

**ANALYSIS OF VERBS IN THE WRITING OF EFL MONGOLIAN
WRITERS**

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ABSTRACT

The present study investigates error found in 45 Mongolian students' English language essays. Participants were final year students majoring in English from the University of Humanities, in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. All participants identified their English proficiency level as "advanced" and they are to receive a Bachelors Degree of "English Language Teacher" upon graduation. Data were collected through simple random sampling of students from EFL courses who were then asked to participate in an essay writing task by choosing one of three available topics.

In order to make the project more comprehensive, all errors were identified by three independent instructors: one English grammar instructor from the University of Humanities, one native English speaking instructor from the Mongolian National University and the researcher herself who is a teacher of Russian and English, who is studying for her Master's Degree in English as a Second Language at the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. All three worked separately. The findings from the students' practical study of errors in written essays were integrated with research on possible causes of errors. Findings from this research show that participants have major difficulties in the following areas: verb tenses, choice of appropriate words, prepositions, and spelling .Major causes of verb errors are mainly attributed tense errors, subject-verb agreement, auxiliary verbs and verb form errors.

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini mengkaji kesilapan penulisan dalam karangan Bahasa Inggeris yang didapati dalam penulisan 45 pelajar EFL (*English as a Foreign Language*) dari Mongolia. Pealajar-pelajar adalah dari Tahun Akhir kursus Bahasa Inggeris di University of Humanities, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. Kesemua pelajar mengenalpasti bahawa kecekapan Bahasa Inggeris mereka bertahap tinggi dan setelah tamat pengajian university, mereka akan dianugerahkan dengan Ijazah Sarjana Muda Guru Bahasa Inggeris. Sampel kajian ini diperolehi secara rawak dalam kalangan pelajar kursus EFL yang telah diminta menulis satu karangan dengan memilih satu daripada tiga tajuk yang diberi.

Untuk memastikan kajian ini lebih komprehensif, semua kesilapan penulisan telah dikenalpasti oleh tiga orang pengajar bebas: seorang adalah pengajar Nahu Bahasa Inggeris dari University of Humanities, seorang guru Bahasa Inggeris penutur natif dan penyelidik sendiri yang merupakan seorang guru Bahasa Russia dan Bahasa Inggeris yang sedang mengikuti Sarjana Bahasa Inggeris Sebagai Bahasa Kedua di Fakulti Bahasa dan Linguistik, Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur. Ketiga tiga pengajar ini telah membuat openilinan mereka secara berasingan berasingan. Dapatan dari kajian pratikal tentang kesilapan dalam karangan pelajar ini digabungkan dengan kajian tentang kemungkinan sebab berlakunya kesilapan ini. Dapatan dari kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa para pelajar mempunyai masalah major dalam bidang berikut: *verb tenses*, pemilihan perkataan yang bersesuaian, *prepositions*, dan kelemahan ejaan. Sebahagian besar keemahan yang berpunca dari verb tenses boleh dibataskan tergoong kepada: tense errors, subject-verb agreement, auxiliary verb and verb form.

DEDICATION

Dedicated to my father Narangerel, mother Altanzagas, husband Tenuun and daughter Namuun.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CA – Contrastive Analysis

EA – Error Analysis

EFL – English as a Foreign Language

L1 – First Language

L2 – Second Language

MPRP – Mongolian People`s Revolutionary Party

NGO – Non Governmental Organization

NL – Native Language

NO – Number

SLA – Second Language Acquisition

SLT – Second Language Teaching

TEFL – Teaching English as Foreign Language

TL – Target Language

U.S – United States

U.S.S.R – Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

CHAPTER 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Chapter one consists of introduction, background to the research, problem, objective of the research. The chapter also discusses the research questions, significance of the research and scope of the study.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In the past, being able to speak different languages was appreciated only by the elites of the society. However, in today's world, having the knowledge of a different language, especially English, is becoming a necessity for anybody who is looking to advance in his/her career. Good English skills are widely recognized as essential for educational, business and personal advancement. Among the many skills of learning a language, writing is one of the most difficult to acquire well, writing is a complex process which demands cognitive analysis and linguistic synthesis. If writing in one's first language is tough, it is even harder to learn to write in a foreign language which not only takes considerable time and effort to develop but also the interest so that one can become skillful in writing. Throughout the world where English learning has become a part of school curriculums, it cannot be denied that English writing instruction is hereby assuming an increasing role in foreign language education.

In the field of linguistics which is related to second language learning, research has given great importance to the role of errors in language acquisition. Errors made by students clearly reveal how learners acquire a target language, and such errors highlight the student's proficiency level as well as the students' competence in using the language.

Particularly in writing, doing an analysis of those written errors can provide insights which can lead to changes in teaching methods. However, such analysis should be carefully conducted. Ellis (1997: 17), for instance, distinguishes the differences of an error and a mistake. Mistakes, he asserts, are not the false understanding of grammatical rules of the target language, only the result of a tongue slips. Moreover, the speaker, or a user of the second language can self-correct his/her mistakes since the rules applicable to that foreign language being learnt are actually well-known to the user. On the contrary, an error is counted as an effect due to a lack in the learners` knowledge; the user is basically unacquainted with the exact form as Ellis states (1997: 17). In other words, it suggests that the learner has not quite acquired the level of competency, thus some aspects of the language being learnt are still beyond the learner. The use of incorrect and correct structures in a written text authored by a second or foreign language learner requires an explanation. This is termed as an error, according to Ellis, since the student obviously is not aware of the correct form.

Many theories on analyzing mistakes and errors have been developed and suggested. Contrastive and Error analysis are two of them. The Interlanguage theory proposed by Selinker is another term in the field of second language research studies. The Interlanguage theory claims that second language learner creates sentences which are not explainable by L1 or by L2 form of rules (Ellis 1997: 33). It explains that before a learner is able to accomplish a certain level of competency in learning the target language, he/she has to experience a level of 'mistake-making' which is a reflection of the learner's thoughts and processes of learning the target language. It has also been mentioned by Lado (1957) that where the learner is unable to reach a higher level of learning the target language, that the mistakes and errors committed by the learner is considered as 'fossilisation'.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

A landlocked country located in the heart of central Asia, between China and Russia, Mongolia was unknown to the outside world for many years. For centuries, it was a land of nomadic herders. Long before the time of Christ many tribes living in this vast grassland area were separated and in constant conflict. The only thing that united them was a common language called “Mongolian” (a member of the Ural-Altaic family or a Mongolic language family) and the religion of Shamanism - a sky and nature worship known as “Tenger” in Mongolian language.

However, this continuous internal strife was soon ended when in 1206 a young man named Chingis started uniting separate clans and tribes. In a few short years he was able to successfully form a single state by conquering practically the entire Asia and Russia (Europe) and his army extended to central Europe and Southeast Asia. This was known as the Mongol Empire – the largest empire in terms of land area in the history of mankind. Chingis Khan’s sons and grandsons continued his legacy. Chingis Khan's grandson, Kublai Khan, conquered China and established the Yuan dynasty (1279-1368 AD) and the dynasty gained fame in Europe through the writings of Marco Polo” (Baabar, 2002).

The Mongol Empire continued to grow for the next three centuries when finally Manchu, an ethnic group which built the Qing dynasty took control of Mongolia in 1691. Mongolia could not achieve its independence until the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911. Soon thereafter the large Russian influence introduced a Soviet style "constitution" and declared The People's Republic of Mongolia on 26th of November, 1924. Between 1924 -1928, MPRP (People’s Revolutionary Party of Mongolia) gradually took all power of communist regime. At that time, the society was basically nomadic and illiterate. There was no industrial proletariat; the aristocracy and the religious establishment shared the country's

wealth and there was widespread popular obedience to traditional authorities. The Party of Mongolia lacked grassroots support and the government had little organization or experience” (Baabar, 2002). From 1924 until 1990 Mongolia was known as the MPRP and it was governed by a Communist single-party system under the influence of the U.S.S.R. During the reign, Mongolia was immediately plunged into economic chaos due to the revocation of their primary economic support when their former Communist patron disintegrated in 1990 (Baabar, 2002).

The people of Mongolia, with virtually no experience and subsequent to years of socialist planning were suddenly forced to enter the competitive global market when it was opened to the world. After several years of dire economic conditions, the country slowly began to climb the road to reconstruction. During that time, Mongolians learned how to function in a market economy and much of the aids that entered Mongolia during those times came largely from the international community which contributed large amounts of assistance. Twenty years have passed since Mongolia became democratic and Ulaanbaatar was selected as its capital which together with the small towns which dotted the steppe and the Gobi desert then transformed dramatically. Mongolia as the land of blue sky, while playing host to fast food, the Internet and international cinema, is now also undergoing social and systemic upheaval, a common phenomenon that many other newly independent nations face and with these upheavals, changes and transformation, Mongolians are also experiencing linguistic involvements especially with English (Cohen 2003).

For the Mongolian population of less than 3 million, the gates to the Western world have suddenly opened and Mongolian people desperately want to learn about the outside world and of its development. In fulfilling that curiosity, Mongolians thus have reverted to learning or acquiring a new foreign language other than Russian. As Cohen (2003) states,

“The Russian tongue of their former Soviet big brother had served them well for many years, but if Mongolians hoped to enter the global free market, communication in English was of paramount importance. Therefore, a change in the linguistic policy of the educational system was vital if the coming generation was expected to contribute to the development of the new Mongolia”.

1.2.1 English Language Policy of Mongolia Since 1990

As a communist country for close to 70 years the Mongolian education system can be described as being heavily influenced by the Russian system. There were many Russian schools and the Russian language was the prominent second language not only in secondary schools and universities but also among those of professional positions. The impact of the Mongolian Democratic Revolution of 1990 and the subsequent collapse of its communist regime was not only felt economically but also educationally. As the country became exposed to the outside world, opportunities in various fields of interaction also became more accessible. All the new possibilities to study abroad, new business opportunities were now situated within the need or demand to learn the English language as in consequence, the Russian language was duly left behind and its use was thus limited to interactions with the former U.S.S.R.

As the exposure for Mongolia became widespread, it appears that the country was unprepared for this growth of demand. In the instance of creating the space to learn the English language for the purpose of gaining wider audience outside of Mongolia, the country's education system found that it was limited by the number of teachers able to teach the language. To overcome this inadequacy of teachers, in 1992, the government developed English language training programs which were aimed at educating former

Russian language teachers to become more competent in the English language. This move can be considered as one of the first policies made by the Mongolian Government to develop English language trainers. In that project, around four hundred Russian teachers were retrained to serve as English teachers for the purpose of serving the entire country. Subsequently, state Universities in the capital Ulaanbaatar city (Mongolian National University, University of Humanities, Technical University of Mongolia, and State University of Education of Mongolia) introduced tertiary programs including the Bachelor's and Master's degree programs so as to provide opportunities for enabling the country to acquire more qualified English language teachers. By the year 2003, there were about 1000 English language teachers throughout Mongolia of which 634 served as secondary school teachers. From the same population, about 120 of these teachers worked in colleges and universities while the rest became involved in English language centers (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, Mongolia 2003).

The Mongolian Education Ministry passed The National Teaching Foreign Languages policy in 1995 and the policy states that students attending state secondary schools had to choose between English or Russian language when they enter the fifth grade. At this point of their education, Mongolians were required to study that particular foreign language for a total of six years at the expense of 655 hours in total (National Policy on Teaching Foreign Languages, 2).

The Mongolian parliament also promulgated an official white paper in the year 2000 and this white paper states that the English language must obtain further prominence in the Mongolian education system as Mongolia integrates itself with the world of economy. The government was also of the opinion that the need in studying a new foreign language can further raise the economy of the country via tourism as well as other sectors. The

government also directed its people to study the language wherever possible and students, in particular should begin learning the English language in the fourth grade, and that this process of learning should continue until students graduate from secondary school” (The Official White Paper, 2000). Consequently, students` overall classroom hours were increased to at least 655 and at graduation the number will be increased to 700 (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, Mongolia 2000).

1.2.2 Administrative and Non- Administrative English Language Plans of Mongolia Since 1990

Since the democratic revolution of Mongolia in 1990, the Mongolian Education Ministry has developed a number of joint projects with global organizations and NGO’s with the aim of implementing English language training. Since the year 1991 the Mongolian Education Ministry and the Peace Corps of the United States of America (US) have partnered in order to integrate EFL teachers voluntarily with Mongolian teachers who served at the Departments of English Study in various universities and secondary schools. The province capitals of Mongolia called *aimags* (province capitals) also accepted many Peace Corps instructors so that they can help to organize TEFL methodology and teaching skills classes for the Mongolians. .

In the year 1996, the Education Ministry’s major project became prominent when a grant from the Asian Development Bank was received. This grant was used for the purpose of conducting teacher training in various *aimags*. Developing the teacher’s ability in understanding the elementary communicative teaching skills and methods was the main focus of the National Teacher Training Project and soon a series of practicum were conducted twice a year. Regardless of these ongoing endeavors, the amount of studies in

the English language were still limited and teachers who participated in these workshops were still unable to receive adequate training in their English development and the cause can be traced to the lack of supply.

In the year 2001, a survey was conducted among 146 secondary school English teachers for the purpose of identifying the needs analysis of English language teachers serving in Mongolia. The survey reported that 82% of the 146 teachers involved expressed their unsatisfactory opinion on retraining courses and they also mentioned that bi-yearly workshops were not supporting them in their teaching skills nor were they able to express their teaching ability to the fullest. It appears that their experiences in learning English and the former Russian language was not comparable as respondents stated that their Russian language training was much wider than their English language studies (Cohen, 2001). This is because all Russian teachers learnt Russian for 7-10 years during Communism, and most of them obtained their Russian education in the Soviet Union or trained further for an academic year.

The survey results provide an understanding that additional training programs and workshops for the teachers across the country were necessary for further improvement. In response to that survey result, the Education Ministry then developed a systematic mission with the Soros Foundation and its aim was to produce a qualified Mongolian English language teacher trainer so as to be able to achieve the above mentioned goal. Subsequently, a year-long course in language development, methodology, teacher training and mentoring were held for teachers from *aimags*, as well as Ulaanbaatar secondary schools and universities. Upon graduation of this training scheme, each teacher would return to his/her school to conduct in-service teacher training workshops, mentoring sessions and testing and evaluation of students for his/her respective schools and faculties.

Since the establishment of the project in 2003, over 35 one-day workshops, 30 several-day seminars and over 100 mentoring sessions have been conducted” (Soros Foundation Mongolia, 2003). This program was noted as part of the most effective efforts in training in-service teachers as the training program were prepared and organized completely by native Mongolian teachers only (Ibid, 9). The Mongolian Education Ministry partnered with the Soros Foundation again in 1998 to create a Standard English textbooks sets for secondary school pupils. The first edition of these textbooks was completed for use in grades five to ten in Mongolian schools in the year 2000. Presently, every state secondary school in the country is using these books. In the year 2005, the English language teaching curriculum standard was raised in terms of standard based on these textbooks. The curriculum focused on the following areas:

- All English classes and teachers’ syllabi should be based on specific competencies in the four skills found in the national textbook series.
- All testing and evaluation will be based on these competencies.
- Learning through the communicative and constructivist approaches will be emphasized.
- If teachers use topics and subjects outside of the textbook, they must be culturally and educationally appropriate.
- The teaching of grammar should be integrated and tested with the four skills, and not taught as a separate subject (Mira, 2003).

Such importance placed on the English language education is evident from the Parliament’s white paper which states that, “The Ministry of Education, in cooperation with participating international organizations, should seek to do the following: diversify the English resources

of schools across the country, further update English curricula to a concomitant level with international standards and construct English villages for summer school programs”. It is of utmost importance for any future government to continue the advancement of English education.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Learners of English should be equally exposed to all the four basic skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing in order to master the language (Brown 2000). Among these four, writing is the most difficult skill for most students. Many learners find it difficult to master the ability and competency in writing in English because of a number of difficulties such as the inconsistency of the language in terms of tenses, vocabulary, prepositions, discourse markers, and writing genres which are present in the different texts written in English. In the case of Mongolia, all learners of English are learning the language in a foreign language context with many of them being taught grammar in classrooms mainly. Learners are seldom exposed to authentic writing texts and so the skill of writing is acquired based on what is taught in classrooms. In addition to that, the little exposure to the language also limits learners as to how the language is used within context. Hence, Mongolian learners of English are not only restricted by the exposure, they are also short in terms of using the language authentically since learners use their own mother tongue to communicate in everyday life, even within language classroom. In the University of Humanities, Mongolia, stated within the syllabus for EFL, it was mentioned that the objective is so that “Students will acquire the skills and knowledge to cooperate; deal with learners by building a positive environment to learn English”. However, the aims of the curriculum are hardly attained because of the linguistic environment perpetuating the

country thus Mongolian learners are often challenged by this inability to communicate their meanings whether in face-to-face interactions or other forms of communication. More so when writing is a desired competence to achieve as the less one uses a language for practical reasons, the less inefficient one's writing of such a language since language use is often tied to everyday usage. Consequently, Mongolian students and their written abilities are affected. This problem is further compounded by the concentration of teaching grammar, it being the main focus of English language syllabus. Where grammar becomes the focus, other skills are often neglected within classrooms. Thus, Mongolian learners are again deprived of this opportunity to further develop their knowledge, skills and competence.

Of the four skills a learner has to acquire through foreign language learning, writing is the most difficult to master and as a skill, it not only make cognitive demands on the learner but also affective demands. Writing is about making one's writing clear, coherent, readable, appropriate, purposeful and sociolinguistically right for the readers. For the reader, the meaning of the text cannot be negotiated, unlike speaking, because the author is absent so readers have to develop meanings out of what is being read, often through the reader's previous knowledge of things. Sometimes, this is alright because it enables the readers to form meanings for him/herself and sometimes it is not alright because it can cause misunderstandings. Hence, for a writer to be competent in a foreign language, it is vital that when he/she writes, all meanings need to be expressed clearly. This puts demands on the use of words and the choice of words used does create an impact on the readers. Further, the way words are structured is also another way where readers can be impacted by the writing since a particular way of writing carries a certain intention since it bears the tone it is being written in. In brief, it is fair to say that when the meaning of a written work is not

explicitly expressed or cannot be inferred from the reading, misunderstandings occur. Like Saville-Troike (2006) and many more other scholars have said, learning a language is about learning the culture of that language but when second or foreign language learners learn a foreign language and attempt to write in that particular language, they face problems. First they tend to transfer their cultural norms onto the writing of the foreign language. Second, when they are faced with limited vocabularies for writing in the foreign language, they search for strategies to convey their meanings and one of these strategies is by translating the words into their mother tongue or first language. Obviously when this occurs, part of their writing becomes problematic not only for themselves but also for readers. .

Although learning a foreign language is best acquired first by learning its grammar, it is not only grammar that provides the scaffolding for writing to take place. One needs exposure and in the case of writing, it can only be accomplished if the learner learns to read and write more simultaneously. Failure to gain the required level of grammar and the level of language proficiency in terms of vocabulary, language structure, idioms and other aspects of a language can cause the learner to commit a number of errors (because the learner cannot tell what is appropriate or what is inappropriate). In addition to the above reasons, language learners who are interested in accomplishing the writing skills of a competent writer also need to learn how that foreign language is used in actual contexts (sociolinguistic knowledge) and this means that they need the exposure whether in an authentic form or through secondary sources like television, movies and so on since it involves more than elementary rules of usage (Richards, 1971b).

In a newly exposed country like Mongolia, it would seem that Mongolian learners have a long way to go. This study sets to address that gap by looking at what the writing errors of

Mongolian learners so that recommendations can be made to address their inadequacies where training is concerned.

1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY

The error of a foreign language made by non-native speakers is best described through the approach of Error Analysis or EA. In that respect, the researcher hopes to conduct this research with the aim of examining the writing errors of Mongolian EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners, and the reasons causing these errors as seen in their written texts.

Considering the abovementioned issues faced by Mongolian students, the objectives of this research are thus:

1. To identify the types of errors made by Mongolian EFL learners in their writing
2. To investigate the possible causes of these errors

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the aims and objectives outlined above, this study will thus attempt to answer the following research questions:

1. What types of errors do Mongolian EFL students make in their writing?
2. What are the types of errors most frequently made?
3. What are the possible causes of these errors?

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This research only examines the writing errors made by Mongolian students of an EFL program offered by the Mongolian University of Humanities. Based on the literature offered by past studies (Corder, 1974; Richards, 1974; James, 1998; Selinker, 1972 in Richards, 1974; Richards & Sampson, 1974), a grouping for Error Analysis (EA) encompassing verb tense errors are examined. Since EA is a very broad scope, making the effort to examine all types of written errors in this study will be impossible. In that regard, the researcher will limit the study of EA to looking only at the verb tenses. Verb tenses can encompass present, past, future and progressive.

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

“The study of errors is part of the investigation of the process of language learning. It resembles the study of the acquisition of the mother tongue and provides us with a picture of the linguistic development of a learner. The study of errors may give us indications as to the learning process” (Corder, 1974:125) and this in return can enable teachers to adjust their syllabus and teaching methodology to accommodate the needs of the learners in order for them to improve their language writing skills. In other words, errors are significant in different ways. For instance, errors are the evidence of learner’s leaning strategy of a language, errors are the source of valuable insight into what is affecting learner’s ability to write in the foreign language and this barrier can be overcome. Errors give information as to how much knowledge the learners have acquired of the target language and how much they need to gain in order to be competent in the target language. Finally, one can come up with the picture of the causes of their problems by analyzing learners` errors and helpful perspective measures could be thought of once their problems are understood. Taking an

interest in understanding the learners` errors is an essential part of being a good language teacher.

Having said that, it is a fact that many language teachers are often annoyed by the errors made by their students in a writing task. It is possible that students` errors appear in all forms of written task and due to that many teachers may find it impossible to `correct` all their student`s errors and this in return compounds the problem of not being able to write well in the target language. In the past few decades numerous studies have been done in the area of EA and such studies have highlighted the learning process of language learners particularly those in the EFL context. Hence, this research is significant in a way that it tries to make Mongolian classroom teachers of English realize that errors are an important feature of learning languages. In return knowing what kinds of errors are committed by their learners will enable these teachers to know how best their teaching can be adjusted to meet the needs of their learners.

This study is also important for teachers to become familiar with some concepts of error analysis such as interlanguage. How individual learners learn a target language is useful for teachers as it can provide the necessary assistance for them to develop their individual learning system. Moreover, by proving these errors as a means of how learners learn, the teachers` understanding of how learners learn and what difficulties they face can also help them to create appropriate materials for the learners and in return develop a kinder or more pleasant attitude towards learners so that they can be made to feel confident and thus be encouraged.

1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

It is impossible for the researcher to conduct a more comprehensive analysis of the errors made by learners since error analysis can be very wide and time consuming when it comes to picking on ‘errors. In that regard, this study is confined to one Mongolian University and is confined to the errors found in the written task of final 45 year EFL students.

1.9 CONCLUSION

Studies have shown that errors are common in EFL contexts but they are an essential step of the language learning process. From what has been read of other studies on learning English as a foreign language, it would seem that error analysis is one of the oldest areas and one which has been over researched. However, not only is Mongolia a new country in terms of the exposure it gets where the English language is concerned, Mongolia is also a country which is in its infancy in training up its teachers for teaching the English language. Thus, it would not be cliché to suggest doing Error Analysis as a study in this dissertation and although EFL learners are known for their preferred strategy of transferring their L1 knowledge onto their foreign language learning contexts, this study would be able to highlight some new findings in that it gives specific focus only to their use of verbs. It is essential to understand why errors are committed by Mongolian EFL learners who are based in a Mongolian university because these errors can enable the classroom teachers to identify where their teaching methodologies can be further enhanced and what kind of teaching materials could be developed for a more effective teaching process. In this chapter, the researcher has highlighted the research problem, research aim, research questions, significance, limitations and scope of this study. The subsequent chapter will focus on various past studies, which are provided in support of the notion of Error Analysis.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents and discusses the works related to the area of second language acquisition (SLA) and more specifically the literature in relation to Error Analysis (EA) including the definition and purposes of EA, two major approaches of a second language learner`s errors: Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis . Furthermore, two approaches, which form the basis to this study will also be discussed in this chapter. Towards the end of this chapter, previous EA studies conducted in Malaysia and other countries are reviewed and they will be discussed in relation with the current research.

2.1 ERROR ANALYSIS AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

For years, there have been many studies which look at the process of first language acquisition and second language learning. Findings about first language acquisition have been adapted to foreign language learning and it has been concluded that the process of second language learning works in a similar way of where young children learn their native tongue of any language for birth.

Not differentiating the term mistake and error here, it is undeniable to say that in language learning, whether as first, second or foreign language, making plenty of mistakes is a natural process of the language acquisition or learning norm. In the case of young children, as they get feedback from adults after having used the language, they learn how to produce language grammatically and semantically, thereby, producing acceptable sentences in their

native language as they grow older and become cognitively more advanced. What a foreign language learner does in operating through a foreign language, or in this case also termed as target language, is no different from that of a child acquiring his/her first language. Both parties go through the same process of making sense of what is heard, process this further ran the mind, then when the time is ripe, use the language which is likely to be 'misused' first before it becomes acceptable. In language learning, it is inevitable that all learners would make mistakes (temporary because they know the language rules) and commit errors (permanent because they are unaware of the language rules). However, that process can be either enhanced through feedback or it can become impeded through no feedback. The steps that learners follow in learning a foreign language can be seen through writing. This can provide feedback to the researchers and language teachers who can then treat this as a way of helping their learners to overcome the mistakes and errors.

The analysis of errors thus can contribute to the field of linguistics in that sense although it cannot be argued that the field of language teaching will benefit most since the study of Error Analysis, for example, can provide many insights into language learning. As indicated above, what a linguist looks for in understanding the language learning process can contribute a lot to the questions which language teachers are often asking. Many of these teachers complain that their students are unable to use the linguistic forms that they are taught but Lengo (1995) states that this situation is due to the teacher's false impression where they assume that output should be an authentic representation of input and of course, this belief ignores the function of intake i.e. that knowledge of a language students are exposed to are often internalized for a period of time before they can be reproduced. In addition, suffice to say too that intake may be different from the teacher's syllabus. Thus, it

is reiterated that a study on Error Analysis enables teachers to find out the sources of errors thereby empowering them to take pedagogical precautions towards them. In that regard, the analysis of learner language is an essential need to overcome some learning and teaching questions which when resolved can also contribute to proposing solutions to overcoming the challenges in different ways.

2.2 DEFINITION AND PURPOSE OF ERROR ANALYSIS

Errors are an integral part of language acquisition. The phenomenon of error has long interested Second Language Acquisition (SLA) researchers. In a traditional second language teaching situation, errors are regarded as the linguistic phenomena that are deviant from the language rules and standard usages, and they often reflect learners' deficiency in language competence and acquisition device. As observations and experiences demonstrate, many language teachers simply correct individual errors as they occur, with little attempt being made to see the patterns of these errors or to seek the causes of these errors if not at least to identify learner ignorance. Presently, however, with the development of linguistics, applied linguistics, psychology and other relevant subjects, SLA practitioners' attitude toward errors have changed greatly. Instead of being problems to be overcome or evils to be eradicated, errors are seen to be evidence of the learners' stages in acquiring their target language (TL) development. "It is through analyzing learner errors that errors are elevated from the status of undesirability to that of a guide to the inner working of the language learning process" (Ellis, 1985, p. 53). The following section will look at how Error Analysis is described.

2.2.1 Error Analysis (EA) is both spoken and written medium errors examination committed by learners.

Corder (1974:125) states that "The study of error is part of the investigation of the process of language learning". In this respect it resembles methodologically the study of the acquisition of the mother tongue. It provides us with a picture of the linguistic development of a learner and may give us indications as to the learning process (Corder, 1974: 125). Termed as EA, error analysis contains two main aims: 1. to identify the patterns of errors or mistakes that students make in their work and 2: to understand why students make the error and to provide targeted instruction to correct the errors (Cohen and Spenciner 2007).

2.3 CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS (CA)

Contrastive Analysis (CA) is the organized comparison of two or more languages, with the aim of describing their similarities and differences. "CA was developed and practised in the 1950s and 1960s as an application of structural linguistics to language teaching" (Richards, Platt & Platt, 1992, p. 83). CA labels comparisons and contrasts between languages in phonology, grammar, and semantics levels. However, Lado (1957) formulated the theoretical foundations recognized as CAH (Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis). He introduced a comprehensive theoretical solution that suggests a set of systematic mechanical ways for the contrastive language analysis.

In the early 1960s and 1970s CA was broadly used in the field of SLA (Second Language Acquisition), as a tool of clarifying certain components of the Target Language (TL) which were more challenging to learn. The behaviorist theories at the time prevailed and language

learning was seen as formation of habit which could be reinforced or restricted by providing an impetus that can lead to existing habits. Therefore, the difficulty in mastering certain structures in a second language (L2) depended very much on the difference between the learners' mother language (L1) and the language which they were trying to learn (<http://udgraduates-support.wikispaces.com/Essential+FLP+Concepts>).

Lado (1957) also claims that those elements which are similar for the learner because it bears similarities to his/her native language will find the target language simpler to learn and where there are elements which are distinctively more different will be more difficult to acquire and this was highlighted in his book, *Linguistics Across Cultures*(1957).

By differentiation, Lado means that the differences of a learner's L1 and L2 can reveal areas of difficulty for the second language learner therefore, teachers should be aware of some basic differences between the learner's L1 and L2 which can be helpful for them when providing materials with specific guidelines for teaching.

Nonetheless, CA was not really considered as a good approach which can trace all types of errors, since it basically influenced the treatment of errors. To pave the way for a more thorough treatment of errors, Error Analysis was thus developed as a theory which was able to provide more explanation to second language learners' errors.

2.4 ERROR ANALYSIS (EA)

Error analysis is the investigation of both spoken and written task. (Corder 1975, p160-170), who highlighted errors and its significance states:

“The study of errors is part of the investigation of the process of language learning. In this respect it resembles methodologically the study of the acquisition of the mother tongue. It

provides us with a picture of the linguistic development of a learner and may give us indication as to the learning process”.

Various studies have proven that learners’ errors are proof of their learning techniques as they attempt to develop their own system of language learning based on the exposure which they are given. Learners continuously try to carry their techniques of learning alongside the techniques of the language which they are exposed to which in return causes formulation and rejection of hypotheses. Even very young children learning a language do this (see Kuang, 2007). In his statement of error making, Strevens (1969) states that if the learner’s writing errors show a regular pattern of errors and where these can be seen it would be a wonderful strategy for teachers who could then understand the learners’ process of learning. Indirectly, such errors may even be seen as a sign of achievement in learning.

In the early 1960s, the production of errors made by SLA learners became the focus of research in SLA. Later on, this perception changed when emphasis was given to recognizing the systems or the learning process and thus searching for the causes of these errors became the trend. It became the main issue in time. This change was significant because it opened up a remarkable insight into the learners’ knowledge of the target language which they are learning and, consequently, it helped teachers to understand the nature of how learners learn a language. In addition, its` significance was proven through number of studies like Eli Hinkel (2004), Khor (2009) ,Saadiyah Darus (2009) on errors.

Moreover, the learner’s creation of a language system that was comparatively simpler was not only based on nothing but through close scrutiny of observations and analyses. This system was labeled as a system that was easier than the system of the target language, but only from the perspective of researchers. It is unclear if learners perceive their language

system at this phase of learning and making errors as 'simple'. But viewed from an observer's perspective, it has been deduced that learners simplify their learning process by ignoring certain rules of the target language and that they do not revise those rules. In addition, some reports also claim that their language system at this phase changed as their exposure to the target language increases, suggesting that there is an overwhelming input which they may have found difficult to register or process. In that regard, errors can be viewed as evidence of developmental phenomena of certain categories and structures of grammar applied by the students at a precise period of learning.

Corder (1973) claims that through describing and classifying learner errors via linguistic terms, researchers can learn to understand the features of language which are causing them distinctive learning problems. Such a knowledge can in return, help researchers and teachers to produce materials which can help the learners when and where needed. At the same time the phenomenon also implies that their learning process is not permanent but development, therefore, not to be disturbed.

Clearly, the Error analysis approach was developed with the hope of revealing learners' level of language acquisition. The learners' role in developing hypothesis regarding the target language rules is significant because errors committed by language learners are the evidence of strategies which a learner uses in the target language. These errors are further grouped as (a) Local error – the errors which do not interfere with communication and (b) Global error – the errors which inhibit understanding (Shaughnessy, 1977). Theorists have developed various categorizations of global and local errors although the pioneer, Corder (1974) defines errors as deviations from correct usage resulting because a learner does not know the relevant language rule yet and that mistakes should be termed as deviations which

are exemplified by slips of the tongue, presumably caused by inattention and stress. He then categorized errors into the following types: Pre-systematic, Post-systematic and Systematic errors (Corder, 1974:131).

I. Per-systematic errors

This occurs before the learner has realized any system for classifying items being learned. At this stage the learner can neither correct nor explain his/her errors.

II. Systematic error

This occurs after the learner has noticed a system, and error occurs consistently. At this stage the learner can explain his/her errors but cannot correct them.

III. Post systematic error

This occurs when learner is consistent in his/her recognition of systems; which means he/she can correct and explain the error.

2.5 STEPS TOWARDS DOING AN ERROR ANALYSIS

The following are the basic procedures of doing EA as recommended by Corder (1973).

2.5.1 Recognition of Errors

An essential part of recognizing an error is to know what is meant by erroneous and idiosyncratic utterances. The term “Erroneous” as used by Corder (1973) is explained as nonstandard or unusual errors and as incorrect grammar form of the target language. However, a sentence articulated by the learner and transcribed eventually can be analyzed for idiosyncrasies. As mentioned above, Corder (1974) defines error as systematic or

competence error. In other word, these errors are likely to be repeated and they can show the knowledge of the linguistic system of the L2 learner. Corder (1974) defines mistake as unsystematic. He says that mistakes occur due to the slip of the tongue, gaps in the memory or just carelessness. The only differences between erroneous and idiosyncratic is the overtly and covertly errors.

Corder (1967:27) believes that error recognition is decisively dependent upon correct interpretation of the learner`s intentions and discusses kinds of utterances.

The two kinds of utterances mentioned by (Corder, 1967) are as follows:

- (1) Overtly erroneous – Seemingly ungrammatical,
- (2) Covertly erroneous - Seemingly well-formed but meaning is not conveyed to what the learner proposed to say.

According to Corder (1974) interpretation can be made for both overtly and covertly erroneous cases. To do so, the learner should be asked of what he or she really intended to mean and make explanation in his or her mother tongue which is the process called ‘authoritative interpretation’. Then the learner would think of the native speaker`s version of how she or he would have put words together in the context to get the proposed meaning which is called ‘authoritative reconstruction’.

A plausible reconstruction is made in some cases when the instructor is not able to communicate with the learner face to face a process which is called ‘a process of plausible interpretation’. This stage is a study of the sentences outside structure combining it with the information received from its context. Following that, the reconstruction of utterances

which aim to discover the options of possible meanings that the learner could have intended is made.

2.5.2 Description of Errors

The looking at learners' errors, the basic description of an error is about showing the learners how they fail to express what they intended to say. In other words this step may allow learners to realize where their errors are and in that way they would be able to realize what it was that they were supposed to say. Issues, which prevent accurate descriptions, are expected. Thus, the researcher needs to pay exceptionally good insight into the learners mind. "Learners do not take the same route to the same errors nor should learners be assumed that they produce same error for different reasons and not at different time" marks Mc. Donough (1981, 115).

However, Corder (1967:127-128) sees this as irrelevant citing that "the object of error analysis is to explain errors linguistically and psychologically in order to help the learner to learn". He suggests that one should hunt for repeatedly occurred errors so that the rules used by the learner can be described.

He also believes that there is a chance of learners being in disagreement with the errors they have committed as errors occur in all level such as phoneme, word, sentence or a paragraph. The notion of systematic errors is only considered in this study by looking at the repeated errors as stated by Corder (1973).

2.5.3 Explanation of Errors

Accounting on why errors were made is the most important step in trying to understand the processes of SLA. The causes of errors can be due to quite a few reasons including mental processes but due to the limitation of our knowledge in understanding the neurological and psychological language learning progress, the discussion in this study will thus focus on physical errors, i.e. errors seen in writing of Mongolian EFL learners. In other words, using Mongolian as the subjects' L1, this study will focus on errors caused by L1 interference.

Lott (1983) believes that there is no mother tongue interference in learning a target language but Nickel (1978) widens this view by advocating that there is such a thing as interference error. He suggests that interference errors must be distinguished in two ways: direct and indirect. By direct interference Nickel (1978) means that the relevant unit or structure of L1 and L2 is same and by indirect interference, he means that the items and structures are not the same in both languages. Looking at EA as an approach to understanding how learners learn a second or foreign language, Corder (1967) mentions that errors can be categorized into three different errors: 1. Transfer (speakers or writers who apply their native language knowledge to a second language), 2. Analogical (learners who apply their previously learnt strategies in new situations) and 3. Teaching induced errors (learners who make errors because of teaching methods and materials).

Further to that, Richards (1974) adds two more types of errors to Corder's group and they were termed as: L2 communication methods and L2 learning strategies.

1. Strategies of production relate to the unproblematic use of L2 knowledge, i.e. the learner relies on acquired knowledge to communicate. In the process of planning strategies to create new utterances, the learner tries to simplify the task, and thus, errors may be generated even if the learner has the correct knowledge.

2. A communications strategy is defined as “a systematic technique employed by a speaker to express his meaning when faced with some difficulties because of his inadequate command of the language used in interaction” (Corder,1981:103). Strategies of communication can occur when the learner has a gap in his knowledge and has to fill it or by-pass it in order to achieve the communication.

2.5.4 Classification of Errors

The classification of errors has also drawn a lot of attention from researchers. Burt and Kiparsky (1974:73) define types of errors into: a) global – where errors involve the overall sentence structure and b) local – where errors affect particular constituent.

At the global level, Corder (1973:277) classifies errors into a few major classes: omission, addition, selection and misordering of some required elements. Depending on the types of errors committed at the linguistic level, errors can be measured and taken into consideration within each category: lexicon, phonology, morphology, syntax and speech.

2.6 SOURCE-OF ERRORS

Presenting a range of possible explanations for language learners` error is the most important contributions of error analysis. Finding out the exact causes of errors is a very challenging task as errors are described in many different ways (Svartvik 1973; Richards 1974b). Errors were considered as habits of L1 interference towards the L2. Yet, the Error

Analysis approach has opened possible sources for error occurrences and widened the understanding the nature of errors.

Error sources can also be tied to: a) Interlingual errors, b) Intralingual errors, c) Learner's strategy of learning and d) Developmental or errors of overgeneralization. They are further explained.

I. Interlingual Errors – errors that are found to be traceable to first language interference

Interference errors- mother tongue influence where the areas L1 and L2 obviously different (Richards, 1995:6). When a learner applies his/her mother tongue rule or system to the target language, errors are resulted and this prevents the learner from acquiring the rules or systems of the second language, if those errors are not subsequently corrected. Corder (1973) , Nemser (1971) and Selinker (1972) point out that in order to understand the learner's language as a system in its own right, it is necessary to look at what learners go through in a series of interlanguage systems which could become corrected along the process of learning not through the process of fossilization.

II. Intralingual Errors – errors that are derived from the target (L2) language structure itself.

Ellis (1997) mentions that some errors seem to be universal because they clearly reflect the learners' attempts to make the task of learning and using the target language simpler. In examples where the use of past tense suffix 'ed' have been fixed for all verbs as in English, such an occurrence is an example of simplification and over generalization. Ellis (1971) claims that these errors are common in the speech of second language learners, irrespective

of their mother tongue. He further adds that Intralingual errors can also result from faulty or partial learning of the target language rather than language transfer. They may be caused by the influence of one target language item upon another.

III. Learner`s Learning Strategies – is about how a learner uses his/her previous L1 and L2 knowledge to produce a hypothesis about the current language which he/she is learning.

In this category, a learner uses L1 rule transfer and L2 rule generalization strategies when relying on previous information. This is seen as simplification. The strategy of simplification is a process where a learner tries to ease the learning difficulties and enable communication so that the learning task can be simplified.

IV. Developmental or Error of Overgeneralization – this refers to errors which students make as a result of their own assumption (hypothesis) about the language, generally not caused by mother tongue interference.

The definition of developmental errors comes from Richards (1974a:48) who says that those items created by learners reflect not only the L1, but also instances of generalizations based on the partial exposure to the L2. In other words, learners tend to develop hypothesis of the rules that he/she is exposed to but these rules are neither related to their L1 nor their L2. These errors can be classified into different classes according to their sources. They can provide valid reasons as to why learners make those errors.

Corder (1974) provides three sources of errors which are: Overgeneralization, Language Transfer and Teaching-induced error (techniques and materials used in teaching), (Corder, 1974:130). Simpson and Richards (1974) also came up with more sources of errors and they listed: three additional sources: 1) Ignorance of rule restrictions, 2) Incomplete application of rules, 3) False concept hypothesized. They are further elaborated below:

2.7 OVERGENERALIZATION

An overgeneralization occurs when the errors resulted from the influence of several structures that are closer to the structure which was previously used by the learner (Richard, 1974:174). These errors are believed to be crucially essential and can be treated as a strategy in human learning where meaningful learning is acquired through generalization. Thus, language learning was viewed as a process of generalization” (Brown, 2000, Richards, 1974).

To illustrate, the following examples showing a combination of irregular structures are presented:

- ‘It is sees’ – the combination of ‘It sees’ and ‘It is seen’,
- ‘She can drives’ – the combination of ‘She drives’ and ‘She can drive’,
- ‘I am hope’ – combination of ‘I hope’ and ‘I am hoping’.

In addition, redundancy reduction has also been added as another cause of overgeneralization. Richard (1974:48) claims that: “there are certain items which are contrasted in the grammar of the language but, do not carry significant and obvious contrast for the learner”. He claims that s the cause of the structure being overgeneralized is due to some teaching methods, and this seems to put the cause of the errors to teachers.

2.7.1 Language Transfer and Negative Transfer

Language transfer, sometimes known as first language interference, linguistic interference or cross-meanings refers to the application of knowledge from a learner’s first language or mother tongue to a target language he/she is learning (Schechter, 1992).

In Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and Second Language Teaching (SLT), language transfer can be seen as a key issue. In the 1950s, L1 transfer was often deemed as the most important factor to consider in theories of second language learning as well as in approaches to second language teaching. In the 1960s however, its importance waned as learners' errors were no longer seen as evidence of language transfer but rather of the creative construction process (Lado,1957).

Recently, focus has reemerged to acknowledge the role of transfer. Studies seem to suggest that L1 can interact with other dynamics which have not been fully explained at the current moment. Although the demand of ESL writing difficulty weighs very much on teachers, it is helpful for both student and instructors in a writing class to be conscious of such errors particularly in their writing. Where L1 transfer can create mistakes or are unsuitable to the structure of the L2, negative transfer is said to have taken place. Also known as interference, negative transfer uses L1 pattern or rule on an L2 structure thereby creating error or inappropriate form in the L2. Negative transfer can be found at all the levels of language structure. A substantial amount of empirical work in SLA research has been devoted to establishing to what extent errors are the results of transfer (i.e. interference)" (Lado, 1957).

2.7.2 Teaching – Induced Errors

The term 'Induced error' refers to learner's errors that came about because of classroom situations rather than from learners' incomplete competence in the target language such as grammar thus, is viewed as L1 interference. It was also pointed out that "errors can easily be caused by the structure of a classroom situation, for instance, by the way a teacher gives definitions, explanations or arranges practice opportunities (Stenson, 1983: 256-262).

Adding on to this is James (1998) who prescribes a category of ‘teacher-talk induced errors’. He says that “Since teachers’ also possess language deficiencies, this situation can elicit erroneous use of language. Such errors do not necessarily only occur in spoken language but also in written forms. The scholar claims that this phenomenon should not be restricted to the talk itself but also errors in writing, lexical items and others” (James, 1998: 191). The teacher’s role in a classroom is to provide standard models of the target language (TL). However, teachers sometimes fail to be the ideal model of the TL because of their own inadequacies. This occurrence can be detected through the way teachers conduct classes via their general teaching methods and their less than precise writing and speaking competency in the TL. Hence, the likelihood of learners making errors tends to escalate.

2.7.3 Ignorance of Rule Restriction

Ignorance of Rule Restriction (IRR) is about the learner’s failure in examining the restriction of the TL structure where the rules to be applied in context are not applied. IRR is more closely seen as over-generalization because in this instance learners use previously learnt rules in the context. Analogy is one of the causes of IRR where learners encounter an issue with specific verbs and prepositions. By using the same verb with similar preposition they thus commit the error of analogy. Richards claims that particular in which contrasting elements are put together cause these errors (1974b:50).

2.7.4 Incomplete Application of Rules (IAP)

The English rule application in an inadequate situation is considered as the cause of errors of incomplete application of rules. Richards (1974b:50) notes that “We may note the occurrence of structures under this category, whose deviancy represents the degree of development of the rules required to produce acceptable utterances”.

The English question form is a sample of IAP. Some students use statement forms of a sentence as questions whilst adding or omitting the question word others use the reduction of redundancy to simplify matters and this is termed as implication.

Another reason which causes poor classroom communication is when question formation is changed. In the classroom, learners are asked to answer the question rather than asked to find out something. Thus, learners tend to commit errors whilst trying to match their answers with the question form and this is noted by Richard (1974:51) illustrates with an example: Question-“What does she have to do?” and the Answer is “She have to do write the address”.

2.7.5 False Concept Hypothesized

“Faulty rule learning takes place at various levels because of faulty comprehension of distinctions in the TL”, states Richard (1974b:51). He claims that a false concept hypothesized is caused by poor gradation of teaching items. He further suggests that, “good care must be taken in presenting the various elements when teaching” because some teaching materials contain contrastive approach based language teaching, where some items are over-emphasized. Students face trouble from these textbooks as they are not presented in learners L1.

2.7.6 Learners’ Production Strategy

Learner’s strategy of production is the use of the target language knowledge in communication. Learners make errors when trying to construct a sentence by simplifying the task not standing with his or her knowledge of correct form.

2.7.7 Learners' Communication Strategy

A communication strategy is defined as “A systematic technique employed by a speaker to express his meaning when faced with some difficulties because of his inadequate command of the language used in interaction” (Corder, 1981:103). The errors occur because of his/her incomplete knowledge and he or she tries to by-pass it to accomplish the communication. The strategy is named as ‘avoidance’ as the learner avoids or reduces the strategy in order to reach the goal.

2.8 LIMITATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF ERROR ANALYSIS

According to Buteau (1970:144), EA is important in that ‘error-based analyses are not only rich but also necessary to work out and test hypotheses concerning factors that set degrees of difficulty in second language learning at the intermediate level’. Brown (1980) also believes that error analysis may take centre stage as compared to contrastive analysis. He mentions that even though some of these errors can be traced to the learners’ first language or mother tongue, it appears that learners do not actually make all the errors predicted by contrastive analysis. Learners from disparate language backgrounds may also make similar errors in learning the same target language as a result of overgeneralisation or other factors like tiredness, lack of motivation and so on. However, Brown draws attention to one danger of error analysis saying that it may overstress the importance of production data. Many researchers pay attention to production data although it cannot be denied that comprehension data also plays an important role in the process of SLA since it gives the picture of learner’s language development.

Halliday (1964) states that EA is useful for the construction of a purely descriptive framework to looking at the analysis and notation of errors. Halliday is of the opinion that after the errors have been collected, the error diagnosis can be done in two ways i.e. either descriptively or comparatively.

The descriptive method is more preferred because it yields a simpler correction and it can be used in language classes with students who are from different backgrounds. If the teacher believes that the only cause of the error is due to interference, the error can then be explained through comparative means as if it comes from the interference of the native language. But this second way of error diagnosis is rather limited as it can only be used in classes where students share the same mother tongue.

In the 1980s, EA gradually lost its popularity because of endless criticisms raised to the methods used. According to Chau (1975:122), the most serious of these is a lack of objectivity in its procedures of analysis, of defining and categorizing errors. Another limitation of EA is its lack of explanatory function, as most error analyses just classify lists of categories of errors according to their frequency of occurrence, rather than giving an explanation. In terms of categorization Strevens (1969:6) claims that 'some errors are obvious, but many are either multiple errors (in the sense that they are partly grammatical and partly lexical) or are difficult to categorize in any linguistic way'.

Another major criticism made by Schachter (1974), is that most of the error analysis just focus on errors per se and they do not seem to deal with helping learners to avoid making such errors. Schachter (1974), for example, says that it is inaccurate to come to conclude that relative-clause errors existing among certain learners of English are due to language transference. In fact, it was found that native speakers of Japanese were largely avoiding

that structure when writing because it was difficult for them, thus these errors were less obvious in their writings as compared to native Persian learners. Furthermore, error analysis (EA) does not deal with what students were doing that caused them to succeed; that is, it did not deal with what led to their learning. Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982) sum up the three major conceptual weaknesses of EA as follows: (a) the confusion of description of errors with error explanation (the process and product aspects of error analysis), (b) the lack of precision and specificity in the definition of error categories, and (c) simplistic categorization of the causes of learners' errors.

In spite of the problems and the criticism posed to EA and CA, the results provided have made great contributions to applied linguistics. The study of transfer and intralingual phenomena, for instance, has contributed to recontextualising the role of learner errors whereas under the audiolingual (behaviourist) view, errors were seen as an impediment for learning, and under the communicative and cognitive perspectives, errors were viewed as part of the resources learners trigger during the learning development.


Recognizing these weaknesses of EA, Duskova (1969) attempts to find the answer to the question of whether CA can be replaced by error analysis. Utilizing a corpus of written papers of 50 Czech postgraduate students, he summarizes every source of errors found in their target language learning process. His conclusion is that the value of contrastive analysis cannot be underestimated. He adds that the teaching materials based on contrastive analysis will be much improved if they can include the most common errors predicted by contrastive analysis alone. Duskova (1969) also found that categories that exist in both languages but display differences in their functions and distribution, although giving rise to many errors, do not seem to be the most potent source of errors.

The need to apply error Analysis (EA) as a way of doing research in a new country like Mongolia which is still in its 'baby stage' of using English can be justified. Firstly, through error analysis, EFL teachers will get an overall knowledge about the students' errors. Since foreign language learning is a process of hypothesis-making, trial and error occurrences are inevitable. In that regard, EFL teachers should learn to tolerate some of these errors, especially the local errors so that learners confidence about the target language can be further enhanced without the intervention of criticisms. Secondly, errors can tell EFL teachers how far towards the goal the learner has progressed and consequently, what remains for him or her to learn. In that aspect, learner errors are valuable feedbacks. As teachers, there are steps which can be taken towards enhancing teaching such as remedial teaching based on their errors. Thirdly, it cannot be dismissed that errors are indispensable to the learners themselves, for the making of mistakes can be regarded as a device the learners employ in order to learn. Finally, some errors cannot be ignored and in return requires mindful handling otherwise they may turn fossilized. In a sense, error analysis theory together with other theories have enriched the second language learning theory in that learning evolves within a process in which success comes by profiting from mistakes and by using mistakes to obtain feedback from the environment. With the feedback they make new attempts to achieve the more closely approximate desired goals.

2.9 MONGOLIAN LANGUAGE

Before move on, it is important to understand how the native language (Mongolian Language) of the subjects constructs and what aspects of this language affect to the subject's errors. During the data analysis, it became clear that most of the errors were

attributable to L1 interference and its rule. The causes of main errors were due to the Mongolian suffix. Below is presented some information about Mongolian grammar.

The Mongolian language (in Mongolian script:  - Mongol Khele (written from up to down); in Mongolian Cyrillic: МОНГОЛ ХЭЛ - Mongol khel) is the official language of Mongolia and the best-known member of the Mongolic language family. The number of speakers across all its dialects may be 5.2 million, including the vast majority of the residents of Mongolia and many of the Mongolian residents of the Inner Mongolia, the autonomous region of China” .

It is very complex and challenging language for the learners whose native language is European, Chinese, Korean, Japanese or English and Russian because of its pronunciation.

The English language, in comparison to other languages, have five main vowels where each is pronounced as either a long or short sound whereas Mongolian has fourteen vowels with seven short vowels and seven long vowels. This distinction between long and short vowels is critical for learners since their usage is closely tied to the meaning of the words. For example, *tos* is - grease, oil, while *toos* is – dust. In addition, consonants are also constrained in the Mongolian language with regards to their usage. For example, **r** is never used to begin a Mongolian word and the letter **f** is used only in foreign loan words. Clearly, on comparison, it would seem that Mongolian grammar is less complicated than the English grammar since the former has only three tenses (past, present, and future) as opposed to the English component with past, present, future and conditional tenses. Also, Mongolian has no prepositions and no articles to contend with, making sentence structure much simpler. However, things may become difficult when a learner tries to add adjectives

to it because the position of the adjectives can change meanings. All grammatical functions and sentential relationships in Mongolian are formed by attaching one or more suffixes to the end of a word. For example, *bolgoomj*, or care can become *bolgoomjtoi*, an adjective meaning ‘careful’, or even *bolgoomjtoigoor*, an adverb meaning ‘behave carefully’.

As for syntax, an English sentence is constructed based on ‘subject-verb-object’ order but in Mongolian, the order is a more direct, ‘subject-object-verb’ arrangement. For example, ‘I am going to the store’ in Mongolian would simply be ‘I store go’ in English.

Another thing that confuses learners of Mongolian is the double vowels in a word which indicate a long sound. In other words, the vowels are stressed putting emphasis on the first vowel rather than the second. For example: *Ulaanbaatar* – the name of capital city and *tsagaan* – the color white and *muur* – a cat.

As mentioned above modern Mongolian language has eight cases, and each is formed by suffixation with the root word. The following table displays each case with its equivalent English meaning” (Kullman, 78).

Cases: Meaning: Transliteration & Meaning

Nominative Who *Ger-Home* (No suffix in nominative)

Genitive Whose *Ger(een)-The home’s*

Dative-Locative To whom *Ger(t)-To, in the home*

Accusative Whom *Ger(iig)-The home*

Ablative From Whom *Ger(eec)-From home*

Instrumental By whom *Ger(air)-By, through home*

Comitative With whom *Gereenkhen(tei)-With home*

Directive Towards whom *Ger(pyy)*-Towards home

“The eight cases function as the basis of noun phrase structure, and as such, they are essential to the form and meaning of basic Mongolian syntax” (Roger Cohen, 2003). This is the main reason why Mongolian EFL students commit errors related to their mother tongue interference.

2.10 STUDIES ON ERROR ANALYSIS

Numerous studies have been done using the Error Analysis and Contrastive Analysis approach. Since the current study investigates the errors in the writing of Mongolian ESL students; reviewing previous studies related to the current research is necessary.

Shamim Naderi (1997) did a research on the error patterns displayed in native Dari speakers' EFL writing in English and in Dari. The study investigated error occurrences in 20 native Dari speakers' English and Dari writing. The analysis, concerning the three research hypotheses, supported these findings: (1) as predicted, the native Dari speakers committed a variety of errors similar to learners from previous studies; (2) as predicted, the participants made fewer errors in English than in Dari; and (3) counter to the hypothesis, the results indicated that the participants, when writing in Dari, demonstrated more errors in the simpler tasks; yet, the participants committed more errors in the *more complex* (versus *simpler*) English writing task, consistent with this hypothesis.

Koh (2000) investigated the written subject-verb agreement errors in the interlanguage of 50 Form One students. A total of 2454 errors (61.4%) from total of 4000 responses were elicited. The errors were analyzed according to five categories of singular and plural subject-verb agreement errors of the present tense form. The study concluded that the causes of the errors were mainly intralingual.

Kam (2009) carried out a study on errors made by 40 Form Chinese students in 40 compositions and structured tests. She focused on incorrect use of simple past and past progressive tenses and the errors were categorized into selection, omission and addition. 74% were the highest accounted error which was additions, 18.1% omissions and total of 7.9% was past tense errors. As for the past progressive tense, omission errors was the highest 71%, selection error was 29%. Kam found that, in the structured test all errors of simple past tense was selections and errors of selections and omissions were of past progressive tense.

Saadiah Darus (2009) examined the errors of 72 Malay students, 37 of whom were males and 35 of whom were females in Form Four. The participants were all Malaysian Secondary school pupils. The written essays were analysed and Markin software was used as an instrument for this study. The errors in the essays were identified and classified into various categorizations. The result reveals info of six most common errors committed by the participants. The errors are: 'singular/plural form, verb tense, word choice, preposition, subject-verb agreement and word order'.

Khor (2009) investigated the errors in the writing of 70 Form One Chinese students. Errors were categorized into 18 types. Errors of mechanics, verb tenses, preposition was found in the English essays. First and second language influence was the causes of those errors. This study suggests that teachers need to emphasize on how certain concepts are handled in English, Malay and Chinese. It is also important to make the students aware of the differences in the structure of English, Malay and their L1.

Tan (2008) explored EFL learners' major writing difficulties by analyzing the nature and distribution of their writing errors. The participants were 95 second year non-English

majors of Kun Shan University. The error analysis revealed that the top four most commonly made errors were word choice, verb form, missing subject and verb tense. The major causes of these errors were attributable to limited vocabulary size, poor grammar knowledge and interference from first language. Six appropriate instructional strategies were suggested so that teachers can adopt a more effective approach to enhance students' writing proficiency.

Another study was done by Wee (2010) who identified and described the written verb-form errors made by 50 Malaysian Malay English as Second Language (ESL) learners. The subjects wrote three types of essays namely; narrative, descriptive and expository essays. The subjects' errors were identified and categorized according to errors of omission, addition, misformation and ordering (Dulay, Burt and Krashen, 1982). Errors of misformation were the highest consisting of 63.4%, followed by those of omission at 29.0%, addition at 7.6% and those of ordering at 0.1%. By essay type, it was found that the highest percentage of errors was found in the narrative essay at 40.3% followed by the descriptive essay at 32.7% and the expository essay at 27.0%. For the tense category, the highest percentage of errors was in the past tense at 37.6% followed by the present tense at 33.7%, future tense at 21.5% and other verb-forms at 7.3%. This study revealed that the English tense-aspect system (ETAS) and subject-verb agreement (SVA) were the most difficult areas in the verb-forms to master for Malay students due to interlingual (mother tongue) influence and intralingual factors (complexities within the target language).

Mohammad Ali Fatemi (2008) conducted a research to investigate the relationship between writing competence, language proficiency and grammatical errors in the writing of Iranian TEFL sophomores. A study was carried out in two phases. First phase objective was 1) asses the writing competence of the Iranian TEFL sophomores; 2) measure their language

proficiency, and 3) examine the relationship between their writing competence and language proficiency and its sub-skills including listening, reading, and grammatical competence. The second phase was mainly descriptive and an error analysis of the subjects' writing was done to achieve the following objectives: 1) find out the most frequently occurring categories of grammatical errors; 2) establish a rank order of these errors; 3) investigate if their L1 (Persian language) was the source of their grammatical errors; and 4) establish the probable interference of grammatical errors with communicative purposes of their writing. A study consisted of 97 subjects who were randomly selected from the total population of 140 Iranian TEFL sophomores. Conclusions drawn from the findings of this study imply that serious pedagogical considerations have to be given to the teaching of grammar to improve the writing competence of Iranian TEFL sophomores. Also, test developers can take advantage of the most frequent grammatical errors for developing their test items.

A study was done on grammatical errors in the written English of Tamil students by Ramalu (2005). The aims of this research were to explore the grammatical errors of 50 Tamil students' English written task. A study attempted to find the possible sources of the errors in terms of interlingual and intralingual. The analysis of errors showed that verbs/verb phrases errors ranked 47%, the highest percentage, followed by the article errors 18%, pronoun errors 15%, preposition errors 15%, and conjunction errors 5%. The errors were attributable to both interference of the Tamil language influence and overgeneralization and simplification of the English language rule system by the subjects.

Roger Cohen (2003), a volunteer teacher of Soros foundation who lived in Mongolia for five years conducted a research by describing the developments of English language

education in Mongolia since the country's democratic revolution of 1990. The purpose of his study was to determine the unique aspects of English grammar acquisition by Mongolian learners. 35 students of 2 senior year classroom took place in his study from September 2005 to June 2006. Students were asked to keep a journal addressing their particular language learning difficulties and their daily classroom performances, exams and essay samples, assignments were monitored and evaluated by the course instructor.

2.11 CONCLUSION

In chapter two, the researcher discussed the development of EA and CA over the years, its significance and limitations. She provided the reasons of using EA instead of CA, and discussed the most recent studies on Error analysis and Contrastive analysis. Information gathered from previous studies of Constructive analysis and Error analysis is valuable. Therefore, the researcher believed it will be a perfect guide to investigate and analyze the data gathered for the current study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODS

3.0 INTRODUCTION

The methodology used to carry out this research is presented in this chapter. Introduction followed by participants, description of methodology used in this study and how data were collected is discussed.

3.1 BACKGROUND TO THE PARTICIPANTS

The subjects of this study were 45 students majoring in EFL at the University of Humanities located in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. They were all final year students of the EFL program. As mentioned in the abstract the subjects are to be awarded the degree of Bachelor in Teaching English upon graduation. Teachers of these subjects as well as the subjects themselves identified their English proficiency as advanced. It became clear during the research process that students have been learning English for over 6 to 10 years including 4 years of university EFL program. This means they already have had the knowledge of English in certain ways before taking EFL program in the University. The National Policy on teaching foreign Languages of 2005 highlights:

“Students should begin studying English in the fourth grade and all English students should continue studying English in the newly added 11th grade. Total hours of English study in schools are 655 to over 700 at the time of graduation”. (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, Mongolia 2000). Hence the participants have had enough exposure to the English language for the past 6 to 10 years.

Simple random sampling was used to determine the sample size. Based on the criteria of homogeneity the selection of participants was made. The subjects were homogeneous in terms of age, religion, language and social-educational background. Corder (1974) states that for studying error analysis, the study of group errors may only be meaningful if the group is homogeneous. He further added that members have to have the same mother-tongue and should be matched educationally, socially and intellectually so that these errors and their analysis will be more consistent.

This researcher was undertaken as an exploratory study. The subjects for this study were selected from one University (University of Humanities) in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. All selected subjects are Mongolians and basically all of them have had their primary education in Mongolian schools. In the justification of taking the undergraduates as subjects for this study, it has to be clarified that this was due to the fact that they were easily accessible since the researcher was a teacher in this institution before. The researcher was not able to get more subjects from different Universities as her request of conducting a study was denied by the deans of various faculties from other institutions.

In addition, the number of participants who signed up to participate in this study was 60. However, the number decreased to 45 when some of the participants simply did not show up on the day this study was held. Thus, the original number was inevitably reduced. It is my belief that participants may have misunderstood the purpose of this study.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND INSTRUMENTS USED

Three types of techniques were used in collecting the data: Essay writing task, questionnaire and an informal interview.

To analyze the data the researcher used three steps. First, student`s hand writing were all read and marked. The incorrect sentences, words were highlighted by red check pen. Second, the students` errors were calculated and classified into nine types. The error classification scheme developed by Corder (1974) was used to classify the nine common errors found in student`s English essay. Lastly, the information obtained through questionnaire and interview were analyzed and illustrated further. It is further reiterated that the writing tasks was administered by the researcher but the marking of these written texts were performed by three markers, two inter-raters who were teachers of English and the researcher.

The researcher aimed to investigate the errors in the writing of Mongolian final year students of Mongolian University of Humanities enrolled in an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) programme. It was the intention of the researcher to test the assumption that there is a correlation between the errors in the English writings of Mongolian students and the interference from their mother tongue. The researcher also worked on the hypothesis that a lack of knowledge regarding L2 rules may have contributed to the learners` errors.

The descriptive qualitative approach is used to discover the real causes behind errors. This is because descriptive research studies deal with collecting data and testing hypotheses or answering questions concerning the current status of the subject of study. The approach deals with the question of “WHAT IS” of a situation and concerns with determining the current practices, status or features of situations. Another aspect of descriptive research is that data collection is either done through asking questions from individuals in the situation (through questionnaires or interviews) or by observation. The researcher collects the data, analyzes and also provides interpretations of the data based on previous readings of literature.

The tools used for this study were a written task, questionnaire and interview which will be illustrated in the following sub-sections.

3.2.1 Written Work

“Writing is the tool to demonstrate writers’ ability to construct sentences that are correct in a logical and grammatical way” stated Halliday and Hassan (1976). With this in mind, the researcher has decided to collect narrative English essays with a maximum length of 300 words from 45 students. The subjects were given 50 minutes to complete the task. The researcher has chosen a narrative essay writing task for the participants because writing of this genre is easier to elicit from students than oral tasks. Additionally, narrative essays do not require the writers to research on the subject nor do they require writers to write in a particular length of words. Narrative essays basically require a writer to use his or her own imagination or things that the writer has already experienced. In this study, the participants were given a choice of three different topics namely: ‘If I had a million dollar’: ‘The hardest thing I ever had to do’ and ‘the most memorable trip’.

In order to make participants come up with effective writing ability, the researcher discussed these topics with the supervisor (Dr. Devikamani) to see if they can generate words and after her approval, the mentioned topics were chosen because they were considered most suitable.

Samples of the writing task sheet are appended (Appendix 2).

3.2.2 Questionnaire

The researcher conducted a survey, because structured questions can be completed with many participants in a relatively short time. The data collected is analyzed easily, more

importantly it is quantifiable and generalizable to an entire population. The purpose of this questionnaire was to elicit some background knowledge of the participants in terms of the use of English language.

The questionnaire model was one which had been designed by a researcher Ramalu(2005) who investigated the English written errors of Tamil students. It consisted of five pages with 14 questions containing both Likert-scale and open-ended questions. These were 'WH' formulated questions with the options where the subjects were required to select appropriate one. To fit the questionnaire into the present study, Ramalu;s (2005) questionnaire items were slightly adapted and changed by the present researcher according to the research criteria. A sample questionnaire is appended (Appendix 1).

The original questionnaire set included items on participant's socio-economic status. However the current study does not need to analyze the socio-economic status of the participants as this study was not aimed at investigating the participant's economic status and its effect on their language learning.

The grammatical items of the present questionnaire were taken from questionnaire that was constructed by Cohen (2003). As was noted in the literature review, Cohen had conducted a research study among Mongolian students. He observed the most challenging or facile aspects of English Grammar faced by Mongolian English learning students.

3.2.3 The Interview

An informal interview was conducted with both students and the teachers for further clarification. All 45 subjects and their 3 teachers participated in the interview. Only three out of eight teachers agreed to take part in the interview. Two of them were grammar

teachers who have been teaching English grammar and English teaching approaches for six to eight years and Evaluation teacher who has 5 years of teaching experience. For the students, some were able to give reasons why they committed such errors which will be elucidated in Chapter 4. However most of the subjects were not able to give reasons for their errors which caused some difficulty in explaining their sources. As for the teachers, they tended to be ignorant and were unable to give full explanation to the sources of their students' errors. Thus, little information was gathered from them which will be discussed in Chapter 4 as well.

3.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Corder (1973) classifies the errors in terms of the difference between the learners' utterance and the reconstructed version. In this way, errors fall into four categories: omission of some required element; addition of some unnecessary or incorrect element; selection of an incorrect element; and misordering of the elements. Since writing errors can be numerous and impossible to categorize, the study will only be focusing on the verb, article and preposition aspects of the Mongolian ESL learners writing. Verbs in this case are subdivided into tenses, subject-verb agreement, auxiliary and verb form.

Before moving forward, the researcher restates the aims and research questions.

This study aims to:

1. To identify the types of errors seen in Mongolian EFL writers' writing tasks
2. To identify the possible causes of these errors

The following are the formulated research questions:

1. What are the types of errors made in the writing of Mongolian EFL students?

2. What are the types of errors most frequently made?

3. What are the causes of these errors?

To categorize the various verb errors, the following section highlights the definitions.

3.3.1 Verb

English verb forms can be described as simple and complex. This study focuses on simple verbs which are tenses, subject-verb agreement, verb form and verb 'to be'.

I. Tense

Tenses show the time of a verb's action or being. There are three inflected forms of verb endings. The present simple and continuous tense which indicate something is happening or being now. 'I am teaching'; 'I teach'. The past simple and continuous tense which indicate that something happened in the past. 'I was teaching'; 'I taught'. Finally, past participle form which indicates something happened in the past prior to another action. 'I have been teaching'; 'I have taught'.

II. Subject- Verb Agreement

This refers to a change in the forms of a verb depending on its subject. Verb subject can be singular or plural. English verb changes its form in the third person singular and only in the present tense. A verb with third person singular subject always end with -s.

III. Auxiliary Verb

An auxiliary verb is a verb that functions as a helping verb. According to (Palmer, 1980) there are two types of them: primary auxiliary (which are verb 'to be', 'have' and 'do'),

secondary auxiliary (which are known as modal verbs ‘will’, ‘shall’). Primary auxiliary verbs will be focused in this study.

3.4 CATEGORISATION

3.4.1 Identification of Errors

Firstly, the completed task sheets were collected and reviewed and a number of sentences, words were counted. Most of them had 5- to 15 sentences, whereas only a few of them had 15 sentences and above. The length of the essays ranged 40- 270 words. An error classification scheme developed by (Corder, 1974; Richards, 1974; James, 1998; Selinker, 1972 in Richards, 1974; Richards & Sampson, 1974) namely: **grammatical** (prepositions, articles, subject-v-agreement, verb tenses, pronoun and auxiliary verbs), **syntactic** (word order), **lexical** (word choice, word form), **semantic** (incomplete sentence), & **mechanics** (spelling) was adapted in this study. However, syntactic, lexical and semantic errors were not taken into consideration as they were beyond the scope of this study.

3.4.2 Classification of Errors

Verb errors found in papers were classified into six groups namely: tenses, subject-verb agreement, auxiliary verb and verb form.

Table 3.1 Error Types

Errors	Types	Examples
Tenses	Past simple	<i>We go to Russia last summer.</i>
	Present simple	<i>I am paying my for my apartment.</i>
Subject-V-Agreement	Misselection of verb	<i>My brother and Sarah is good friends</i>
	Omission of 's'	<i>She always feel sorry for poor people.</i>
Auxiliary verb	Misselection of 'have' and 'has'	<i>He have a house for children without homes.</i>
Verb form	Wrong past tense verb form	<i>I drived a car I maked cookies</i>

Errors were then sub-categorized into error types classified by Corder (1973). According to him errors fall into four main categories: omission, addition, selection and misordering.

Omission of Some Required Elements

Omission is about some lexical items that are omitted by the learner due to its complexity of producing them. For instance: in pronunciation, some consonants are inaudible or some constituents are left unvoiced which often create problems for second language learners.

For example: (Errors are in bold)

1. Third person singular morpheme-s in the sentence.

She **like** playing tennis. (likes)

He always **break** his toys. (breaks)

2. Plural marker's'.

My sister has two **cat** and one guinea pig. (cats)

They are close **friend**. (friends)

3. Omission of some obligatory elements also occurs in syntax and learners often omit the following elements in the sentence.

She likes to ~ shopping. (go)

During the school vacation, I always went back~ country. (to)

John and Jack ~friends. (are)

Addition of Unnecessary or Incorrect Elements

Addition of unnecessary elements is often occurs. In morphology, third persons singular – s is often seen as well as plural mask – s. Examples:

They **plays** piano very well. (They play piano very well).

I help my mom to **cleans** the house. (I help my mom to clean the house).

Article addition is also overused at the syntactic as the following sentences:

I go to school by **the** bus. (I go to school by bus).

We went to the countryside by **the** car. (We went to the countryside by car).

Selection of an Incorrect Element

Selection of wrong phonemes, morphemes structures and vocabulary items causes misselection errors. At the phonological level interlingual transfer is often seen as cause of such errors because, learners may substitute similar phoneme from the mother tongue for a SL as English /u/ and /au/ are respectively mispronounced and often results misspelling.

For instances:

I go to school by **bas**. (I go to school by bus)

I **cought** a big fish for the first time. (I caught a big fish for the first time).

In syntax level, the learner selects a wrong item which may be induced by interlingual transfer or overgeneralization.

I **maked** some cookies for my mom. (I made some cookies for my mom).

She is a **coocker**. (She is a cook)

The learners sometimes select words which are entirely different from their conveyed meaning. According to (Tarone, 1972) this is due to the “prompted strategy of approximation”.

Misordering of the Elements

Misordering errors occur when learners misorder words in a sentence where constituents of a single noun or phrase or verb are split.

I and my mom... (My mom and I...).

He took home me. (He took me home).

The present study limits its scope within a conceptual framework which is used to give route for the progress and results of the study. A framework is guided to determine the error types and reasons behind them.

3.5 QUANTIFICATION OF ERRORS

Each task score was calculated by the following formula. “No. erroneous sentences/No. sentences constructed*100”.

$$\frac{\text{Number of erroneous sentences}}{\text{Number of sentences constructed}} \times 100$$

The total number of each word class category was counted and tabulated. Percentage of errors was calculated for each word class and for its sub-categories. SPSS, software for statistical analysis was used in calculation.

3.6 EXPLANATION OF ERRORS

This stage explains error types and reasons for their occurrences. The causes of such errors were the interference of a mother tongue, when researcher and other colleagues translated the sentences into Mongolian. An error caused by the unawareness of certain rules of the target language was considered to be intralingual and developmental errors.

3.7 RESEARCH PROCEDURE

A questionnaire, interview and a writing task technique were used in collecting the data. The study was held at the Mongolian University of Humanities. The questionnaire and the task sheets were distributed to the chosen participants and collected after they had completed the work under the supervision of the researcher herself.

Papers were marked by three independent instructors including the researcher herself. Writing scripts were evaluated analytically (focusing on five items chosen by the researcher: grammar, vocabulary, organization, originality and cohesion). The scoring was conducted within two weeks after the scripts were collected. The raters used four-point scale (1: poor to 4: good). In order to determine the evaluation items and criteria for labels the researcher referred to Cohen (1994).

Details concerning the rating procedure of writing task are summarized below:

Table 3.2 Features of the Analytic Rating Scale Used

Score	Originality of Content	Organization	Vocabulary	Structure	Cohesion & Logical Consistency
4	interesting ideas were stated clearly	well organized	very effective choice of words	almost no errors	sentences logically combined
3	interesting ideas were stated fairly clearly	fairly well organized	effective choice of words	few minor errors	sentences fairly logically combined
2	ideas somewhat unclear	loosely organized	fairly good vocabulary	some errors	sentences poorly combined
1	ideas not clear	ideas disconnected	limited vocabulary range of vocabulary	many errors	many unfinished sentences

As mentioned previously, two other external examiners were asked to check and mark the papers to validate the data collected from above techniques: one English grammar instructor from University of Humanities, one native-English-speaking instructor from the Mongolian National University. To determine consistency among coders, an inter-coder reliability (J. Cohen, 1960) analysis using the Kappa statistic was performed in SPSS version 15. This kind of inter-coder reliability measure was chosen because it is the most common measure and it also takes into account the agreement among coders. Moreover, it is significant to mention that most statisticians prefer for Kappa values to be at least 0.6 and most often higher than 0.7 before claiming a good level of agreement (J. Cohen, 1960; Landis & Koch, 1977; Krippendorff, 1980; Stemler, 2001). In coding qualitative data of this study, all Kappa values were higher than 0.70, substantial results that indicate significant reliability and consistency of all coding schemes used for coding qualitative data in this study (Stemler, 2001).

The most careful attention in identifying the errors and long term discussion was made meanwhile, in order to make this study more comprehensive.

3.8 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the researcher discussed the background of the participants, theoretical framework and doing research and analyzing data how data was collected and analyzed to carry out this research. The methodology explains how the data was collected and analyzed. The types of errors for the purpose of the study will be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 INTRODUCION

This chapter presents results from two perspectives: input retrieved from student`s questionnaires which would provide information of their English language use in everyday situation. It also provides information whether student`s everyday use of English affect the error they commit. The results obtained from the analysis of errors gathered from the written tasks given to the subjects are also presented. Given the task as stated in chapter three above the 45 subjects were given a task of writing a narrative essay in English. Three topics were provided for them to choose one topic only. Subjects were given 50 minutes to complete the writing. Subjects were advised to use Mongolian-English dictionary. The student`s written work were then collected by the researcher herself. As stated in chapter three papers were then marked by the researcher and two other instructors from different universities. The data collected was first analyzed at two levels namely: word and sentence. The errors at word level were identified and subdivided into grammatical, lexical, semantic, syntactic and mechanics. Only grammatical errors are analyzed as this is the focus of this study and these errors were analyzed and classified into verb, article and prepositions errors. For the benefit of readers, few samples of the subjects` essays and questionnaire are appended in (appendix 3).

4.1 FINDINGS FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The following charts are illustrated based on the information acquired through the questionnaire about English language usage in the home, within classroom and outside

classroom environment. For this, only the highest and the lowest in the rank were considered. The statistical analysis of data is presented in appendix 6. The diagram provided will indicate information based on gender.

4.1.1 Demography of subjects taking part in the survey (questionnaire)

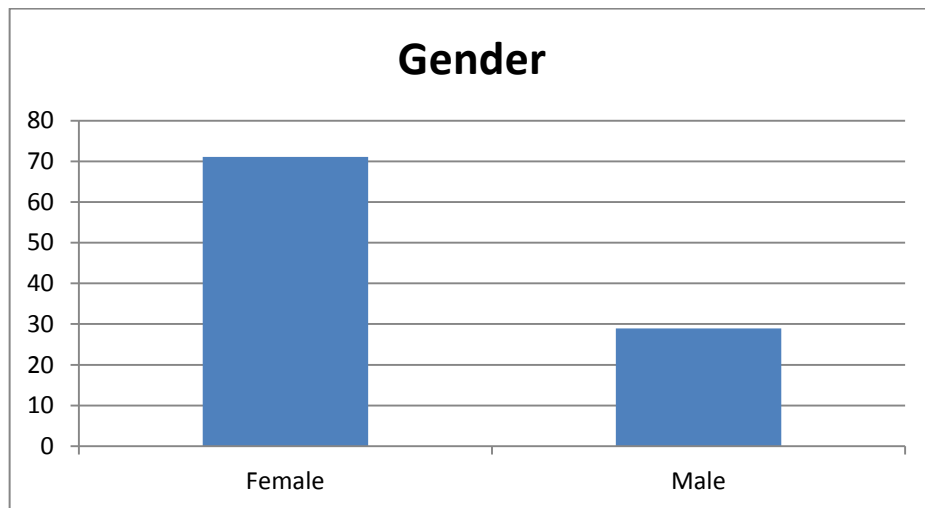


Figure 4.1 Participants' Gender

As Figure 4.1 shows, of the overall 45 students who participated in this study, 71% of the subjects (32) were female, and 28% (13) were male students.

The diagram below will next illustrate the information about the subjects' spoken use of the English Language

Figure 4.2 shows the analysis of usage of English language in communication at home, classroom environment.

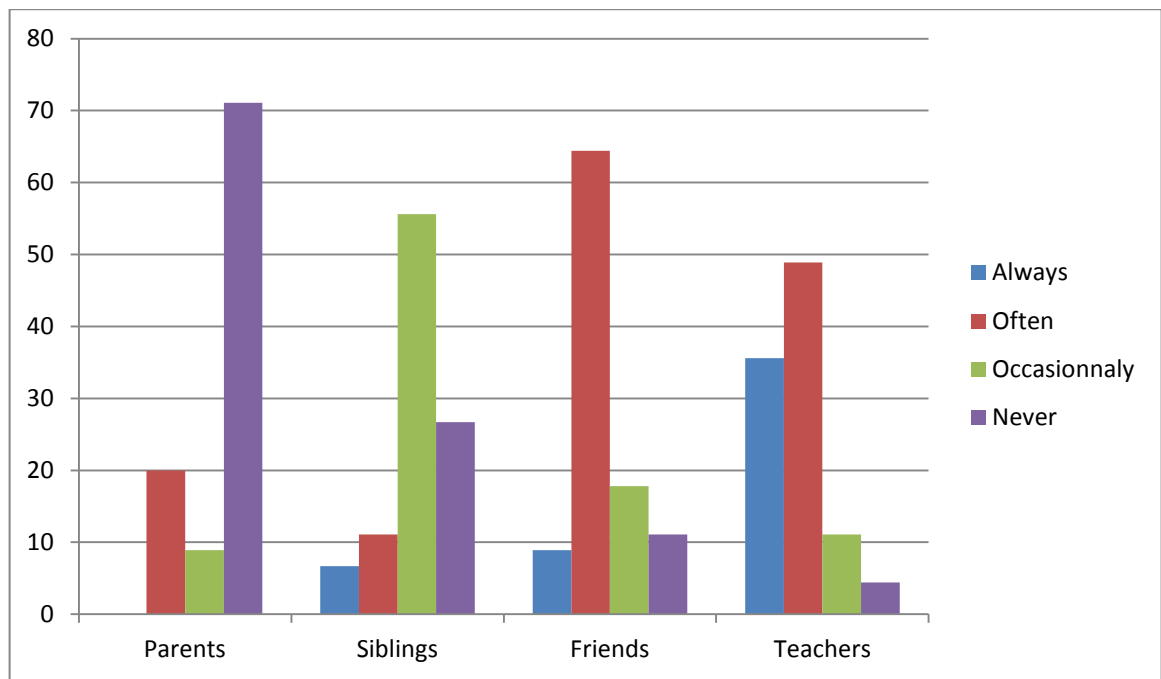


Figure 4.2 Participants' Frequency of Speaking English with Others

From figure 4.2, it seems that 71% of the subjects stated that they never speak English with their parent because their parents do not know English or their parents speak Russian only. 55% of the subjects (25) have stated their occasional use of English with their siblings, whereas only 6% (3) said they always speak English with their siblings. 6% (3) subjects always speak English with their siblings because they are graduated from English speaking countries such as England, Canada, USA and English language use is the part of their everyday life.

As for the oral communication in English with friends: 64% of the subjects (29) have stated often, 8% (4) stated always speak English during English lesson and another 8% (4) said they never speak English with their friends.

The figure also provides information on the subjects' oral communication with their teachers in the classroom.

48% (22) of the subjects declared that they often speak English with their teacher in the classroom, and 4% (2) said they do not speak English at all. From this result, it is hypothesized that students are basically not convinced or encouraged to use their English language knowledge to communicate

For any learners, communication in the language classroom gives confidence of using the target language inside the classroom as well as outside the classroom and reflects the learner's attitude towards the language. The researcher observed that students lack the confidence of speaking English as they feared constructing a wrong sentence, making mistakes or awkward pronunciation. Only few students were able to communicate freely, without any fear of making mistakes and showed better performance.

The researcher does believe that a positive learning attitude is the important in language learning. Communication will occur if learners are given more opportunity and purpose for the use of the target language in a supportive environment.

4.1.2 Descriptive Analysis of Students: Electronic Media Exposure

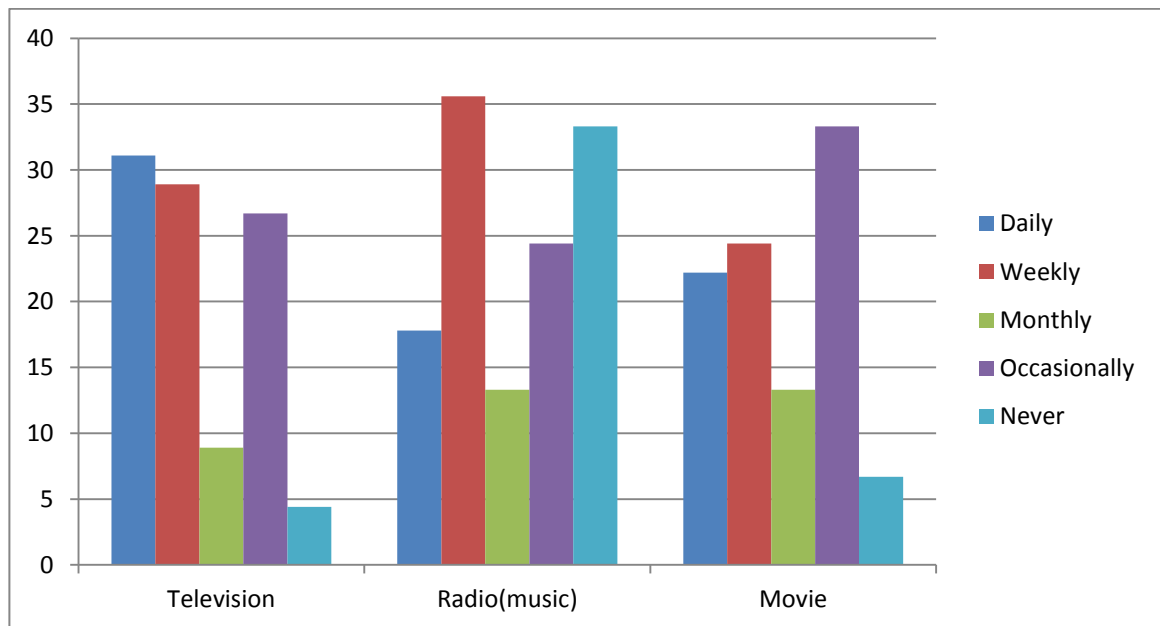


Figure 4.3 Participants' Exposure to Electronic Media

Statistics of Exposure to Media is shown in this figure. The information gathered from here was important as the use of media is another major way of learning and improving a language. 31% (14) subjects stated they watch Television daily (programs, news movies in English), while 4% (2) have said they never watch TV as they live in the dormitory where there is no Television access. 35% of the participants (16) have declared they listen to the radio (music-English songs) weekly while 8% (4) said they never listen to the radio. Subjects go for movies were 33% which is (15) while only 6% (3) have stated they never watch movies in English. Participants were interviewed for further illustration. They liked watching English movies on television or some channels like National Geographic or BBC. However they always face issues in understanding the language which make them lose their interest in watching anything in English. It was clear that the subjects are on the right path of improving their target language as they try to expose themselves to various media. The

only thing left is for subjects to understand that exposing themselves to any media is not just for entertainment also for learning and improving their target language.

4.1.3 Descriptive Analysis of Students: Print Media Exposure

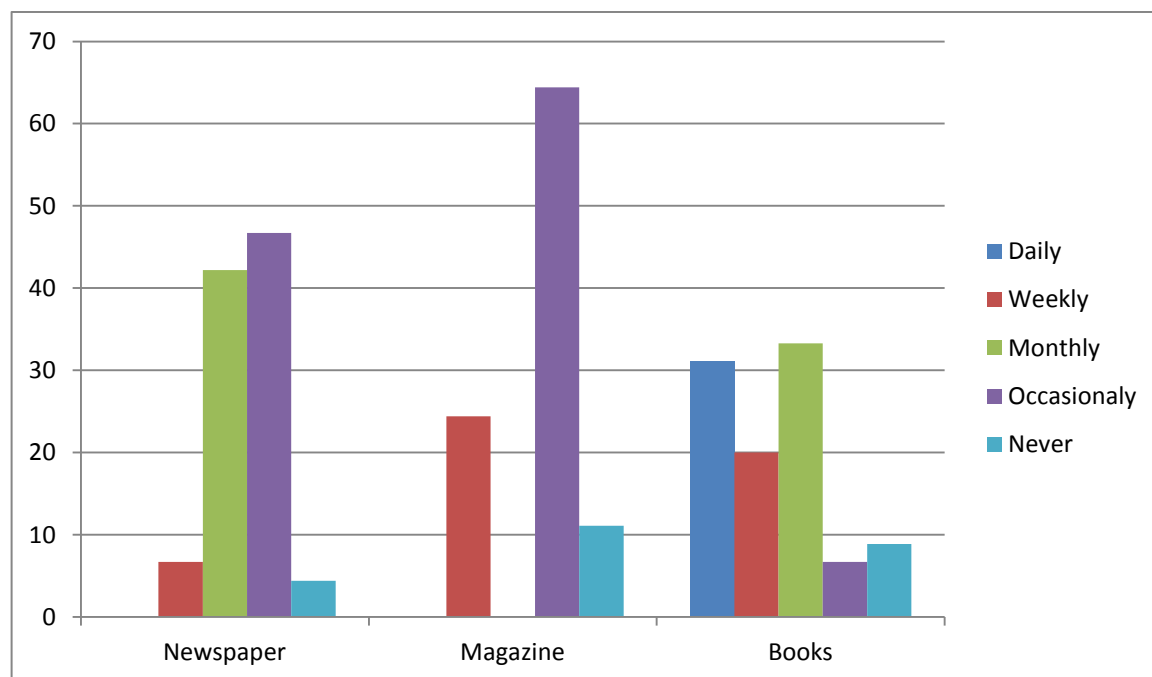


Figure 4.4 Participants' Exposure to Print Media

Newspaper, magazine and book are related to print media. They consist of day to day issues which help learners gain information about the issue as well as connect with the real usage of language. Reading is also very important in improving writing skill. Thus, the information gathered here was the key way of knowing subjects intension in using them as learning tool.

The reading materials such as newspaper, magazine and book 46% (21) have declared they occasionally read English newspaper (for the purpose of doing homework), 64% (29) read magazine occasionally and 33% (15) read book monthly. The above activities show that subjects are in the right direction of getting more exposure to English. However, it became

clear through interview that they tend to run away from watching, listening or reading things in English as they do not get the full idea of what is going on.

4.1.4 Descriptive Analysis of Students: English Learning Difficulty

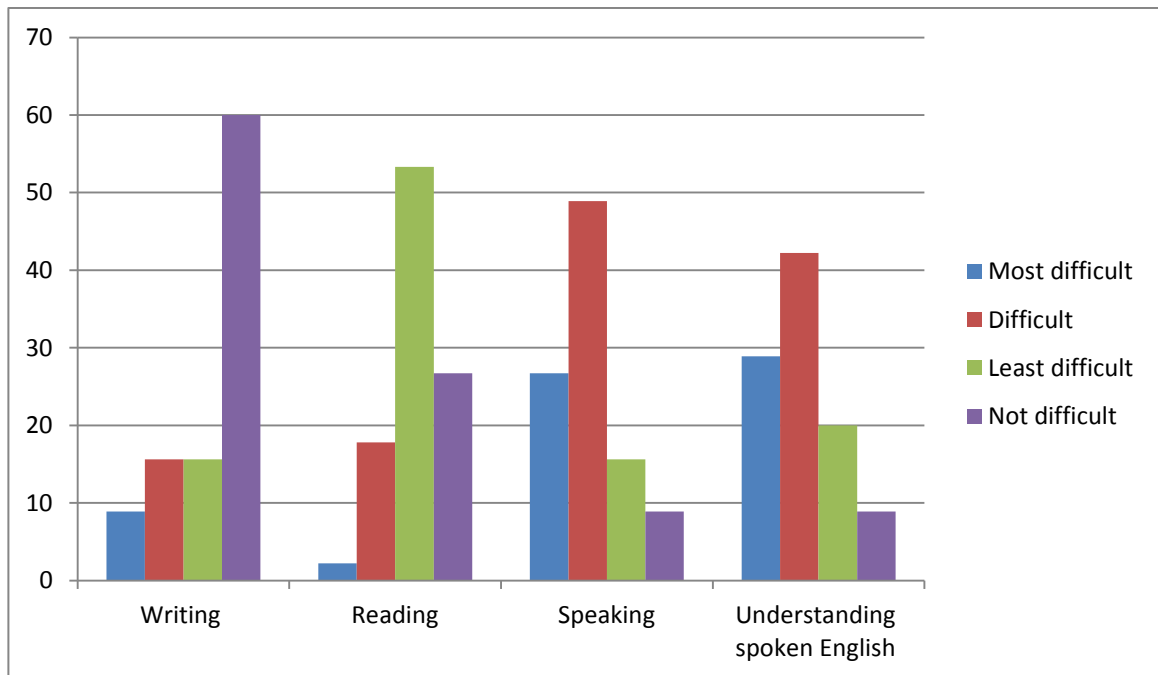


Figure 4.5 English Learning Difficulty

Knowing the subjects' perception of English learning difficulty level was essential in a way that if subjects were aware of the issues they faced or if they really knew what they needed, they could improve that problematic part of a target language.

Figure 4.5 gives readers some idea of the subjects' difficulty in learning English. . Almost 60% of the subjects (27) have stated that the writing skill is not difficult to learn when 8% have stated it being most difficult. 53% of the subjects feel reading is the least difficult while only 2% have said it is the most difficult skill to learn. However, the researcher felt writing should be the main issue that students must seriously consider due to the fact that the majority of them have not had the basic knowledge of how an essay should be written.

Regarding the matters of speaking and understanding the spoken English 48% of the subjects have declared speaking is a difficult skill to learn, while 8% (4) feel it is not difficult. 42% of the participants have said understanding spoken English is difficult while 8% (4) have stated it is not a difficult skill to learn.

Writing is the most compound skill to learn. Learners need to know subject matter and collect the relevant information about the topic. During the process of writing learners need to have clear purpose of what to write and how to build up ideas in the text well as need to know series of sentence patterns, words, and appropriate writing style. Unfortunately, it is observed from Figure 4.5 and from interview that subjects do not feel they have a problem in writing.

4.1.5 Descriptive Analysis of Students: Difficulty in English Writing

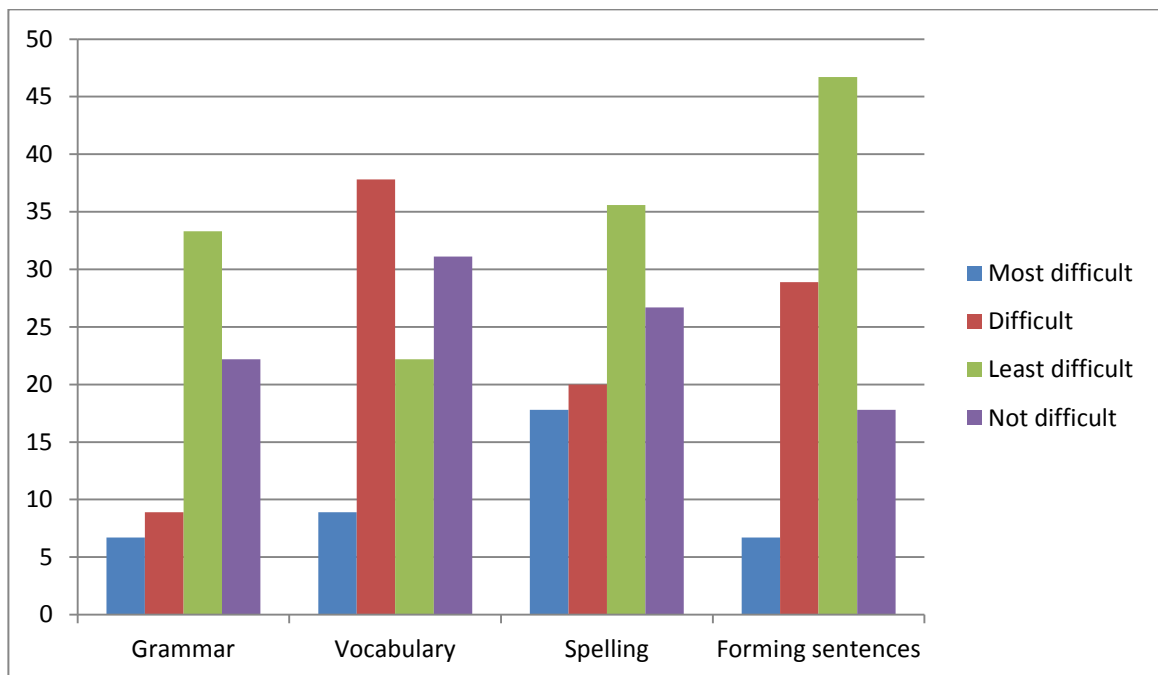


Figure 4.6 Difficulty in English Writing

Learners acquire the knowledge of writing at various stages. Knowing of stages they find easy or hard, and finding out the component which provoke them make errors was one of the aims of this study. Thus, information gathered from this item as important.

Regarding the matters of which components are difficult when writing in English 33% of the subjects have stated that grammar is the least difficult while only 6 % of them reported grammar as being the most difficult component when writing in English. 37% of the participants have reported that vocabulary is difficult in writing while only 8% have said it is the most difficult component when writing in English. As for spelling and forming sentences 35% of the participants have stated spelling is the least difficult while 17 % have told it is the most difficult in writing.46% of the subject have said forming sentences is difficult when only 6% stated it is the most difficult component when writing in English. Grammar and vocabulary knowledge enable learners to create meaningful, orderly and grammatically correct text. The learner is not able to put words together and cannot express his/her ideas or intentions otherwise. Various stages of learning grammar, motivations and of course regular practice can enhance the writing skill.

As for the question “When writing an essay in English do you first think of a word in Mongolian then translate it to English or do you make selection directly in English?” 35% of the participants have said yes, they do think in Mongolian first then translate into English, 48% have stated sometimes and 15% of them have said they make direct selection in English without translation. This shows that language learners often do translation from native to target language. Translation from native to target language is one of the main reasons why learners make errors. The reason is L1 and L2 do not always consist of same word, sentence and grammar structure. Thus it was again vital to know if translation is the cause of subject’s error commitment.

4.1.6 Descriptive Analysis of Students: Difficulty in Learning

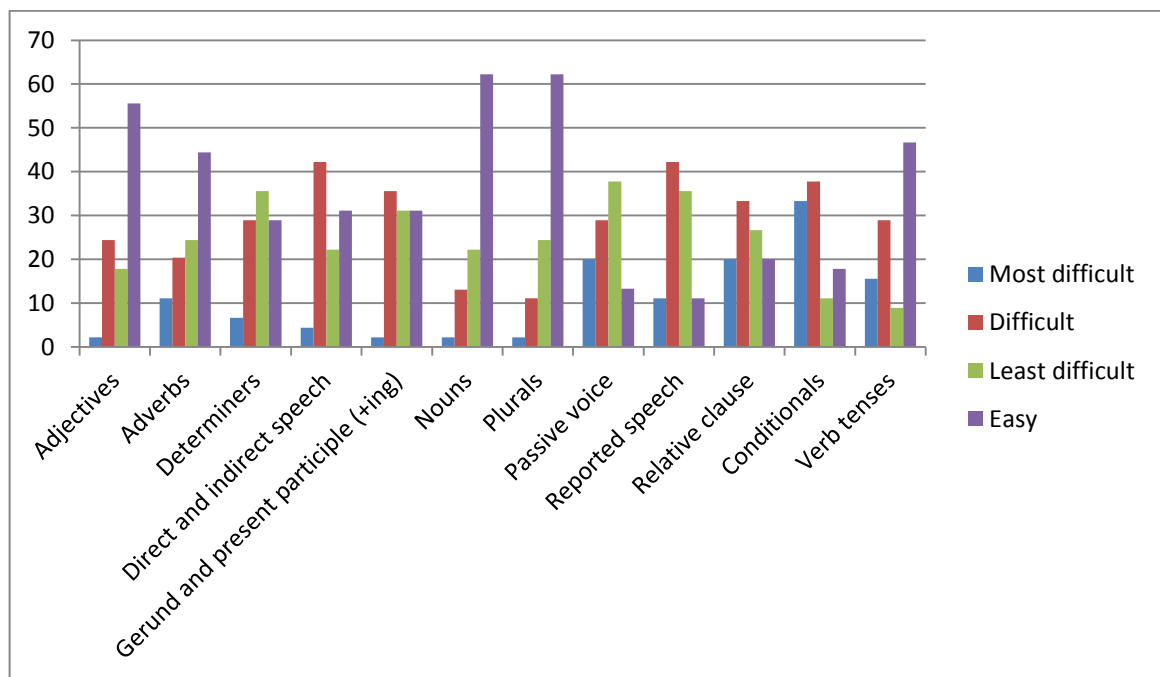


Figure 4.7 Difficulty in Major Grammar Topics

Only the highest in the rank is considered in Figure 4.7 the grammatical topics given in this question are considered as major grammar topics of English language and most difficult ones to learn for Mongolian students according to Cohen (2003). Corder suggested in 1967 that linguistics should study the process of second and foreign language acquisition at various stages and the strategies that learners may use.

As can be seen in the above figure, 62% of the subjects have stated nouns and plurals as being easy for the learners to learn, followed by adjectives 55%, adverbs 44% and verb tenses 46%. The rest of the topics belong to the category of most difficult, difficult and least difficult topics. In writing, knowledge of grammar enables one to put words together in correct order to communicate ideas and intentions. According to Corder (1967) the study of the learners' dialect would tell the teacher how far the learners have progressed towards

the goal and what more they have to learn yet. Thus information gathered from this question was significant to know if these grammar items affect the subjects writing.

4.2 FINDINGS FROM THE WRITTEN TASK

This section presents the analysis of the written task. As mentioned in chapter 3, the subjects were requested to write an English essay with maximum of 300 words choosing one of three given topics. The topics to be selected from this task are:

- a) If I had a million dollars,
- b) My most memorable trip and
- c) The hardest thing I ever had to do.

It appears that most of the subjects have chosen the first topic which is “If I had a million dollar”. The compositions were completed within 50 minutes at the Mongolian National University of Humanities under the supervision of a researcher herself. Subjects were given a chance of using Mongolian – English dictionary. A total of 30 essays were written by the subjects. However, only 14 of 30 written essays could be used for analysis. 16 essays were incomplete or incomprehensible due to huge amounts of multiple word errors, blurred meanings while some were not written at all. Further, some tasks were written in less than the required number of words. Consequently, only 14 out of 30 were found useful. These written tasks were then coded and analyzed according to Corder (1973). He classifies the errors in terms of the difference between the learners’ utterance and the reconstructed version. In this way, errors fall into four categories: omission of some required element; addition of some unnecessary or incorrect element; selection of an incorrect element; and misordering of the elements. Since writing errors can be numerous and impossible to

categorize, the study will only be focusing on the **verb** aspects of the Mongolian ESL learners writing. Verbs in this case are subdivided into tenses, subject-verb agreement, auxiliary and verb form.

4.2.1 Categorising Errors

Using the “No. erroneous sentences/No. sentences constructed*100” formula the percentage of erroneous sentences were calculated.

$$\frac{\text{Number of erroneous sentences}}{\text{Number of sentences constructed}} \times 100$$

In looking at the 14 written tasks elicited from this study, a count was performed and a total of 171 complete sentences were identified and a total of 1799 words were derived from the 14 written Corder (1973) classifies the errors in terms of the difference between the learners’ utterance and the reconstructed version. In this way, errors fall into four categories: omission of some required element; addition of some unnecessary or incorrect element; selection of an incorrect element; and misordering of the elements. Since writing errors can be numerous and impossible to categorize, the study will only be focusing on the **verb** aspects of the Mongolian ESL learners writing. Verbs in this case are subdivided into tenses, subject-verb agreement, auxiliary and verb form.

For the purpose of categorizing erroneous sentences, a sentence was determined as erroneous if it contained grammatical errors pertaining to misselection, omission, addition or misordering of words, spelling errors or usage of wrong lexical item. 35 (21%) out of 171 sentences were correct in terms of meaning and constructed without a grammatical, syntactic, semantic or lexical error.

4.2.1 Analysis of Error Types

A total of 368 errors were produced from 14 papers (average of 26.28 % per paper). As mentioned in chapter 3, an error classification scheme developed by (Corder, 1974; Richards, 1974; James, 1998; Selinker, 1972 in Richards, 1974; Richards & Sampson, 1974) namely: **grammatical** (prepositions, articles, subject-v-agreement, verb tenses, pronoun and auxiliary verbs), **syntactic** (word order), **lexical** (word choice, word form), **semantic** (incomplete sentence), & **mechanics** (spelling) was adapted in this study. Then the errors were then categorized into 11 groups. The overall findings indicate that the participants made errors in the following areas as shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Types and Frequency of Errors

Error Type	Count	Percentage	Example
Verb tense	55	14.95%	I was afraid and <i>want</i> to fly to my country.
Word choice	52	14.13%	I will save the <i>other</i> money in the bank.
Preposition	49	13.32%	...had most memorable trip <i>for</i> their life.
Spelling	48	13.04%	My most <i>memorable</i> trip was this summer <i>vacotion</i> .
Incomplete sentence	38	10.33%	Need for my education.
Article	34	9.24%	I will buy <i>a</i> new clothes and things.
Word order	20	5.43%	I think that I must <i>hard</i> study.
Word form	17	4.62%	I will live with my family <i>happiness</i> .
Subject –V- agreement	14	3.80%	My brother and Sarah <i>is</i> good friends She always <i>feel</i> sorry for poor people.
Auxiliary verb	10	2.71%	He <i>have</i> a house for children without homes.
Pronoun	5	1.35%	They can be happy with <i>our</i> new homes.

A total of 368 common errors were examined and categorized into eleven error types. Errors related with lexical knowledge (word choice, spelling, word form) accounted for

31.79%. Errors related with sentence structure (word order and incomplete sentence) accounted for 15.76%. Other grammatical errors (verb tense, preposition, subject- verb-agreement, article, auxiliary verb and pronoun) accounted for 47.37%.

The count and percentage of each error type in a chain of downward order. They are (1) verb tense (2) word choice (3) preposition (4) spelling (5) incomplete sentence (6) article (7) word order (8) word form (9) subject-V-agreement (10) Auxiliary verb and (11) pronoun. The main focus of this research was on verb errors thus errors pertaining to spelling, article preposition, word choice and word order were not discussed.

4.3 VERB ERRORS

Errors pertaining to verb/ verb phrase are sub-divided into tenses, subject-verb agreement, verb form and verb ‘to be’. Erroneous sentences under each subdivision are listed below followed by the possible sources.

4.3.1 Tense Errors

A. Past Tense

Last year I go to the countryside of Arkhangai aimag with my parents. (went)

During my school holiday last year I visit my grandparents they live in Erdenet city.
(visited, lived)

Of the three topics given to the participants “My most memorable trip” was based on past tense. Notwithstanding the past time adverbial Last, During the last or Yesterday that participants used in their writing, they have used present tense verbs in the above sentences.

Examples:

1.	Yesterday I speak about the same thing with my friends on the phone. (Yesterday I <i>spoke</i> about the same thing with my friends on the phone).
2.	I <u>go</u> to the China for the first time last April. (Last years I <i>went</i> to China for the first time.)
3.	I <u>buy</u> lots of clothes for me and my family. (I bought lots of clothes for me and my family).
4.	I <u>volunteer</u> into group and <u>help</u> poor people. (I volunteered into a group and helped poor people)
5.	I <u>cannot</u> eat the food in China and <u>miss</u> my country food very much. (I <i>could not</i> eat the food in China and <i>missed</i> Mongolian food very much)
6.	I was so afraid and <u>want</u> to fly back to my country. (wanted)

The sentences above indicate a situation which took place in the past and the use of present tense verb is incorrect.

B. Simple Past or Simple Continuous for Simple Present

Examples:

1.	Every day I <u>am dreaming</u> to study in foreign university. (Everyday, I <i>dream</i> of studying...)
2.	Every time I <u>thought</u> of winning big money to travel abroad. (Every time I <i>think</i> of winning big money)
3.	I always <u>helped</u> my grandparents to take care of their livestock. (I always <i>help</i> my grand parents...)

Everyday and always are the indicators of simple present and shows present habitual and routine. Therefore the verbs in the above sentences should be in the present simple tense.

The use of simple present for simple past, simple present for future or vice-versa can be attributed to redundancy reduction which is a strategy of overgeneralization. Learners create a deviant structure based on their own experience of the structure in the target language and might have thought that verb change is unnecessary as the indicators like yesterday, always, everyday or tomorrow are already presented.

On the other hand, the errors could have been derived as a result of the communicative strategy applied. Grammatical errors often occur in conversation mainly because of the ignorance of grammar rules. It was evident that the participants can easily use past, present and future tenses in their speaking. However, in some cases participants did not mind making few errors during conversation as errors raised from circumstances of speech do not occur in any systematically categorized form. Thus, learners tend to write what comes to their mind which then leads to errors.

C. Inconsistency between Tenses

1.	First, I go to abroad and after I come back work in Mongolian big company.
2.	When I graduate I will be study continue.
3.	I will be study masters after my graduation.

The Mongolian language operates on 3 major tenses which are: (past, present and future tense). From the examples illustrated, it was evident that the participants can easily use past, present and future tenses with correctness as data in this study show. However, those sentences written were simple sentences. When it came to creating combined sentences, the participants in this study had the confusion of choosing comprehensive ones or they just seemed to be ignorant of other tenses. The past, perfect and continuous theoretically, exists in Mongolian language, but they are only used in oral speech. Among the 45 students surveyed, the majority had noted that they have difficulty in acquiring the past perfect, present perfect and future perfect tenses. Comparing and contrasting their usage of tenses between the English and Mongolian language was the key reason for their difficulty in acquiring them. The findings reveal that students did not have complete knowledge on the use of different verb tenses from both languages.

4.3.2 Subject-verb Agreement Errors

Subject-verb (SVA) agreement errors are the next common verb errors made by Mongolian students in the misselection verb errors. It was clear from the analysis of students that they often face difficulty in using SVA as they failed to mark the third person singular verb in the simple present tense.

Examples:

1.	My brother and Sarah is good friends (My brother and Sarah are good friends).
2.	My grandparents is very old (My grandparents are very old)

The following sentence shows the failure of singular subject - singular verb rule, where ‘She’ should have a singular verb ‘feels’.

1.	She always feel sorry for poor people. (She always feels sorry for the poor)
2.	My brother like watching movies. (My brother likes watching movies)
3.	When I goes to school every morning. (I go to school every morning).

The occurrence of such errors can be attributable to a strategy of overgeneralization which is reducing the linguistic burden. According to Richards (1974) omission of third person – s, overgeneralization removes the necessity for concord. Thus relieves the learner of considerable efforts. Richards says that generalization can be seen as simplification which consists of attempt by learners to ease the burden of learning and facilitate communication. The researcher considered SVA errors found in the Mongolian students’ written work could attributable to negative L1 transfer. There is no such change in the verb form to agree with the subject. However, nothing particular revealed through informal interview regarding the cause for SVA errors, other than differences of both languages.

4.3.3 Auxiliary Verb Errors

Examples of auxiliary verb error are given below.

1.	He have a house for children without homes. (He has...)
2.	When we has free time, we will study new language. (We have...)
3.	My mom have many flowers. (My mom has...)

The examples were also extracted from the written texts of the participants and these examples suggest that the problem may be due to their failure to observe rule restriction. In some cases like ‘I shall’ or ‘I am’ students appear to have knowledge in how it is constructed. Thus, in a way students have overgeneralized this knowledge with the plural subject. However, this could also be due to their L1 interference as Mongolian nouns are formed with a suffix to distinguish its plural and singular form while the use of suffix shows the meaning of the verb.

4.3.4 Verb Form Errors

Examples listed below are the errors that derived from the selection of wrong past tense verb form:

1.	I drived a car on the countryside road for the first time. (I <i>drove</i> a car on the countryside road for the first time)
2.	I bringed home a canister of strawberries. (I <i>bought</i> home a canister of strawberries)

Above are the erroneous sentences because of wrong formation of the past tense verb. The verb form should be irregular in order to be considered as correct. These errors appear to be systematic and participants seem to have overgeneralized the rule of the regular past tense form to irregular by adding *-ed* marker to the verb.

The collocational errors were also found in the writing. For instance:

1.	My mother made jam with the strawberries I bringed . (My mother made jam with the strawberries I <i>brought</i>)
2.	A man makes strange tasty food. (A man <i>cook</i> strange food)

A collocation is a word that is often used with other words and collocational errors are the result of word correspondence which is inappropriate despite the fact that the meaning intended is obvious. These kinds of error can also be traced from false concepts hypothesized. This is another class of developmental errors which derive from faulty comprehension of distinction in the target language (Richards, 1971). The use of *made* for *cook* is an example substitution that derives from confusion. However, in this case, this error occurred because of first language influence. In Mongolian, there is no specific word as cook and it is constructed as '*make food or make jam*'.

4.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the researcher discussed the most common errors made in written task and sources for their errors.

The English essay challenge revealed that the learners had made a variety of errors, especially in grammar which added up to 85.06 % of the total errors. Most of them were derived from the learner's failure to acquire the English grammar rules and resulted in developmental errors. Mother tongue interference was also another reason for the subjects' errors as they tend to translate Mongolian text to English, where they follow native language rules and results in interlingual errors.

The two open-ended questions from the questionnaire, and the interview revealed that their errors were also attributable to the learner's incompetence in use of the target language.

Participants mentioned that translating text from Mongolian to English was easy and this process was comfortable for them. Most of the interviewed students were expressing their true feelings of fear, a fear of committing errors. Thus the errors analyzed are traced to mother tongue interference and difficulty of the target language itself.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 INRODUCTION

This is the last chapter of this report and it presents of an overview of the study, restatement of the objectives, review of the findings, limitation of the study, recommendations based on the study and suggestions for future research, and the pedagogical implications of the findings.

5.1 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The researcher was encouraged by the earlier studies that emphasized the English language difficulty faced by non-native speakers, decided to focus her research on the errors in the writing of Mongolian EFL students as there was no study was conducted recently. The researcher, who is a future English teacher have got the idea and observation of how English language is taught in Mongolian society and where students do face problems. Driven by these reasons, the researcher studied Mongolian English language learner's errors and their sources. In fact the present study, as compared to other studies, is unique since it is the very recent study and focuses on not only grammatical errors, but the most common errors among Mongolian students.

5.2 RESTATEMENT OF THE OBJECTIVES

The objective of this study has been to investigate the causes behind the errors in the writing of Mongolian EFL students and to determine if the errors are the reason of interlingual or intralingual interference. The most important thing for the researcher was

obtaining the desired feedback. Therefore, the researcher conducted a survey using questionnaire for the data collection. To get even more idea of how students really feel about learning English, the researcher designed open-ended questions at the end of the questionnaire and carried an interview to widen their perceptions.

The researcher involved 45 students from one University and the most suited research approach was questionnaire to accommodate the size of the samples. Simple random sampling was used to determine the sample size. Participants were chosen from Mongolian State University of Humanities as it is one of the biggest university of Mongolia and hundreds of students enroll EFL program of this University each year.

It was necessary for the researcher to identify the representative for the study as the researcher has the choice of three or four options. Thus, the researchers contacted with each university and appointed the representatives with the help of administration authorities.

5.3 REVIEW OF THE FINDINGS

The finding of the research on the whole show that participants have major writing difficulties in learning and using verb tense, choosing appropriate words and prepositions, difficulty in spelling accuracy. Causes of errors are mainly attributable to limited vocabulary size, poor grammar knowledge and interference from first language. The writing challenge of these 45 subjects should allow us to infer that graduates of EFL program are low proficient English writers, who will only able to write simple sentences or sentence fragments with lots of grammatical and lexical errors. Furthermore, most of them are unable to express their ideas clearly in writing and unable to communicate with not only each other and the outside world.

The data from questionnaire reveals the information of the extent of English usage with their parents, siblings, friends and the teacher. It shows that subjects never speak English with their parents except only occasionally with their siblings and friends. The English language was often used in the classroom with the teacher, which indicates it is the only place where they have the chance to communicate in English and shows that it is not given an importance at home, among friends and siblings. As for the exposure to English in media majority of the subjects stated their daily exposure to Television, weekly exposure to music. Most of the participants said they watch movies in English and few have expressed they never watch, frankly saying they do not like to watch movies in English because they find understanding spoken language is hard as they always feel disappointed after the movie or show.

A surprising data was collected on the difficulty of learning English skills. Most of the subjects have stated the writing skill is not difficult to learn while speaking is considered to be the difficult skill. Honestly, the researcher did not expect writing would be the easy skill for the subjects to learn as the researcher herself finds writing as very difficult skill and demands a high repertoire of the language. The subjects have also stated that English grammar is difficult to learn.

This shows that the subjects have not really realized what is more difficult or important for them and what should be done to learn languages as their performances were far behind from being advanced. If they lack competence in the language, errors are never going to be avoidable and their messages will not be delivered correctly. In addition, these factors have revealed that home environment, attitude and motivation affect second language acquisition.

As stated earlier, the present study was conducted to investigate the types of errors made by Mongolian EFL learners in their written English. Thus, the researcher conducted an essay writing task where the selected subjects were required to write 300 words essay choosing one of three topics. Wide range of errors was found in the writing and was very hard for the researcher to analyze.

5.3.1 Lexical Errors

Errors related to lexical knowledge (word choice, spelling, and word form) accounted for 31.79%. Errors of word choice was the highest in the rank which takes 14.13% followed by the spelling errors 13.04% and the word form which takes 4.62 % of the most common errors. The participants had a great difficulty in choosing appropriate or correct words to express their ideas clearly. Some participants wrote very little or nothing and this might be explained by their limited vocabulary and confusion of knowing or not knowing where to begin or just the fear of creating plenty of mistakes. The subjects expressed their opinion of their inability of creating appropriate words and phrases to express their ideas as they can express in their mother tongue.

The spelling errors were not due to form a new word, but because of inaccuracy and carelessness of the subjects. Or some seemed to be caused by similar phonemes as they sound basically same.

Word form errors are due to the insufficient knowledge of word forms and have nothing to do with the mother tongue, as Mongolian language also forms words as noun, adjectives or adverbs etc.

5.3.2 Sentence Structure Errors

Errors related with sentence structure (word order and incomplete sentence) accounted for 15.76%. It is observed that constructing an English sentence is quite complicated for Mongolian students due to the differences of both languages. English and Mongolian language sentence structure is similar in a way that both contain subject- verb-object. However subject-verb-object form is English sentence structure and Mongolian language structure is subject-object-verb (predicate).

Causes for incomplete sentences were very confusing for the researcher and her colleagues as Mongolian language also construct a short sentence consist of even one word. However, the researcher could not understand the meaning of examples sentences or could not predict the meaning.

5.4.3 Grammatical Errors

The grammatical errors (verb tense, preposition, and article) accounted for 37.51%. Among the 45 students surveyed, the majority had noted they have difficulty in acquiring past perfect, present perfect and future perfect tenses. Comparing and contrasting between the English and Mongolian tense was the key reason for difficulty in acquiring them. Basically, finding revealed that students did not have complete knowledge on the use of different verb tenses.

Many studies on English prepositions have concluded that English prepositions are difficult to use for non-native speakers. However, some of these erroneous sentences are attributable

to the students' ignorance of target language rules as they could construct a sentence with correct preposition during their interview.

The main reason for making article errors is that the Mongolian language does not contain indefinite or definite articles. The Mongolian language rather uses specific numbers, word orders or case endings to form definite and indefinite articles.

5.3.4 Sources of Errors

The researcher found that the errors made by Mongolian students distinguishable as some were attributable to L1 and some were to L2 difficulties.

A. Interlingual errors

Examples taken from the subject's written work showed a lot of native language influence. The researcher could notice translation from Mongolian to English language which shows that L1 patterns interact with L2 development.

As mentioned above, constructing sentence is problematic for Mongolians, because both languages are different from each other. English and Mongolian language sentence structure is similar in a way that both contain subject- verb-object. However subject-verb-object form is English sentence structure and Mongolian language structure is subject-object-verb (predicate). For example: "I am going to shopping center" would be changed to "I am shopping to center going. The "I will hard study" sentence clearly shows Mongolian sentence structure where we use adjectives not at the end of a sentence but just after the subject. Therefore, a cause of such error is definitely the first language interference.

There are only 3 major tenses in Mongolian language which are: (past, present and future tense). The participants could easily use past, present and future tenses as a number of participants used the simple present, past and future tenses for all cases. Those sentences were simple sentences. When it came to create combined sentence students had the confusion of choosing comprehensive one or they just seemed to be ignorant of other tenses. The past, perfect and continuous theoretically exist in Mongolian language, but used only in speaking and they are not named as past, present and future perfect. Among the 45 students surveyed, the majority had noted they have difficulty in acquiring past perfect, present perfect and future perfect tenses. Comparing and contrasting between the English and Mongolian tense was the key reason for difficulty in acquiring them. Basically, finding revealed that students did not have complete knowledge on the use of different verb tenses. However, this confusion still can be considered as mother tongue influence.

As for the article errors, Mongolian language does not contain any type of article. Therefore, difficulty in acquiring the article has always been one of the biggest issues. Besides the examples and explanation given above, the researcher also wants to open up another cause of article use difficulty. “Students also had particular trouble using the definite article for collective nouns and often substituted a plural –s marker in its place, e.g. *the rich, the majority, the infirm* mistakenly changed to *riches, majorities, infirms*. This is most likely due to L1 interference, as collective subject nouns are often pluralized in Mongolian.” (Roger Cohen 2003).

Other than the sources and errors mentioned above, many errors were traced from the subject’s written task due to the mother tongue influence. Such examples as follows:

Like many other languages, Mongolian language does not contain phrasal verbs. Thus, subjects had problems in using PV formation or separation which was traced through

examination of the data as students tried to translate Mongolian words to English and combined it with unnecessary or wrong endings.

Mongolian methodology of forming plural nouns is very complex compare to English. Therefore, selection, addition and omission of simple suffix ‘-s’ were found in the written work which was influenced also by the translation from Mongolian to English.

Mongolian grammar construction requires ‘from’ for many situations. In a way, it is used in the same situations as English for example: “I came from home”, “I take money from my parents” etc. However, students used “from” for quite few inquiring situations like: “People`s opinion is different from mine”, “Buying clothes is better from watching movie” or “Because from the snow, we stop in the way. These are the causes or direct translation from Mongolian to English.

B. Intralingual errors

Most of the errors found in the written task were identified as intra-lingual errors or developmental errors as they were resulted from the target language difficulties. Intralingual or developmental errors are explained in terms of (a) overgeneralization, (b) ignorance of the rule restrictions, (c) incomplete application of rules and (d) false concepts hypothesized. Such examples were given in chapter four. These errors were belonged to the term of ignorance and incomplete application of the rules.

Examples of such errors as follows:

Confusion of plurals and singulars: The use of ‘have’ with singular and ‘has’ with plural shows subjects lack of knowledge of certain rules.

No matter the tenses, regular or irregular the use of ‘-ed’ was either omitted or added to basically to all verbs which is the overgeneralization of the rules.

There were few other errors that were caused because of the incomplete application of rules and ignorance. For example:

The use of article with countable and uncountable nouns. Addition or selection of a wrong article was seen in the writing for some cases which was due to subject's ignorance or accuracy as they could name the article use with countable and uncountable nouns during the interview.

English construction of conditionals is quite similar to Mongolian. However, subjects have made bunch of errors in creating conditional sentences which is obviously due to the ignorance, or for some cases incomplete application of rules.

The errors resulted from the learning process of the second language, can be generally relying on the seldom use of the target language. It is seen from the subject's written work that they lack knowledge of forms, functions and rules of English. if they are given a chance and opportunity to communicate in English expressing their idea, thoughts and feeling without the thought of making mistakes, they can check their ability through self-evaluation and good language competence and confidence would occur as a result.

5.4 SUGGESTED PEDAGOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Learning language is a very complex process and not everyone learn the language at the same pace. Only the language teachers must be aware of the learners system. Several pedagogical suggestions are given to help reducing the errors that Mongolian learners make.

First of all, opportunities for natural exposure and interaction must be created by the teachers and educators at least in the language classroom. Students should not be frightened of watching movies, shows and listening radio or taped conversation as they are the major process of learning foreign language. Teachers should also think of outside classroom activities as homework for the students so that they could use the language not only in the classroom.

Non-native teachers take majority percent of the English teachers in Mongolia. We are likely to make mistakes or show wrong example in some aspects of English. Reading journals, books related to our profession is important for us so we could keep up with current issues in language. It is necessary for us to attend workshops and courses to gain knowledge of new methods and arts so we could show learners professional model of the language. We must inform students with correct use of the rules regarding grammar, vocabulary and especially pronunciation.

Thinking in the target language is very important when learners write or speak in English and we should always remind students to think in the target language. This will avoid students to make errors influenced by the native language. Teachers must be able to explain how certain rules of both languages differ or cognate.

Teachers should look at student's errors from a different point of view. We should understand that errors are the learning process. Instead of judging them for their mistakes we must teach them how to avoid and how to correct them. What Mongolian teachers usually do is to underline all the errors with red pen without explanation and leaves notes like too much mistakes or 2 (which is marking number with the meaning of bad). Students

often are not able to notice where their errors rely on. Therefore, clarification for those errors is extremely important.

Finally, teacher must make students to be creative. The researcher knows the fact that Mongolian students basically never asked to write a simple composition and they are never taught essay writing rules. They are never asked to do presentation. Students gain self-confidence through presentation and listen themselves through each other. Teachers usually do not think of it as an important part of the learning process, helps students to be confident and can minimize their speaking and writing errors. Thus, these activities must be taken into the teaching process.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Here are some suggestions for future studies in this field.

Samples size of the respondents must be larger for further studies. The results from the current research can be verified this way. Every level of English learners must be included in the study so that the other causes for incompetency are discovered.

Writing essay is only one part of the exercise. Oral task, translating text and grammar test can be included.

A question regarding to task administration, it is not preferable to limit the time for one, two days or a week. Student's yearly work, tests essays examine peppers and speaking exercises can be kept and monitored to collect more valuable information.

5.6 IMPLICATIONS

At this stage, it is important to note that generally the finding of this study is unsatisfactory, but bears valuable information as this study is the evidence of inappropriate methodology of teaching.

Grammar translation method is the main method that is used in the teaching of English in most Mongolian schools and universities. This does not really help students to use their target language and develop their knowledge further. Theory and grammar is not the only part of English.

In other words, in teaching English especially in training the future English language teacher, we must provide them with sufficient input and aspects of English language. “We must create the opportunities to use their newly found knowledge in practice and verify its exactness in real world. Grammar is only important component of English, should not be seen as general principle of communication” says (Richards, 1995). Teachers must keep this phrase in mind and train their students.

5.7 CONCLUSION

The researcher is contented that she had the opportunity to carry out her study successfully and investigated what she intended to investigate. She hopes that this research revealed valuable information which would be of great use for all Mongolian English language teachers and in that regard allow them to reflect to see how best they can enable Mongolian learners of English to advance in learning this language by their teaching materials which can be designed based on the outcome of this study.

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Learning the English writing system 15-Oct-02

Vivian Cook

<http://privatewww.essex.ac.uk/~vcook/EWSChap5.htm>

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Learning Results

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Transfer/Cross-linguistic influence

Cathy Benson- ELT Journal Volume 56/1 January 2002 © Oxford University Press

http://www3.oup.co.uk/eltj/hdb/Volume_56/Issue_01/freepdf/560068.pdf

APPENDIX 1: STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

The information that you contribute will be in great use and you will never be identified.

Respond to the statements below by filling in the appropriate box.

1. DATE _____
2. DEPARTMENT _____
3. MALE _____ FEMALE _____
4. GRADE _____

I hope that you will answer all questions accurately and sincerely. This questionnaire is only for research purposes and you are not required to write your name on the questionnaire. This would only take 20 minutes.

Thank you.

5. HOW OFTEN DO YOU SPEAK ENGLISH WITH THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE?
PLEASE TICK (√) IN THE RELEVANT BOX.

People	Always	Often	Occasionally	Never
Parents				
Brothers and sisters				
Friends				
English teacher				

6. HOW OFTEN DO YOU LISTEN TO OR VIEW THE FOLLOWING IN ENGLISH? PLEASE TICK (√) IN THE RELEVANT BOX.

Number of items listened or viewed	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Occasionally	Never
Television					
Radio(music)					
Movie					

7. HOW OFTEN DO YOU READ THE FOLLOWING IN ENGLISH? PLEASE TICK (√) IN THE RELEVANT BOX.

Times read	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Occasionally	Never
Newspaper					
Magazine and					

Comics					
Books					

8. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING SKILLS, DO YOU FIND MOST DIFFICULT IN LEARNING ENGLISH? RANK ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 4 (1- MOST DIFFICULT TO 4 – NOT DIFFICULT).

Ranks	Most difficult	Difficult	Least difficult	Not difficult
Writing				
Reading				
Speaking				
Understanding spoken English				

9. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING DO YOU HAVE DIFFICULTY IN WRITING IN ENGLISH? RANK ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 4 (1-MOST DIFFICULT TO 4 - NOT DIFFICULT).

Ranks	Most difficult	Difficult	Least difficult	Not difficult
Grammar				
Vocabulary				
Spelling				
Forming sentences				

10. TICK THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES ACCORDING TO DIFFICULTY YOU EXPERIENCE DOING THEM. (1- MOST DIFFICULT TO 4- NOT DIFFICULT).

Activities	Most difficult	Difficult	Least difficult	Not difficult
Writing				
Reading				
Speaking				
Listening				
Grammar				
Vocabulary				

11. WHEN WRITING AN ESSAY IN ENGLISH DO YOU... PLEASE TICK (✓) IN THE RELEVANT BOX.

Do you...?	Yes	Sometimes	No
First think of the words in Mongolian and then translate it to English			
Make the selection directly in English without translation			

12. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING MAJOR GRAMMAR TOPICS DO YOU FIND HARD TO LEARN? RANK ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 4 (1- MOST DIFFICULT TO 4- EASY).

Topics	Most difficult	Difficult	Least difficult	Easy

Adjectives				
Adverbs				
Determiners				
Direct and indirect speech				
Gerund and present participle(+ing)				
Nouns				
Plurals				
Passive voice				
Reported speech				
Relative clause				
Conditionals				
Verb tenses				

Please specify the tenses.

Most

difficult-

Difficult

Least

difficult_____

Easy

13. WHAT WAS YOUR EXPECTATION FROM TESL PROGRAM OF UNIVERSITY OF HUMANITIES?

14. WHAT OTHER FACTORS DO YOU THINK INFLUENCE TO YOUR LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY? PLEASE ILLUSTRATE YOUR OPINION BELOW.

APPENDIX 2: ESSAY WRITING TASK

Choose one of the three topics below and write a narrative essay with the maximum word of 300.

Topics

IF I HAD A MILLION DOLLARS

MY MOST MEMORABLE TRIP

THE HARDEST THING I EVER HAD TO DO

You have 50 minutes to complete the task.

APPENDIX 3: STUDENTS' WRITTEN WORKS

^{or (spelling)}
Most memorable trip.

Every body may ^{have (V)} traveled and had most memorable trip ¹ for their life more ~~time~~ than once or ~~two times~~ ^{twice}. What is the ^{that} trip? each person thinks differently about it. ^{it} means ~~that~~ ~~it~~ is to travel and ~~spend~~ ^{visit} to have fun with friends or parents to ^{to go} famous places and foreign on ^a holiday.

I traveled with ^{foreign} friends for 30 days in 2009. Then I was ^{very} happy. We went to see Mongolian aims and famous places, rivers, mountains ^{previously have} ^{traveled} ^{went} before. I never travel and go around Mongolia and countryside. Then I understood that Mongolia is very big and beautiful and has wonderful [?]. I didn't have time [?] because 30 days were short time to see all [?]. And last summer vacation I went back to America's. Every ~~body~~ ^{body} wants to go and study ~~there~~ ^{there}. I lived with my brother and sister for 4 months. But I didn't like USA. I couldn't eat ^{the} foods and I always missed my parents. Then I ~~was~~ ^{became} a ^{vegetarian}. Also I couldn't go ^{of} home and see, go ^{any where} [?]! I was stolen my purse by black man and they are very dangerous in America. I was afraid and ^{wanted} to fly ^{back} to my country but I had many friends and seen a lot of things and traveled around 5 states of America.

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At the end I want ^{to} tell that my Mongolia is very nice, and big ^{is}. Some foods, goods are expensive but I can live, study and would be ^{to do whatever I want} free and do what I want. ^{have the freedom}

Maybe every ~~body~~ ^{body} who ^{goes} go ^{comes} to abroad and back realizes ^{this} it.

If I had a million dollars

I will do ^{I will do what I want} to want thing.

I will buy ^{new} clothes, things ^{Unfortunatly?} I will buy a new, large, nice ^{word choice}

and comfortable house. Also I will give money ^{to} for poor people. I will help them.

And I want to travel around the world. I will go to foreign country

Such as: America, England, Singapore, Korea, Japan, and China.

I will improve my English. Maybe I will travel around the Mongolian

countryside. It's very beautiful and ^{has} fresh air. Then I will study Chinese

Korean, and Japanese in training center. And ^{I want spend money on THINGS I don't need.} But I don't spend ^{money} not need thing.

Also I want to study ^{for} as ^{prep} a master's degree in America. ^{I will do what I want} If I had a million

dollars I will study ^{for} as a ^{prep} master's degree in America. I will pay ^{for my} apartment's

rent, food's ^{and} money, ^{would} books. I need ^{to} some books, papers, pen, handbag, notebooks

and ~~prop~~ papers. So I will ~~by~~ buy them. And I will use the internet and computer.

I will pay money for them. I will buy ^{to eat} ^{delicious} food, sweets, and chocolate,

and drink pepsy, milk, and some vitamins. If I had ^{become} ill, I will need some

medicire. Also I will ^{buy some} nice clothes, running shoes, and thick clothes.

I will save some money in a bank. It's ^{need ed} need ~~to~~ for my education.

if I had a million dollars

if I had a million dollars, I will do many things.
I will help to young children, ^{hospital patients} patientant people and
poor people. ^{afterwards} After I will buy a new car and
new house. I will ^{study for} learn to master degree and I will
save the other ^{remaining} money in the bank. I think that
a million dollars is ^{a lot of} so many money. Because I will
^{spend it on} do to needed things. But some people think that a
million is not ^{much} many money. Maybe they ^{will} buy ^{only} a one
thing. But I and other students think that ^{many?} that
^{its a lot of} many money. So we ~~and I~~ will do ^{all?} all things.
Dream is not pay the money as if I had ^{ever} a million
dollar. I will do those things. ^{It's needed for} future life.
Then I will live with my family ^{happily} happiness But I will not
go to ~~abroad~~. Because I love our country.

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APPENDIX 4: SAMPLE OF FILLED-OUT QUESTIONNAIRE

Student's questionnaire

The information that you contribute will be in great use and you will never be identified.

Respond to the statements below by filling in the appropriate box.

1. Date the 25th of November
2. Department Literature
3. Male _____ Female _____
4. Grade 4th course

I hope that you will answer all questions accurately and sincerely. This questionnaire is only for research purposes and you are not required to write your name on the questionnaire. This would only take 20 minutes.

Thank you.

5. How often do you speak English with the following people? Please tick in the relevant box.

People	Always	Often	Occasionally	Never
Parents				✓
Brothers and sisters				✓
Friends			✓	
English teacher	✓			

6. How often do you listen to or view the following in English? Please tick in the relevant box.

Number of items listened or viewed	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Occasionally	Never
Television		✓			
Radio(music)	✓				
Movie			✓		

7. How often do you read the following in English? Please tick in the relevant box.

Times read	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Occasionally	Never
Newspaper				✓	
Magazine and Comics				✓	

Books	✓				
-------	---	--	--	--	--

8. Which of the following skills, do you find most difficult in learning English? Please tick in the relevant box.

Ranks	Most difficult	Difficult	Least difficult	Not difficult
Writing				✓
Reading			✓	
Speaking		✓		
Understanding spoken English	✓			

9. Which of the following do you have difficulty in writing in English?

Ranks	Most difficult	Difficult	Least difficult	Not difficult
Grammar				✓
Vocabulary				✓
Spelling				✓
Forming sentences		✓		

10. Tick the following activities according to difficulty you experience doing them.

Activities	Most difficult	Difficult	Least difficult	Not difficult
Writing				✓
Reading			✓	
Speaking		✓		

Listening	✓			
Grammar			✓	
Vocabulary				✓

11. When writing an essay in English do you... Please tick in the relevant box.

Do you...?	Yes	Sometimes	No
First think of the words in Mongolian and then translate it to English	✓		
Make the selection directly in English without translation			✓

12. Which of the following major grammar topics do you find hard to learn? Please tick in the relevant box.

Topics	Most difficult	Difficult	Least difficult	Easy
Adjectives				✓
Adverbs				✓
Determiners			✓	
Direct and indirect speech		✓		
Gerund and present participle(+ing)				✓
Nouns				✓
Plurals				✓
Passive voice			✓	
Reported speech			✓	

Relative clause			✓	
Conditionals	✓			
Verb tenses				✓

Please specify the tenses.

Most difficult Passive Voice and Complex sentences

Difficult Conditionals and Clauses

Least difficult Direct and indirect speech

Easy Active tenses

13. What was your expectation from TESL program of University of Humanities?

14. What other factors do you think influence to your language proficiency? Please illustrate your opinion below.

13. I was elementary my English. I ~~can't~~ ^{wasn't can} speak English. Now I know my English grammar. ^{But we didn't teach by English person (teacher)}
14. I influence ^{thing} to study English is My university teachers ~~not~~ ^{teach} so many lessons. such, economics, literature, so many literature lessons. ~~by~~ ^{by} Our teachers teach us not professional lesson so much. These lesson didn't need us. ^{English} We would like to ^{teach} English person (teacher). Teachers give us too many homework. We can't do on-time.

APPENDIX 6: STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF SOCIO- LINGUISTIC STATUS

Frequency Table

Sex of respondent

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	female	32	71.1	71.1	71.1
	male	13	28.9	28.9	100.0
Total		45	100.0	100.0	

Speaking English with Parents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Often	9	20.0	20.0	20.0
	Occasionally	4	8.9	8.9	28.9
	Never	32	71.1	71.1	100.0
Total		45	100.0	100.0	

Speaking English to Siblings

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Always	3	6.7	6.7	6.7
	Often	5	11.1	11.1	17.8
	Occasionally	25	55.6	55.6	73.3
	Never	12	26.7	26.7	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Speaking English to Friends

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Always	4	8.9	8.9	8.9
	Often	29	64.4	64.4	73.3
	Occasionally	8	17.8	17.8	91.1
	Never	4	8.9	8.9	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Speaking English to teacher

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Always	16	35.6	35.6	35.6
	Often	22	48.9	48.9	84.4
	Occasionally	5	11.1	11.1	95.6
	Never	2	4.4	4.4	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

View TV in English

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Daily	14	31.1	31.1	31.1
	Weekly	13	28.9	28.9	60.0
	Monthly	4	8.9	8.9	68.9
	Occasionally	12	26.7	26.7	95.6
	Never	2	4.4	4.4	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Listen to radio in English

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Daily	8	17.8	17.8	17.8
	Weekly	16	35.6	35.6	53.3
	Monthly	6	13.3	13.3	66.7
	Occasionally	11	24.4	24.4	91.1
	Never	4	8.9	8.9	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Watch movie in English

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Daily	10	22.2	22.2	22.2
	Weekly	11	24.4	24.4	46.7
	Monthly	6	13.3	13.3	60.0
	Occasionally	15	33.3	33.3	93.3
	Never	3	6.7	6.7	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Read English Newspaper

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Weekly	3	6.7	6.7	6.7
	Monthly	19	42.2	42.2	48.9
	Occasionally	21	46.7	46.7	95.6
	Never	2	4.4	4.4	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Read English Magazine

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Weekly	11	24.4	24.4	24.4
	Occasionally	29	64.4	64.4	88.9
	Never	5	11.1	11.1	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Read English Books

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Daily	14	31.1	31.1	31.1
	Weekly	9	20.0	20.0	51.1
	Monthly	15	33.3	33.3	84.4
	Occasionally	3	6.7	6.7	91.1
	Never	4	8.9	8.9	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Learning English writing skill

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	most difficult	4	8.9	8.9	8.9
	difficult	7	15.6	15.6	24.4
	least difficult	7	15.6	15.6	40.0
	not difficult	27	60.0	60.0	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Learning English reading skill

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	most difficult	1	2.2	2.2	2.2
	difficult	8	17.8	17.8	20.0
	least difficult	24	53.3	53.3	73.3
	not difficult	12	26.7	26.7	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Learning English speaking skill

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	most difficult	12	26.7	26.7	26.7
	difficult	22	48.9	48.9	75.6
	least difficult	7	15.6	15.6	91.1
	not difficult	4	8.9	8.9	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Understanding Spoken English

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	most difficult	13	28.9	28.9	28.9
	difficult	19	42.2	42.2	71.1
	least difficult	9	20.0	20.0	91.1
	not difficult	4	8.9	8.9	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Grammar Writing difficulty in English

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	most difficult	3	6.7	6.7	6.7
	difficult	17	37.8	37.8	44.4
	least difficult	15	33.3	33.3	77.8
	not difficult	10	22.2	22.2	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Vocabulary use in English writing

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	most difficult	4	8.9	8.9	8.9
	difficult	17	37.8	37.8	46.7
	least difficult	10	22.2	22.2	68.9
	not difficult	14	31.1	31.1	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Forming sentence in English

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	most difficult	3	6.7	6.7	6.7
	difficult	13	28.9	28.9	35.6
	least difficult	21	46.7	46.7	82.2
	not difficult	8	17.8	17.8	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Writing difficulty experience

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	most difficult	10	22.2	22.2	22.2
	difficult	4	8.9	8.9	31.1
	least difficult	12	26.7	26.7	57.8
	nor difficult	19	42.2	42.2	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Reading difficulty experience

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	difficult	10	22.2	22.2	22.2
	least difficult	14	31.1	31.1	53.3
	not difficult	21	46.7	46.7	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Speaking difficulty experience

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	most difficult	14	31.1	31.1	31.1
	difficult	18	40.0	40.0	71.1
	least difficult	9	20.0	20.0	91.1
	not difficult	4	8.9	8.9	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Listening difficulty experience

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	most difficult	7	15.6	15.6	15.6
	difficult	34	75.6	75.6	91.1
	least difficult	1	2.2	2.2	93.3
	not difficult	3	6.7	6.7	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Grammar difficulty experience

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	most difficult	2	4.4	4.4	4.4
	difficult	26	57.8	57.8	62.2
	least difficult	16	35.6	35.6	97.8
	not difficult	1	2.2	2.2	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Vocabulary difficulty experience

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	most difficult	11	24.4	24.4	24.4
	difficult	8	17.8	17.8	42.2
	least difficult	14	31.1	31.1	73.3
	not difficult	12	26.7	26.7	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Difficulty in spelling

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	most difficult	8	17.8	17.8	17.8
	difficult	9	20.0	20.0	37.8
	least difficult	16	35.6	35.6	73.3
	not difficult	12	26.7	26.7	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Translate Mongolian text into English

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	16	35.6	35.6	35.6
	sometimes	22	48.9	48.9	84.4
	no	7	15.6	15.6	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Make a selection directly in English

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	4	8.9	8.9	8.9
	sometimes	23	51.1	51.1	60.0
	no	18	40.0	40.0	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Difficulty in learning adjectives

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	most difficult	1	2.2	2.2	2.2
	difficult	11	24.4	24.4	26.7

least difficult	8	17.8	17.8	44.4
easy	25	55.6	55.6	100.0
Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Difficulty in learning adverbs

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid most difficult	5	11.1	11.1	11.1
difficult	9	20.0	20.0	31.1
least difficult	11	24.4	24.4	55.6
easy	20	44.4	44.4	100.0
Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Difficulty in learning determiners

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid most difficult	3	6.7	6.7	6.7
difficult	13	28.9	28.9	35.6
least difficult	16	35.6	35.6	71.1
easy	13	28.9	28.9	100.0
Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Difficulty in learning direct and indirect speech

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid most difficult	2	4.4	4.4	4.4
difficult	19	42.2	42.2	46.7
least difficult	10	22.2	22.2	68.9
easy	14	31.1	31.1	100.0
Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Difficulty in learning gerund

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
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Valid	most difficult	1	2.2	2.2	2.2
	difficult	16	35.6	35.6	37.8
	least difficult	14	31.1	31.1	68.9
	easy	14	31.1	31.1	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Difficulty in learning nouns

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	most difficult	1	2.2	2.2	2.2
	difficult	6	13.3	13.3	15.6
	least difficult	10	22.2	22.2	37.8
	easy	28	62.2	62.2	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Difficulty in learning plurals

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	most difficult	1	2.2	2.2	2.2
	difficult	5	11.1	11.1	13.3
	least difficult	11	24.4	24.4	37.8
	easy	28	62.2	62.2	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Difficulty in learning passive voice

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	most difficult	9	20.0	20.0	20.0
	difficult	13	28.9	28.9	48.9
	least difficult	17	37.8	37.8	86.7
	easy	6	13.3	13.3	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Difficulty in learning reported speech

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	most difficult	5	11.1	11.1	11.1

	difficult	19	42.2	42.2	53.3
	least difficult	16	35.6	35.6	88.9
	easy	5	11.1	11.1	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Difficulty in learning relative clause

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	most difficult	9	20.0	20.0	20.0
	difficult	15	33.3	33.3	53.3
	least difficult	12	26.7	26.7	80.0
	easy	9	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Difficulty in learning conditionals

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	most difficult	15	33.3	33.3	33.3
	difficult	17	37.8	37.8	71.1
	least difficult	5	11.1	11.1	82.2
	easy	8	17.8	17.8	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Difficulty in learning verb tenses

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	most difficult	7	15.6	15.6	15.6
	difficult	13	28.9	28.9	44.4
	least difficult	4	8.9	8.9	53.3
	easy	21	46.7	46.7	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	