

***An Analysis of the Common Grammatical  
Errors in the English Writing made by 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Secondary Male Students in the Eastern  
Coast of the UAE***

***By***

***Taiseer Mohammed Y. Hourani***

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Institute of Education  
of the British University in Dubai in part fulfillment of  
the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Education in  
English Language Teaching**

***Supervisor:***

***Dr. Mick Randall***

***Institute of Education  
British University in Dubai  
Dubai - UAE  
June, 2008***

# ***An Analysis of the Common Grammatical Errors in the English Essay Writing made by 3<sup>rd</sup> Secondary Male Students in the Eastern Coast of the UAE***

## ***Abstract***

*Having students to produce an organized, neat and error-free piece of writing has always been the life long dream and the ambition of all EFL teachers. The purpose of this study is to explore the common types of grammatical errors made by Emirati secondary male students in their English essay writing. The study was conducted in five leading schools on the Eastern Coast of the UAE. The most common and salient grammatical errors which were found in the students essays included: passivization, verb tense and form, subject-verb agreement, word order, prepositions, articles, plurality and auxiliaries. These errors were classified and tabulated according to their number of frequency in the students essays. 105 students and 20 teachers participated in completing two separate questionnaires reflecting their attitudes and opinion towards the English writing skill. Follow up interviews with 5 supervisors were conducted to deepen understanding and interpretation of the results. The data revealed that the UAE students make different types of grammatical errors, and most of these errors were due to intralingual transfer. In this study, intralingual transfer errors were more frequent than interlingual ones. Furthermore, the findings and the results of this study also showed that the English writing skill of the secondary male students in the UAE state schools needs more reinforcement and development.*

*Based on the findings, recommendations and some implications which are of significance to educators and policymakers as well as to EFL teachers are provided. At last, it is hoped that the results of this study could be of much benefit for developing the English writing skill among secondary students in the UAE schools.*

## **Dedication**

*This dissertation is dedicated to my mother and my dead father (May Allah accept him in the paradise), my wife, my brothers, my daughter and my sons. I appreciate their everlasting love, patience, encouragement and support and without them, I would not have been able to accomplish my Master dissertation.*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

*A big number of people contributed to the success of this thesis, and I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to them all. Particularly, I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Mick Randall, my advisor, whose expertise, understanding, and patience, added considerably to my graduate experience. I appreciate his vast knowledge and skill in many areas, his professional guidance, and his assistance and support in every step.*

*I would like to express my appreciation to Dr. Eman Gad, without her support and encouragement, I would not have pursued my master study. I should not forget Professor Clifton Chadwick from whom I learnt a lot about educational policy. I also lack words to express my thanks to Lynn Randall who played a vital role in improving my English writing through language and study skills modules. My deep appreciation also goes to the British University in Dubai (BUiD) that gave me a merit scholarship award. This award covers part of my financial needs that enabled me to carry out this research. Furthermore, my warmest thanks and love go to my dear brothers: Dr. Yousuf, Dr. Yasser, Dr. Naseem , Fathi and Tariq who supported and encouraged me to continue my higher education. I'd like to convey my warmest love to my children Feras, Batool, Mohammad and Ahmed for their patience and encouragement. I would like to thank my sisters, too*

*Last but not least, my recognition and gratitude are addressed to my wife, Nuha, without her motivation, reassurance, patience, love, and unfaltering support, I would not have managed to go back to the university and complete my master study. My deepest appreciation and love also go to my mother whose prayers and encouragement were the basis of my success.*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Abstract</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Dedication</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE: Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1. The Writing Skill	<b>1</b>
1.2. Errors and Mistakes	<b>5</b>
1.3. Significance of Errors	<b>6</b>
1.4. Characteristics of the Arabic language	<b>7</b>
1.5. English Teaching at the UAE Secondary Schools	<b>8</b>
1.6. Research Questions	<b>10</b>
<b>CHAPTER TWO: Previous Studies</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1. Causes and Sources of Errors	<b>11</b>
2.2. Error Analysis	<b>16</b>
2.2.1. Models for Error Analysis	<b>18</b>
<b>CHAPTER THREE: Methodology</b>	<b>23</b>
3.1. Participants	<b>23</b>
3.2. Instruments	<b>23</b>
3.3. Procedures	<b>24</b>
3.4. Limitations	<b>25</b>
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: Data Analysis and Discussion</b>	<b>26</b>
4.1. Error Identification and Categorization	<b>27</b>
4.2. Error Analysis in Students Writings	<b>27</b>
4.2.1. Grammatical Errors	<b>28</b>
4.2.1.1 Passive Voice	<b>28</b>
4.2.1.2 Verb Tense and Form	<b>29</b>
4.2.1.3 Subject-verb Agreement	<b>30</b>
4.2.1.4 Word Order	<b>31</b>
4.2.1.5 Prepositions	<b>32</b>

4.2.1.6	Articles	32
4.2.1.7	Plurality	34
4.2.1.8	Auxiliaries	35
4.3.	Strengthening Student Writing Skill	35
4.4	Supervisors' Perspectives	37
<b>CHAPTER FIVE: Findings and Results</b>		<b>39</b>
5.1.	Causes of Errors in English Writing	42
5.1.1.	Language Transfer	42
5.1.1.1	Interlingual Transfer	42
5.1.1.2.	Intralingual Transfer	44
5.1.2.	Teaching Methods	46
5.1.3.	Lack of Writing Practice	46
5.2.	Weakness in English Writing Skill	47
<b>CHAPTER SIX: Recommendations &amp; Conclusion</b>		<b>48</b>
6.1.	Implications and Recommendations	48
6.2.	Conclusion	51
<b>References</b>		<b>53</b>
<b>Appendices</b>		<b>65</b>

# **CHAPTER ONE: Introduction**

## **1.1. The Writing Skill**

Writing is a difficult process even in the first language. It is even more complicated to write in a foreign language. Many studies indicate for the beginning English Foreign Language (EFL) students, there tends to be interference from their first language in the process of writing in English (Benson, 2002; Cedar, 2004; Chen & Huang, 2003; Collins, 2002; Jarvis, 2000; Jiang, 1995; Lado, 1957; Liu, 1998; Mori, 1998; Yu, 1996). Writing in a foreign language often presents the greatest challenge to the students at all stages, particularly essay writing because in this activity, writing is usually extended and therefore it becomes more demanding than in the case of writing a short paragraph.

Writing in general and essays in particular form problems to secondary students in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Teachers of composition or writing classes in the UAE secondary state schools are generally faced with students who have memorized a good amount of English vocabulary and grammar rules, but have seldom put that knowledge to practical use (Wachs, 1993). In many cases, the majority of these students are still translating words, phrases, and sentences from Arabic to English with often very strange results. The challenge for the composition teacher is to find methods to activate in a meaningful way the passive knowledge the students possess in terms of the writing skill, as well as to help the students become more proficient while working to eliminate some of their common errors. A better understanding of the L1 influence in the process of EFL writing will help teachers know students' difficulties in learning English. It will also aid in the adoption of appropriate teaching strategies to help beginning EFL students learn English writing skills better. As Richards & Renandya (2002:303) claim; "there is no doubt that writing is the most difficult skill for L2 learners to master. The difficulty lies not only in generating and organizing ideas, but also in translating these notions into legible text". Yet, it is very necessary to look into the dynamics of writing and its teaching, as writing is a skill that not only is tested in every valid

language examination, but also a skill that learners should possess and demonstrate in academic contexts. Writing includes numerous considerations and choices to be made regarding “higher level skills”, such as content, structure and organization, and “lower level skills”, such as punctuation and choice of appropriate vocabulary items and grammatical structures, which are the terms used by Richards & Renandya (2002). Moreover, writing skills must be practiced and learned through experience. By putting together concepts and solving problems, the writer engages in "a two-way interaction between continuously developing knowledge and continuously developing text" (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987, p. 12). Indeed, academic writing demands conscious effort and practice in composing, developing, and analyzing ideas. Compared to students writing in their native language (L1), however, students writing in their L2 have to also acquire proficiency in the use of the language as well as writing strategies, techniques and skills, they want to write close to error-free texts and they enter language courses with the expectations of becoming more proficient writers in the L2.

However, most secondary school Arab students find it difficult to write essays free of errors of various types. Therefore, teachers of essay writing need to anticipate certain common types of errors. They may also find other types of errors, which can be revealed by analyzing the written products or essays of students. These are the conventions, which are usually followed by the teachers of writing when analyzing students' errors.

As mentioned above writing is a complex task; it is the “most difficult of the language abilities and skills to acquire (Allen & Corder, 1974, p. 177). Its level of difficulty varies between native speakers (NS) who think in the language used, in this case it will be English, and non-native speakers (NNS) who think in their own native language, in this case, it will be Arabic. While writing, non-native speakers have to think of all those rules they need to apply or use, rules that native speakers are expected to have automatically.



Harold Rosen points out the difficult situation in which a writer can find him/herself:

*"The writer is a lonely figure cut off from the stimulus and corrective of listeners. He must be a predictor of reactions and act on his predictions. He writes with one hand tied behind his back, being robbed of gesture. He is robbed too of the tone of his voice and the aid of clues the environment provides. He is condemned to monologue; there is no one to help, to fill the silences put words in his mouth, or make encouraging noises". (Rosen, 1969: 5).*

Tricia Hedge elaborates on the requirements of effective writing:

*"Effective writing requires a number of things: a high degree of development in the organization of ideas and information; a high degree of accuracy so there is no ambiguity of meaning; the use of complex grammatical devices for focus and emphasis; and careful choice of vocabulary, grammatical patterns, and sentence structures to create a style which is appropriate to the subject matter and the eventual readers. (Hedge, 1998:5).*

The writing skill involves many other sub-skills like the general knowledge about the subject in question and the ability to translate ideas into grammatical sentences. Rivers (1968:243) argues that any academic writer must meet four major conditions:

*The student must learn: 1- the graphic systems of the foreign language; 2- he must learn to spell according to the conventions of the language; 3- he must learn to control the structure of the language so that what he writes is comprehensible to his reader; and 4- he must learn to select from among possible combinations of words and phrases those which will convey the nuances he has in mind in the register which is most appropriate.*

It's true that non-native speakers are more prone to committing errors. Teachers of English in the UAE are currently facing the challenge of adopting and developing a wide range of methods to accomplish effective teaching of English writing. This, of course, is not an easy task. A large number of students in the UAE continue to fail to master the basics of the English writing even after long years of formal education. Teachers of English feel satisfied to have a student who speaks and writes correct English. This has been the ambition of all EFL teachers. Students in government schools in the UAE start learning English from the first primary, and by the end of the secondary stage of education, the pupils have spent more than twelve years of learning EFL. At the end of this period, they are expected to understand advanced English, to communicate with an English speaking person within certain reasonable areas, to read simple English with ease, fluency and understanding, and to write a paragraph in English using basic structures of the language. However, during my long experience as a teacher of English at government schools in the UAE, I have found out that the majority of

students at the end of their secondary cycle have great difficulties in reading with comprehension and that very few of them are able to write meaningful and error-free English sentences. In spite of the fact that they have studied English for more than twelve years and that their vocabulary repertoire is expected to be massive and their knowledge of grammar rules and the mechanics of writing is satisfying, most of the students are still not able to write a correct paragraph using adequately the basic structures of the English language they have learnt. However, why do students still find difficulties in writing in English when their teachers do their best to help them to achieve good results? The answer to this question might be that learning English or any other foreign language is difficult, not only for the Arab students mentioned in this study, but for all non-native speakers. The main problem is that, even in their very first lesson, the learners of a foreign language do not start learning this new language from zero or a neutral point (Hwang, 1970: pp 26-29). Instead, they interpret the new phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic patterns through those of their native language.

What finally matters, I believe, is that we encourage our students to write. Lynn Holaday (in Stephen Tchudi, 1997: 35) points out "the way to become a better writer is to write". She remarks "students who feel incompetent at writing avoid writing. They do not practice. They do not get better."

On the light of this introduction the main aim of this study is to explore and analyze the common grammatical error patterns in Secondary male students' English essay writing in UAE state schools in the Eastern Coast. The study will first provide information on types of grammatical errors male students make; second, describe the methodology used in collecting the data; third, display the results; fourth, discuss and interpret the results.

## 1.2. Errors and Mistakes

It is essential here to make a distinction between mistakes and errors. According to Brown *mistakes* refer to "a failure to utilize a known system correctly" whereas *errors* concern "a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflecting the interlanguage competence of the learner" (1994a: 205). Two things need to be stated here: Firstly, mistakes do not require special treatment assuming they are recognized. Secondly, *error* here refers to structures only. Both Corder (1967, 1971) and James (1998) reveal a criterion that helps us to do so: A mistake can be self-corrected, but an error cannot. Errors are "systematic," i.e. likely to happen regularly and not recognized by the learner. Hence, only the teacher or researcher would locate them, the learner would not (Gass & Selinker, 1994).

Norrish (1983) made a clear distinction between errors and mistakes. He stated errors are "systematic deviation when a learner has not learnt something and consistently gets it wrong." He added that when a learner of English as a second or a foreign language makes an error systematically, it is because he has not learnt the correct form. Norrish defined mistakes as "inconsistent deviation." When a learner has been taught a certain correct form, and he uses one form sometimes and another at other times quite inconsistently, the inconsistent deviation is called a mistake. And it is in this light that the researcher has chosen to focus on students' errors not mistakes. An error, however, is considered more serious. In Contrastive Analysis, the theoretical base of which was behaviourism, errors were seen as "bad habits" that had been formed. The response was based on the stimulus. It was assumed that interference of the mother tongue (L1) was responsible for the errors made during the transition period of learning the target language. As an English teacher, I am well aware of the fact that my Arabic speaking students in grade 12, science section, commit many errors in essay writing (See appendix 6). These students have been studying English almost their whole lives and still, their errors are numerous.

In the cognitive approach, errors are seen as a clue to what is happening in the mind. They are seen as a natural phenomenon that must occur as learning a first or second language takes place before correct grammar rules are completely internalized. I think teachers are relieved to find a more realistic attitude towards errors. Errors are no longer a reflection on their teaching methods, but are, rather, indicators that learning is taking place. So errors are no longer “bad” but “good” or natural just as natural as errors that occur in learning a first language. The insight that errors are a natural and important part of the learning process itself, and do not all come from mother tongue interference, is very important. There is variation in learners' performance depending on the task. Learners may have more control over linguistic forms for certain tasks, while for others they may be more prone to error.

## **1.2. Significance of Errors**

Many educators and theorists in the field of error analysis have focused on the importance of second language learners' errors. Corder (1967) indicates that errors are significant in three different ways. First to the teachers, in that they tell them how far towards the goal the learners have advanced and consequently, what remains for them to learn. Second, they provide to the researchers evidence of how language is learnt or acquired, what strategies or procedures the learners are employing in their discovery of the language. Thirdly, they are indispensable to the learners themselves, because we can regard the making of errors as a device the learners use in order to learn. Research has provided empirical evidence pointing to emphasis on learners' errors as an effective means of improving grammatical accuracy (White et al, 1991; Carroll and Swain, 1993). Indeed, as Carter (1997:35) notes, 'Knowing more about how grammar works is to understand more about how grammar is used and misused'. There is a need for students to recognize the significance of errors which occur in their writing, to fully grasp and understand the nature of the errors made. This requires English

language teachers to be better equipped, more sensitive and aware of the difficulties students face with regard to grammar. In other words, it is a way the

learners have for testing their hypotheses about the nature of the language they are learning. Taking these ideas into consideration, this study attempts to identify the grammatical errors which students make in writing English essays in order to help teachers of English tackle the problem and to indicate the points of weakness in English writing.

#### **1.4. Characteristics of the Arabic language: (Sofer & Raimes, 2002)**

Spoken in Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen.

##### **The written language**

- \_ Arabic is written from right to left.
- \_ Spelling is phonetic.
- \_ No distinction is made between upper and lower case.

##### **Sentence structure and word order**

\_ Under the influence of the *Qur'an* (Koran), writers aim at rhythmical balance and coordination, with the split between subject and predicate occurring midway in a sentence.

\_ Arabic favors coordination over subordination; sentences often begin with *And* or *So*.

\_ Basic word order in Classical Arabic is V-S-O: the verb precedes the subject:  
\*Hoped the committee to solve the problem. Colloquial Arabic is S - V - O .

\_ Arabic uses a *that* clause where English uses infinitive: \*I want that you stay.

##### **Nouns and pronouns**

\_ Personal pronouns are often added to verbs: \*My father he lives in California.

\_ Relative pronoun makes no human/nonhuman distinction, and pronoun object is retained in a restrictive relative clause: \*Here is the student which you met her last week.

\_ Singular noun is used after a numeral above ten: \*He has eleven cousin.

## **Verbs and verbals**

- \_ No equivalent of auxiliary *do*: \*You have a brother ?
- \_ No verb *be* in present tense: \*They going to the movies. \*Where the post office?
- \_ No modal verbs.
- \_ No gerund or infinitive forms.
- \_ Perspective of tense and time is very different from English.
- \_ Past perfect is formed with *be*: \*They were eat.
- \_ Reported speech retains tense of original: \*She said she is leaving.
- \_ Simple present tense covers meaning of simple and progressive in English:  
She working now. \*She working every day.

## **Adjectives and adverbs**

- \_ Adjectives follow noun: \*a book interesting long.

## **Articles**

- \_ No indefinite article: \*He is student.
- \_ Definite article is used for days of the week, some months, some place names, and in many idiomatic expressions: \*He went to the Peru. \*He is still in the bed.

## **1.5. English Teaching at the UAE Secondary Schools**

The English Language occupies a very prominent position in the United Arab Emirates in all different fields. It is the main language of communication amongst many diverse nationalities in the country. Therefore, the need for English as a communication tool is very demanding. This realization has been widely reflected in students failing to see the point of studying English as a compulsory course in general education regardless of the EFL teachers' efforts to explain its significance. In fact, the Ministry of Education (MoE) in the UAE is exerting all efforts to teach the English language appropriately in all schools, as a result, it always promotes conferences and symposia where teachers of English can develop their teaching professions in all different language skills. The MoE has also drawn specific goals in the teaching of English at the secondary stage. Among these, students should be able to write English essays that are grammatically correct, properly punctuated and effectively organized, and to

understand and communicate using a variety of notions and linguistic functions based on everyday situations. Accordingly, all Emirati secondary school graduates are expected to develop native-like facility in English which will enable them to communicate spontaneously, effectively and confidently about a broad range of topics. The results of the studies conducted in the UAE led to the conclusion that the goals set by the Ministry of Education were ambitious and had not yet been fulfilled. Despite the long years of learning English, most English teachers who teach secondary stages still complain about their students weakness in English essay writing. It was also evident from the students' performance results in the written samples that were collected for this research (See appendix 5). In spite of the shift from the grammar-translation teaching methods to the communicative approach in language teaching, most students still continue to memorize the textbook rather than master English for communication. Unfortunately, English is tackled as a school subject that needs to be memorized and tested rather than a tool for communication. There is no doubt that English language has recently become very necessary in the UAE schools for two things. First, the school graduates are not allowed to join institutions of higher education unless they achieve a certain score in the Common English Proficiency Assessment (CEPA). Second, The MoE has lately presented an ambitious program for school administrations to learn English and pass the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). So, success in learning English might determine keeping one's own future career and professional status.

It is worth noting that in spite of the great efforts exerted in the UAE secondary schools to teach English, it is not possible to find a fluent English-speaking student. On the other hand, weakness in writing skill is clearly observed because teachers may not spend more time on teaching this skill due to the time limit of the course they are teaching ( See appendix 2) . They focus on the question items such as extensive vocabulary and grammatical rules to meet the requirements of the formal exams. During my long experience in the teaching of the English language, I found out that most students face difficulty in writing English

paragraphs free of errors due to many reasons that will be explored in the following chapter.

## **1.6. Research Questions**

The aims of this study will be investigated through the following research questions:

1. Does the incomprehensibility of English grammatical rules have negative effect on students writings?
2. Is mother tongue interference the major cause for errors in the English writings of Emirati male students?
3. What are the most common sources of grammatical errors in students English essays?
4. Are the UAE Secondary Male Students weak in writing English essays?

In the chapter that follows, the major previous research findings relating to causes and sources of errors in addition to error analysis will be reviewed.



## **CHAPTER TWO: Previous Studies**

To better understand the Emirati secondary male students grammatical errors in writing English essays, it is helpful to examine the literature in the following areas: the causes and sources of errors, error analysis and patterns of errors.

### **2.1. Causes and Sources of Errors**

A lot of causes and sources of errors have been introduced by some theorists. In the following section the primary causes of errors will be reviewed: Interlingual errors and intralingual errors. Interlingual errors are those which are related to the native language (NL). That's to say there are interlingual errors when the learners' NL habits (patterns, systems or rules) interfere or prevent them, to some degree, from acquiring the patterns and rules of the second language(SL) (Corder, 1971). Interference (negative transfer) is the negative influence of the mother tongue language (MTL) on the performance of the target language (TL) learner (Lado, 1964).

Intralingual errors are those due to the language being learned, independent of the native language. According to Richards (1971) they are items produced by the learner which reflect not the structure of the mother tongue, but generalizations based on partial exposure to the target language. The learner, in this case, tries to “derive the rules behind the data to which he/she has been exposed, and may develop hypotheses that correspond neither to the mother tongue nor to the target language” (Richards, 1974, p. 6). In other words, they produce deviant or ill-formed sentences by erroneously applying their knowledge of TL rules and structures to new situations. In 1974, Selinker (in Richards, 1974, p. 37) reported five sources of errors:

1. Language transfer.
2. Transfer of training.
3. Strategies of second language learning.
4. Strategies of second language communication.
5. Overgeneralization of TL linguistic material.

In 1974 Corder (in Allen & Corder, p. 130) identified three sources of errors: Language Transfer, Overgeneralization or analogy, & Methods or Materials used in the Teaching (teaching-induced error). In the paper titled "The Study of Learner English" that Richards and Simpson wrote in 1974, they displayed seven sources of errors:

1. Language transfer, to which one third of the deviant sentences from second language learners could be attributed (George, 1971).
2. Intralingual interference: In 1970, Richards exposed four types and causes for intralingual errors:
  - a. Overgeneralization (p. 174): it is associated with redundancy reduction. It covers instances where the learner creates a deviant structure based on his experience of other structures in the target language. It may be the result of the learner reducing his linguistic burden.
  - b. Ignorance of rule restrictions: i.e. applying rules to contexts to which they do not apply.
  - c. Incomplete application of rules.
  - d. Semantic errors such as building false concepts/systems: i.e. faulty comprehension of distinctions in the Target language (TL).
3. Sociolinguistic situation: motivation (instrumental or integrative) and settings for language learning (compound or co-ordinate bilingualism) may affect second language learning.
4. Modality: modality of exposure to the TL and modality of production.
5. Age: learning capacities vary with age.
6. Successions of approximative systems: since the cases of language learning vary from a person to another, and so does the acquisition of new lexical, phonological, and syntactic items.
7. Universal hierarchy of difficulty: This factor has received little interest in the literature of 2<sup>nd</sup> language acquisition. It is related to the inherent difficulty for man of certain phonological, syntactic, or semantic items or structures. Some forms may be inherently difficult to learn no matter what the background of the learner is. Krashen (1982) suggested that the acquisition of grammatical structures follows a 'natural order' which is predictable. For a given language, some grammatical

structures tend to be acquired early while others late. This order seemed to be independent of the learners' age, L1 background, and conditions of exposure.

James (1998, p. 178) exposed three main diagnosis-based categories of error:

1. Interlingual: interference happens when “an item or structure in the second language manifests some degree of difference from and some degree of similarity with the equivalent item or structure in the learner’s first language” (Jackson, 1981 101).

2. Intralingual:

a. Learning strategy-based errors:

- i. False analogy
- ii. Misanalysis
- iii. Incomplete rule application
- iv. Exploiting redundancy
- v. Overlooking co-occurrence restrictions
- vi. Hypercorrection (monitor overuse)
- vii. Overgeneralization or system simplification

b. Communication strategy-based errors:

- i. Holistic strategies: e.g. approximation and language switch
- ii. Analytic strategies: circumlocution (expressing the concept indirectly, by allusion rather than by direct reference).

3. Induced errors: they “result more from the classroom situation than from either the student’s incomplete competence in English grammar (intralingual errors) or first language interference (interlingual errors)

- a. Material induced errors
- b. Teacher-talk induced errors
- c. Exercise-based induced errors
- d. Errors induced by pedagogical priorities
- e. Look-up errors

Language transfer is another important cognitive factor related to writing error. Transfer is defined as the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously acquired (Odlin, 1989). The study of transfer involves the study of errors (negative transfer), facilitation (positive transfer), avoidance of target language forms, and their over-use (Ellis, 1994). Behaviorist accounts claim that transfer is the cause of errors, whereas from a cognitive perspective, transfer is seen as a resource that the learner actively draws upon in interlanguage development (Selinker, 1972).

Despite the fact that L1 transfer is no longer viewed as the only predictor or cause of error at the structural level, a writer's first language plays a complex and significant role in L2 acquisition. For example, when learners write under pressure, they may call upon systematic resources from their native language for the achievement and synthesis of meaning (Widdowson, 1990). Research has also shown that language learners sometimes use their native language when generating ideas and attending to details (Friedlander, 1990). In addition, contrastive studies, which have focused on characteristics of L1 languages and cultures, have helped us predict rhetorical error in writing. These studies have been valuable in our understanding of L2 writing development. However, many feel that these studies have also led to reductive, essentializing generalizations about ways of writing and cultural stereotypes about students from certain linguistic backgrounds (Fox, 1994; Leki, 1997; Spack, 1997). As a result, erroneous predictions about students' learning based on their L1 language and culture have occurred regardless of social factors, such as "the contexts, and purpose of their learning to write, or their age, race, class, gender, education, and prior experience" (Raimes, 1998, p. 143).

J. Kerr (1970) based his study on the common errors in written English made by a group of Greek learners of English as a foreign language. It was found that the causes of mistakes were: 1. Ignorance of the words or constructions to express an idea; 2. Carelessness; 3. The influence of the mother – tongue; 4. Mistakes arising from making false analogies with other elements of the foreign language.

On the other hand, Ntumngia (1974) conducted research on error analysis of Francophone Cameroonian secondary school students. The purpose of this study was to identify and analyze the errors of these students with the hope that this identification and analysis would result in implications for instructional strategies used by teachers of English. The result of the study showed that the sources of errors committed by the students were due to both interlingual and intralingual factors. For instance, the writing problems experienced by Spanish speakers living in the United States may be due to a multiplicity of factors, including the effects of transfer and interference from the Spanish language, and cultural norms (Plata, 1995). First of all, learners may translate from L1, or they may try out what they assume is a legitimate structure of the target language, although hindered by insufficient knowledge of correct usage. In the learning process, they often experience native language interference from developmental stages of interlanguage or from nonstandard elements in spoken dialects (a common occurrence in students writing in their native language as well). They also tend to over-generalize the rules for stylistic features when acquiring new discourse structures. In addition, learners are often not certain of what they want to express, which would cause them to make errors in any language.

Finally, writers in L2 might lack familiarity with new rhetorical structures and the organization of ideas (Carson, 2001; Connor & Kaplan, 1987; Kutz, Groden, & Zamel, 1993; Raimes, 1987). L2 writing relates closely to native-language literacy and particular instructional contexts. Students may not be acquainted with English rhetoric, which can lead to writing that appears off topic or incoherent to many learners of English as a foreign language. The studies relating to the process of language transfer and overgeneralization received considerable attention in the literature. Swan and Smith (1995, p. ix) gave a detailed account of errors made by speakers of nineteen different L1 backgrounds in relation to their native languages.

Diab (1996) also conducted a study in order to show through error analysis the interference of the mother-tongue, Arabic, in the English writings of EFL students at the American University of Beirut. Okuma (1999) studied the L1 transfer in the

EFL writings of Japanese students. Work on over-generalization errors, on the other hand, is reported by Richards (1974, pp. 172-188), Jain (in Richards, 1974, pp. 208-214) and Taylor (1975). Furthermore, Farooq (1998) identified and analyzed two error patterns in written texts of upper-basic Japanese learners, in an EFL context. He focused on both transfer and overgeneralization errors. Habbash (1982) studied common errors in the use of English prepositions in the written work of students at the end of the preparatory cycle in the Jerusalem area and found out that more errors were attributable to interference from Arabic than to other learning problems. She indicated that students always resort to literal translation before they form English patterns. In other words, they translate the English into Arabic and then the Arabic back into English, word for word (not phrase by phrase). Finally it is clear from this brief discussion that the learner brings with him one source of error: his mother tongue. Even more importantly, the learning process itself is the source of other errors.

## **2.2. Error Analysis**

Error analysis is an essential source of information to teachers. It provides information on students' errors which in turn helps teachers to correct students' errors and also improves the effectiveness of their teaching. The study of errors by themselves would have been misleading, but in contrast to the number of correct responses gives a good picture of which items are being mastered and which are not. This study hopes to enlighten teachers on the grammatical errors that require remedial work so that time is not wasted on teaching grammar items or any other linguistic features which pose little or no problems to the majority of the students in relation to writing compositions.

The definition of error analysis by Corder (1974) is very close to the Malaysian context: "What has come to be known as error analysis has to do with the investigation of the language of second language learners." In line with the emphasis on examinations in the Malaysian education system, Lim (1976), stated: "One of the main aims of error analysis is to help teachers assess more accurately what remedial work would be necessary for English as a Second Language (ESL)

students preparing for an English Language test, so as to help these students avoid the most common errors."

Error analysis is a type of linguistic analysis that focuses on the errors learners make. It consists of a comparison between the errors made in the Target Language (TL) and that TL itself. Pit Corder is the "Father" of Error Analysis (the EA with the "new look"). It was with his article entitled "The significance of Learner Errors" (1967) that EA took a new turn. Errors used to be "flaws" that needed to be eradicated. Corder presented a completely different point of view. He contended that those errors are "important in and of themselves." For learners themselves, errors are 'indispensable,' since the making of errors can be regarded as a device the learner uses in order to learn.

Hence, I have decided to conduct an error analysis, the best tool for describing and explaining errors made by speakers of other languages (Johanson, 1975) in order to know the sources of these errors and the reasons behind their continuous occurrence year after year with different groups of learners.

We find studies such as Richards's "A non-contrastive approach to error analysis" (1971), where he identifies sources of competence errors; L1 transfer results in interference errors; incorrect (incomplete or over-generalized) application of language rules results in intralingual errors; construction of faulty hypotheses in L2 results in developmental errors. Not all researchers have agreed with the above distinction, such as Dulay and Burt (1974) who proposed the following three categories of errors: developmental, interference and unique. Stenson (1974) proposed another category, that of induced errors, which result from incorrect instruction of the language. In addition to studies focusing on error categorization and analysis, various studies concentrated on these three different areas. In other words, research was conducted not only in order to understand errors per se, but also in order to use what is learned from error analysis and apply it to improve language competence. Such studies include Kroll and Schafer's "Error-Analysis and the Teaching of Composition", where the authors demonstrate how error analysis can be used to improve writing skills. They analyze possible sources of

error in non-native-English writers, and attempt to provide a process approach to writing where the error analysis can help achieve better writing skills.

### **2.2.1. Models for Error Analysis**

Corder (1967 & 1974) identified a model for error analysis which included three stages:

1. Data collection: Recognition of idiosyncrasy.
2. Description: Accounting for idiosyncratic dialect.
3. Explanation (the ultimate object of error analysis).

Brown (1994, pp. 207-211) and Ellis (1995, pp. 51-52) elaborated on this model. Ellis (1997, pp. 15-20) and Hubbard et al. (1996, pp. 135-141) gave practical advice and provided clear examples of how to identify and analyze learners' errors. The initial step requires the selection of a corpus of language followed by the identification of errors. The errors are then classified. The next step, after giving a grammatical analysis of each error, demands an explanation of different types of errors. Moreover, Gass & Selinker (1994, p. 67) identified 6 steps followed in conducting an error analysis: Collecting data, Identifying errors, Classifying errors, Quantifying errors, Analyzing source of error, and Remediating for errors.

*Systematically analyzing errors made by language learners makes it possible to determine areas that need reinforcement in teaching (Corder, 1974).*

While Sridhar, (1980 :222) considered the following steps for error analysis:

1. Collection of data (either from a 'free' composition by students on a given theme or from examination answers).
2. Identification of errors (labelling with varying degree of precision depending on the linguistic sophistication brought to bear upon the task, with respect to the exact nature of the deviation, e.g. dangling preposition, anomalous sequence of tenses, etc.).
3. Classification into error types (e.g. errors of agreement, articles, verb forms, etc.);
4. Statement of relative frequency of error types.



5. Identification of the areas of difficulty in the target language.
6. Therapy (remedial drills, lessons, etc.).

In fact, there has been little research on errors in written English compared with the studies that have concentrated on reading and phonology even within the limited field of error analysis. Ultimately, the use of error analysis and appropriate corrective techniques can aid effective teaching and learning of the English language. It is very essential in this connection to go through some literature conducted in the field of analysis of students' errors in writing.

In reviewing many studies written on this field it has been found out that most students commit many different types of errors in writing English compositions. Bataineh (2005) conducted a research on errors on using indefinite articles made by third secondary students. She found out that secondary students committed nine types of errors, and their frequency computed and then compared across the three levels. The analysis revealed that all errors, except one, are independent of the learners' native language.

In another study done on 80 students at a Jordanian University with an average of 11 years' instruction behind them, in two different studies, Mukkatesh (1981) explored the errors in the production of *wh*-questions by Arab-speaking students. He found that approximately 25% of students' errors involved a failure to invert the subject and verb or auxiliary. The author notes that while this could be a sign of L1 influence, it has also been reported to be characteristic of first language learners and second language learners from other linguistic backgrounds. Students also frequently omitted *do* in questions formed from sentences in which there was not an auxiliary. Again, this result could be attributed to L1 influence or interlanguage. Students were found to use *do* or *be* incorrectly instead of other auxiliaries, which can only be attributed to interlanguage. The author concludes that error analysis is a method which cannot differentiate in many cases between possible sources of error. On the other hand, Habash (1982), studied common errors in the use of English prepositions in the written work of preparatory students in the Jerusalem area and found out that more errors were attributable to interference from Arabic than to other learning problems.

Khuwaileh and Al Shoumali (2000) conducted a similar study to investigate the Jordanian students' writing errors and they found that tense errors are the most frequent ones committed by Arab learners. This thing might happen because Arabic has three tenses only. Lin (2002) examined 26 essays from Taiwanese EFL students at the college level. The results of this study indicated that the four highest error frequencies were sentence structures (30.43 %), wrong verb forms (21.01%), sentence fragments (15.94%), and wrong use of words (15.94%), respectively. Also, to discover learning deficiencies in writing English, Kao (1999) scrutinized 169 compositions from 53 Taiwanese college students who were English major students. Twenty-two of them came from Soochow University and 31 were from Fu Hsing Kang College. A total of 928 errors were found, among which grammatical errors occurred with the greatest frequency, 66%, Semantic errors occurred 18% of the time, and Lexical errors occurred with the least frequency, 16%.

Ying (1987) examined 120 Taiwanese EFL learners' compositions and sorted errors on the basis of three criteria: overgeneralization, simplification, and language transfer. A total of 1,250 errors were detected in the 120 compositions, among which 78.9% of the errors were a result of language transfer, 13.6% were overgeneralization of the target language, and 7.5% were forms of simplification.

The results in Tadros, (1983) study indicated that some errors made by Sudanese students are caused by the interference from the learners' L1. Chuo (2001) agreed that the use of L1 requires language teachers to explain abstract and complicated grammar structures. To help beginning EFL learners better understand English grammar, contrastive analysis that compares the Mandarin and English languages was used in this study to facilitate grammatical explanation as well as to clarify the linguistic differences between Mandarin and English. The steps for contrastive analysis involve selection and comparability (Sridhar, 1975). Instead of overall comparison between Mandarin and English, the researcher contrasted these two languages on the core elements of speech, including verbs, nouns and articles, On the other hand, James Handrickson (1979) made an experiment in error analysis and error correction at Ohio State University on adult intermediate ESL

learners. It was found that most communicative errors resulted from inadequate lexical knowledge, misuse of prepositions and pronouns or seriously misspelled lexical items. Most linguistic errors were caused by inappropriate lexical choice, lack of subject- verb agreement, misuse and omission of prepositions, faulty word order or misspelled words.

The Henning (1978) study is consistent with Handrickson when he analyzed developmental error patterns in adult Iranian learners of English as a foreign language. It was found that simple prepositions were incorrectly used very frequently. The conclusion reached was that mastery in the usage of English prepositions according to their meanings is one of the most sensitive indicators of the degree of English proficiency' (Henning, 1978: pp. 396-397).

Obeidat, H. A. (1986) study was similar to that of Mukattash, L. (1981) in investigating the syntactic and semantic errors in the written composition of Arab EFL learners. It was found that students in both studies made interlingual errors in determiners and preposition usage, retaining resumptive pronouns in relative clauses, word order, missing subjects and copula, and verb and preposition idioms. Students were also found to make interlingual errors in proverbs and idioms, prefabricated expressions, and forms of address. Evidence of lexical interference was also found. Intralingual errors were found in relative pronoun and wh-questions, subject-verb agreement, verb forms, copula, auxiliary, tense usage, and word choice. The author asserts that some error such as copula and third person singular -s deletion are evidence of universal grammar.

Analyzing the errors made by Taiwanese EFL college students, Chen (1998) reported that most Taiwanese students have difficulties in the use of English tenses due to the absence of verb conjugation in Mandarin. Since Mandarin is not an inflected language, Fang (1999) highlighted the teaching of English verb tenses to prevent Taiwanese EFL students from misusing English tenses due to the linguistic difference. Another grammatical error that is frequently found in Taiwanese EFL students' compositions is the misuse of English articles. Chen (2000) considered that English articles could be one of the most difficult

grammatical parts for Taiwanese EFL students as there is not an equivalent syntactical device to the English article system.

The influence of L1 on L2 was also examined by Lakkis and Malak (2000) who concentrated on the transfer of Arabic prepositional knowledge to English by Arab students. Both positive and negative transfer were examined in order to help teachers identify problematic areas for Arab students and help them understand where transfer should be encouraged or avoided. In particular, they concluded that "an instructor of English, whose native language is Arabic, can use the students' L1 for structures that use equivalent prepositions in both languages. On the other hand, whenever there are verbs or expressions in the L1 and L2 that have different structures, that take prepositions, or that have no equivalent in one of the languages, instructors should point out these differences to their students".

Generally, most studies conducted in the fields of causes and sources of errors and error analysis generated a conclusion that mother tongue interference is the main factor that is responsible for the cause of errors in students' writings. Furthermore, research done on error analysis among Arab and non-Arab students revealed that approximately the most common types of errors are all similar, they are focused on grammatical errors such as the wrong use of prepositions, verb tense, articles and subject-verb agreement.

## **CHAPTER THREE: Methodology**

### **3.1. Participants**

The population of the study consisted of 115 students who were in their third year of secondary education, aged between 17 to 18 years. They were selected from five leading state secondary schools in the Eastern Coast of the UAE; namely from Fujairah, Khorfakkan and Kalba. About 23 students represented each school. All the participants were male students chosen randomly from the science stream because science students are expected to write in more detail than arts students whose writing skill ability is limited. The participating students have been studying English as a school subject for more than 12 years and the number of English periods taught per week is six and the duration of each period is 45 minutes. Their native language is Arabic, but English, the Target language, is being taught as a Foreign Language (FL). Moreover, 20 teachers who teach different secondary stages participated in a questionnaire and 5 supervisors of English from Sharjah and Fujairah Educational Offices were interviewed to shed light more on the students' writing skill.

### **3.2. Instruments**

The current study employs a mixed method design which includes both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Such a method integrates both approaches to provide a much more detailed and comprehensive picture of that which is being investigated. In this study the qualitative data (interview) was conducted after the quantitative data collection to foster understanding and interpretation of the results.

For the purpose of obtaining data that will explore teachers' and students' attitudes toward the English writing skills and identify the most common grammatical errors in students essays, the researcher conducted this study by using the following tools for data collection:

1- Two questionnaires, one for the students and the other for the teachers of English. The first one was devised by the researcher (see appendix1). It was

intended to explore the students' attitudes towards the writing skill and it comprises 8 statements tailored according to their occurrence in terms of time of frequency ranging from never to always. The items of the questionnaire were translated into Arabic by the researcher to prevent any interference due to misunderstandings in L2. The questionnaire was given to the same group of students who participated in the writing process. On the other hand, the second questionnaire was adapted from Korbel, M. (2001). It was designed to explore teachers' views and attitudes in teaching the writing skill. (See appendix 2)

2- Semi structured interviews with 5 supervisors of English to obtain qualitative data regarding students writing skills (See appendix 3) .

3- Samples: The corpus on which this study is based includes 115 essays of which 10 essays were excluded due to incomprehensibility and illegibility. 105 essays were targeted of approximately 120 to 200 words each, written in classes in five secondary state schools. The purpose of collecting the samples was to analyse the most common grammatical errors made by third secondary students in the Eastern Coast of the UAE.

### **3.3. Procedures**

At the initial stage of data collection, permission was sought from the teachers of the targeted classes in the five secondary schools involved to allow 15 minutes of the whole class' time to respond to the questionnaire distributed to the students. The teachers were cooperative and wiling to participate in accomplishing this study. At the same time another questionnaire exploring teachers' attitudes and beliefs toward their students' writing was being given to the teachers of English who were asked to submit it the next day. All the teachers in the targeted classes have been teaching English for more than ten years, that is to say they have enough expertise in dealing with composition strategies.

A week after collecting and analyzing the data of the two questionnaires, permission was gained from the school principals and teachers of English to allow for a writing activity. Both teachers and students were told about the aim of this activity which was to analyse the students grammatical errors in essay writing.

The students were provided with the topic 'The Danger of Smoking to Health' and were asked to write on it in 120 to 200 words. They were also given sufficient time to write (Ellis 1997-a: 114). Data were analysed following Sridhar, (1980) approach to conducting error analysis. The compositions were all written in 50-minute class sessions. This study was undertaken, through error analysis, to investigate the grammatical errors third secondary students in the Eastern Coast of the UAE made in their EFL writings. The researcher developed, based on the literature (Corder, 1974; Richards, 1974; James, 1998; Selinker, 1972 in Richards, 1974; Richards & Sampson, 1974), a *Taxonomy for Error Analysis* including **grammatical errors: passive verb tense and form, subject-verb agreement, word order, prepositions, articles, plurality and auxiliaries** (See appendix 4).

### **3.4. Limitations**

As mentioned previously the purpose of this study is to analyse the types of grammatical errors committed by third secondary students in the Eastern Coast of the UAE. At the beginning, the students were told about the purpose of the writing. The researcher asked the colleagues who supervised the writing essay task in their targeted schools to help in identifying and classifying the errors. They were given a classification table in advance (see appendix 4) to count the number of grammatical errors and it took a lot of time for the teachers to do the task. The researcher had also to revise the number of errors in each essay for accuracy then the frequencies of errors were counted and tabulated. The second limitation is the limited number of the participants that might not enhance the generalizability of the findings. This study dealt with a limited number of students and linguistic aspects involved in writing due to the limitations of space and time.

Thirdly, since this study was conducted on secondary students in the UAE state schools whose writing competencies might be different from those in private schools, it should be noticed that the findings might not be applicable in private school context. Future research is needed to shed more light on other aspects of the writing skill such as style, coherence and cohesion. Furthermore research is also needed to conduct more studies on private schools.

## CHAPTER FOUR: Data Analysis and Discussion

As mentioned before, the aim of this study is to analyse the grammatical errors 3<sup>rd</sup> secondary Emirati male students make in their writing essays.

The results of this study have shown that the UAE secondary stage students make a lot of different types of writing errors in general and grammatical errors in particular. It can be noticed that the findings of this study are in line with the results of many related studies conducted in the Arab World (Diab, 1996, Farooq, 1998, Habbash, 1982, Bataineh, 2005, Mukkatesh, 1981, Al Shoumali, 2000). It is clear from this brief discussion that the Arab learners commit many errors in English writing essays and the sources of these errors can be interlingual and intralingual ones. The most sensible source of action, with present knowledge, for the teacher is to reject the extreme position-on the one hand that errors are wrong and must be avoided at all costs by very carefully controlled drilling; on the other hand that incorrect forms are necessary, even vital, and so should be actively planned into the teaching process-and attempt to blend the best features from both approaches into the teacher's error correction.

In respect of the most common types of errors in students writing, the findings of this study lend much support to the related the first research question (*the incomprehensibility of grammar rules have negative effect on student writing.*). It was revealed that grammar was the most common type of errors.

The results of this study are different from Khuwaileh and Al Shoumali (2000) who conducted a study to investigate the Jordanian students' writing errors and they found that tense errors are the most frequent ones committed by Arab learners while agreement error was found to be the most frequent errors in this study. Although the results of the study indicated the majority of the UAE students are still making a lot of grammatical errors, to some extent, some writings were found well organized and had fewer errors.

The target language and its closeness to L1 play a role in promoting language transfer, but several other factors also influence transfer. Kellerman (Gass and



Selinker 1983) regards the learners' perceptions of the nature of L2 as a variable involved in language transfer. This transfer depends on the perceived distance between L1 and L2, which constantly changes for learners as they acquire more of the target language.

Olshtain (Gass and Selinker 1983) states that the learners' perceptions play a role in language transfer, and that perception of language universality increases the likelihood of transfer. Finally, Postman (Ellis 1965) believes practice is a factor in producing negative or positive transfer. Increasing practice on the original task increases positive transfer, and with little practice, negative transfer occurs.

#### **4.1. Error Identification and Categorization**

In order to analyze the types of various grammatical errors in students' essays, the errors were identified and categorized into different error types by two raters who were English grammar experts. Both raters received training from the researcher, following an expert validated guide for error analysis, and corrected 105 writing samples that served as a pilot study and then reviewed by the researcher. The researcher used their completed score sheets to calculate errors. According to Huang (2002), absolute frequencies refer to the actual occurrence of errors, expressed by natural numbers. The errors were counted and rated in percentage of frequency. They were divided into two groups; interlingual errors and intralingual errors. A total of 1175 errors were counted in this study (See tables 2 and 3 p. 44, 45). Since the error analysis used in this study focused especially on grammatical errors regardless of other writing skills, such as idea expression, organization, and cohesion, the essay scoring involved error frequency counts for grammatical errors only.

## 4.2. Error Analysis in Student Writings

The main objective of this study is to analyse students' grammatical errors and to investigate the reasons behind their frequent occurrence and find a remedy to minimize committing such errors. In the following section, examples of students' grammatical errors were collected for the purpose of analysis.

### 4.2.1. Grammatical Errors

It is undeniable fact that an understanding of a language grammar is essential and as it is said vocabulary is the flesh of the language and grammar is the skeleton. However, most Arab learners of English as a foreign language view the study of grammar as boring and there are frequent outcries about the difficulty of structures among the students (Qashao, 2006). English grammatical rules are intricate and the UAE secondary school students are weary of taking grammar classes with rote memorization and drills which they find both boring and difficult to understand or appreciate. One of the misconceptions among the UAE students is the belief that without mastering most English grammatical rules they will not be able to communicate in English.

Examples of the grammatical types of errors all drawn directly from essays in the research corpus are given below and underlined along with the correct word or form immediately following each example: (See also appendix 6)

#### 4.2.1.1 Passive Voice

There is the possibility that the type of compositions written by the students did not require the use of the passive voice. But what does show from the analysis of the errors of those who used the passive voice is that the percentage of errors is (6%). The number of the total errors found was 65.

Example of errors in the use of the Passive Voice:

\* *Smoking can be caused many serious diseases. (can cause)*

In this example, it can be said the student confuses between active voice and passive voice. This might be due to the lack of sufficient training and drills on this rule which lead to overgeneralization of the rule.

\* It can been said that smoking is bad. (*can be said*)

The misuse of verb to be is peculiar in this example since this verb does not exist in the Arabic language. This type of error may be due to intralingual transfer.

\* The habit which called smoking ..... (is called )

In this example the student tried to over-generalize the rule as there is no verb to be in the Arabic language. According to Richards (1971), the errors mentioned above could derive from “faulty comprehension of distinctions in the target language.” He added that these were sometimes due to poor gradation of teaching items whereby the form was may be “interpreted as a marker of the past tense.” This developmental error termed as false concepts hypothesized is a common occurrence among Arab learners.

#### **4.2.1.2. Verb Tense and Form**

High error rates in this study occurred within the error category of verbs, with 250 errors, an error rate of 21% (Table 1.p 38). This finding may explain that the use of English verbs was a major learning difficulty for all Arab students. The use of verb tense shows that the Emirati students still find a difficulty when and how to use the tense and the form of the verb. The tenses most commonly misused were the simple past tense, future tense, past perfect and present simple. It can be justified by the incomprehensibility of the correct form and use and usage of the verb. 28 students who participated in answering the questionnaire (See appendix 1) mentioned in the one hand that the incomprehensibility of grammar rules is always responsible for their difficulty in the English writing skill and this provides a positive answer to the first research question. Moreover, the 14 tenses in English are considered one of the most difficult structural points facing the Arab students learning English. This thing might happen because Arabic has three tenses only. Misuse of simple and present simple.

\* Some people said that they smoking ..... (say.....*smoke* )

In this example, the student has confused between the use of simple past and simple present. There is a kind of language interference. In Arabic, time sequence in a sentence doesn't matter so much.

\*People smoke because they think that they will be relaxed. (*relax*)

In this example the student doesn't understand the right form of the future tense, so instead of adding the infinitive form of the verb, he inserted unnecessary verb *to be* and the past participle. There is also confusion between active and passive voice.

\* Many people didn't smoked. (smoke)

The student over-generalized the use of negative past tense, instead of adding the infinitive form after didn't, he transferred the past meaning. This could be traced to the fact that the Arabic tense system, in general, is rather simple and straightforward regarding the concept of time

\* you will loosing your life ..... (lose)

In this example the student tried to express futurity by using "will" but he formed the tense in a wrong way, instead of using infinitive after will, he added the -ing. This finding echoes Chen's (1998) assertion that most Arab EFL students have difficulties in the use of English verbs due to the absence of verb conjugation in Arabic. Many studies conducted in this field indicated that tense errors are the most frequent ones among secondary students in Khuwaileh's & Shoumali's (2000) studies and Chen's (1998).

#### **4.2.1.3. Subject-Verb Agreement**

The most common type of error made by students in the study group is subject-verb agreement. In this case the subject and the verb phrase in the English sentence should agree in number and person. This was the area with the highest sampling with a total of 268 attempts. It is evident that this item had the highest percentage of errors (22%) in this study. Although the students still make errors, they do lack a basic understanding of subject-verb agreement.

Examples of errors in Subject-Verb Agreement:

a. plural subject does not agree with singular verb:

\* The people thinks those smoke cigarettes are adult. (think)

\* Although many people knows about smoking dangerous. (know)

b. singular subject does not agree with plural verb:

\* It encourage smokers to smoke. (encourages)

\* The cigarette company have the major roles (has)

\* The more dangerous results is gum infection ..... (are)

In Arabic, the subject must agree with the verb that follows, that is to say if the subject is masculine, the verb should respond to it and the same applies to the feminine. A possible explanation why students tend to add –s after plural, and omit –s after singular may be due to overgeneralization of the rule. Students overgeneralize the plural by adding the plural –s to the verb that follows and omit the –s in the verb if the subject is singular. Most Arab students confuse between the third person singular (–s) and the plural (-s). They tend to add --s to the verb if the subject is plural and omit –s if the subject is singular. Handrickson (1979) in his study found out that the most common errors resulted from subject-verb agreement.

#### **4.2.1.4. Word Order**

Once again, there is evidence and counter evidence of transfer in studies related to word order. Studies have focused on whether, for example, **SVO L1s** carry this pattern over into the **L2**. It is the fourth highest error occurrence in the participants' papers of this study (120 errors of which 50 interlingual and 70 intralingual errors and both rate 10%), were primarily based on the intralingual transfer. The following are examples:

- \* Smoking is a habit bad.                   ( *a bad habit*)
- \* How we can stop smoking?           ( *can we* )

The first example shows that the student uses his mother tongue in producing the sentence since in Arabic the adjective follows the noun while in English the adjective precedes the noun. Thus error in word order occurred. In the second example, the student's overgeneralization in forming the right question in English has made him to commit such an error due to the incomprehensibility of the question word order. In the above two examples, interlingual transfer and intralingual transfer inhibited the students to produce correctly ordered sentences.

#### 4.2.1.5. Prepositions

Errors in the use of prepositions were ranked third after verb tense; they constitute 18% of the total rate of errors. Most of these (167) errors were caused by interference from Arabic. The most closely related studies have emphasized the difficulty of English prepositions for Arab learners. In Scott's study preposition errors ranked second only to verbs, although in Mukattash's (1981) found out that they ranked fourth among general grammatical errors. They are, therefore, a particular area of difficulty for Arab learners, mainly because of mother tongue interference (117) rate 25% of the total interlingual errors.

The following are examples of wrong choice of prepositions:

- 1- .... To help smokers quit smoking, go to a walk.... (for)
- 2- Diseases can be caused of smoking. (by)
- 3- Many people die from smoking. (of)
- 4- run everyday in the sea. (by)

When we compare the prepositional uses in Arabic and English, we find prepositions in English that have equivalents in Arabic and others that do not. There are structures that are equivalent in both languages and others that are not likewise. Another possible explanation for the occurrence of the errors above is ignorance of rule restrictions. Emirati learners tend to make analogy of what they have learnt and apply it in new situations. Lakkis and Malak(2000) agree with Henning(1978) and with this study that simple prepositions were incorrectly used very frequently by Arab learners of English due to the transfer of Arabic prepositional knowledge to English.

#### 4.2.1.6. Articles

One of the most difficult structural elements for EFL learners is the English article system (definite & indefinite). Surprisingly, the English articles *a (n)*, *zero*, and *the* are quite difficult to acquire not only for ESL/EFL learners but also for children learning English as a first language. Articles are believed to be a source of difficulty for learners and teachers of English as a second/foreign language, especially for those whose native languages do not have articles or do have articles or article-like morphemes which are used in ways that differ from English articles (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman, 1999)

In this study, article use is another frequent problem in students texts. The total number of errors counted in articles is 110. They constitute 10% of the total rate of errors.

#### Examples of errors in the use of articles

- a. redundant use of the article "the" and the absence of indefinite article "a":
  - \* the smoking is bad habit. (zero article). Smoking is a bad habit.
- b. misuse of the article "a" before words with vowel sounds:
  - \* if you smoke cigarettes, it cost you a expensive money. ( an expensive)
- c. omission of articles:
  - \* ..one of major problems... . ( the major problems )
  - \* the smoking is one of bad habit..... ( the bad) or possibly (the worst)

The student in example (a) added *the* before the gerund where it is not necessary. And dropped out "a" before bad. This explains the student's incomplete understanding of the rule. In example (b) the student added (a) instead of (an) before a word that begins with a vowel. This again explains over-generalization of the rule. Arabic does not have an equivalent form that goes before the noun. Concerning the deletion of the definite and indefinite articles, some students may not know when to use them and when not (example c). This failure to learn and understand the use of the articles explains the students' excessive use of these articles in other situations. It is quite clear that there is a problem with the students' linguistic competence in this regard. The Arabic language system of the definite and indefinite articles might have a negative effect on the students' wrong use of these articles in the target language, and this really needs to be investigated by researchers.

The Arabic article system is similar to that of **English** in meaning; however, form is highly varied. While the Arabic system manifests a binary distinction between the defined and the undefined, the **English** system exhibits a tripartite distinction. The Arabic defined (marked by the definite article /al/) and the undefined (marked by the absence of /al/) correspond to the **English** defined (marked by the definite article **the**) and the undefined (marked by the indefinite articles **a (n)** and **zero**). It is possible that participants may have forgotten sometimes to use articles due to the interference from their first language and this explains the occurrence of interlingual errors.

#### 4.2.1.7. Plurality

A noun is defined as a word that is used to name any person, animal, thing, idea, state, or quality (Russell, 1993). In this study, the percentage of errors in plurality is relatively low compared to other types of grammatical errors (8%). 90 errors were counted in the texts.

Examples of errors in plurality:

\* Errors involving countable nouns where the **(s)** is left out

a. smoking can cause many disease like cancer... (many diseases)

b. they should do some hobby. (some hobbies)

A possible explanation of dropping **(s)**, students may not realize that determiners such as *some* and *many* require plural nouns and due to the lack of training or incomprehensibility of the rule such errors may occur.

\* Mixing between countable and uncountable nouns

Examples:

\* Many child are smoking now. (children)

\* ...with all this advices .... (pieces of advice)

Arab students in general and Emirati students in particular confuse between regular and irregular plural nouns. They tend to keep the irregular plural as singular when it is plural as the case in example (a). They also incline to add (s) to uncountable as in example (d). A possible explanation for this is that students try to over-generalize the rule where (s) is added to all plurals. Some researchers such as Jain (1974) and Tan (1978) have attributed morphological errors like the above to over-generalization and a simplification strategy on the learners' part. This means that in order to simplify things, learners often sub-categorize certain countable nouns as uncountable nouns and vice versa. Thus, the students' failure to mark plural countable nouns could probably be due to a subconscious learning strategy employed by them to lighten their memory load when managing new English data input. While some respondents are inclined to leave out the (s) morpheme in plural countable nouns, others have an affinity for inserting the (s) morpheme in singular countable nouns as well as uncountable nouns. These errors could be repercussions of constant corrections to mark their plural nouns,



and thus the learners are prompted to insert the s morpheme when they should not and cannot do so.

#### **4.2.1.8. Auxiliaries**

Wrong use of **be, have, do**

- \* *It can been said that smoking is bad .* (be)
- \* *First of all smoking is have a nicotine* ( has)
- \* Non-smokers try don't to sit with (not)
- \* Most people didn't smoke but they smell smoker. (don't)
- \* What does these cigarettes do with those people ( do )

In an attempt to show that events happen and happened, the respondents in this study over-generalized the use of auxiliary verbs and committed the errors above. Thus, instead of “it can be said that smoking is bad” and “... smoking has nicotine ... ,” the learners displayed confusion in the use of English auxiliaries. Indeed, where the auxiliaries (be), (have) and (do) are concerned, Emirati learners have no frame of reference, and therefore there is a possibility that the absence of such auxiliaries in Arabic is indirectly responsible for Emirati learners’ errors.

### **4.3. Strengthening Student Writing Skill**

Why are Emirati students not writing well? The reasons are endless according to Wiener. Less writing is done at home, so the student is not experiencing this skill before coming to school. Students spend numerous hours watching television and playing video games. (Wiener, 1990). Education has also changed. Some schools have adopted a whole language curriculum and little time is allotted for the learning of writing. Learning to write well requires time (Arter, 2000). Students are not given the opportunity to write. With the resurgence of workbooks and worksheets as valuable learning tools, students are only given a small blank to give an answer, which makes it very difficult to write an in depth, creative answer (Lamme, 1987). Insufficient teacher training plays a key role in the problem. According to McAlexander (1993) there are four interrelated reasons for student underachievement in writing:

1. A more universal kind of inexperience among students.
2. Students' lack of interest in reading and writing.
3. The influence of biochemical irregularities.
4. The role of learning abilities.

A review of the literature revealed several solutions to improving the writing skills of the students. These solutions included a positive attitude towards writing, providing multitudes of writing experiences, and developing lessons that will target specific writing weaknesses. All teachers experience student apprehension to write at one time or another (Reeves, 1997). Motivation and success complement one another, according to Burns (1999). Whatever a student does poorly, or believes they do poorly, will be avoided. Thus if students do not think they are good at writing, they will not choose to write, and become less capable because of avoiding the experience. "Poor writers fear making mistakes." (Temple and Gillet , 1990).

A safe place, for students to express themselves through writing, is the first thing teachers need to provide. The classroom should become a "community of authors, a supportive and cooperative relationship among students and teacher that occurs when writers explore possible topics, try out ideas, and struggle together to create."(Burns, Roe, Ross, 1987 p.392). It is also the role of the teacher to supply a supportive atmosphere and topics. Writing experts believe that learning written language is similar to children's acquisition of oral language. It is crucial for the writer to learn by doing, to interact with printed word, and " to explore ideas and the writing process without restriction." (p.70).

Because poor writers do their best to avoid writing, the teacher needs to make writing "so necessary and so ordinary process that the influent writer can't avoid it" (p.297). This includes making it a part of the entire curriculum. Another prevalent belief is that teachers should focus on the mechanics of writing: spelling, punctuation and sentence structure to create good writers. Burns believe that "the teacher who has a wide repertoire of strategies can coordinate and intermingle modes of instruction to teach students to enjoy being authors and produce coherent pieces of writing." (Burns,1999,p.232).

Even if teachers don't feel that they are writing experts, teachers still need to model, according to Graves (1983). Cullinan (1993) and Gunning (1998) also

address the importance of modeling. Modelling demonstrates the commonalities of all writers and helps teachers understand their own writing. Daily writing in a "non-threatening, practice-like atmosphere" (Reeves, 1997, p.60) allows students to comprehend that writing is a process that requires time and practice (Robb, 1994), (Reeves, 1997). "By involving the student in authentic communication situations, they will be taught to value writing as an important communication tool" (Sunflower, 1993.p.7).

Creating a conducive environment and giving varied assignments is not enough. "The greatest writing growth happens when students write frequently, and a writing convention is taught when a specific need for it arises." (Hughes, 1994,p.39). Students are not born with the necessary skills to become good writers. They need to develop them to grow as writers and as learners. Teachers need to demonstrate and discuss these strategies that can help writers break the "blank paper barrier and get started with first drafts" (Robb,1994,p.114).

Mini-lessons on various writing skills give struggling writers more tools and strategies to help them through the process. Lessons need to focus on where the students are as writers. Robb suggests keeping an error list. "Error lists are a treasure box of possible mini-lessons that reflect students' development and experiences of language." (Robb, 1994, p.117). Routman (1996) supports the need for teaching skills but reminds teachers that the skills need to be taught in authentic context. Time must be made daily for students to write because writing takes time. According to Cunningham and Allington , " The opportunity to write daily is especially critical for students who come from homes where they have few opportunities to see other students write or to actually write themselves. " (1999,p.86).

#### **4.4 Supervisors' Perspectives**

In order to get a clearer picture about what causes UAE students to commit many grammatical errors in their English writing essays, recognizing perspectives of supervisors of English is necessary and beneficial. The 5 interviewed supervisors recognized the positive effects teachers can exert on their students' developing writing skills. Some interviewed supervisors put much responsibility on teachers for the decline of their students writing skill. Here is what some of the supervisors

indicated regarding the weakness of the Emirati students in the English writing skill. When the interviewee supervisors were asked: **Why do you think secondary students at state schools in the Eastern Coast suffer from weakness in English writing skill?** (See appendix 3) one supervisor said,

*"It is really a big problem among most students at different stages. I think this is due to many reasons, Lack of vocabulary, lack of motivation, the effect of mother tongue and unavailability of practicing the language are some of the most common reasons."*

**Another supervisor said,**

*"It is an accumulated weakness resulting from previous years. Lack of vocabulary and writing activities are the major reasons."*

Some supervisors blamed the teacher for the weakness of their students English skill.

*To me , the teacher plays a great role in developing the students writing skill. I think the teacher's method in teaching writing can be sometimes blamed for the students weakness in writing. Some teachers are still teaching writing the way they were taught.*

Teaching strategies is responsible for the drawback in students writing as one supervisor said.

*"The way the teacher teaches writing can play a role in developing the student writing skill. Moreover, the writing activities which are given to the students are still not enough to motivate and encourage students to practice the writing skill properly".*

Lack of adequate vocabulary and motivation besides the time allotted to the classroom writing activities were among the most common reasons for students weakness in the English writing skill.

*"The time given to the writing activities inside the class is not enough. Lack of vocabulary and motivation are also among the causes of weakness in writing skill."* said one supervisor.

*"It can be said that both teachers and students are to blame . Some teachers do not adopt new techniques in teaching writing and some students never take matters seriously, as a result weakness in English in general and writing skill in particular can occur"* **said another supervisor.**

From the above findings, the researcher deduced that there are a number of factors that partake in the weakness of the Emirati secondary male students in the English writing skills. These were reflected in the responses of the teachers and students in the questionnaires and the answers of the interviewee supervisors.

## CHAPTER FIVE: Findings and Results

The main purpose of the study was to explore and analyse the grammatical errors in English essays in the UAE secondary state school students and to find out the main reasons behind their continuous occurrence and to find a remedy to minimize committing such types of errors. To illustrate these issues the responses in the two questionnaires of both teachers and students were carefully studied besides the responses of the 5 English supervisors in the interview. The findings and the results of the study will be shown in this chapter. After setting the categories, the researcher chose, based on the literature, the sources of errors that are mainly Interlingual and Intralingual . So, the errors were explained in grammatical terms, and thoroughly examined to find their sources, paying particular attention to L1 transfer, since the researcher needed to address the research question: “Is mother tongue interference the major cause for errors in the English writings of Emirati male students?”

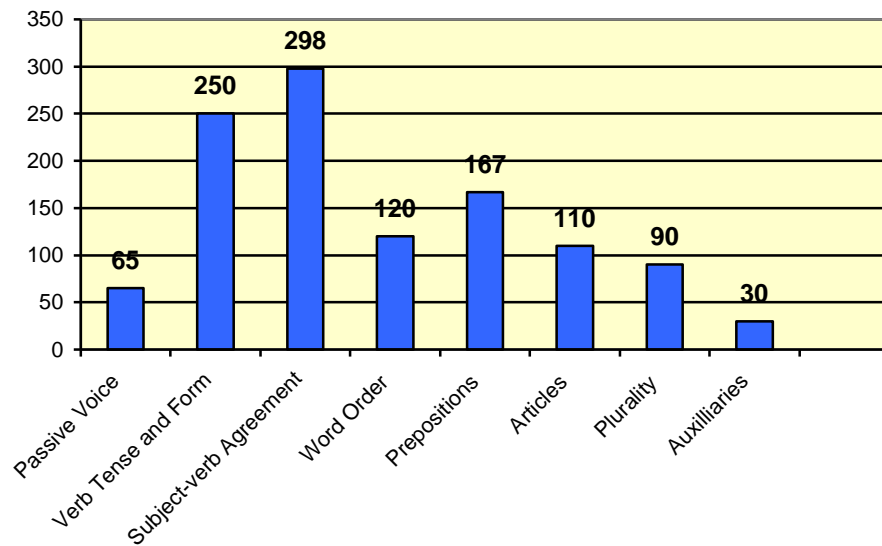
*Table 1: Total of Interlingual and Intralingual Grammar Errors*

No	GRAMMATICAL ERRORS	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Passive Voice	65	6 %
2.	Verb Tense and Form	250	22%
3.	Subject-verb agreement	298	25%
4.	Word Order	120	11%
5.	Prepositions	167	15%
6.	Articles	110	10%
7.	Plurality	90	8%
8.	Auxiliaries	30	3%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	1130	100%

The researcher has detected 1130 interlingual and intralingual grammar errors in free compositions written by 105 Emirati secondary male students (See table 1). These errors were tabulated according to the times of frequency and percentage. The types of grammatical errors that were analysed for this study were limited to 8 types. There were 472 (38%) interlingual grammar errors (See table 2) and 658 (62%) intralingual ones (See table 3). Most of the grammar errors were made in

the area of subject-verb agreement 298 errors (25%) of which 120 were interlingual while 178 were intralingual (27%). The other grammar errors included is passivization; 65 errors were detected rated (6%), tense 250 (22%), word order 120 (11%), prepositions 167 (15%), articles 110 (10%), plurality 90 (8%) and auxiliaries 30 (3%). The result of the study showed that the errors committed by the students were due to both interlingual and intralingual factors. Based on the findings, it was found that the grammar intralingual errors were more frequent than those of interlingual ones ones. This is contrary to many research findings that were investigated in this study and this provides a negative answer to the second research question that mother tongue interference is not the major cause of grammatical errors in Emirati male students English writings.

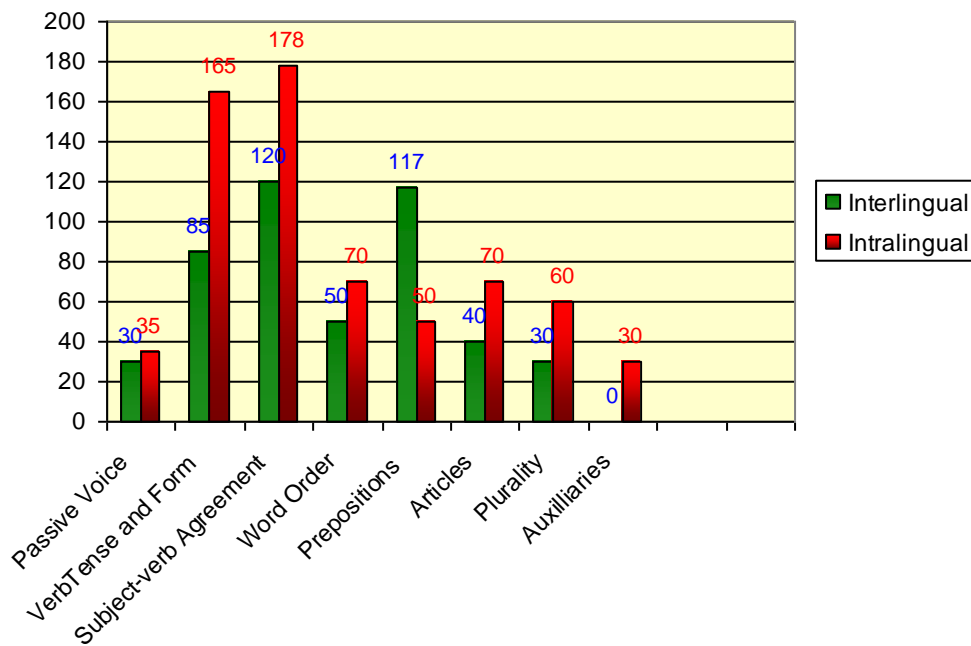
**Graph1. Total of Interlingual and Intralingual Grammatical Errors**



Graph1 shows the frequency of the eight interlingual and intralingual grammatical types of errors found in the students essays. It is clear from the graph that the most common errors found in the essays were "*subject-verb agreement*". The 298 errors related to agreement form the highest percentage among the other types of errors. Next comes "*verb tense and form*" which constitutes (25%) second after subject-verb agreement. Errors in *word order* constitute (11%). A number of errors were found regarding "*plurality*" (90) errors forming (8%). Errors of "*prepositions*" 167 (15%) were classified the third common type. Errors in the use of *articles* were also evident; they formed 110 (10%). Looking at "*passivization*" and "*auxiliaries*" errors , one can see they are the least dominant errors in the students essays.

From the above analysis, it can be deduced that students of third secondary in UAE state schools commit many grammatical errors in their English essay writing due mainly to interlingual and intralingual sources. The results of the study appeals to the first research question claiming that the incomprehensibility of grammar rules has negative effect on students' writing English essays.

**Graph 2. Interlingual versus Intralingual Errors 2:**



Graph 2 shows the number of interlingual vs. intralingual errors for each category. The total number of Interlingual errors was 472 whereas the total number frequency of Intralingual errors was 658. Based on this graph we can tell that the highest percentage of interlingual errors was in *subject-verb agreement*. As for the highest percentage of Intralingual errors, it was, by far, in *subject-verb agreement*, too. Amazingly enough *auxiliaries errors* were found in intralingual transfer whereas no errors were detected in terms of interlingual transfer. Passivization were the least recurrent intralingual grammatical errors after auxiliaries.

## **5.1. Causes of Errors in English Writing**

Based on these findings we can tell that Emirati male students do commit errors because of L1 transfer, however, their biggest number of errors is due to intralingual reasons.

### **5.1.1. Language Transfer**

Selinker (1974: 120) isolates five different strategies adopted by learners in interlanguage building as potential sources of errors, but related to this study, the researcher would like to focus on two types of errors: First, if errors occur as a result of the native language, the process is called "*language transfer*" or interlingual transfer. These errors could systematically be found at the beginning of second language learning. Since the learner is a beginner, he tends to rely on a great deal of transfer from his mother language. Second, if they can be proved to be a result of "a clear overgeneralization of TL rules and semantic features, then we are dealing with the *overgeneralization of TL linguistic material*." These are a case of negative intralingual transfer committed later in the learning process.

#### **5.1.1.1. Interlingual Transfer**

Interlingual transfer (i.e. transfer from the mother tongue or any other previously learned language) in foreign language learning is a major cognitive strategy that learners fall back on when their linguistic means falls short of achieving their communicative ends. Needless to say, the mother tongue is an additional source for hypothesis formation that the first language learner does not have. The



influence of the mother tongue and the pervasiveness of interlingual transfer are indisputable, especially in learning situations where students' exposure to the foreign language is confined to a few hours per week of formal classroom instruction (Mahmoud, 2000). Thus, interlingual transfer is a strategy that is readily available to the learners to compensate for the inadequacies when attempting to communicate in the foreign language. Deviations resulting from interlingual transfer have been recorded at all linguistic levels, Gass and Selinker, (1994), Odlin, (1989).

The total number of interlingual transfer errors found in the essays was 445 which constitutes about 38% of the total number of errors. This indicates that student's native language plays a crucial role in writing the target language. Having a look at interlingual errors (See table 2), we can see that the largest number of errors computed were in *agreement* between the word and the verb that follows (120). Whereas passive voice and plurality have the same number of error frequency (30). There were no errors computed in auxiliaries. Although the use of articles can be viewed as a problem to many secondary Arab students, the findings of this study proves the opposite, about 40 errors in the use of articles found in the essays that forms 9% of total number of interlingual errors. *Verb tense* formed a percent of about 19% while word order formed 11%. The use of prepositions also constitutes a big problem to many Arab students. Errors counted in prepositions were (90) while errors in word order were (50). On the other hand, in students responses in the questionnaire (See appendix 1) the majority of students believe that mother tongue interference is always responsible for their weakness in the writing skill which is inconsistent with the data obtained from the sample essays as developmental errors were found to be the most. Again the answer to the research question number2 can be negative. It is also worth noting that results obtained from this study contradict with the results obtained from a study conducted by Habbash (1982); she indicated that interlingual transfer is responsible for the sources of errors in the writings of the respondents whereas this study proves the opposite where intralingual transfer was the major source of errors.

Table 2. Grammatical Errors Categorization due to Interlingual Transfer

No.	GRAMMATICAL ERRORS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1.	Passive Voice	30	6%
2.	Verb tense and Form	85	18%
3.	Subject-verb Agreement	120	26%
4.	Word Order	50	11%
5.	Prepositions	117	25%
6.	Articles	40	8%
7.	Plurality	30	6%
8.	Auxiliaries	0	0%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 5.1.1.2. Intralingual Transfer

A second source of error frequently identified in learner interlanguage is 'intralingual transfer'. Those due to the language being learned (TL), independent of the native language. They are "items produced by the learner which reflect not the structure of the mother tongue, but generalizations based on partial exposure to the target language. The learner, in this case, tries to "derive the rules behind the data to which he/she has been exposed, and may develop hypotheses that correspond neither to the mother tongue nor to the target language" (Richards, 1971, p. 6). ' Such errors may be caused by the influence of one target language item upon another. Brown (1994: 225) cites research suggesting that the early stages of language learning are characterized by a predominance of interference (interlingual transfer), but once learners have begun to acquire parts of a new system, more and more intralingual transfer – generalization within the target language – is manifested. The total number of intralingual transfer errors found in the essays was 658 which constitutes about 62% of the total number of errors (See table 3). This indicates that the percentage in the number of errors found in students essays due to intralingual errors is higher than interlingual errors. Looking at table 3, the highest frequency of errors in students essays is found in agreement between subject and verb (178) errors. This means that this type of error constitutes a big problem to the Emirati students. In addition, one can tell

that passive voice (35) errors do not cause a difficulty in students writings. Compared to *prepositions (50) errors*, *verb tense (165) errors*, comes next to agreement. *Ordering* and *the use of articles* have the same level of difficulty, (70) errors were found in both types. 30 intralingual errors were found in *auxiliaries* while 60 were found in *plural forms*. The findings of this study is in consistent with a study conducted by Bataineh(2005). Both studies reveal that intralingual transfer is the cause of many grammatical errors in students essays.

To conclude, Emirati secondary male students still commit a large number of grammatical errors due to interlingual and intralingual transfer and these are the mains sources of their frequent types of errors. This would provide an answer to the third research question that interlingual and intralingual transfer are the most common sources of grammatical errors in students English essays.

Table 3. Grammatical Errors Categorization due to Intralingual Transfer

<b>No.</b>	<b>GRAMMATICAL ERRORS</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
1.	<b>Passive Voice</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>5%</b>
2.	<b>Verb tense and Form</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>25%</b>
3.	<b>Subject-verb Agreement</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>27%</b>
4.	<b>Word Order</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>11%</b>
5.	<b>Prepositions</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>7%</b>
6.	<b>Articles</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>11%</b>
7.	<b>Plurality</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>9%</b>
8.	<b>Auxiliaries</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>5%</b>
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>658</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **5.1.2. Teaching Methods**

Taking into account the data obtained from the responses of the students in the questionnaire, it has been found that a considerable number of students (28) believe that methods of teaching *sometimes* plays a role in their weakness in the English writing skill. In my opinion, traditional methods in teaching writing are not appropriate at least in the case of the Emirati students. When looking at the data collected from teachers responses to the questionnaire, it can be understood that teachers in the UAE state schools are still stick to old methods in teaching. When they were asked if they adopt new methods in teaching writing, 6 teachers out of 20 responded *seldom* and when they were asked if they use supplementary materials in teaching writing 7 responded "*never*" while one teacher responded "*always*" (See appendix 2). On the other hand, in an interview with five supervisors from two different educational zones, all of the interviewees agreed that teachers need to adopt new techniques in teaching the English writing skill (See appendix 3). It can be concluded that effective classroom teaching methods play an essential role in developing the students writing skill and traditional teaching methods can be a source of errors in students writings.

### **5.1.3. Lack of Writing Practice**

Lack of writing activities may lead to weakness in the writing skill as a result a lot of errors in students essays will occur. Based on the data obtained from the two questionnaires, a large number of students (29) believe that the lack of writing activities and homework is always responsible for their weakness in the English writing skill (See appendix1). A lot of teachers mentioned that the school text book is to blame for the cause of students errors in their writing. 7 out of 20 teachers believe that the writing drills in the school curriculum are not satisfying and 9 teachers said that their students never practice writing on a daily basis. Moreover, 10 teachers said that they *sometimes* spend enough time on the writing skill in their classrooms (See appendix 2). It can be concluded that lack of continuous writing activities may lead to committing more errors in the writing process.

## **5.2. Weakness in English Writing Skill**

Based on the findings and the results, the Emirati secondary male students make many grammatical errors due to many reasons that have been tackled earlier. The data obtained from teachers responses in the questionnaire shows that 13 teachers out of 20 remarked there is always an evidence of lack of basic writing skill. All the 20 teachers agreed that the students whom they teach always make errors of different types in their compositions (See appendix 2). On the other hand, when asked about the reasons why UAE secondary students in the Eastern Coast of the UAE are weak in English writing skills, 3 out 5 supervisors said that the lack of vocabulary, motivation, writing activities and teaching methods are among the reasons behind the weakness in English writing skill. One supervisor said it is the mother tongue interference while another said it is the little time given to the writing activity (See appendix 3).

Based on the analysis of students writing essays, the responses of teachers and students as well as the supervisors answers, the researcher concluded that Emirati male secondary students still make many errors of various types particularly grammar errors and consequently their writing is below the expected ambition of both teachers and supervisors. This provides a positive answer to the fourth research question that UAE secondary male students are really weak in the English writing skill.

## CHAPTER SIX: Recommendations & Conclusion

### 6.1. Implications & Recommendations

The findings in this study have suggested some implications which are of significance to EFL teachers and syllabus designers as follows:

**Implications for EFL teachers:** The study of the participants' errors helps teachers identify the problematic areas of headline language at different levels of instruction. They will be able to infer the nature of the learner's knowledge of the headlines at a given stage in his learning career and discover what he has still to learn. Fallahi's (1991. p.25) terms, "error analysis is a clue for the teacher to pinpoint the learning problems which can hardly be predicted by contrastive analysis". Furthermore, a course based on the frequency of errors will enable the teacher to teach the point of error and to emphasize more on those errors where the error frequency is higher. Errors provide feedback, they tell the teachers something about the effectiveness of their teaching techniques and show them what parts of the syllabus they have been following have been inadequately learned or taught and need further attention.

Teachers should increase the number of assignments for the sake of which the students would have to do a lot of writing during their free time, hence they would be reading a lot of English material and thinking in English, especially if they have to make oral presentations for their work. In addition, if teachers implement Team Work in class and get the students to work in groups on their projects, students will have the chance to practice together to develop their writing skill, they will also have the chance to speak English with each other instead of Arabic. Besides, they would, hopefully, correct each other's errors. As for the writing rules and conventions, these need to be "enforced" much earlier. All teachers would need to get together in order to try to solve this problem. In the meantime, Teachers can suggest a few error analysis exercises and objective tests that would help the students be more accurate, but still, nothing can replace Essay Writing itself in order to improve writing. Students should also be encouraged to write in class, at home, in their journals. They need to be given some well defined essay writing rules (for the thesis statement, introduction, conclusion, transition words, etc...),

and some samples of their writings need to be transcribed and distributed to them for correction and analysis: they would be learning from their errors. In brief, we definitely have to adapt ourselves and our curriculum to their needs.

To reduce their students' threat of failure and to orient them for success, teachers can tell their students that unless the errors hinder their intended meaning, they will not be penalized for them. Through such an understanding between teachers and students, it is hoped that the students will be able to overcome their test anxiety and, in turn, reduce their errors. It should be known to teachers that error analysis has been employed to draw a picture of the learners' learning strategies and never meant to eliminate or even reduce the students' errors. Rather, it intends to help teachers adjust their teaching methods and understand their students' learning strategies. However, errors, regardless of the teaching methods employed in the classroom, are there and will stay as long as foreign language teaching is practiced. Therefore, teachers should not be so worried about them. On the other hand, teachers can draw their students' attention to the differences between the native and foreign languages. In this case, second or foreign language learners' sensitivity and awareness of these differences will be raised, and that might help students reduce their interference errors. There is no doubt that the native language plays an important role in learning and using another language, especially in foreign-language learning situations where the learners' exposure to the target language is confined to a few hours per week of classroom instruction. The Arab students learning English in such a situation use the interlingual transfer strategy (i.e. transfer from Arabic, the most readily available linguistic knowledge) to solve their learning and communication problems in English. When teaching writing, therefore, we must look for ways to help students learn how to express themselves clearly and how to organize their ideas logically. We must show them how to make their writing vivid and interesting. It has to be tidy, correct, and well formed.

Writing a tidy, correct and well formed piece of discourse, however, means something much broader and more important than just putting correct words and sentences together. Writing composition does not follow automatically from adequate vocabulary and grammar, but to be taught quite specifically. Unfortunately, what we see in our

classrooms today is that a great deal of writing that our students do is primarily concerned with reinforcing the teaching of particular structure. It is concerned with putting words together. It is concerned primarily with the transference into the written medium of lexical items and patterns already presented orally. Writing a composition necessarily involves the dual task of deciding that to say and how to say it. The emphasis in teaching composition in our schools has so far been on how to say it. This is undoubtedly due to our concern with grammatical accuracy.

**Pedagogical Implications:** Interlingual transfer is a learning strategy that most foreign-language learners fall back on, especially in acquisition-poor classroom situations where exposure to the language is confined to a few hours per week of formal instruction. Accordingly, many language teachers and researchers talk about making use of the mother tongue in the classroom (Mohammed, 1998). Making use of the mother tongue in foreign-language teaching makes for a psycholinguistic technique based on the learners' tendency to rely on their previous linguistic knowledge in formulating hypotheses about the target language. One of the most widely suggested uses of the learners' mother tongue is the presentation of contrastive comparisons of the two languages to make the learners aware of the differences and similarities between them. This technique is believed to be helpful in that the learners will know when to transfer from their native language and when not to.

Researchers recommend the following to minimize students' use of negative transfer in their writing:

1. An English language teacher should be a good model of the target language.
2. Teaching and learning should focus equally on all the four language skills.
3. Teacher should also emphasize on accuracy, apart from proficiency.
4. Learners should be encouraged to think in the target language rather than in their native language when writing.
5. Contrastive analysis (CA) could be introduced as part of the teaching and learning process.
6. Teacher-student conferencing/feedback should be carried out more often.
7. Students should be encouraged to read more in order to familiarize themselves with the correct usage of standard English.
8. Students should be encouraged to use the target language as often as possible.
9. Grammar rules should be taught implicitly rather than explicitly.

**Implications for syllabus designers:**

Errors are significant to syllabus designers to see what items are important to be included in the syllabus and what items are redundant and should be excluded. The analysis of the participants' errors can help identify learners' linguistic difficulties and need at a particular stage of language learning.



## **6.2. Conclusion**

The study aimed at identifying, describing, categorizing, and diagnosing the type of grammatical errors made in the Emirati secondary male students' English essays and the sources of these errors. As a result, a number of different grammatical errors were found in their English essays. These were limited to eight major errors: passive voice, verb tense and form, subject-verb agreement, word order, prepositions, articles, plurality and auxiliaries. After analyzing the errors, it has been found out that the students make grammatical errors due to two main reasons: Interlingual and intralingual reasons. It can thus be concluded that Emirati male students still have a long way to go in writing satisfactory essays in English. The way they composed their essays clearly shows their weak grasp of the basic tenets of English grammar. It is the responsibility of both syllabus designers and teachers of English to cater for the students' writing skills. School textbooks should include more free and controlled writing exercises that would help improve students writing abilities. On the other hand teachers should vary their teaching methods in order to facilitate and enable their students to write competently. I think errors in students writing can be minimized if modern techniques in teaching writing were adopted. It is clear that the errors in grammar require more attention than the others. Teachers should then be more aware of these types of errors and provide the necessary follow up work to check the problem areas as discussed earlier. However, EFL teachers and researchers can not ignore error analysis as an important tool by which they can learn more about the psycholinguistic processes involved in the learning of a foreign language. The findings of this study support the claim that Arabic-speaking students commit many grammatical errors when writing essays in English. Errors indicate that EFL students depend on interlingual and intralingual strategies to facilitate learning. Such strategies help in case of perceived linguistic similarities and lead to problems in case of differences. Most of the incorrect grammatical sentences found in students essays were due to intralingual errors. Grammatical proficiency is the foundation of better writing ability. Efficient grammar instruction, especially for adult learners helps EFL students learn English more effectively (Valette, 1991). Therefore, understanding students' learning difficulties and providing

appropriate grammar instruction is the key to effective teaching for EFL teachers. However, in dealing with errors, it is important for teachers to establish what the error is, to establish the possible sources of errors, to explain why they happen because a full knowledge of the causes of an error enables the teacher to work out a more effective teaching strategy to deal with them and finally to decide how serious the mistake is to have a remedial work.

To conclude, correlating our learners' abilities in both Arabic and English implies that some of the participants' problems in English writing can be linked to the deep-rooted problems in Arabic writing. It follows from this point that learners of English need also to be taught about the English text awareness rather than transferring. This can be done by guiding learners to look critically and analytically at English texts written by native speakers of English which in turn supports their own writing. Simultaneously, the learners will improve their general language proficiency by following these strategies. However, this study dealt with a limited number of the linguistic aspects involved in writing due to the limitations of space and time. Clearly, there is a great deal of work to be done in this area in the future.

## References

- Arter, J.A., Spandel, V., Culham, R. (2000). Portfolio for Assessment and Instruction. Eric Digest. ED388890.
- Bataineh, R.F. (2005). Jordanian Undergraduate EFL Students' Errors in the Use of the Indefinite. *Asian EFL Journal*, March 2005, Volume 7. Issue 1, Article 5
- Bereiter, C. & Scardamalia, M. (1987). *The psychology of written composition*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Brown, H.D. (1994). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Prentice-Hall.
- Burns, B. (1999). *How to Teach Balanced Reading & Writing*. Arlington Heights, IL: Skylight Professional Development.
- P.C. Burns, B.D.Roe, & E.P. Ross (1987). *Teaching Reading in Today's Elementary Schools*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Carroll, S. and Swain, M. (1993) "Explicit and implicit negative feedback: An empirical study of linguistic generalizations. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*. 15/3. pp. 357-86.
- Carson, J. (2001). *Second language writing and second language acquisition*. In T. Silva and P.Matsuda (Eds.), *on second language writing* (pp. 191-200). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. [-15-]
- Carter R (1997) 'The new grammar teaching' in Carter R *Investigating English discourse* Routledge, London, pp 19-35.
- 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](http://www3.oup.co.uk/eltj/hdb/Volume_56/Issue_01/freepdf/560068.pdf)

- Cedar, P. S. (2004). Transferability and translatability of idioms by Thai-speaking learners of English. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 64(08), 2570. (UMI No. 3101068).
- Celce-Murcia, M., & Larsen-Freeman, D. (1999). *The grammar book: An ESL teacher's Course*. Boston: Heinle and Heinle.
- Chen, H. C. (1998). A contrastive analysis of the language errors made by the Chinese students of English as a second/foreign language. *Journal of Wu-Feng Applied Linguistics*, 6, 224-237.
- Chen, C. Y., & Huang, H. Y. (2003). L2 acquisition of subject-prominence by EFL students in Taiwan. *English Teaching & Learning*, 27(4), 99-122.
- Chen, H. C. (2000). Error analysis of some features of English article usage. *Journal of Wu-Feng Applied Linguistics*, 8, 282-296.
- Chuo, I. (2001). Mother tongue use in foreign language classrooms: A survey of teachers' and students' perception. *Journal of the College of Liberal Arts, NCHU*, 31, 199-218.
- Collins, L. (2002). The role of L1 influence and lexical aspect in the acquisition of temporal morphology. *Language Learning*, 52(1), 43-94.
- Connor, U. & Kaplan, R. (Eds.), (1987). *Writing across languages: Analysis of L2 text*. USA: Addison-Wesley.
- Corder, S.P. (1967). *The significance of learners' errors*. Reprinted in J.C.Richards (ed.) (1974, 1984) *Error Analysis: Perspectives on Second Language Acquisition*. London: Longman, pp. 19 - 27 (Originally in *International Review of Applied Linguistics*, 5 (4)).

- Corder, S. P. (1971). Idiosyncratic dialects and error analysis. *IRAL*, 9 (2), 147-160.
- Corder, S. P. (1974). *Error Analysis*. In J. P. B. Allen and S. Pit Corder (eds.) *Techniques in Applied Linguistics (The Edinburgh Course in Applied Linguistics: 3)*, London: Oxford University Press (Language and Language Learning), pp. 122-154.
- Cullinan, B.E. (1983). *Pen in Hand: Children Become Writers*. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association.
- Cunningham, P.M. and Allington, RL (1999). *Classrooms that Work: They Can All Read and Write*. Longman, Inc.
- Diab, N. (1996). *The transfer of Arabic in the English writings of Lebanese Students*. Retrieved January 5, 2003 from <http://lael.pucsp.br/especialist/181diab.ps.pdf>
- Dulay, H. and Burt, M. (1977). "Remarks on creativity in language acquisition". In M. Burt, H. Dulay and M. Finocchiaro (eds.), *Viewpoints on English as a Second Language*. New York: Regents.
- Ellis, H. C. (1965). *The Transfer of Learning*. New York. The Macmillan Company.
- Ellis, R. (1994). *The Study of Second Language Acquisition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
- Ellis, R. (1995). *Understanding Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, R. (1997). *SLA Research and Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

- Fallahi, M. (1991). *Contrastive linguistics and analysis of errors, Vol. 1: The grammatical structure of English and Persian*. Tehran: Iran University Press.
- Fang, Y. C. (1999). Teaching English verb tenses to Chinese EFL students. *Journal of Kuen-Shan Institute of Technology*, 2, 119-123.
- Farooq, M.U. (1998). *Contrastive and error analysis based teaching strategies*. Aichi Women's Junior College- Retrieved December 30, 2003 from <http://www.cels.bham.ac.uk/resources/essays/farooq2.pdf>
- Fox, H. (1994). *Listening to the world: Cultural issues in academic writing*. Urbana Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Friedlander, A. (1990). Composing in English: Effects of a first language on writing in English as a second language. In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Second language writing: Research insights for the classroom*. (pp. 109-125). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gass, S, and Selinker, L. (1983). *Language Transfer in language Learning*. MA: Newbury House Publishers, Inc.
- Gass, S. and Selinker, L. (1994). *Second Language Acquisition: An Introductory Course*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- George, H.V. (1971). English for Asian learners: Are we on the right road? *English Language Teaching*, XXV, 270-277
- Graves, D.H. (1983). *Teachers and Children At Work*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann Educational Books.
- Gunning, T.G. (1998). *Assessing and Correcting Reading and Writing Difficulties*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Habash, Z. (1982). *Common Errors In The Use of English Prepositions In The Written Work Of UNRWA Students At The End Of The Preparatory Cycle In The Jerusalem Area*. Retrieved January 2, 2003 from <http://www.zeinab-habash.ws/education/books/master.pdf>

Handrickson (1979). A Developmental Analysis of English Errors made by Iranian Students: The study made by Henning (1978) at the University of California

Hedge, T. (1998) *Writing: Resource book for Teachers*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Henning, G.H. "A Developmental Analysis of Errors of Adult Iranian Students of English as a Foreign Language." *Language Learning*, 28, 2(1978): 387- 397.

Holaday, L. (1997) `Writing Students Need Coaches, Not Judges.` In S. Tchudi (ed.) *Alternatives to Grading Student Writing*. NCTE.

Huang, J. (2002). Error analysis in English teaching: A review of studies. *Journal of Chung-San Girls' Senior High School*, 2, 19-34.

Hubbard, P., Jones, H., Thornton, B. and Wheeler, R. (1996). *A Training Course for TEFL*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hughes, S. (1994). *The Webbinf Way*. Winnipeg, Canada: Pegusis Publishers.

Hwang, JR "Current Theories of Language Leaning and Teaching." *English Teaching FORUM*, 8, 2(1970): 26-29.

Jackson, H. (1981). Contrastive analysis as a predictor of errors, with reference to Punjabi learners of English. In *Contrastive linguistics and the language teacher*, J Fisiak (ed). Oxford: Pergamon.

- Jain, M. 1974. 'Error Analysis: Source, Cause and Significance'. In Richards, J. (Ed.). *Error analysis: Perspectives on Second Language Acquisition*. 189-215. Essex: Longman.
- James, C. (1998) *Errors in Language Learning and Use*. London: Longman.
- Jarvis, S. (2000). Methodological rigor in the study of transfer: Identifying L1 influence in the interlanguage lexicon. *Language Learning*. 50(2), 245-309.
- Jiang, M. C. (1995). An analysis of Chinese ESL learners' errors in prepositions. *Journal of National Chiayi Institute of Agriculture*, 41, 187-201.
- Johanson, Stig. "The Uses of Error Analysis and Contrastive Analysis I. "English Language Teaching, 29, 3(1975): 246- 253.
- Kao, C. C. (1999). An Investigation into lexical, grammatical, and semantic errors in English compositions of college students in Taiwan. *Fu Hsing Kang Journal*, 67, 1-32.
- Kellerman, E. (1983). "Now you set it, now you don't". In S.Gass and L.Selinker (eds.), *Language Transfer in Language Learning*. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House.
- Kerr, J.Y.K. (1970). *Common Errors In Written English*. Malta: St. Paul's Press Ltd.
- Khuwaileh, A. & Shoumali, A. (2000). *Writing Errors: A Study of the Writing Ability of Arab Learners of Academic English and Arabic at University*. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 13(2), 174-183.
- Korbel, M. (2001). *Strengthening Student Writing Skills*. Thesis (M.A). Saint Xavier University and Skylight Professional development Field-Based masters Program.



- Krashen, S. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Kutz, E., Groden, S., & Zamel, V. (1993). *The discovery of competence: Teaching and learning with diverse student writers*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers.
- Lado, R. (1957). *Linguistics Across Cultures*. University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor.
- Lado, R. (1964). *Language Teaching: A Scientific Approach*. McGraw-Hill.
- Lakkis, K. and Malak, M. A. "Understanding the Transfer of Prepositions". *FORUM, Vol 38, No 3, July-September 2000*. (Online edition: <http://exchanges.state.gov/forum/vols/vol38/no3/p26.htm>)
- Lamme, L.L. (1984). *Growing Up Writing*. Washington, D.C.: Acropolis Books LTD.
- Leki, I. (1990). Coaching from the margins: Issues in written response. In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Second language writing: Research insights for the classroom* (pp. 57-67). New York: Cambridge University Press. [-17-]
- Lim Ho Peng. (1976). Errors and error analysis in TESL: The Malaysian experience. *RELC Journal*. 9(2), 335-351.
- Lin, S. (2002). A case study of English writing competence of students at the Mei Ho Institute of Technology. *Journal of Mei Ho Institute of Technology*, 20, 180-206.
- Liu, D. (1998). Ethnocentrism in TESOL: Teacher education and the neglected needs of international TESOL students. *ELT Journal*, 52(1), 3-10.
- Mahmoud, A. (2000) Modern standard Arabic vs Non-standard Arabic: Where do Arab students transfer from? *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 13, 126-136.

- McAlexander, P.J. (1993). Mina Shaughnessy in the 1990s: Some Changing Answers in Basic Writing.
- Mohammed, A. (1998). Interlingual comparisons in foreign language grammar Instruction. *The Educational Journal*, 13, 317-353.
- Mori, Y. (1998). Effects of First Language and Phonological Accessibility on Kanji Recognition. *The Modern Language Journal*, 82(1), 69-82.
- Mukattash, L. (1981). Wh-questions in English: A problem for Arab students. IRAL. 19(4):317-25.
- Norrish, J. (1983). *Language learners and their errors*. London: The Macmillan Press
- Ntumngia (1974). Error Analysis on EFL of Francophone Students, Illinois University, Carbondale.
- Obeidat, H. A. (1986). An investigation of syntactic and semantic errors in the written composition of Arab EFL learners (Doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois, 1986). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 47, 3415A.
- Odlin, T. (1989). *Language Transfer: Cross-Linguistic Influence in Language Learning*. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Okuma S. (1999). Indices of L1 transfer in EFL writing: *A study of Japanese learners of English*. Retrieved January 15, 2003 from <http://www.surrey.ac.uk/ELI/sakaeo.pdf>
- Plata, M. (1995). Success of Hispanic college students on a writing examination. *Journal of Educational Issue of Language Minority Students* [on-line serial], 15. Available: <http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/miscpubs/jeilms/vol15/success.htm>

- Qashoa, H. (2006), Motivation among Learners of English in the Secondary Schools in the Eastern Coast of the UAE, BUID, Asian EFL Journal. <http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/thesis>
- Raimes, A. (1987). Language proficiency, writing ability and composing strategies: A study of ESL college student writers. *Language Learning*, 37, 439-468.
- Raimes, A. (1998). Teaching writing. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 18, 142-167.
- Reeves, L.L. (1997, Feb). Minimizing Writing Apprehension in the Learner-Centered Classroom. *English Journal*, 86 (6).
- Richards, J.C. (1971). A noncontrastive approach to error analysis. *English Language Teaching Journal*. 25, 204-219
- Richards, J. C. 1974. Error analysis and second language strategies. In *New frontiers in second language learning*. Eds. J. H. Schumann and N. Stenson. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, p. 6
- Richards, J. C. (1974). *A Non-Contrastive Approach to Error Analysis*. In Richards, J. (Ed.). *Error analysis: Perspectives on Second Language Acquisition*. 172-188. Essex: Longman.
- Richards, J.C. and G.P. Sampson (1974). *The study of learner English*. In J.C. Richards (ed.) *Error Analysis. Perspectives on second language acquisition*, pp. 3-18.
- Richards, J. C. & Renandya, W. A. (eds) (2002) *Methodology in Language Teaching: An Anthology of Current Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Rivers, W. M. (1968) *Teaching Foreign Language Skills*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Robb, L. (1994). *Whole Language Whole Learners*. New York: Quill William Morrow.
- Rosen, H. (1969) '*Towards a Language Policy Across the Curriculum*' in *Language, the Learner, and the School*. London: Penguin.
- Routemen, R. (1991). *Invitations*. Portsmouth, NH: Irwin Publishing.
- Selinker, L. (1972). Interlanguage. *International Review of Applied Linguistics*, 10, 209-231.
- Selinker, L. 1974. 'Interlanguage'. In Richards, J. (Ed.). *Error analysis: Perspectives on Second Language Acquisition*. 31-54. Essex: Longman.
- Sofer N.Z. & Raimes, A. (2002). *Keys for writers, A brief handbook*- Third ed. – Houghton Mifflin Company. Retrieved January 2, 2003 from <http://college.hmco.com/english/raimes/3e/fmraimes.pdf>  
<http://college.hmco.com/english/raimes/3e/12raimesi.pdf>
- Soter, Anna O. 1988. "The Second Language Learner and Cultural Transfer in Narration". In Purves, Alan C. (ed.) *Writing Across Languages and Cultures: Issues in Contrastive Rhetoric*. New York: Sage Publications.
- Spack, R. (1997). The rhetorical construction of multilingual students. *TESOL Quarterly*, 31, 765-74.
- Sridhar, S. N. (1975). Contrastive analysis, error analysis and interlanguage: Three phases of one goal? *Studies in Language Learning*, 1. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED123888)

- Sridhar, S. N. (1980). *Contrastive analysis, error analysis, and interlanguage*. IN: J. Fisiak (ed.) *Contrastive linguistics and the language teacher*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Stenson, N. (1974) "Induced errors" in Shumann and Stenson (eds.), cited in Ellis (p. 60).
- Sunflower, C. (1993). *75 Creative Ways to Publish Students' Writing*. New York: Scholastic Professional Books.
- Swan, M, and Smith, B. (Eds). 1995. *Learner English: A teacher's guide to interference and other problems*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tadros, A. A. (1979): "Arabic Interference in the written English of Sudanese Students- Relativisation." *English Language teaching Journal*, 33, 3234-239.
- Tan, B. K. (1978). Proficiency in English amongst secondary four Chinese stream students in Singapore. *RELC Journal*, 9, 39–53.
- Tayli, M. & Al-Salamah, A.I. (1990). *Building bilingual microcomputer systems*. *Communications of the ACM* (33), 5, (May), pp.495-504.
- Taylor, B. P. (1975). The use of overgeneralization and transfer learning strategies by elementary and intermediate students of ESL. *Language Learning*, 25, pp. 73-107.
- Temple, G. and Gillet, J.W. (1990). *Language Arts*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company.
- Valette,R.M.(1991). Proficiency and the Prevention of fossilization: An editorial . *Modern language Journal*, 75(3),325-328.

Wachs, S. 1993. Breaking the writing barrier: Approaches to the composition class. In P.

Wadden (Ed.), *A Handbook for Teaching English at Japanese Colleges and Universities*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

White, R and V. Arndt. 1991. *Process Writing* Harlow: London

Widdowson, H. (1990). *Aspects of language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wiener, H.S. (1990). *Any Child Can Write*. New York: Bantam Books.

Ying, S. Y. (1987). *Types of errors in English compositions by Chinese students: a search for interlanguage*. Unpublished master's thesis, Fu Jen Catholic University, Taipei, Taiwan).

Yu, L. (1996). The role of L1 in the acquisition of motion verbs in English by Chinese and Japanese learners. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 53, 191-218

## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Students Questionnaire

The following statements are general statements about your attitude and opinion towards the difficulty of the English writing skill. Please indicate the appropriate item next to each statement and which applies to your opinion. Your answers are appreciated and will be used in developing your writing skill.

#### The difficulty of the English writing skill lies in:

No.	Statement	never	seldom	sometimes	always
1.	The teaching methods in writing	15	35	28	16
2.	The text book	22	37	28	17
3.	Lack of writing activities and homework.	12	21	32	29
4.	The incomprehensibility of grammar rules	12	24	30	28
5.	The incomprehensibility of mechanics of writing	21	30	28	15
6.	Mother tongue interference	10	18	30	36
7.	Lack of motivation	14	17	38	25
8.	Lack of vocabulary	5	7	12	70

## The Arabic Version: النسخة مترجمة الى اللغة العربية

استبانة الطالب :

العبارات التالية تعتبر جمل عامة حول رأيك وميولك تجاه صعوبة مهارة الكتابة في اللغة الانجليزية. يرجى وضع علامة صح (/) تحت البند الذي تراه مناسباً ومقابل العبارة المذكورة التي تتفق مع ميولك ورأيك. نحن نقدر اجاباتك وسيتم التعامل معها بسرية تامة وستستخدم لصالح تحسين وتطوير مهارتك الكتابية في اللغة الانجليزية.

تكمن صعوبة الكتابة في اللغة الانجليزية في :

الرقم	العبارة	ابدا	نادرا	أحيانا	دائما
1.	طرق التدريس لمهارة الكتابة	15	35	28	16
2.	المقرر الدراسي	22	37	28	17
3.	قلة الانشطة الكتابية والواجبات	12	21	32	29
4.	عدم فهم قواعد اللغة	12	24	30	28
5.	عدم فهم اسس مهارة الكتابة	21	30	28	15
6.	تداخل لغة الام (اللغة الرئيسية)	10	18	30	36
7.	نقص الدافعية	14	17	38	25
8.	قلة مخزون المفردات	5	7	12	70



## Appendix 2: Teachers Questionnaire

You are kindly requested to reply on the following questionnaire regarding your attitude and views toward your students writing skills. Your responses are highly appreciated and will be exploited to improve the teaching of the writing skill at the state schools in the UAE.

Tick the box below the most appropriate item.

	Statement	never	seldom	sometimes	always
1.	Do you feel there is evidence of lack of basic writing skill in your students?	-	-	7	13
2.	Are you satisfied with writing curriculum that the reading series provide	7	7	4	2
3.	Do you use supplementary writing materials?	7	5	7	1
4.	Does your class write on a daily basis?	5	9	4	2
5-	Does lack of time affect your concentration on the writing skill?	1	1	4	14
6-	Do your students make errors of different types in their compositions?	-	-	-	20
7-	Does the district provide any training or in service in the area of writing.	-	3	11	6
<b>When teaching the writing skill for your students, do you concentrate on :</b>					
a.	Capitalization?	6	7	5	2
b.	Punctuation?	5	7	6	2
c	Spelling?	-	7	9	4
d.	Handwriting?	7	9	3	2
e.	Appropriateness of lexis?	-	2	13	5
f.	Grammar?	-	1	1	18
g.	The organization of writing?	7	8	4	2
h.	The process and product of writing	6	7	3	4

*Adapted from Korbel, M. (2001)*

## Appendix 3

### Interview with supervisors

#### **1- Why do you think secondary students at state schools in the Eastern Coast suffer from weakness in English writing skill?**

**S1.** It is really a big problem among most students at different stages. I think this is due to many reasons , Lack of vocabulary , lack of motivation , the effect of mother tongue and unavailability of practicing the language are some of the most common reasons.

**S2.** It is an accumulated weakness resulting from previous years. Lack of vocabulary and writing activities are the major reasons.

**S2.** To me , the teacher plays a great role in developing the students writing skill. I think the teacher's method in teaching writing can be sometimes blamed for the students weakness in writing. Some teachers are still teaching writing the way they were taught .

**S3.** The way the teacher teaches writing can play a role in developing the student writing skill. Moreover, the writing activities which are given to the students are still not enough to motivate and encourage students to practice the writing skill properly.

**S4.** The time given to the writing activities inside the class is not enough. Lack of vocabulary and motivation are also among the causes of weakness in writing skill.

**S5.** It can be said that both teachers and students are to blame . Some teachers do not adopt new techniques in teaching writing and some students never take matters seriously, as a result weakness in English in general and writing skill in particular can occur.

#### **2- How can you help in developing students English writing skill in the Eastern Coast of the UAE?**

**S1.** Teachers ought to change their methods of teaching and they also need to develop themselves professionally by reading more about teaching the writing skill.

**S2.** We always hold a lot of symposia and workshops in terms of developing the writing skill among students . We also encourage teachers to attend such sessions like TESOL Arabia conferences that are annually held.

**S3.** I think teachers should give their students more homework and more writing activities to do . Furthermore , Students have to learn the text vocabulary and the vocabulary identified by the CEPA committee .

**S4.** It is very important to teach the students at lower stages the mechanics of writing and to focus more on structure and grammar.

**S5.** Through our regular visits , we always direct and supervise teachers to adopt modern and effective teaching methods in teaching the writing skill. teachers should also care about students errors in writing and try to tackle them carefully. Students compositions must be well corrected to enhance students ability to write well.

## Appendix 4

*Table1: Total of Interlingual and Intralingual Grammar Errors*

No	GRAMMATICAL ERRORS	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Passive Voice		
2.	Verb Tense and Form		
3.	Subject-verb agreement		
4.	Word Order		
5.	Prepositions		
6.	Articles		
7.	Plurality		
8.	Auxiliaries		
	<b>TOTAL</b>		

## **Appendix 5**

### **Samples of Students' Essays:**

#### **Sample 1:**

The smoking is a harmful habit. It is cause a bad effect. Smoking can harm your body it can cause a lung cancer and many other benegerour disessie. Also it can cause a bad breath from smoker's mouth. Moreover smoker's kide may smoke if they see thir's father smoke. A cigarette is very bad for your body. It is a slow suisied. I advice smoker's go away from smoking and I help you how smokers quit smoking. first drink a lot of water next smokers try don't sit with other people smoeking and don't drink tea a lot becuse it can be used for cigarette. why don't do exsersis with all this advices can stop smoking. finally I hope very happy live and healthy body for smoker's and I advice are don not smoking because smoking harm body and harm are family. A cigarette very bad and it is cause slow suisied.

#### **Sample 2:**

I think it is a good idea for you. I advise you therow sosity of smoking. Smoking it is very dangerous and bad Helth .Every mounth people who dai Five mulyon thousand in the world. I advsie for who smok stop smoking because it is throw your mony. I give you how to help smokers quit smoking.First , in the UAE houspetal of Shake Zayed , it will can change your lung. Secand , stop smoking for 10 year 3th, run every day in the sea. 4<sup>th</sup> go to the hospital every 1 month to chuck up your body.5<sup>th</sup> every day you must eat vigetabls , fruit and don't drink too much coffee. this is advise for how to help smokers quit smoking. Finally , I think all who smoking everyday deases in your lung and bady. thank you .....

### **Sample 3:**

Nowadays when I look around me I see many people smoking. I ask myself why do all this people are smoking but with no answer . Some people said that they smoking because when they do that they feel comfortable and better . But they also know what could smoking causes for them from a lot of diseases. The least dangerous results from smoking is your bad breath and stained teeth. The more dangerous results is gum infection , damage bones and mouth sore. But the problem is not here the problem is in the most dangerous results like heart diseases and cancer this may led the smokers smoke is the advertisements that encourage them to smoke. It's really very easy to start smoking but it is very hard to stop it. At least smokers know about that chemical substances in the cigarette but they still smoking. There are many ways to stop smoking but prevention is better than cure. We should say no to the First cigarette. I disagree with smokers but if there are just one good thing is smoking I will be the first one who addict on smoking.

### **Sample 4:**

Smoking is the werst thing kids and adult can be smoke. You have probably heard about the dangerous of smoking to health. The least dangerous results can smoker make is a bad breath and yellow teeth. The more dangerous results is cold and headache. The most dangerous results is cancer and hart disease. The people thinks those smoke cigarette are a adult. To help smokers quit smoking by doing exercisise .go to walk. Cut down cigarette. Quit smoking at once. If you really wont to stop smoke you will stop: It will help you to stop smoke.If you smoke cigarette it will cost you a expensive money. You will Losing you live slowly. Many people died because cigarette If you smoke a lot of cigarette you will be a dicted .The people who not smoking become a ill if he sit with smokers. You must stop smoking and be the healthy man. You will live longer if you stop smoke. Be careful to your self .Finally the smoke cigarette is bad habet.

### **Sample 5:**

Smoking is the most dangerous habit that had spreaded in our life. When we talk about smoking we are really talking about a dangerous trap. Cigarettes have a serious effects on our health. First it is the cause of many serious diseases like cancer , hearth Arokes and lung diseases. For example, in the United States there are 46 million people who are considered as heavy smokers. They smoke a large number of cigarettes that was smoked reached to 425 bilion cigarettes , the United States every year loses a big number of its

population because of smoking. Besides it is expected that the number of the annual deaths of smokers will jump to 20 million people by 2020 . Why is that ? What does these cigarettes do with those people ? each cigarette contains 4000 chemical substances at least 43 of them are main causes of cancer. In addition to that , it was proved that lung cancer is directly caused by the nicotine ( a substance which is available in a cigarette). Moreover , the smoke of the cigarette contains a very dangerous chemical , it is called carbon monoxide , carbon monoxide really combines with hemoglobin of the blood, the chemical which is resulted by this combination has a very dangerous effects on our body cells, especially brain cells. On the other hand we must ask ourselves why are these people smoking.....

### **Sample 6:**

Allah gave people life and asked them to keep on their selves. So they must live in a safe healthy environment. Many people die from smoking every year because is harmful for the smokers and the bad air can cause health problems for non smokers have to stop smoking and take care of their health and people healthy. There are many ways to stop smoking like walking , chewing gum , drinking water or juice.....etc.

They must know that smoking is the main causes for lung cancer, lung diseases and for heart arteries. As well as to losing money on cigarettes and losing their children. In my opinion all smoker should be start to live and quit smoking. Finally I want to give smokers some of advices on danger of smoking.First they should be on them make exercises everyday.second , I advise them to eat balanced diet or white meat or fruits and vegetables.third If I were you , I would stop smoking to protect our children healthy. These is some advices to help smokers to stop smoing.

### **Sample 7:**

Smoking is a very serious habit. First it causes many dangerous results . At least it causes bad smell and it make our teeth yellow and weak. It causes many fattal desease and is sometimes it causes obesety . The worst dangerous results is heart desease. there are many reasons that make smokers smoke such as feeling stress , drinking too much coffee and tea and may be they like the tase of cigaretes . then , the cigaretes company have the major roles that push consumers to buy this product by make advertisement that show the people that smoking is good for development . On the other hand , there are many centers help smokers to stop smoking by many ways such as give them some pills , make regualr exercise , give them some advice about the food should they eat, give him some books about dangerous of smoking and offer some sports center . That ways it

can make the smokers stop smoking or at least cut down smoking. The most problem things in our society is that smokers now about dangerous of smoking and really they know about it diseases but, they still smoking. finally if smokers really want to stop smoking they should do some things first such as they have to feel that they really want to stop smoking, they have to stop smoking one time at all , they should do some hobby that make him busy its advisable to ask his family for help they should tell to himself that it shame to cannot to stop smoking and the better way to stop is seeing a doctor.

### **Sample 8:**

Today I am going to talk about one of major problem which face our society which is smoking. The smoking is one of bad habit which is the people can't live without it . Although much written of the smoking but people smoke . I going to give you some of information of smoking . first of all the smoking is have a nicotine this a chemical has impact in hurt disease this will give cancer and eyes and mouth and gum diseases . Most people didn't smoke but they smell smoker this called a (second smoker). I give you some advice to stop or cut down this problem. one of these advice is have to throw smoking packet . second the father should not smoking in houses because children look and learned and another some sweets don't eat a lot of these because we will you go a nuther problem . If I were you . I'd to cut down cigarette and don't back for this smoke . If you stop smoking you will be get good health and you have good body . You had better get exercise and don't sleep all time . you will get good health finally . my Opinion you don't quit smoking you can tell or go doctor will help you.

### **Sample 9:**

Smoking is a very bad habit that many people are addict to it. As we know , That smoking causes many bad results to human body. The dangerous of smoking , we can define them into three groups. First, the least dangerous results that smokers usually have stained teeth , bad breath and lose of taste. Then , the more dangerous results , which causes many problems to human life, like breathless. Finally , the most dangerous results, which cause death to human, because smoking causes lung and blood cancer. Although many people knows about smoking dangerous , they are still smoking. actually there are many things that makes one smoke, & the most common thing that many people think that smoking makes our mind in relax & rest, & that's a wrong thought. On the other hand, the advertisements usually describe smoking in a great view by smoking photos & big posters. They don't care about your health, so they write with a small line at the last of any advertisement that smoking causes blood cancer , that anyone don't care about that. By the

way , there are many things that help smokers to quit smoking. First they should stop smoking at once .Then they have to throw away all the cigarrats and try to avoid sitting with smokers. Also its advisable for smokers to do a lot of exerice regularly & chew gums, but they have to be far from coffee , because it encourage smokers to smoke. Finally many people can eet together& decide not to some for a one day. At the last Don't forget that if you want to stop smoking it's up to you because you can't stop smoking without your desire.

### **Sample 10:**

There is a bad habit which is spreading among our people in our society and all over the world. This habit which called smoking is very dangerous , one cigarette contains many harmful chemical substances , therefore many peple die every year as a result of the harmul effect of smoking. People smoke because they think that they will be relax and will change their mood. On the other hand , Teenagers think that they will be adult and have freedom when they smoke. However, That's not true because freedom doesn't mean being a slave to a cigarette . In fact no body can imagine how the dangerous of smoking is . Indeed , There are many diseases were caused by smoking such as loss of taste, mouth sore, stained teeth bad breath besides gum infection and damage to bones. But that's nothing comparing with lung cancer and heart diseases. In this way smoking is harmful for smoker and those who around him., furthermore , smokers are exposed to heart attack 2 or 3 more than none smokers. Actually , smoker burns his money and spending it on harmful thing . Moreover, it is a long way to the tomb and it's a slow suicide, consequently, it's forbideen in Islam. In summary there are many ways to quit smoking. the first of all , Make them awareness about the dangers of smoking. Next , the government should build smoking treatment centre and make the medicine which help smokers to quit smoking cheaper.. then the parents should advice their children not to smoke and take care of them. After, the government should force advertisers to advertise warning advertisements about smoking . because advertisement has a great inflence on people especially teenagers and new generation. Them we must run a campaign to stop smoking . Thus how can we stop smoking ? At last , if we want to stop smoking we mus have serious intention otherwise we can not.



## **Sample 11:**

There is no doubt that smoking is a very bad habit which destroys our society and causes many diseases because one cigarette has more than one thousand harmful substances such as tar and nicotine and may it have viruses such as TMV virus. Bad breath, mouth sore and a loss of taste are the least results. Damage to bones and gum infection are the more harmful results. The most terrible results are cancer and heart diseases. Many smokers deny these dangers and say that they are so far and safe from these diseases, but unfortunately they will be ill if they don't leave this habit. Many teenagers believe that smoking is the best way to throw their problems behind them or they will be adults and they take their freedom but they are only slaves for their cigarette. Cigarette companies know these results but they don't care about people's health, they care about their own money in banks. They concentrate on teenagers because they are too easy to be attracted and it is so easy to start smoking than leave. Luckily there are many ways to quit this habit by telling smokers about its dangers and its forbidden in Islam to smoke because they are destroying their health and they spend their money for nothing. Or if the smoker affords we can take him to a medical centre but we must know that if a smoker wants to leave this habit, he will never leave it.

## **Sample 12:**

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century many bad habits and evil things were spread on the whole world, such as smoking, drugs wars and other things. Let's now focus on smoking. As we know smoking is dangerous to our health. But most people made it as their tradition. When you help someone to quit smoking you almost save a life. But why some people prefer to die than to quit smoking. Smoking advertisement has a big effect on people who really want to smoke. Furthermore, in Islam country there are many ways to quit this fatal habit. Smoking has many dangers to our health such as bad breath, loss of taste, and mouth sores are the least dangers of smoking. The more dangerous results are gum infection, tissue under the teeth and bone pain. More serious results are deadly to us such as cancer and heart disease. The danger of smoking is known to the whole world, but how come smokers don't quit smoking? To answer this question firstly most of people are not aware of the danger of smoking. Secondly, it is easier to start smoking than it is to quit. Thirdly they become slaves of this fatal habit and too weak to quit it. Fourthly, medicine to quit smoking is expensive. By the way if people want to quit smoking he will do it. Will

our children will be the customer of smoking advertisement ? we must advise our children of dangers of smoking and warn them that they will be asked for their money in what they use it. finally it's better to use to follow the God words in our life.

### **Sample 13:**

Smoking is a very bad habit. It causes many fatal diseases. For example , bad breath , stained teeth and mouth sores. But the most dangerous Effects are cancer and heart problems. On the other hand, Nobody can deny that smoking is dangerous to health. It's true that smoking burns body and money. It is slow suicide too. Islam can forbid all Muslims to take cigarettes because it causes harm to their bodies. In addition to that , If you determine to stop smoking you must really want to stop, stop all at once , doing exercise , drink lots of water and don't drink coffee and tea.

In terms of Effects , the important reason to stop smoking that babies and children . Because if you smoke , the children will smoke too. So why not stop smoking and start living ?

I believe smoking is the most dangerous thing in our lives . it causes worry , stress and weight loss and bad smells .

Many people in the world died because take cigarettes. They don't know the bad result of smoking ,so I advise all people who smoke stop smoking now because the dangerous effects of smoking . On the other hand, In my opinion the teacher should advise all student to stop smoking and start their lives. I believe the good idea to stop smoking in the world is to high the price and forbid smokers to smoke in the general places , and don't import it in the other countries.

## Appendix 6

### The most common errors that were detected in students' essays

#### The Danger of Smoking to Health

##### GRAMMATICAL ERROR PATTERNS

###### **A- Passive Form**

1. " Diseases can caused of smoking.... "
2. " It can been said that smoking is bad... "
3. " Smoking can be caused many serious diseases... "
4. " If you smoke , you child will be smoked ..... "
5. " This habit which called smoking is very dangerous.... "
6. " many bad habits and evil things were spread on the whole world.. "
7. " Although much written of the smoking but people smoks....."
8. " There are many diseases were caused by smoking....."
9. " They smoke a large number of cigarttes that was smoked ...."

###### **B- Verb tense and form**

1. " People smoke because they think that they will be relax....."
2. " There are many diseases were caused by smoking ..."
3. " some people said that they smoking because when they do that they feel comfortable and better "
4. " diseases and cancer this may led the smokers..... "
5. " You will Losing you live slowly ..... "
6. " Smoking is the most dangerous habit that had spreaded in our life .. "
7. " consumers to buy this product by make advertisement that show the people that smoking is good for development ..... "
8. " many ways such as give them some pills ... "
9. " but, they still smoking..... "
10. " first of all the smoking is have a necoten ..... "
11. " Most people didn't smoke but they smell smoker this .....
12. " In the 20<sup>th</sup> century many bad habits and evil things were spread on the whole world ..... "
13. " But why some people prefer to died than to quit smoking ..... "
14. " we must advise our children of dangers of smoking..... "
15. " It is cause a bad effect."
16. " People they can slave..
17. " this may led the smokers smoke
18. " " Smoking is the werst thing kids and adult can be smoke....."

19. " In the 20<sup>th</sup> century many bad habits and evil things were spread on the whole world
20. " It will can change your ung...
21. " I think all who smoking everyday ....
22. " You will loosing .....
23. " In my opinion all smokers should be start to live and quit smoking....

#### **D- Subject-Verb Agreement**

1. " .....Actually , smoker burns his money and spending it on harmful thing ....."
2. ".....moreover, teenagers were infuens very much by cigarette...."
3. ".....smoking are very dangerous and bad habit ...."
4. " Many people knows the danger of smoking by many sources like TV ....
5. " The least dangerous results from smoking is your bad breath and stained teeth..."
6. " The more dangerous results is gum infection ....." "
7. " The people thinks those smoke cigarette are adult....."
8. "...smell and it make our teeth yellow and weak...."
9. "...Then , the more dangerous results , which causes many problems..."
10. "...and make the medicine which help smokers to quit smoking cheaper.... "
11. ".....because one cigarette have more than one thousand harmful substances..."
12. " if there are just one good thing is smoking I will be the first one who addict on smoking.
13. " " The most problem things in our socity is that smokers now about dangerous of smoking
14. " they should do some hobby
15. " Although many people knows about smoking dangerous , they are still smoking
16. " actually there are many things that makes one smokes
17. " it encourage smokers to smoke
18. " because one cigarette have more than one thousand harmful substances
19. " Luckily there is many ways to quit this habbit
20. " In my opinion the teacher should advise all student to stop smoking
21. " the people thinks those smoke cigarttes..."
22. " Cigarettes have a serious effects ...
23. " there is some advices ....
24. " The cigarette company have the major roles...

#### **E- Word Order**

1. ".....Thus how we can stop smoking ...?"
2. " ...Smoking is a habit bad and money cheap....."
3. " I ask myself why do all this people are smoking , but with no answer...."
4. " But they also know what could smoking causes for them from a lot of diseases
5. " give them some advice about the food should they eat,..."
6. " The United States every year loses a big number of its population because of smoking..."
7. " I want to give them some advice about the food should they eat....."

## F- Prepositions

1. " ...To help smokers quit smoking by doing exercise .go to walk..."
2. " ..Diseases can be caused of smoking..."
3. " Although much written of the smoking but people smokes....."
4. " I going to give you some of information of smoking .... "
5. " They concentrate about teenagers...."
6. " Be careful to your self ....." "
7. " they should tell to himself
8. " Although much written of the smoking but people smokes
9. " first of all the smoking is have a nicotine this a chemical has impact in hurt disease
10. " they write with a small line at the last of any advertisement
11. " smoking advertisement has a big effective to people
12. " I advise for who smoke .....
13. " ..run every day in the sea..."
14. " many people die from smoking ...
15. " smoking is the main cause for lung cancer ,....

## G- Articles

1. " At least smokers know about that chemical substances in the cigarette..."
2. " If you smoke cigarette it will cost you a expensive money....."
4. " Finally the smoke cigarette is bad habit....."
5. " Today I am going to talk about one of major problem which face our .....
6. " The smoking is one of bad habit which is the people can't live without it ...."
7. " first of all the smoking is have a nicotine...."
8. " Bad breath, loss of taste, and mouth sores are at least the dangers of smoking..."
9. " The smoking is a harmful habit.
10. "I hope - very happy life.
11. The smoking is one of a bad habit
12. " In summary there are many ways to quit smoking. the first of all
13. " You must stop smoking and be a healthy man ...

## H- Plurality

1. " Smoking can cause many diseases like cancer..... "
2. " The most dangerous result is cancer and heart disease....."
3. " Many children are smoking now.... "
4. " ...give them some advice about the food should they eat,...."
5. " ...they should do some hobbies....."
6. " I give you some advice to stop or cut down this problem..."
7. " ..many smokers deny these dangers...."
8. with all this advice can stop of smoking
9. " . .... And a healthy body for smokers'
10. " It's bad health for your body and your children and your wives.....

11. " stop smoking for 10 years...'

## **I. Misuse of Auxiliaries**

1. It can been said that smoking is bad

2. First of all smoking is have a nicotine

3. Non-smokers try don't to sit with

4. Most people didn't smoke but they smell smoker

5. and I advice are don not smoking

6. A cigarette very bad and it is cause slow suisied.

7. it will can change your lung.

8. I ask myself why do all this people are smoking

9. What does these cigarettes do with those people

10. It can been said that smoking is bad .

11. First of all smoking is have a nicotine

13. Non-smokers try don't to sit with

14. Most people didn't smoke but they smell smoker

