

**RESEARCH PAPER****An In-Depth Analysis of Linguistic Deficiencies: A Study Investigating Writing Errors of Undergraduate Students from Three Public Universities in Pakistan****<sup>1</sup>Maleeha Nazim\* <sup>2</sup>Sadaf Iftikhar and <sup>3</sup>Adeela Madad**

1. Lecturer, Center for languages, University of Management and Technology, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan
2. Lecturer, Center for languages, University of Management and Technology, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan
3. Lecturer, Center for languages, University of Management and Technology, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan

**\*Corresponding Author** maleeha.nazim@umt.edu.pk**ABSTRACT**

The ability to construct cohesive sentences and paragraphs requires mental work, which makes it an essential and adaptable language competency. Writing, though challenging, is taught to students in order to support the growth and application of their writing abilities, not just in the classroom but additionally in postsecondary education and future career pursuits. Beyond the confines of the classroom, writing is essential for children to express their needs, feelings, and viewpoints. Writing instruction consists of four key stages: planning, creating, rewriting, and editing. These steps represent one of the four core language skills. This study deals with the analysis of writing errors made by undergraduate students from three Public Universities of Pakistan. The main objective of the study was to highlight and analyze writing errors from essays written by 45 students. The researcher used qualitative method for this study. After analyzing errors from essays a total of 635 errors were identified which were sub-divided into 18 categories. The findings of the study show the most repeated errors were wrong usage of tense and punctuation marks. Furthermore, identifying the errors made by Pakistani university students proved important since it highlighted the issues they are facing and enabled the instructors to provide the students feedback to improve their writing.

**Keywords:** School Leader, Emotional Labour Experience, , Work Engagement**Introduction**

There are a number of reasons why writing errors occur among Pakistani pupils, indicating both systemic and personal difficulties. The impact of the school system is one important factor to consider, as learning focused on exams and rote memorization may take precedence over the formation of critical writing abilities. Less exposure to a wide range of genres and writing styles in the curriculum may also hinder students' ability to articulate ideas effectively. Another important factor is language proficiency. Higher education institutes in Pakistan frequently use English as the medium of instruction, which might make it difficult for students to pick up the subtleties of a second language. This obstacle to language can lead to grammatical mistakes, strange phrase constructions, and trouble explaining complicated concepts.

Inadequate infrastructure and resources, such as restricted access to writing centers, libraries, and opportunities for professional development, can also prevent students from improving their writing abilities. Students' socioeconomic backgrounds can also affect how exposed they are to a variety of literary and linguistic encounters. In order to prevent errors in writing amongst Pakistani students at public universities, it is imperative that support systems and focused interventions be developed. This requires an

understanding of these contextual elements. This background gives the research a solid base upon which to examine particular issues and suggest workable solutions to improve writing ability in this school setting.

Compared to listening, speaking, reading, and writing, writing is one of the disciplines that undergraduate students perceive to be the most challenging. According to previous researchers, these abilities are connected to one another: excellent listening skills encourage speaking, great communication abilities improve reading, better reading lessons enhance writing, and strong writing abilities boost speaking and reading knowledge. It might be said that writing serves as a platform where words, characters, numerals, and ideas are put together on paper to express, articulate, and interpret thinking in formal writing. Students must rehearse writing a lot in order to improve. Writing is an old and established method of instruction, although it can be challenging for teachers to guide their students so that they make fewer errors. Instructors ought to encourage students to formulate ideas on the subject and then record them.

### **History of the study**

The development of written communication throughout human history is encompassed in the complicated history of writing errors. It's crucial to remember that cultural, linguistic, and educational advancements have had a lasting impact on the character of writing errors. This is a general summary:

### **Historical Civilizations**

The emergence of regular writing systems is likely what led to errors in the early history of writing. Various civilizations created their own templates, and as these structures were codified and spread, mistakes may happen.

### **Contemporary English Linguistic and Grammar Rules**

Consistent rules were intended to be established throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, when the English language was being standardized under the direction of dictionaries and grammarians. Variations and mistakes continued in spite of this, indicating geographical disparities, changing linguistic usage, and the difficulties associated with a changing linguistic environment.

### **Developments in the Educational System**

The focus of education in schools shifted to writing faults as formal educational institutions spread around the world. As the demands of society for clear communication expanded, so did the emphasis on proper language, spelling, and composition.

### **Digital Era**

As digital communication became more widespread, new kinds of faults also appeared. While useful, autocorrect functions can cause errors, and casual internet communication has encouraged writing styles that occasionally utilize vocabulary that is not conventional.

### **Second Language Acquisition**

As communication across borders grew, faults in writing associated with learning a second language emerged. It might be difficult for non-native speakers to learn the nuances of syntax and grammar.

## **Modern Difficulties**

There are still writing blunders in the modern world. Modern tools make proofreading easier, yet errors are still a result of digital communication's rapidity and informality. Language standards are evolving, and the influence of social media can also have an effect on writing conventions.

Gaining an understanding of the historical background of writing errors can help one better understand the ever-evolving nature of language and the continuous efforts to standardize and improve written communication across various historical periods and cultural contexts. While English literature and fiction are widely read in Pakistani households, it is not fascinating that nothing is being done to increase consciousness of the need to learn how to write creatively in the English language (Hubbard, 2009).

The development of literacy in Pakistan, according to Kamila Shamsie, is accomplished through creative writing. She thought that many of the common Pakistani people had the intrinsic natural aptitude needed to write fiction but were unable to do so because they hadn't had enough exposure to creative and innovative writing techniques, especially in the English language (Shamsie, 2004a). According to Matsuda (2000), in the past, in an L2 classroom setting, the language alone has been found to be insufficient to stress on in order to assist student writers in improving their performance.

Previous studies show that teachers may significantly reduce students' writing errors by systematically examining common mistakes. Teachers can proactively offer targeted remedial resources to pupils by detecting and comprehending the most common writing faults produced by them. By helping students repair faults that they find, these tools help them become more adept at writing in a way that conforms to the syntactical and grammatical rules of Standard English.

By clarifying the various forms of writing errors that university students confront, the current study hopes to further the scholarly conversation. The main goal is to provide college instructors with a thorough awareness of the types of writing faults that are common among their pupils. Equipped with this understanding, teachers may create and execute efficient teaching methods designed to target certain problem areas, which will maximize learning and improve students' written communication skills. The study aims to serve as a useful tool for instructors who are looking to improve the way they teach writing at the collegiate level.

## **Literature Review**

Error analysis has recently come under increased scrutiny as a key area of applied linguistics. The examination of writing errors in student output has been the focus of a significant amount of theoretical and applied research. Yet, the researcher believed that in order for learners to advance to having acceptable writing skills in English, a thorough consideration should be given to error analysis of their work. Making errors can therefore be seen as a sign of language proficiency and as a help in learning a second or foreign language. For instance, Corder (1981) outlined three ways in which errors made by learners are important: First of all, for the teacher because they showed how second language learners acquire it and the methods they used to do so. Furthermore, teachers ought to see these errors as a sign that students are still learning. Finally, it is important for students to correct these writing errors on their own.

## **Causes of Errors**

Every time a student tries to write in English, they make several mistakes. These mistakes may happen for a number of reasons. It can be inter lingual, intra lingual or over

generalization. To find which errors are repeatedly occurring; error analysis is one of the most influential theories of second language acquisition. Error analysis is carried out to encompass not only the process of erroneous detection but also the analysis of the causes and effects of the errors.

Amoakohene (2017) investigated the institute of health and allied sciences 1st learners' level of competency. The analysis of 50 essays indicated that learners had trouble internalizing the principles of the English language. The study's findings identified 1050 errors, of which 584 (55.6%) were grammatical, 442 (42.1%) were mechanical, and 24 (2.3%) were due to improper sentence structure. There were nine different kinds of errors: bad punctuation, coherence errors, and incorrect use of the past tense, bad article usage, bad preposition usage, bad spelling, and bad capitalization, ambiguity, and sentence fragments. For this study, qualitative research was used.

### **Writing Errors**

Khansir (2013) scrutinized the various forms of writing errors made by EFL and ESL students at the undergraduate level in English language and recommended corrective ways to prevent errors from occurring. There were 200 undergraduate ESL and EFL students in Mysore, India, and Bushehr, Iran, who were between the ages of 20 and 24. According to the study's findings, Iranian students made a total of 3045 mistakes, while their Indian classmates made 3274. Punctuation errors were more prevalent than spelling errors, which were less predominant.

The varieties of mistakes made in assignments by a team of male university-level foreign language learners were defined by Sawalmeh (2013). 32 male undergraduates from the University of Hail, aged 19 to 20, took part. They were all Jordanian natives. An essay of between 150 and 200 words that was well-developed was required of the participants. The research revealed that speakers of a language committed 10 common mistakes, including verb-subject tense, word formation, singular/plural combinations, verb tense, double negatives, spelling, short sentence, articles, capitalization and prepositions. The researcher in this study used qualitative method.

According to Zhan (2015), Chinese EFL students' had topic-based papers out of which significant amount of errors were identified. The examples are from essays that full-time undergraduate students had written. There were 177 samples taken from the learners. The results indicated that The usage of specific lexical items, foreign expression, the simple and multiple forms of nouns, elements of speech, non-finite verbs, switch sentences, pronouns, and exploitation of tense and verb form are all examples of grammar mistakes, and other errors were among the most common mistakes made by Chinese students. The findings revealed that a total of 38 mistakes were observed. Both quantitative and qualitative research were used in the study.

Phuket and Othman (2015) explored the main reason why mistakes were made in foreign language students' writing. Through the years 2 and 3, 40 undergraduate students between the ages of 18 and 22 were selected. During an hour, the participants were required to write a paragraph of roughly 300 words. 22 different types of errors were found in the essays written by Thai EFL students, according to the analysis's findings: erroneous verb tense, erroneous verb form, inappropriate use, determiners, parts of speech in placement, in comparison, infinitive and participles, subject-verb agreement, short sentences, translated words from Thai, choice of words, perception relationship ambiguity, lexical cohesion, punctuation, capital letters, and vocabulary. The study was a mixed method research.

The most problematic elements, according to Sultan (2015), are the usage of tenses, spelling, capitalization, omission, placement of articles, and ignorance of the degree of

adjectives. The questionnaire was carried out by four teachers. Twenty-five learners took part, and each was assigned a paragraph to write. Three additional pages were offered for brainstorming, a rough copy, and a final correction. The research revealed that interference from the mother tongue and regular usage of the Grammar Translation Method approach were the most common errors. In this study, qualitative research was the primary focus.

Iranian EFL students in Bushehr, who were submitting essays were studied by Marzoughi and Ghanbari in 2015. Eighty medical science undergraduate students took part in the investigation. The findings showed that Iranian EFL students at the graduate level made distinct differences in three categories of essay-writing errors. Also, it was discovered that the majority of the errors were caused on by ignorance.

Demirel (2017) identified significant writing challenges by looking at the common errors made in academic writings. 45 students, 10 of whom were male and 35 of whom were female, enrolled in their first year of study at KTU in the Department of English Language and Literature made up the study's participants. The participants were between the ages of 19 and 21. The corpus was made up of essays with word counts ranging from 500 to 1500. The end result was a list of lexical and syntactic mistakes. Mixed qualitative and quantitative research was used to study the research.

Hamza, Khan, and Abbasi (2017) examined the inside of the writing errors made by Pakistani students. The department of computer science accepted twenty undergrad. The range of ages was from 18 and 25. The participants had to complete a questionnaire and generate a paragraph in English. The study's findings identified 111 mistakes in 11 separate types. It was designed to pinpoint, categorize, specify, and illustrate the root causes of this skills gap among the students. For this study, quantitative methodology was used.

In their 2017 study, Sermsook, Liamnimitr, and Pochakorn looked into the causes of the errors. Twenty-six second-year English majors, who were enrolled in the writing course produced 104 pieces of writing. The findings demonstrate that the most prominent mistakes were punctuation, determiners, subject-verb agreement, misspelling, capital letters, and breaks. Primary causes of the errors were identified as inter-lingual interference, intra-lingual interference, low vocabulary and grammar proficiency in English, and students' negligence.

Researchers Nuruzzaman, Islam, and Shuchi (2018) examined the writing errors of ninety Saudi undergraduate non-English major students at various proficiency levels. According to the research, Saudi EFL students frequently make errors in grammar, lexis, semantics, and mechanics, when writing English paragraphs.

## **Material and Methods**

### **Participants**

Three different institutions provided the total of 45 participants for this study, with fifteen undergraduates from each university selected at random. All of the participants, who ranged in age from 18 to 22, were classified as undergraduate students. Remarkably, the participants' learning of English as a second language was the shared linguistic denominator, a characteristic inherent to their educational paths. It is crucial to emphasize that English has a mandatory position in the academic program in the Pakistani system of education. As a result, students interact with the language of English during their time in school, especially in college, where it is required for three semesters in a row. This participant characteristic breakdown creates a thorough foundation for comprehending the language environment and educational background information on the research participants.

## Instrument

Using an error analysis approach—a strategy often used in the field of social sciences research—this qualitative study investigates recurring flaws that are apparent in undergraduate students' written essays. The participants, who were university students, were instructed to compose essays expressing their thoughts on their favorite university experiences. The reasoning behind this investigation stems from the general goal of improving learners' English language competency, with a particular emphasis on honing their writing skills.

The researcher manually collected and evaluated an entire corpus of 45 essays in order to systematically examine and classify common mistakes. This thorough analysis aims to provide empirical insights into the categorization of mistakes that frequently appear in learners' written statements. Through the process of deciphering these patterns of writing, the study hopes to provide insightful educational implications that will help students become more proficient writers as they negotiate the difficulties of the English language.

## Data Analysis

Using a particular criteria created for the assessment of written work, the researcher methodically evaluated and rated the essays submitted by the participating students, paying special attention to identifying common mistakes among the undergraduate population. The mistakes were gathered, carefully inspected, categorized, and shown according to the classes, frequencies, and percentages that applied to each. Using illustrative instances, the typology of mistakes exhibited by undergraduates was discussed. This study's methodology followed Corder's (1974) description of the procedural examination of mistakes. The steps included taking a sample from the student, identifying errors, describing and explaining them, and then evaluating the results. Following these specified processes, every essay sample from each participant pool was examined, allowing for the detection, thorough description, explanation, and assessment of any faults that were present.

Fifty-five essays were examined in detail, and mistakes were methodically divided into several groups. These encompassed, among others, incorrect expressions, inappropriate word choice and repetition, spelling discrepancies, syntactical ambiguity, prepositional inaccuracies, pronoun misuse, adverbial imprecision, superfluous words, auxiliary verb misapplication, subject-verb agreement lapses, article misuse, omissions, tense inconsistencies, issues of word order, employment of slang, conjunction errors, and punctuation irregularities. Each essay had an unbiased reading, and discovered errors were thoroughly noted on an individualized error form, supported by detailed documentation of their type and frequency. The faults were then categorized and divided for additional examination. The last stage of this research on error analysis is a thorough evaluation and process of decision-making based on the collected data, identifying which faults require more care and concern than others.

## Results and Discussion

The study's main corpus consisted of 45 essays that were obtained from three public universities in Lahore, Pakistan. With painstaking analysis, the investigator found and recorded a total of 635 mistakes in the sampled writings. This quantitative illustration serves as a reference point for the subsequent qualitative analysis of typical linguistic anomalies, leading to a more advanced understanding of the challenges that undergraduate students face when writing their papers in the assigned academic environment.

**Table 1**

Items	Error type	Frequency of errors	Percentage of errors
i	Erroneous statement	24	3.7%

ii	Multiple repetitions of "and" in a phrase	5	0.7%
iii	Usage of word inadequate	69	10.8%
iv	Spellings erroneous	58	9.1%
v	Equivocal sentences	11	1.7%
vi	Erroneous preposition	35	5.5%
vii	Erroneous pronoun	5	0.7%
viii	Erroneous adverb	7	1.1%
ix	Usage of pointless words	25	3.9%
x	Missing of auxiliary verb	26	4.0%
xi	Rule of proximity	19	2.9%
xii	Missing of determiner	34	5.3%
xiii	Missing of words	29	4.5%
xiv	Order of words	11	1.7%
xv	Erroneous use of tense	137	21.5%
xvi	Slangs usage	11	1.7%
xvii	Erroneous conjunction	13	2.0%
xviii	Erroneous punctuation	116	18.2%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 1 provides a detailed summary of the kinds, occurrences, and percentages of mistakes identified in college students' written essays. 18 different mistake types were found throughout the investigation procedure, and they are categorized into mechanical and grammatical categories as shown in Table 1. Errors that are automatically classified include those that include spelling, punctuation, unclear sentence construction, and sentence structure. On the other hand, grammatical errors cover a wide range of linguistic nuances, such as mis-chosen words, misplaced prepositions, subject-verb agreement problems, erroneous statements, repeated conjunction usage, mishandled prepositions, imprecise pronouns, adverbial errors, unnecessary words, misapplied auxiliary verbs, misapplied articles, omissions, inconsistent tenses, irregular word orders, slang usage, and misapplied conjunctions. This methodical classification makes it easier to analyze the many mistake typologies that are present in university-level students' written expressions and provides insightful information for instructional interventions meant to improve language competency in this learning environment.

After analyzing the collected data from samples of essay writing, it is clear that the majority of the students' significant errors were tenses usage (21.57%) indicate that selecting the appropriate verb tense is their weakest skill, for example: **Once I have an experience to visit Punjab university and I had wait all summer.** Punctuation errors were the second most common (18.27%), for example: **So I preferred to avail that opportunity. we had a lot of fun and we are students of electrical engineering department.** The third biggest error was the improper usage of words (10.87%), for example: **The arrangements were held in the background and They bought many gifts for me.** While the fourth was incorrect spelling (9.13%), for example: **It was very butifull morning that day and It was really a grate experinc.** Use of tenses, punctuation, misuse of words, and spelling errors make up this group of four error kinds, which constitute the vast majority of errors (about 60% of the aggregate). The remaining 14 error categories are all insignificant by comparison. The frequency of each error is less than 5%, with repetition and the incorrect use of pronouns in a single sentence contributing for the least errors (0.78%).

Given the previously described results, the investigator suggests that a basic intervention for college-level students should include thorough teaching on the appropriate use of linguistic verb tenses, words, punctuation, and spelling. Teaching and evaluating these language components should be the primary focus of the educational method, rather than just teaching writing procedures. Teachers can proactively provide students with the skills they need to avoid mistakes in these important language domains by incorporating specific instruction, evaluation of grammatical nuances, extensive vocabulary utilization,

specific punctuation guidelines, and correct spelling rules into writing pedagogy. This all-encompassing strategy is consistent with the overarching goal of supporting undergraduate students' linguistic accuracy and competency, which will enhance their written communication abilities.

Based upon instances of identical faults detected in essays that were written by Pakistani undergraduates, the researcher proceeded with an examination into the underlying reasons for these frequent language differences. It is possible to classify the detected mistakes into four main groups: First of all, word misplacement inside a phrase is referred to as "ordering." Second, "selection" refers to the difficulty of choosing incorrect forms inside a phrase. Thirdly, the definition of "addition" is the addition of superfluous grammatical elements to sentences. Finally, "omission" occurs when necessary linguistic components for sentence structure are unintentionally left out. This analytical classification provides a fundamental framework for comprehending the complex causes of the mistakes that have been uncovered, aiding in the formulation of instructional approaches that are specifically designed to address certain domains.

Apart from the detected grammatical mistakes, the most common issues found in the essays submitted by Pakistani university students indicate shortcomings in language-learning resources and a shortage of qualified language teachers. Furthermore, the mistakes that have been determined to result from encroachment or negative transmission from the students' home language fall under the category of interlingual sources. On the other hand, intralingual mistakes, which are also known as developmental errors, arise due to interference with the students' second language. Through a thorough analysis of the faults that may be found in the essays produced by Pakistani undergraduates, this study aims to identify the underlying causes and rationalizations for the language differences. The inquiry goes beyond simple error detection to reveal the complex factors that lead to the language difficulties that the student body's academic writing has been exhibiting.

## Discussion

The analysis's findings highlight the widespread occurrence of mistakes in every essay that was looked at, with differences in error rates between the samples that were gathered. Remarkably, 21.57% was the greatest mistake rate ever recorded, while 0.78% was the lowest. A deeper analysis of the data elucidates that the major mistakes were attributable to the inappropriate utilization of verb tenses and punctuation symbols by the pupils. Even though the essay topic was supposed to be simple—it asked participants to describe their "best day spent at university"—the study's conclusions showed that participants' comprehension and use of verb tenses varied significantly. Even though the theme content called for a retrospective story, many students were unsure about whether to write their experiences in either the present or the past tense. The actual data clearly showed that the ideal university day had already happened. But a significant portion of students chose the present tense, indicating a widespread breakdown in tense agreement.

Moreover, the examination revealed what appeared to be simple mistakes that might have been fixed with little work. These included leaving out final punctuation, not using commas in lengthy lines, capitalizing sentences only sometimes, and beginning newly formed phrases with lowercase letters. The findings of Khansir (2013) are consistent with the trend of excessive and inappropriate use of punctuation that has been noticed in the writings of non-native speakers of English from different cultural backgrounds, such as India and Iran. The rise in mistake rates highlights a serious shortcoming in students' academic readiness, which is reflected in their official written assignments. This finding prompts critical analysis of the effectiveness of current instructional approaches and highlights the necessity of focused interventions to raise the bar for students' language competency in academic writing setting.



Many previous research works have examined error categorization, frequently using pre-established classification schemes, but unlike other studies that impose categorical limitations, this one did not use predefined categories. The researcher used an inclusive technique to identify faults in essays obtained from undergraduate students at three public institutions in Lahore, Pakistan, without using a pre-established framework. This methodological decision was made in an effort to fully capture the range of faults that may have been included in the published compositions.

The research establishes a standard for future scholarly endeavors and offers a nuanced view on the wide range of mistakes made by rejecting preset classifications. The lack of predefined categories promotes a more thorough analysis of mistakes and provides a strong basis for further research. This method not only deepens our comprehension of common faults but also makes it easier for academic discourse to grow since it gives future academics the ability to recognize and investigate new types of errors that are made in university student-developed compositions.

According to the researcher, two errors were less in percentage but highlighted a gap, which was found repeatedly used by students at undergraduate level. They are:

### **Erroneous adverb**

#### **Example 1**

##### **Error identification**

I was feeling very luckly.

##### **Error correction**

I was feeling very (lucky).

#### **Example 2**

##### **Error identification**

Then finally, we opened our cell phones, cameras and started to collect some memorable clicks.

##### **Error correction**

(Then), we opened our cell phones, cameras and started to collect some memorable clicks.

Or

(Finally), we opened our cell phones, cameras and started to collect some memorable clicks.

(**THEN** and **FINALLY** both are adverbs; we cannot use two adverbs together in one sentence so either we use **THEN** or **FINALLY** in one sentence).

### **Multiple repetitions of "and" in a phrase**

#### **Example 1**

##### **Error identification**

That was the best day for me because merit was high and that was the time to reevaluate ourselves and to polish our knowledge and reassess ourselves to pass the examination and that was the time I come to know that I have the ability to competate others.

### **Error correction**

That was the best day for me because merit was high (.) It was time to reevaluate ourselves (,) polish our knowledge and reassess ourselves to pass the examination (.) That was the time I (came) to know that I have the ability to (compete) others.

### **Example 2**

#### **Error identification**

The topic of the play was love and that we should let people live their lives as they want and the endearing impact of love on the lives of people moreover it taught us the message that we should not judge people.

#### **Error correction**

The topic of the play was love (. Also,) we should let people live their lives as they want (. It portrayed) the endearing impact of love on the lives of people

(. Moreover,) it (gives) us the message that we should not judge people.

### **Causes of Errors in Writing**

#### **Slang Language**

Slang language is becoming more prevalent among students over time. This has a negative impact on their formal writing. Ability to write messages in SMS language is having an adverse effect on learners due to rising mobile phone usage, since they have begun to use the SMS language in official compositions as well, such as asap (as soon as possible) or uni (University). Despite the fact that current technology is highly helpful, it has a detrimental effect on students and makes them lethargic enough to type entire words in their academic important documents.

#### **Interlingua Transfer**

According to the study's findings, inter-lingual transfer happened in spelling; learners could speak words correctly but had trouble writing them down on paper, for example, grate —> great. The absence of "the" in articles, such as "we went to our class rooms and sat on our seats for (the) last time," and the omission of "to" in prepositions, such as "we all friends agreed to travel (to) university on bus," are examples of interlanguage transfer errors. The majority of the time, errors result from word-to-word translation, or direction translation. Thus, each language has its own structure and functions. Tenses errors are another widespread issue in students' writing. According to Watcharapunyawong and Usaha (2013), errors are raised on by the first language's interference.

#### **Over Generalization**

This typically occurs when students add "ed" to irregular verbs, such as doned rather than done.

### **Intra Lingua Transfer**

According to the study's findings, learners add or remove "s" or "es" depending on their level of understanding when they commit intra-lingual transfer errors in subject verb agreement. This occurs because students are not completely conscious of the grammatical principles in their target language, as seen by the numerous seminars held at college level on topics such as spelling (e.g., play → ply) and tenses (e.g. I have a modest Nokia phone; in prepositions, e.g., classmates and me got on to (not necessary) the bus; and in homophones, e.g., too --> to -->two.

### **Pedagogical Implications**

The study's conclusions underline the importance for students to promote analytical thinking and cultivate inventive writing in their endeavors to increase composition abilities and reduce writing deficits. Because some mistakes are repeated, teachers must take a proactive stance and prioritize positive reinforcement above corrective actions. Students may get demotivated if they receive a negative response for making repeated errors. Consequently, giving students who struggle with recurring mistakes more attention might help the correcting process in the classroom work more effectively.

Teachers should carefully address students' faults as part of their instructional approach, clearly articulating the flaws and offering frequent tasks to consolidate a strong understanding of the proper norms. This method not only creates an encouraging feedback cycle and a pleasant learning environment, but it also creates a climate that is favorable to students' ongoing development as writers.

### **Limitation of the study**

There were some difficulties faced while conducting this investigation. The principal restriction was the comparatively small sample size, consisting of 45 individuals in total, of which 15 were chosen from each university. This limitation might make it more difficult to extrapolate the results to a larger group of students. Students also had trouble organizing their writings into three separate paragraphs and frequently showed discomfort while writing one-and-a-half-page essays that had an introduction, a major body, and a conclusion. The fundamental reasons for this difficulty might be a lack of vocabulary, uncertainty about the use of tenses, or trouble choosing words to express ideas clearly.

The third barrier was time limits, which mostly affected less proficient students who found it difficult to finish the essay in the allotted time, which increased the likelihood of mistakes. It is conceivable that these pupils could have performed better had they had more time. Furthermore, the study's exclusive reliance on public universities for sample gathering presents a potential limitation. There could be variations in the error patterns of private and public colleges, with the former possibly suffering less from mistakes. Apart from these drawbacks, the study's results are nevertheless relevant, worthwhile, and perceptive. Although the results acknowledge the aforementioned limitations, they are more reliable since they are consistent with and support earlier studies. It is expected that the study's findings will spark the curiosity of upcoming scholars and lay the groundwork for more investigation into the nuances of writing errors made by college students and possible differences between various institutional contexts.

### **Conclusion**

In a corpus of essays taken from undergraduate students at three public institutions in Lahore, Pakistan, the investigator found a significant range of mistakes, 635 in all. The majority of the obvious mistakes were related to improper use of tenses and punctuation marks, which may be attributed to the students' mother tongue's ongoing effect. The

frequency of these mistakes demonstrated the widespread influence of mother-tongue interference, which is especially noticeable when pupils, thinking in their native tongue, attempt to express ideas in English sentences. Pakistani students face writing difficulties that are similar to those faced by other English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, particularly people who are from the nation of Thailand (Watcharapunyawong & Usaha, 2013; Phuket & Othman, 2015), in which errors are frequently caused by interlingual interference.

There was a clear constraint in the way that participants struggled to come up with appropriate phrases, which pointed to a scarce vocabulary. This study aimed to identify the common mistakes made by Pakistani students who struggle with writing at the university level, even when they are proficient in oral communication. In order to support university students in strengthening their writing abilities, immediate attention is required because of the disparity between their initial exposure to writing instruction and the detected writing competency deficiency. This understanding is essential for closing the gap between university students' development of excellent writing skills and their communication ability.

### **Recommendations**

The study's advantages and disadvantages can provide insightful information for similar investigations in the future. Although the analysis of mistakes in three public universities gave rise to core knowledge, this comparative analysis might be expanded in future research to include institutions that are private as well as public. These kinds of comparisons might provide different outcomes, providing a more thorough picture of writing mistakes in different institutional settings.

Future studies should take into account doing error analyses at schools and colleges in addition to universities in order to determine the underlying causes of recurring inaccuracies in the writing of learners and to outline efficient remedial procedures. A comprehensive investigation of mistake patterns at various educational levels can help generate a more sophisticated understanding of the writing skill development trajectory.

Additionally, studies may be conducted on both smaller and larger sizes, which would enable the discovery of complex issues and the investigation of specialized approaches. By enhancing the generalizability and application of study findings, these scaled studies would offer more nuanced knowledge related to writing errors in educational contexts. The researcher has the following suggestions for potential researchers:

- Teachers must play a significant role in helping students enhance their writing abilities. Students should be encouraged and motivated through writing exercises in the classroom.
- Instructors must also work to improve and to develop their own writing abilities, they ought to participate in workshops held by both public and private organizations to help students advance their writings.
- To teach students the laws of writing techniques, qualified instructors should be hired.
- Teachers should encourage students to rectify their own errors.
- A special group should be scheduled to assist students in overcoming the difficulty of writing.
- The administration of the university should plan seminars on the value of writing for the students.
- Teachers should provide students with motivating feedback, so they can advance more quickly in subsequent assignments.

- Studies reveal that the usage of red ink pens causes instructors to react negatively to learners, so teachers should use alternative ink colors when checking papers instead of red use green to promote optimism among students. University of Colorado sociologists stated in their article, which was published in The Social Science Journal, that students can access teachers more critically when they use a red pen to make comments on their papers than if they use a different color pen (Richard & Heather, 2013).

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