Agreement, having 101 errors (14.92%) in Section A and 189 errors (18.26%) in Section B, totaling 290 errors (16.94%). Therefore, the high rate of occurrence of this type of error proves that subject-verb agreement remains one of the hardest parts of English grammar for undergraduate ESL students.

The second most common error category was Verb Tense Errors, with Section A producing 86 errors (12.70%) and Section B contributing 146 errors (14.11%), giving a total of 232 errors (13.55%) for the two groups. This shows that students from Section B had less tense consistency in their writing compared to their peers from Section A.

Spelling Errors make up the third most significant category of learner errors, with a count of 212 cases (12.38%) found in the corpus. The number of errors in Section A was 70 (10.34%), while Section B produced 142 errors (13.72%). This means that Section B has a larger number of spelling errors, thus pointing out that there is a need for further training in this area.

Errors of the Noun Plural Endings (-s/-es) were also discovered. The numbers in Section A were 90 errors (13.29%), while Section B had 111 errors (10.72%), totaling 201 errors in both sections (11.74%). In a similar way, the Third-Person Singular Endings (-s/-es) errors made 73 cases in Section A, accounting for 10.78%, and 104 cases in Section B, accounting for 10.05%, which means that there were 177 cases of errors of that type in total (10.34%). Next, the Past Tense Ending (-ed) Errors appeared 74 times in Section A (10.93%) and 86 times in Section B (8.31%), with the percentage of errors made totaling about 9.35% and accounting for 160 errors. Therefore, we can conclude that learners have serious difficulties in accurate implementation of inflectional rules of English in their written communication.

Although Word Order Errors were not as prevalent as the major grammatical errors, this category still impacted the organization of sentences and the quality of academic writing throughout the students' contributions. In Section A, the researcher counted 50 occurrences of Word Order Errors (7.39%), while in Section B registered 54 occurrences of this category of errors (5.22%). Thus, the total number of Word Order Errors was equal to 104 (6.07%). Wrong Word Choice Errors were identified 26 times (3.84%) in Section A and 57 times (5.51%) in Section B, accounting for 83 occurrences (4.85%). The same pattern was recorded for Bad Word Combination Errors, which happened to be found 32 times (4.73%) in Section A and 35 times (3.38%) in Section B. As a result, the final number of Bad Word Combination Errors was 67 (3.91%). All of these figures suggest that apart from grammatical errors, foreign language learners had troubles with choosing the words used in the academic context.

Article Errors were present 20 times (2.95%) in Section A and 41 times (3.96%) in Section B, which resulted in the overall score of 61 instances (3.56%). Preposition Errors were observed almost equally in both sections – 20 errors (2.95%) in Section A and 22 errors (2.13%) in Section B, which led to 42 occurrences of this type of error (2.45%). Although these categories happened less often than the major grammatical errors, they still caused a decrease in the linguistic accuracy.

Mechanical aspects of writing, for example, punctuation and capitalization, caused fewer errors when compared to the grammatical and morphological categories. Punctuation Marks caused 19 errors (2.81%) in Section A and 24 errors (2.32%) in Section B that amounted to a total of 43 errors (2.51%). The violation of Capitalization Rules took place in 11 cases in Section A (1.62%) and in 15 cases in Section B (1.45%), which gives a total of 26 errors (1.52%). Pronoun Errors were the least common in the corpus because there were only 5 errors in Section A (0.74%) and 9 errors in Section B (0.87%); the total frequency was 14 errors (0.82%).

In general, the comparative analysis shows that both groups presented similar patterns of linguistic difficulty, but the amount of errors was always higher for Section B. The dominance of Subject-Verb Agreement, Verb Tense Errors, Spelling Errors, and Noun Plural Ending Errors proves that grammatical accuracy remains the main problem in the teaching of ESL in the university. On the contrary, punctuation, capitalization, and pronoun errors were much rarer and therefore contributed insignificantly to the overall error structure of the learner corpus.

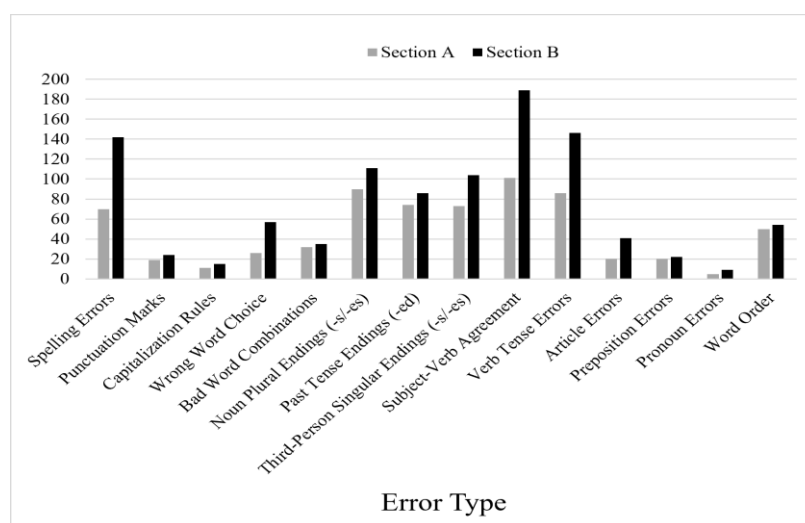


Figure 4.1.: Bar Chart Showing Error Frequencies

The descriptive data illustrated in Figure 4.1 depict the comparative distribution of fourteen different categories of linguistic errors found in the writings of Section A and Section B. The subject-verb agreement errors were the most frequent, with Section B producing almost 190 instances compared to about 100 in Section A. Spelling errors and tense errors were also among the common types of errors identified. However, Section B contained more errors than Section A across all categories. The pronoun errors and capitalization errors were the least frequent types of errors in both sections. Overall, it can be stated that even though both sections displayed similar patterns, Section B had more grammatical and lexical errors. Therefore, appropriate instruction should be given to both groups with specific focus on subject-verb agreement, verb tense use, and spelling.

Table 4.2*Spelling Errors*

Section	Student Example(s)	Target Reconstruction	Error Source
Section A	"benetical", "available", "developement", "probem"	beneficial, available, development, problem	Intralingual: Ignorance of rule restrictions
Section B	"bussoniess", "imporntent", "beame", "probmlems", "avalible"	business, important, became, problems, available	Intralingual: Overgeneralization

Findings of Table 4.2

Table 4.2 provides samples of spelling errors found in both parts of the study. The errors provided in Section A, like "benetical," "available," and "developement," show that learners were facing difficulty in spelling correctly. The errors in this section are categorized as intralingual errors due to the awareness of the learners about the lack of any restrictions on which characters can be used for spelling words in English. The errors in Section B include spelling errors such as "bussoniess," "beame," and "probmlems." Nevertheless, these errors reveal the fact that learners were overgeneralizing the use of spelling patterns that they have already learnt. Overall, the examples indicate that learners experienced difficulties with accurate English spelling and may require further guided practice to improve spelling accuracy.

Table 4.3*Punctuation Marks*

Section	Student Example(s)	Target Reconstruction	Error Source
Section A	"Laziness ? of people", "Firstly"	laziness of people; Firstly,	Intralingual: Incomplete rule application
Section B	"now a days", "shops etc. But"	nowadays; shops, etc., but	Intralingual: Incomplete rule application

Findings of Table 4.3

Table 4.3 presents examples of punctuation errors in the learner corpus. Section A examples such as "Laziness ? of people" and "Firstly" demonstrate incomplete application of punctuation rules, specifically concerning the use of a question mark and a comma. These errors were identified as intralingual errors due to incomplete rule application. Section B examples such as "shops etc. But," demonstrate inconsistent punctuation and writing conventions and were classified as errors caused by incomplete rule application. It is evident from the results that learners need more practice in understanding how to use punctuation properly.

Table 4.4*Capitalization Rules*

Section	Student Example(s)	Target Reconstruction	Error Source
Section A	"it is In near future", "Chatgpt"	it is in the near future; ChatGPT	Intralingual: Ignorance of rule restrictions
Section B	"Some People", "Young age Students", "Tv"	Some people; Young age students; TV	Intralingual: Incomplete rule application

Findings of Table 4.4

Table 4.4 provides examples of capitalization errors found in the writing of learners in both sections. The examples from Section A, such as "it is In near future" and "Chatgpt," show limited awareness of capitalization conventions and were regarded as intralingual errors caused by ignorance of rules. Examples from Section B, such as "Some People," "Young age Students," and "Tv," also demonstrate inconsistency in the use of capital letters and were classified as intralingual errors.

because of incomplete rule application. Overall, the data show that learners need to learn more about capitalization conventions.

Table 4.5

Wrong Word Choice

Section	Student Example(s)	Target Reconstruction	Error Source
Section A	"abilities will be died", "science may be grow up"	abilities will be lost; science may advance	Intralingual: Ignorance of rule restrictions
Section B	"situated this works", "modern way of path", "financial salve"	established these practices; modern path; financial solution	Interlingual

Findings of Table 4.5

Table 4.5 gives examples of wrong word use found in students' writing. In Section A, examples of expressions such as "abilities will be died" and "science may be grow up" which show the lack of understanding of vocabulary rules were classified as intralingual errors. In this section, errors are caused by ignorance about the restrictions of its use. By contrast, in section B expressions such as "situated this works," "modern way of path" and "financial salve" bear the influence of the first language. Therefore, it can be concluded that interlingual errors were made. In general, the conclusions made show that the development of academic vocabulary and the correct use of vocabulary would lead to the improved vocabulary accuracy as well as the improvement of the overall quality of writing.

Table 4.6

Bad Word Combinations

Section	Student Example(s)	Target Reconstruction	Error Source
Section A	"gain this", "do a decision"	achieve this; make a decision	Intralingual: Overgeneralization
Section B	"make a future", "pay charges"	build a future; pay fees	Intralingual: Overgeneralization

Findings of Table 4.6

In table 4.6 some typical examples of collocation errors are presented that were found in the learner corpus. In part A, phrases like "gain this" and "do a decision" illustrate the use of collocations that contain both known words but form strange combinations. These are intralingual errors because of overgeneralization. Section B also provides some examples which show the tendency of the learners to use literal combinations instead of collocations, such as "make a future," and "pay charges." It is clear from the results obtained that in order to become more fluent, precise, and authentic in their academic writing, the learners should be provided with more exposure to authentic English collocations.

Table 4.7

Noun Plural Endings (-s/-es)

Section	Student Example(s)	Target Reconstruction	Error Source
Section A	"two statement", "peoples"	two statements; people	Intralingual: Overgeneralization
Section B	"old peoples", "different kind of items", "Childrens"	old people; different kinds of items; children	Intralingual: Overgeneralization

Findings of Table 4.7

In Table 4.7, we find samples of the errors made in the use of plural endings. In Section A, examples like "two statement," and "peoples" indicate that the learners have not applied the rules accurately, and therefore, this was categorized as an intralingual error associated with overgeneralization. In Section B, we see forms like "old peoples," "different kind of items," and "Childrens" where the rules are being applied incorrectly and are classified as the overgeneralization of the regular plural formation rules. In conclusion, one can say that the results show that learners need to practice using English nouns more appropriately, especially when dealing with irregular plural forms and countable vs. uncountable nouns.

Table 4.8*Past Tense Endings (-ed)*

Section	Student Example(s)	Target Reconstruction	Error Source
Section A	"vanish", "reach"	vanished; reached	Intralingual: Overgeneralization
Section B	"to attracted people", "become lazy", "disagree"	to attract people; became lazy; disagreed	Intralingual: Incomplete rule application

Findings of Table 4.8

Table 4.8 includes representative samples of errors with past verb tenses from the learner corpus. In Section A, the verbs "vanish" and "reach" show that the learners made arbitrary use of regular past forms, leading to incorrect verbs. Such errors represent intralingual errors associated with overgeneralization. In Section B, phrases like "to attracted people," "become lazy," and "disagree," indicate that the learners confused verb forms in different grammatical contexts, resulting in intralingual errors due to improper application of a rule. Overall, it can be seen that in order to eliminate intralingual errors the learners need more practice with regular and irregular verb forms and their correct use in a variety of contexts.

Table 4.9*Third-Person Singular Endings (-s/-es)*

Section	Student Example(s)	Target Reconstruction	Error Source
Section A	"people likes", "preference... grow"	people like; preference... grows	Intralingual: Overgeneralization
Section B	"Internet provide", "people thinks"	Internet provides; people think	Intralingual: Overgeneralization

Findings of 4.9

Errors that pertain to the endings of third-person singular verbs found in the learner corpus are presented in Table 4.9. In Section A, errors such as "people likes" and "preference... grow" illustrate the inconsistent use of third-person singular agreement and fall into the category of intralingual errors that relate to the application of overgeneralization. The cases in Section B, including "Internet provide" and "people thinks", suggest that it is not easy to choose the right form of the verb depending on the grammatical subject. Overall, these results indicate that the learners need to be more conscious of the rules of present simple agreement to increase their grammatical accuracy in academic writing.

Table 4.10*Subject-Verb Agreement*

Section	Student Example(s)	Target Reconstruction	Error Source
Section A	"people is going", "things... is available"	people are going; things ... are available	Intralingual: Incomplete rule application
Section B	"reading are old fashioned", "people becomes", "people... has"	reading is old-fashioned; people become; people ... have	Intralingual: Overgeneralization

Findings of Table 4.10

Table 4.10 includes some examples of subject-verb agreement errors that were detected in the two sets of data. In part A of the analysis, errors such as "People is going" and "Things... is available" show that the rule of subject-verb agreement was not properly used, and were classified as intralingual errors due to incorrect application of the rule. In part B of the analysis, examples such as "Reading are old-fashioned," "People becomes" and "People... has" indicate the tendency to overgeneralize the agreement rules concerning the use of singular and plural subjects. Overall, the findings demonstrate that subject-verb agreement continues to be among the most serious grammatical problems of undergraduate students learning English as a second language and should be addressed with the help of grammar-focused teaching and guided editing.

Table 4.11*Verb Tense Errors*

Section	Student Example(s)	Target Reconstruction	Error Source
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Section A	"people thought", "I agreed"	people think; I agree	Intralingual: Overgeneralization
Section B	"they invented", "people believed"	they invent; people think	Intralingual: Incomplete rule application

Findings of Table 4.11

Table 4.11 presents representative examples of verb tense errors identified in the learner corpus. In Section A, expressions such as "people thought" and "I agreed" were identified as tense errors based on their surrounding sentence contexts. In the relevant contexts, the intended meaning required the simple present tense to express general, current, or timeless propositions. Thus, the forms were reconstructed as "people think" and "I agree," respectively. These errors were classified as intralingual errors associated with overgeneralization, as learners appeared to extend past-tense forms to contexts in which the simple present was required. Similarly, in Section B, expressions such as "they invented" and "people believed" were identified as inappropriate past-tense forms in contexts where the intended meaning required the simple present. Accordingly, these forms were reconstructed as "they invent" and "people think" and classified as intralingual errors resulting from incomplete application of tense rules. Overall, the findings indicate that learners experienced difficulties in selecting tense forms appropriate to the intended meaning and communicative context. These findings suggest the need for context-based instruction and guided writing practice focusing on the functional use of verb tenses.

Table 4.12

Article Errors

Section	Student Example(s)	Target Reconstruction	Error Source
Section A	"In near future", "an screen"	in the near future; the screen	Intralingual: Incomplete rule application
Section B	"in future", "the newspapers"	in the future; newspapers	Intralingual: Ignorance of rule restrictions

Findings of Table 4.12

The errors resulting from the usage of articles in the learner corpus are shown in Table 4.12. In the first section, the errors "in near future" and "an screen" showed that the article application rules were not properly applied. Those errors belong to the intralingual errors type due to the incomplete application of the articles' rules, meaning that the learners improperly applied the article rules in their language. In the second section, the phrases "in future" and "the newspapers" showed that the article omission was inappropriate. These errors belong to a different intralingual errors type caused by lack of knowledge about the said rules, which means that the learners cannot identify situations where articles should be used. Overall, the results of this research indicate that learners had problems using articles accordingly to the context of the sentence. So, proper instruction combined with practice will allow students to acquire better understanding and use of articles in English.

Table 4.13

Preposition Errors

Section	Student Example(s)	Target Reconstruction	Error Source
Section A	"reading on paper", "compare from", "agree on this point"	reading from paper; compare to; agree with this point	Intralingual: Ignorance of rule restrictions
Section B	"read online on paying", "agree on", "addicted for"	read online without paying; agree with; addicted to	Intralingual: Incomplete rule application

Findings of Table 4.13

Table 4.13 provides several instances of errors relating to prepositions found among the learner corpus. In section A, instances like "reading on paper," "compare from," and "agree on this point" are found to show difficulty in the selection of correct preposition in English. These errors were classified as intralingual errors due to lack of knowledge of the rule regulation. Instances found in section B are "read online on paying", "agree on", and "addicted for" show inconsistency concerning the application of English prepositions in the entire data collection. Overall, it was found out that there is insufficient exposure to authentic patterns and collocations of prepositions among the learners.

Table 4.14*Pronoun Errors*

Section	Student Example(s)	Target Reconstruction	Error Source
Section A	"making it bound", "they has both advantages"	making digital reading bound; it has both advantages	Intralingual: Incomplete rule application
Section B	"invest in them", "read it online"	invest in it; read them online	Interlingual

Findings of Table 4.14

Table 4.14 provides instances of the pronoun errors found in the learner corpus data. The samples in Section A, such as "making it bound" and "they has both advantages", reveal that participants apply incomplete pronoun reference and agreement rules and these errors can be classified as intralingual errors implying the partial realization of the respective rules. The sample from Section B, "invest in them" and "read it online", show that the learners' native language has an influence on their performance and proves to be an interlingual error. Since the number of the errors concerning pronouns is less than those pertaining to other grammatical categories, their seriousness in terms of sentence clarity and coherence cannot be underestimated. The results obtain point to the need for further teaching and practicing of pronoun reference and agreement.

Table 4.15*Word Order*

Section	Student Example(s)	Target Reconstruction	Error Source
Section A	"In future will be the Laziness increased", "why people not gain this"	In the future, laziness will increase; why do people not gain this?	Intralingual: Incomplete rule application
Section B	"they wont online reads", "people charges pay", "use you also can"	they want to read online; people pay charges; you can also use	Intralingual: Ignorance of rule restrictions

Findings of Table 4.15

Table 4.15 shows some of the representative word order errors found in the learner corpus. In Section A, examples such as "In future will be the Laziness increased" and "why people not gain this" show the incomplete application of English sentence structure and are said to be intralingual errors due to the partial application of the rule. Likewise, the examples in Section B, which include "they wont online reads," "people charges pay," and "use you also can," show difficulty in the arrangement of sentence elements to follow the standard word order in the English language. In general and overall, the results show learners still face problems in producing grammatically sound sentences and would benefit from practicing with English syntactic structures during guided writing and revising sessions.

5. Conclusion

The written productions of undergraduate ESL learners were analyzed in this study with reference to error analysis defined by Corder (1967). There were two sections involved in this study, namely A (n = 32) and B (n = 35). The research employed an error corpus made up of 1,712 errors which were examined according to fourteen error categories to determine the most frequently produced types of errors and possible sources of their occurrence.

As far as the results are concerned, the two groups had similar weaknesses concerning language use, although students from section B made more errors than those from section A. Subject-verb agreement, tenses, spelling, and plural forms turned out to be the leading kinds of errors showing that grammaticality and morphology are among critical problems for undergraduate ESL students. Moreover, it was found out that the majority of the undergraduates made intralingual errors, mainly in the form of generalization, insufficient application and lack of knowledge of the rules. However, only a small percentage of errors resulted from interlingual influence. In conclusion, this study underscores the importance of implementing a more structured teaching system in the area of using English grammar and other necessary elements of academic writing at the undergraduate level. Moreover, it found evidence on the effectiveness of the Error Analysis technique used as a tool for diagnosing students' problems and improving their learning process at different stages. In general, it can be said that teachers have the opportunity to implement their pedagogical experience in order to make students error-free in different aspects of academic writing.

5.1. Recommendations

As far as the findings of this research are concerned, some suggestions can be made based on the results obtained:

1. English writing courses should account for the importance of teaching students subject-verb agreement, verb tense and noun inflection since these three types of errors occurred quite frequently in students' writing according to the corpus.
2. The practice of writing should be combined with teacher feedback so that students could become aware of their errors and correct them.
3. Proofreading and self-editing activities can also be useful in enhancing the student's knowledge of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization rules.
4. It is essential for instructors to integrate vocabulary enhancement as well as collocation activities into their lesson plans in order to avoid vocabulary inaccuracies.
5. Error analysis and corpus-based activities need to be included in ESL teaching to help the learners see natural occurrence of errors and make them grammar aware.
6. Research has to be conducted with more learner corpora from different universities and make comparisons on students' written outputs in different levels of study.

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