

Studies Deanship of Graduate

Al-Quds University



*Analysis of Writing Errors Made by Palestinian EFL Learners in
Jericho Governmental Schools*

By

Ziyad Mustafa Dahnoun Borraaka

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***Writing Errors Made by Palestinian EFL Learners in Jericho
Governmental Schools***

By

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Supervisor

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**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the degree of
Master in Methods of Teaching English, Faculty of Graduate
Studies, at Al-Quds University, Jerusalem, Palestine, 2010**

Declaration

I certify that this thesis, submitted for the degree of master, is the result of my own research, except where otherwise acknowledged, and that this thesis (or any part of the same) has not been submitted for a higher degree to any university or institution.

Ziyad Mustafa Dahnoun Boreeka

Signature

Program of Graduate Studies in Education
Deanship of Graduate Studies

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my family, my wife Maha, and my children Ahmad and Hala. To my parents, brothers and sisters, who, gave me love and support. I also dedicate this work to my uncle Dr. Tawfeek Bali and my aunt Wafa'. Finally, all dedication goes to the soul of Palestinian martyrs, who taught us to immortalize their words and memories.

Acknowledgments

I am grateful to my professor Dr. Samir Rammal, my thesis director and supervisor, for his patience, guidance, and insights without which this work would not have been possible. Indeed, he spared every possible effort to provide me with the opportunity to enable me take decisions about how to best use these insights and thus to reflect on my work.

I owe equally as much to other committee members, Dr Ahmad Fahem Jaber and Dr Adnan Shehadeh whose consistent and firm suggestions helped me obtain the ultimately desired thesis.

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I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my family especially to my wife for her support and motivating advice. Finally, yet more importantly, I am indebted to my uncle Dr. Tawfeek Bali for his help and encouragement.

Abstract

This study aims to investigate the writing errors made by Palestinian EFL learners in Jericho governmental schools, Palestine. It also examines the effects of gender, the years of learning and teaching English and the kinds of errors that are made by Palestinians students in the twelfth grades classes in Jericho city in the scholastic year 2009-2010.

The study was conducted on the twelfth grade students who are learning English as a foreign language. The whole number is (415) students; (149) males and (266) females. The researcher randomly chose a sample of about (45%) of the population. More precisely, the sample consisted of (219) students; (86) males and (133) females.

The study managed to answer the following research questions:

- What are the types of errors made by the twelfth grade Arab EFL learners in Jericho city in the scholastic year 2009?
- Are there any differences in the errors made by EFL learners, in Jericho, due to gender, learning experience and teachers' experiences?

The researcher prepared a written exam which consisted of three choices:

- A composition; (Jerusalem the capital of Arab Culture) or (Green Palestine).

- write a personal letter telling a friend about a summer camp.

This study shows the types of the errors including (semantic, syntactic, coordination and subordination, rhetorical, punctuation and spelling, and the errors that are made by the effect of Arabic on the English). Precisely, the focus is mainly on syntactic errors and on the effect of the Arabic, being the mother tongue of the participants, on English, the learned language.

In light of this study, the researcher recommends the following:

- It is necessary to develop the English teaching strategies as a foreign language strategies for the 12th Grade Students in Jericho.
- Develop the listening skills of EFL students in governmental schools.
- Stop the use of Arabic language in classrooms since the main cause of committing errors in English writing is due to the effect of the native language on learners.

تحليل الأخطاء الكتابية في اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية للدارسين من الطلبة الفلسطينيين في مدارس أريحا الحكومية

زياد مصطفى محمود " دهنون بريقع " .

الملخص باللغة العربية .

تهدف هذه الدراسة التحليلية الوصفية إلى تحليل الأخطاء الكتابية في اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية للطلبة الفلسطينيين في مدارس أريحا الحكومية ، و بالتحديد حاولت الدراسة تقصي: أنواع الأخطاء الكتابية ، و هل يوجد فروق في تلك الأخطاء عائد ة إلى الجنس ، و سنوات الخبرة للمتعلمين وخبرة المدرسين ، و ما هي الاقتراحات المناسبة لمساعدة الطلبة و المعلمين لتخطي هذه الأخطاء .

شمل مجتمع الدراسة جميع طلبة الثانوية العامة الفرع الأدبي في محافظة أريحا للعام الدراسي 2009/2008 ، و البالغ عددهم (149) طالب، و (266) طالبة بما مجموعه من الطلبة (415) طالب و طالبة ، و قد أخذت الدراسة عينة من مجتمع الدراسة ، وهي مدرستان الأولى للإناث ، و هي مدرسة بنات أريحا الثانوية ، و عددهم (86) طالبة ، و الأخرى للذكور وهي مدرسة ذكور البحري و عددهم (133) طالبا" ، و بالتالي مجموع العينة (219) طالب و طالبة .

و قد جاءت هذه الدراسة لتقصي مدى تأثير اللغة العربية على اللغة الانجليزية لطلاب مدارس الحكومة الفلسطينية: و ذلك من خلال الإجابة عن الأسئلة الآتية:

(ما نوع الأخطاء الكتابية في اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية للطلبة الفلسطينيين في مدارس أريحا الحكومية للسنة الدراسية 2009؟) و(هل يوجد اختلافات في تلك الأخطاء عائد إلى الجنس ، و سنوات الخبرة للمتعلمين وخبرة المدرسين؟).

وتم إعداد امتحان كتابي يحتوي على ثلاثة اختبارات: (موضوعي إنشاء) (القدس عاصمة الثقافة العربية، و فلسطين الخضراء)، وكذلك رسالة شخصية إلى صديق تخبره عن مخيم صيفي.

أظهرت الدراسة أنواع الأخطاء التالية (المعاني ، الإعراب ، التنسيق ، الترتيب ، الترقيم ، اللفظ و أخطاء ناتجة عن تأثير اللغة الأم (اللغة العربية) على اللغة الثانية (اللغة الانجليزية) و قد كانت النسبة الأكبر من الأخطاء تتمركز حول الإعراب ، و تأثير اللغة العربية على اللغة الانجليزية .

و في ضوء نتائج الدراسة أوصى الباحث بما يلي:

- ضرورة تطوير الطرق المتبعة في تدريس اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية.
- تطوير مهارة الاستماع لدى الطلبة العرب إلى الناطقين باللغة الانجليزية تنشيط المحادثة في غرفة الصف أثناء التدريس باللغة الانجليزية.
- عدم استخدام اللغة العربية إلا عند الضرورة القصوى حيث أن المشكلة الأكبر تكمن وراء استخدام اللغة العربية داخل غرفة الصف.

Table of Contents

Page	Subject
ii	Declaration
iii	Dedication
iv	Acknowledgment
v	Abstract in English
vi	Abstract in Arabic
vii	Table of contents
viii	List of tables
1	Chapter One
3	Introduction
12	Statement of the problem
12	The importance of the problem
13	Objectives of the study
13	Research Methodology
14	Research Questions
15	Limitation of the study
16	The study abbreviation
16	The study definition
22	Chapter Two
23	Review of Literature
23	Theoretical Literature
23	Previous Studies
27	Studies related to the writing errors analysis
40	Chapter Three
41	Methodology and Procedures of the study
41	Population of the study
42	Research Design
43	Variables of the study
44	Instrument of the study
46	Data Collection
46	Data Analysis
48	Summary

49	Chapter Four
50	Results of the study
50	Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis
50	Types of Errors
50	Semantic errors
51	Syntactic Errors
58	Coordination and Subordination Errors
60	Errors made by the effect of L1 (Arabic Language) on L2 (English Language)
66	Rhetorical errors
69	Punctuation and Spelling
71	Students performance in the test
85	Chapter Five
86	Discussion of the Findings and Recommendations
87	Discussion the results of Data Analysis related to the errors made by students
88	Research Question One
89	Research Question Two
90	Research Question Three
92	Recommendations
95	Bibliography (References)
104	Appendixes
105	The Test

List of tables

Page	Title of table
15	Sample Distribution According to Sex
41	Sample Distribution According to Gender
44	Sample Distribution According to the years of learning English
73	Students classified to their marks in the test
74	Types of errors made by the students
75	Classification of the Semantic errors
76	Classification of the Syntactic errors
79	Classification of the Coordination and Subordination
79	Types of Rhetorical errors made by the students
80	Classification of Punctuation and Spelling errors
83	Classification of the errors made by the effect of L1(Arabic language) on L2 (English language)

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Chapter One

Analysis of writing Errors Made by Palestinian EFL Learners in Jericho Governmental Schools

Chapter One

Introduction

In recent years, there has been increasing interest in studies related to writing because as a skill, writing is very important especially for the 12th grade students, who are going to join universities and, thus, have to depend on themselves in expressing their feelings, needs, and ideas in correct written English. Besides, as university students, they have to be acquainted with and become fully equipped with the necessary writing skills that would enable them write academic reports and research papers in their prospective majors.

As a teacher of English for many years, the researcher has become well aware of the fact that Arabic speaking students in the 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th grades commit many errors in essay writing. Although these students have been studying English for many years at school, their errors are still numerous. Hence, I have decided to conduct an error analysis, which I consider a useful tool for describing and explaining students' writing errors, their causes, and the ways students and teachers should follow in order to overcome such errors.

Analysis of writing Errors made by Palestinian EFL Learners In Jericho

Governmental Schools is an important issue to study because of the difficulty that both teachers and students face in writing English, on one hand. On the other hand, mastering writing for specific purposes, in both Arabic and English is yet another serious problem that Arab students encounter. Accordingly, the central aim of this thesis is to investigate writing skills in English language, and to see whether there is an association between poor writing across English and Arabic languages.

The study also confirms that poor writing in English correlates with similar deficiencies in the mother tongue. Thus, the common assumption in ELT that all learners are fully competent in their first language skills is unfounded, as is much of the criticism of ELT programs for speakers of Arabic, based on poor writing skills in English.

The mastery of written academic English is a central aim of teaching English because English is the language of instruction in these institutions (academic reports, essays, applications and CVs.....etc.) English writing for taking notes, describing objects or devices, writing essays, answering written questions, writing experimental reports, etc. For these reasons, writing has always been an essential aspect of the curriculum of English for Academic Purposes. Yet, students face a number of difficulties in using English for academic purposes. Moreover, formal and informal discussions with our colleagues in Arabic Departments indicate that these students do not also write Arabic (their mother tongue) properly; (this information was furnished by some Arabic teachers in many schools in Jericho). These considerations prompted the researchers to look at nearer errors in written English, to investigate the association, if any, between

categories of errors, and to present some practical recommendations for the teaching of written English for academic purposes.

As we all know, we communicate orally and/or in writing. The researcher focuses, in this study, on the written part. "In spoken conversations with others, we make sense of the dialogue in a complex back-and-forth process of negotiation of meaning between speakers. In written texts, this back-and-forth negotiation is not possible; there is only 'one pass.' The sentence written and read because there is no possibility of negotiating meaning of written documents, the inevitable problems of misunderstandings are exacerbated" (Penman, 1998, page 33). Hence, we can say that writing is an "intricate" and complex task; it is the "most difficult of the language abilities to acquire" (Allen & Corder, 1974, page 177). Its level of difficulty varies between native speakers (NS) who think in the language used (in our 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, in general, to think about all those rules they need to apply, rules that native speakers are supposed to have automatized. Therefore, non-native speakers are more prone to making mistakes and/or committing errors.

It is essential here to make a distinction between mistake and error; both Corder (1967, 1971) and James (1998) reveal a criterion that helps us to do so: it is the self-correct ability criterion (that means if the student re-read what he has written he might find or discover the errors, because of his experience and reading. A mistake can be self-corrected, but an error cannot. Errors are "systematic," i.e. likely to occur repeatedly and

are not usually recognized by the learner. Hence, only the teacher or researcher would locate them, the learner would not (Gas & Selinker, 1994, page 59). Moreover, it is in this light that the researcher chose to focus on students' errors but not on their mistakes.

The researcher well aware of commit many errors in essay writing. These students have been studying English their whole lives and still, their errors are numerous. Hence, as a researcher, I have decided to conduct an error analysis—as an effective tool for describing and explaining errors made by speakers of other languages (Johansson, 1975) – in order to know the sources of these errors and the reasons behind their continued occurrence year after year with different groups of learners. I needed to familiarize myself with the types of errors that my students make in order to determine the sequence and emphasis of instruction.

After having reviewed the literature, I noticed that no study had been done (that I knew of, at least!) which involves Arabic speaking students who have been studying English since eight or twelve years; students who are studying English interactively, as a first language. However, it is essential here to mention the fact that the language these students speak at home is Arabic, not English; hence, we can venture to say that they are EFL students however immersed in English they might be at school.

Can this fact account for our problems? Is my students' native language (L1) "contaminating" their English (L2)? If this were to be true, then we could say that the reason behind all those errors is Negative L1 transfer/Mother Tongue interference? In addition, the best way to

discover such a transfer is through error analysis (Sridhar, 1980),
However, can transfer alone justify all the errors made?

The researcher discussed in this chapter:

- 1) What is error Analysis?
- 2) What are models of Errors?
- 3) What are sources of Errors?
- 4) Identified, described, categorized, and diagnosed Arabic speakers' errors in English essay writing in order to find the sources of those errors and remediation. Besides, he also covered the implications of the findings for teaching EFL/English to Arabic speaking students. Finally, discussed the limitation of this study and proposed future areas of research.

First errors of learning are usually gigantic. Then, and gradually, they diminish as one benefits of his/her errors. In a later stage of learning foreign or second language, learners expected to reach a native speaker's competence or, at least, near that competence where errors eliminated or minimized to the extent that their impact on the learners' communication disappears, or they go unnoticed. However, unfortunately, the case with most of second language learners' errors is not so. Errors, mistakes, slips and attempts, as Edge (1989) has classified and termed them, insist on staining foreign or second language learners' written and verbal performance.

Do errors annoy EFL teachers? Sure they do. Teachers are eager to find their students' writing and verbal performance free of errors. However, second language acquisition (SLA) researchers (Corder, 1971; Richards, 1972 and 1984; Nemser, 1971; and Dulay and Burt, 1973) look at the picture from a different perspective. Errors, they suggest, should not annoy teachers; rather, they should look at as a sign of development of the students' second language. Errors, they add, reflect the students' linguistic, writing, and communication competences at a given stage of their long way to master a foreign language, the linguistic system students are trying to build up and the strategies they are employing to learn.

A substantial number of studies on error analysis have been carried out all over the world to ease the errors' problem and to make the EFL teacher's task in the classroom smoother and easier. However, errors insist to accompany second language learners' verbal and written performance. Error analysis is a type of linguistic analysis that focuses on the errors learners make. "At the level of pragmatic classroom experience, error analysis will continue to provide one means by which the teacher assesses learning and teaching and determines priorities for future effort." According to Corder (1974, p79), error analysis has two objects: one theoretical and another applied. The theoretical object serves to "elucidate what and how a learner learns when he studies a second language." In addition, the applied object serves to enable the learner "to learn more efficiently by exploiting our knowledge of his dialect for pedagogical purposes."

The investigation of errors can be at the same time diagnostic and prognostic. It is diagnostic because it can tell us the learner's state of the language (Corder, 1967) at a given point during the learning process and prognostic because it can tell course organizers to reorient language-learning materials based on the learner's current problems.

It is helpful to keep in mind some of the many uses we are likely to make of writing. For example, on a personal level, most of us use writing to make a note of something (things we have to do or want others to do, like our shopping list), and to keep records of things we want to remember. We send messages and write letters to friends, and a few of us keep diaries. Most of us have to fill in forms from time to time (especially applications -- for example, for insurance - or questionnaires) and occasionally we write formal letters (for example, if we change our job). Apart from this, the amount of writing we do regularly will relate to our professional life. Some might spend a good deal of time writing letters, instructions, reports, etc. For others this will only be an occasional activity. Few of us, on the other hand, are likely to spend any time writing poetry or fiction. In addition, outside the classroom, we never write 'compositions' (My daily routine, my favorite pastime, etc.) of the kind that are still a feature of many examinations!

Writing can be extremely demanding for students because it calls upon many experiential, cognitive, linguistic, affective and psychomotor memories and abilities, writing involves lower-order transcription skills and higher-order composing skills. The problems experienced by weaker writers' compound by their feelings of incompetence and lack of success.

Developing clear and accurate expression through writing presents the major problem for most students with learning difficulties. Written language is perhaps the most difficult of all skills to acquire because its development involves the effective coordination of many different cognitive, linguistic and psychomotor processes. Sturm and Koppenhaver (2000, 1979, page 35) tell us that composing for writing involves complex thinking that must integrate multiple components including the topic or theme, choice of words, organization, purpose, audience, clarity, sequence, cohesion and transcription. Competence in writing in different genres and for different purposes relies heavily on possession of adequate vocabulary, knowledge of syntactical structures, and appropriate strategies for planning, composing, reviewing and revising written language. The ability to generate ideas and organize appropriate content for writing also needs some measure of creativity and imagination (Rief, 2006, page 103). Writers also need to be able to spell the necessary words with some accuracy; and finally, writing requires fine motor coordination and automaticity in handwriting or keyboarding.

It is because writing is a complex skill involving multiple processes and abilities that problems can arise for some students. There is reason to suppose that the number of students with writing difficulties is even greater than the number having trouble in reading with understanding (Lindstrom, 2007). Saddler et al. (2004, p. 3) wisely remark that, ‘Good writing is not only hard work, it is an extremely complex and challenging mental task’ motivation and anxiety problems often accompany the process of writing for those who are not proficient, and can seriously

interfere with the quality and quantity of text the student produces (Lindstrom, 2007). The attitude of weak writers toward writing becomes entirely negative ('I can't write, so I hate writing') and they avoid the task whenever possible.

The challenge for teachers is to restore students' lost interest and motivation for writing. A classroom where the atmosphere encourages all students to experiment with writing and to take risks without fear of criticism is a necessary but insufficient condition to achieve this change. Weaker writers will still need a very large amount of support and guidance from their teachers to reach the stage where they can recognize their own progress. For some students it may be necessary at first to use various incentives and rewards (extrinsic motivation) to increase the time they spend engaged in writing. It is also necessary to ensure that students attempt to write about topics that genuinely interest them and to which they can relate at a personal level. Some of the activities recommended in the next.

The researcher tried to discuss the types of errors from a number of perspectives:

1- **Semantic Errors:**

Semantic deals with the meanings of words and utterances. On one hand, I will focus on the lexical confusion errors, which are due to interference from Arabic. On the other hand, I will try to find the

lexical malformation that means creating words that are non-existent in the L2.

2- **Syntactic Errors:**

(A) There are errors made by Arab learners in the use of the noun phrase. These are pronouns, articles, quantifiers, adjectives, and prepositions.

(B) Errors in the use of the verb phrase constituents including: tenses, modals, passives, and adverb.

(C) Usage Errors made in of the English sentences including word order, wh-questions, and negative statements.

3- **Coordination and subordination errors:** there are some errors in using the conjunction connectors, Relative clauses....., etc.

4- **Rhetorical Errors:**

There are errors including repetition, parallelism, cohesion, introductory statements, and shifting from indirect to direct speech.

Punctuation and Spelling

The researcher tried to find the errors in the use of punctuation marks and in spelling.

The effect of L1 (Arabic language) on L2 (English Language) writing.

The population of the study is Arab EFL learners whose mother language effect on the foreign language might be the main cause of the problem. Then errors they are likely to make, the researcher has to find, classify, and analyze.

Statement of Problems:

Arabic speaking students who have studied English for eight or twelve years, it is essential to mention the fact that the language these students speak at home is mainly Arabic, not English; hence we can venture to say that they are EFL students whose English has mistakes, especially in writing.

This study tackles the question of errors made by Palestinians EFL learners in Jericho governmental schools. The students' errors in written English were collected, corrected, and analyzed so as to comment on them and determine the causes that led students to make such errors. It is intended that the error analysis sheds light on the learning strategies students employ to learn English as a foreign language. Some important implications were inferred help EFL teachers improve their teaching methods, and in turn, reduce their students' English writing errors.

“To use two languages familiarly and without contaminating one by the other is very difficult,” maintains Samuel Johnson in 1961. Therefore, the researcher has tried to find the errors, which are usually made by Arab students at the secondary school level, especially those errors made by 12th grade students. He, then, analyzed them in order to describe and put some principles for students to avoid such writing errors.

The Importance of the Study:

Studying errors made by Arab learners in writing English as foreign language gives the teachers types of errors, the reasons of the errors and what are the suitable English language (as foreign language) strategies that may reduce or get rid of writing errors. The importance of teaching language rules when teaching writing documented in many studies. For example, in their survey Leki and Carson (1994:89) found that the largest percentage of responses to the question of what students would like to have learned or learned better in their writing classes was “more language skills”. The most frequently expressed specific needs were vocabulary and grammar.

Hedgcock and Lefkowitz (1994) also noted that both EFL and ESL responses to their survey concerning student response to feedback conventions “indicate a strong concern for formal text features, such as lexical and grammatical accuracy” (p. 150)

Teachers in the Arab world in general and Palestinian teachers in particular, face serious writing errors while they correct their students' English writing. These errors make them think of ways how

to solve this dilemma, so this study attempted to describe the errors from different perspectives. Moreover, it mainly focused on exposing and analyzing elements and principles of writing mechanism.

Objectives of the Study:

This study mainly aims at describing Arab students' writing errors in English, analyzing these errors, and suggesting ways to help student learners overcome these errors.

Research Methodology:

The study being a descriptive analytical in nature, the researcher in dealing with the data collection, opted for giving a writing task to the 12th Grade students at Jericho Secondary School. Students were asked to write a composition similar to the task they encounter in the TAWJIHI standard examination. Then, the researcher carefully studied the writings of the student participants, marked their errors, categorized, described, and analyzed them. Finally, the researcher provided suggestions that would help the learners overcome their writing problems.

Limitation of the study

- *Place limitation:* Jericho Secondary Schools (Literary Stream).
- *Time limitation:* Scholastic year is (2008–2009).
- *Human limitation:* The students are AL-Buhtory & Jericho Secondary Schools.

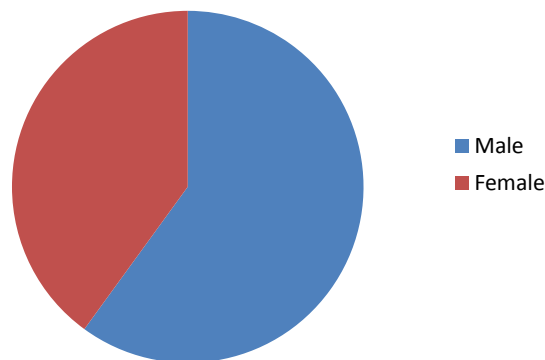
- **Variables:**

This study comprised the following variables:

- **Sex**: two levels of sex, males or females.
 - **Years of learning English**: two levels, 12 or 8 years.
 - **Stream**: is the literary stream.
-
- **Sample Distribution According to Sex**

Percentage	Number	Sex
60%	133	Male
40%	86	Female
100%	219	Total

Sample distribution according to the gender



Research Questions:

The purpose of this study is to analyze errors made by Palestinian Arab EFL learners in Jericho Secondary School.

The study attempts to answer the following question:-

1. What are the types of errors made by Arab EFL learners in Jericho Secondary School?
2. Is there any difference in the errors made by EFL learners in Jericho due to gender, learning experience, and teachers' experience?

Limitations of the Study:

This study is limited to the students in Jericho Secondary School Literary Stream “AL-Buthory School, and Jericho Secondary School for girls in the scholastic year 2008–2009, Second Semester.

The Study Abbreviations:

- 1- **ESL** (English as a second language)
- 2- **ESOL** (English for speakers of other languages)
- 3- **EFL** (English as a foreign language)
- 4-**EA** (Errors Analysis)
- 5- **ELT** (English Language Teaching)
- 6- **ELT** (English language Teaching)
- 7- **TESL** (Teaching English as a Second language)
- 8- **TESOL** (Teaching English to speakers of other languages)
- 9-**TEFL** (teaching English as a foreign language)

- 10- **TESL** (Teaching of English as a second language)

- 11- **FL** (Foreign Language)
- 12-**CA** (Classification Analysis)

The Study Definitions:

Error and Mistakes

The different systems of language lead learners to make errors and mistakes. In order to analyze learners’ errors in learning a foreign

language, it is too crucial to make a distinction between mistakes and errors.

1- **Errors**

As stated above, the different systems of language make us commit errors when using the target language. Here the researcher tried to define what an error is. "An error is noticeable writing from the adult writing of native speaker, reflecting the inter language competence of the learners." (Brown, 1980: 165) There are two ways to conceptualize 'inter-language /IL'. First, it can refer to the abstraction of learner language, the aggregate of forms, processes and strategies that learners resort to in the course of tackling an additional language. This concept is similar to de Saussure's langue. Alternatively, 'IL' can be used to refer to any one of a number of concretizations (cf. de Saussure's parole) of the underlying system (James, 1998: 7) Errors are typically produced by people who do not yet have full command of language institutionalized system (Corder, 1974: 29). The errors themselves are competence errors. According Corder, true errors are markers of the learners' competence (Richards, 1974). Errors caused by deficiency in competence and a shortcoming in the knowledge of language learners make errors when they have not learnt something correctly.

From the linguists' opinion above, the researcher would conclude that a mistake refers to the failure to use the language system correctly is caused by some factors such as carelessness, memory lapses, and physical

condition. While error, refers to the failure to use the system correctly is caused by the lack of the learners' competence.

2- Mistakes

A mistake is different from an error. A mistake refers to a performance of error that is either random or a slip of the tongue, in that it is failure to utilize a known system correctly (Brown, 1980: 165).

A mistake refers to performance of errors that are a random guess or a slip, in that it is a failure.

Mistakes caused by hesitation, slips of the tongue: the learner, who makes mistakes, will sometime use one form or another. This shows an inconsistency. For example:

A. Learners produce "he must go" and "he must to go".

B. Learners pronounce the word error (intruction) not Instruction.

3- Writing

There is no particular definition of writing stated by an author or a linguist. L. Strauss in J. Hartley, et al (1962: 66) stated that "writing might, that is to say, be regarded as a form of artificial memory, whose development should be accompanied by a deeper knowledge of the past and, therefore, by a greater ability to organize the present and the future."

In fact, there are some acts of writing which used as the basis for conceiving the meaning of writing. Those acts of writing are in line with the development of learning to write through which a student should pass. Writing involves more than just producing words and sentences.

Producing a piece of writing, we should write a connected series of words

and sentences, which grammatically and logically linked, so that the purpose we have in our mind will suit the intended readers.

The style of language used in a piece of writing designed for nonprofessional and people living in the village is different from the one design for educated people such as students, teachers, doctors and professors. Whether style is feature of literary composition belongs to form and expression rather than to the substance of the thought or matter expressed and a manner of discourse or tone of speaking, adopted in addressing others or in ordinary conversation. Writing with the understanding from the past time in order to inform and express what had happened. It organized well in order to be understandable for the readers (Harmer, 2004: 3). Just like speaking, writing is a way of communicating a message with an intended audience. It is a means of expressing thoughts, ideas, and feelings. By writing, we may flow out a burden occupying our mind offer our ideas and concepts to others, and share our knowledge and experiences.

However different from writing, much of our speaking is spontaneous, noncomplex, and linked to the particular situation at hand. Speech is ephemeral. It lasts the moment of speaking. It is gone as soon as it is uttered. In some cases, especially in informal situations, a speaker pays a little attention to the conventions of speaking such as the composition of talk, the organization, development, and the articulation. However, it does not reduce the comprehensibility of the nuances delivered by the speaker to the audience.

Writing is more than just public communication; it is also a way of thinking. Writing involves a range of writer's consciousness. When we sit down holding a pen and facing a piece of paper ready to write, apparently we are engaging in more than just one act of consciousness, such as the contents of thoughts, the style of thoughts, the organization of thoughts, the purpose of thought, and so on. These acts lead us to create a good and careful thinking, which strongly needed when we want to produce a good writing.

Writing as one of the four language skills, in real world contexts, is a social act. It is not an activity in its own right or is not a solitary enterprise, but one that serves the other skills. Therefore, writing has a relation with grammar, reading, listening, and speaking.

Most students find foreign language writing is difficult; they will rarely need to write in adult life, so they will decrease the amount of writing. Rivers as quoted by Swarbick (1994: 142) describes five stages of development that students need to go through in acquiring competence in writing, i.e.: copying, reproduction, recombination, guided writing, and free writing.

We should also consider the writing process. It is influenced by the content and the medium of the writing. The processes are planning, drafting, editing, and final draft (Harmer, 2004: 4-6). They are the steps if we want to compose a good writing.

Before writing, we should plan what do we write about, and the purposes of the writing. After that, we can start to write. We may produce a number of writing (draft) and editing in order to get the good writing –

that is the final draft. Writing involves some activities before, when we write, and after writing. The activities before we write include exploring ideas which could be building vocabulary, interviewing someone, discussion, etc; and organizing ideas which could be ordering information in a paragraph, writing topic sentences, limiting information, using a time sequence, making an idea map, categorizing and making outline, summarizing ideas, writing titles, etc. When we write, we should develop cohesion and style, which includes connecting ideas, adding details, selecting the correct verb tense, selecting the correct tense, and writing the first draft. This is not the end of writing. After we write the first draft, we should edit and revise it. It could be the content, form, organization, cohesion and style, and grammar. In order to produce a good writing we should write more than just one draft. A good writing could be the fourth or fifth draft or even more.

English as a Foreign or Second Language

ESL (English as a second language), **ESOL** (English for speakers of other languages), and **EFL** (English as a foreign language)

All refer to the use or study of English by speakers with a different native language, the precise usage, including the different use of the terms ESL and ESOL in different countries. These terms are most commonly used in relation to teaching and learning English, but they may be use in relation to demographic information.

ELT (English language teaching) is a widely used teacher-centered term, as in the English language teaching divisions of large publishing houses, ELT training, etc.

TESL (teaching English as a second language), **TESOL** (teaching English to speakers of other languages) and **TEFL** (teaching English as a foreign language) are also used.

EFL, English as a foreign language, indicates the use of English in a non-English-speaking region. Study can occur either in the student's home country, as part of the normal school curriculum or otherwise, or, for the more privileged minority, in an Anglophone country that they visit as a sort of educational tourist, particularly immediately before or after graduating from university.

TEFL is the teaching of English as a foreign language; note that this sort of instruction can take place in any country, English-speaking or not. Typically, EFL learned to either pass exams as a necessary part of one's education, or for career progression while working for an organization or business with an international focus. EFL may be part of the state school curriculum in some countries.

ESL is (English as a second language). This term has criticized because many learners already speak more than one language.

TESL: is the teaching of English as a second language.

Chapter Two

Chapter Two

Review of Literature

This chapter aims to demonstrate the available relevant literature to the study since the researcher has tackled the concept and goals of the analysis of errors made by Arab EFL learners. He has also surveyed previous foreign and Arabic studies that discuss the concept of analysis of writing errors made by Arab EFL learners.

First: Theoretical Background:

Error analysis first introduced by Fries (1945) and Lado (1957) who have claimed that foreign or second language learners' errors could be predicted based on the differences between the learners native and second languages. They have also suggested that where the aspects of the target language are similar to those of the learners' native language, learning will be easy; otherwise, it will be difficult and second language learners expected to make errors. Since then linguists compared and contrasted languages in an attempt to figure out the differences or similarities that

might exist between them and used these data to predict transfer errors second or foreign language learners would make. As a result, contrastive analysis dominated SLA research for quite a time. It hoped that the findings reached by the different researchers would eventually be used to help develop special drills and exercises that would help learners learn correct and accurate use of the target language, and, in turn, eliminate or, at least, minimize their errors.

The serious challenges to the predictive power and theoretical foundation of classical classification analysis CA, together with the dissatisfaction teachers with the inadequacy of CA to account for learner errors, gave rise to a shift of focus from the CA treatment of errors to the error analysis movement.

The behaviorist theory of second language learning and transfer theory was seriously challenged by Chomsky, whose seminal review of Skinner's (1959) *Verbal Behavior* cast serious doubts on the adequacy of habit formation theory of language learning. Learners are no longer seen as passive recipients of language input. Rather, they go through a process of "creative construction". That is, the second/ foreign language learner, like the first language learner, acquires the language by testing hypotheses about the L2 structures. In sum, the behaviorist theory of second language acquisition was supplanted by "cognitive code – learning" theory, which places great emphasis on the creative role of the learner in the learning process.

EFL teachers and second language acquisition researchers are always involved in describing the performance data of learners in the hope that

such description will provide evidence that the learners are attempting to learn the foreign/ second language systems. The learning process accompanies by difficulties, problem or errors, which are the manifestation of an emerging linguistic system that develops in stages or inter languages “ILs” (Selinker, 1972).

Over the past four decades, some applied linguists have been preoccupied with studying FL learners’ errors with the objective of gaining insights into the process of second language acquisition.

Error analysis first introduced by Fries (1945) and Lado (1957), who have claimed foreign or second language learners, errors could be predicated based on the differences between the learners native and second languages. They have also suggested that where the aspects of the target language are similar to those of the learners, native language, and learning will be easy; otherwise, it will be difficult and second language learners expected to make errors. Since then linguists compared and contrasted languages in an attempt to figure out the differences or similarities that might exist between them and used these data to predict transfer errors second or foreign language learners would make. As a result, contrastive analysis dominated SLA research for quite a time. It hoped that the findings reached by the different researchers would eventually used to help develop special drills and exercises that would help learners learn correct and accurate sue of the target language, and, in turn, eliminate or, at least, minimize their errors.

However, the picture not completed at that point. Errors refer to manifest themselves in the learners’ written and verbal production. In

addition, classroom teachers have found out that where learners are expected to make errors, they actually don't, and where they are not expected to err, they do they face difficulties where they are not expected to (Dulay and Burt, 1973; Macnamara, 1971). The conclusion reached by the EFL classroom teacher and SLA researchers was that contrastive analysis is not the efficient tool by which second or foreign language learners' errors could be predicated and accounted for. They also discovered many errors that were clearly not due to interference from the learners' native language. Therefore, it was safe for these researchers to assume that there must be other sources of errors besides the first language interference. Consequently, SLA researchers shifted their focus from predicating errors based on contrasting languages to classifying the various kinds of errors they see learners making.

As a result of that shift, a substantial number of studies (Corder, 1985; Selinker, 1972; Emam, 1972; Scott and Tucker, 1974; El – Hibir, 1976; Ibrahim, 1978; Kharma, 1981; Ellis, 1985; Kharma and Hajjaj, 1989; Mukattash, 1981; Shaheen, 1984; Abed – El – Jawad, 1986; El – Hibir & Al – Taha, 1992) have been carried out all over the world. It was hoped that by studying the various types of errors made by second or foreign language learners, SLA researchers would be able to draw a clear picture of the second language learning process, the learning strategies followed by second or foreign language learners and the sources of the learners' errors. It was also hoped, would help reduce these errors through drills and exercises devised based on this error analysis. So error analysis dominated the field of SLA research for a long time, however, the fruits

of this new trend of SLA research were not up to the researchers' and teachers' expectations.

Errors are still found in the verbal and written performance of second or foreign language learners. What makes things worse is that error analysis appears to suffer from different weaknesses. Hoornstra (2002), Ellis (1985), Tono (1999) and Larsen – Freeman & Long (1991) have pointed out the weaknesses error analysis suffers from are as follows: first, the collected data for error analysis represent a single point in time. Therefore, error analysis is not an efficient tool by itself for studying the development of the learners' second language. Second, error analysis deals with the learners' verbal and written production; that is the production competence. Up to date, it cannot tackle the receptive competence, which is as important as that to the production. Third, error analysis is based on a linguistic paradigm which does not describe accurately the way language work. Fourth, it is said that error analysis is not a perfect tool to categorize errors and explain their sources. A close look at the different studies which deal with errors, these critics of error analysis have suggested, will clarify the discrepancy that exists among the findings reached by different researchers. What might be an interference error in one study is a developmental one in another. The conclusion that might be reached is that error analysis, to some extent, is impressionistic, and that is a real serious problem which error analysis suffers from.

Regardless of these problems, error analysis helps SLA researchers learn more about the psycholinguistic process involved in

learning a second or a foreign language. These processes, it suggested, constitute an important role in the learning of the second and even the first language (Senders & Moray, 1991.p.47). Moreover, EFL teachers and methodologists need error analysis to understand the learning strategies of the second language learners, and in turn, develop better teaching methods.

Studies Related to the Writing Errors Analysis

Bartholomae, David, 1986.

Explores the implications of the observation teachers need to be able to recognize styles of writing. Bartholomae believes that a literary education is fundamental to being able to discern style. Furthermore, a literary education involves the realization that style derived from the language of a cultural legacy. Basic writers, however, do not have the literary education to ground their use of language, which results in their writing being adequate, but not expressive.

Bartholomae, David, 1980.

He examines 'the basic writing' as a variety of writing with its own style and suggests that error in basic writing "can only be understood as evidence of intention" (255). Error analysis, then, can help teachers recognize stages of individual development and assist instruction.

Connors, Robert J. and Andrea A. Lunsford, 1988,

Connors and Lunsford present their analysis of 3000 marked essays in order to discover the most common patterns of student errors marked most consistently by American instructors. Major findings include the observation that teachers disagree on what constitutes a makeable error, and tend to mark errors related to how serious or annoying the error perceived for both student and teacher, although the difficulty in explaining the nature of the error also factors into the process. Furthermore, all stereotypes of English teachers' side, teachers do not mark many errors. Finally, and more refreshingly, the study suggests that college students at the end of the century do not make more errors than they did earlier in the century.

Harris, Muriel, 1981.

Harris analyzes sentence fragments found in student papers according to a scheme defining different categories of fragments: broken sentences and minor sentences. Focus is on a particular kind of minor sentence: the fragmented free modifier. She suggests strategies for dealing with these errors.

Kroll Barry, John C. Schafer 1978.

They discuss the connection between error analysis--using errors as indicators of mechanical and conceptual patterns and a process approach to writing. Discusses the possible sources of errors in ESL writers and shows how an understanding of the source of an error can apply to helping the writer move toward the correct form.

Odell, Lee, 1973.

Odell suggests that teachers' responses to student writing should identify and refine the strategies of students' mental processes. These strategies include focus, contrast, change, reference to sequence, reference to physical context, and classification. He analyzes several examples of student writing to explain useful response techniques.

Struck H. R 1976

Struck argues that graduate students are more motivated than undergrads to improve their writing, and describes the course he teaches to PhD students in a variety of disciplines. He improves graduate students' writing by doing "frequency counts" on their writing samples to explain the kinds of stylistic problems that occur in their work, such as verb variety, subject vs. non-subject sentence openers, and passive construction.

Wall, Susan V. and Glynda A Hull, 1989

Writing instructors assume that they share a common knowledge with respect to various types of student errors. Wall and Hull, however, conducted a study using 55 English teachers, including elementary, secondary, and university teachers. The results indicate that teachers do not share a common assumption of what constitutes error.

Williams, Joseph M., 1981.

He discusses the difficulty of defining grammatical/mechanical errors, and the wide variation in definitions and judgments about the seriousness of different errors. Defines categories of error, based on whether a rule was violated or not, and whether we (readers) notice or respond to its violation or not. He discusses errors that fall into each of these categories.

Selinker, 1972

He defines errors “as the part of IL performance judged to be deviant from an idealized TL norm in some way”. Lennon (1991) defines errors as “... a linguistic form from which, in the same context.... Would in all likelihood not been produced by learners’ native speaker counterparts.” (James, 1998, page 64)

Dulay, 1982

She cogently outlined four major descriptive for the classification of errors into categories, Linguistic category, surface strategy, comparative taxonomy and communicative effect.

1. Linguistic category

A linguistic category classifies errors based on the language component and constituent affected by the error. Language components comprise phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, lexicon, text and discourse. Examples of constituent’s are: noun phrase, verb phrase, auxiliary, preposition, adjective, adverb, etc.

2. Surface strategy

Surface strategy enables the researcher to classify errors on the basis of the alteration entailed by the error. Four categories are suggested; omission, addition/ over inclusion, information/ miss election a misordering.

Omission errors involve the absence of a linguistics item in an utterance. It generally agreed that learners usually omit grammatical morphemes, as opposed to content words. Examples of grammatical morphemes are: articles, auxiliaries, pronouns, and prepositions. Addition, in contrast, involves the over inclusion of unnecessary items in an utterance. Malformation errors involve the substitution or confusion of two items. Misordering errors involve misplacement of a linguistic item or structure in an utterance.

3. Comparative Taxonomy: The classification of errors, determined comparison is between the structure of L2 errors and certain types of constructions'. (Dulay et al., p. 163) Most EA studies compared L2 errors to structures in the learner's first language (Interlingual errors) or to errors made by children learning the L2 as their mother tongue (developmental errors).

Interlingual errors result from the learner's attempt to fall back on L1 structures while producing L2 utterances. To identify Interlingual errors,

the researcher translates the learner's L2 utterance into the learner's L1, example the utterance.

Developmental errors, on the other hand, are similar to those made by children learning the L2 as their L1. For example, the following erroneous utterance produced by an Arab EFL learner is developmental since the same error also found in the speech of children learning English as L1.

4. Communicative Effect Taxonomy

According to communicative effect, taxonomy errors are evaluated based on their effect on the native speaker, reader, or listener. Errors that cause miscommunication are called "global" by Burt & Kiparsky (1972, 1974). Examples are word order of major constituents and missing wrong or misplaced sentence connectors. Local errors, in contrast, do not hinder communication. Examples are errors in nouns, verbs, auxiliaries. Khalil (1984) evaluated the communicative effect on American native speakers of EFL learners. Two measures used: evaluation (intelligibility and naturalness judgments) and interoperation. He found that semantically deviant utterances are judged to be less intelligible and interpretable than were grammatically deviant utterances.

Stinson, N 1997

He investigates the actual writing process of individual learners when writing in a foreign language and in their mother tongue. Such a within – subjects design allows us to assess the degree to which individual

students operate in the same way in the two languages, which is an issue that is central to the teaching of writing in a foreign language. If learners experience difficulties writing in a foreign language, this may well be due to problems with writing in the mother tongue. Our investigation provides information on the extent to which the ability to write in L2 depends on L1 writing skills.

Tetroe, 1987

When studying the writing process, naturally, the expectation is that there will be some kind of correspondence between the process and the result of that process.

Found close relationships between the quality of the writing process and the quality of the essays produced and, in the study by Jones and Tetroes (1987), the quality of planning corresponded to essay quality.

Pennington (1993) found no relationship between process and product. The different findings are due to differences in the number of subjects used in the investigations but might also be attributed to other variables that vary from study to study.

Cumming, 1989

The question of the contribution of L2 language proficiency and L1 writing skills to L2 writing success also addressed in studies of the L2 writing process. Cumming (1989) found that both variables have a bearing on L2 writing performance but, judging from the results of his study of university level students, the two variables contribute differently

L1 writing skills found to relate significantly to the quality of the L2 writing process. In other words, expert writers in L1 demonstrated an expert process in L2 and basic writers in L1 used a basic process in L2, regardless of the fact that some of the writers in each group had intermediate level L2 language proficiency did not seem to affect the quality of the L2 writing process. In other words, if students are good writers in L1; the chances are that they operate a skilled process in L2 and vice versa. However, L2 language proficiency coincided with essay quality; informants with advanced levels of L2 proficiency obtained better ratings on their essays than those with intermediate level proficiency. These issues will also be addressed in this study.

Cumming, 1989

The enterprise of investigating learner processes is not only time consuming, but also tricky. Since we do not have direct access to what goes on in people's minds, we have to rely on indirect evidence of learner processes. Whether this indirect evidence obtained via think-aloud procedures or via computer programs tracking the subjects' every move and action, the data elicited have to be interpreted. By its very nature, such interpretation is highly subjective, and all researchers can do is try to avoid idiosyncratic interpretations by respecting a set of rules that has emerged over time of this kind of enquiry. First, adopting a theory of the writing process ensures that researchers can explicitly state the kinds of phenomena they are looking for in the data. Second, the underlying theory of the writing process that guides the study has implications for the

type of data collection used or the study. Finally, the analysis of the data must carry out by the last two analyses that, ideally speaking would arrive at the exact same interpretation of the same piece of data.

S.P. Corder

Error Analysis owes its place as a scientific method in linguistics. As Rod Ellis cites (p. 48) said, "It was not until the 1970s that EA became a recognized part of applied linguistics, a development that owed much to the work of Corder." It was Corder who showed to whom information about errors would be helpful (teachers, researchers, and students) and how. There are many major concepts introduced by S.P. Corder in his article "The significance of learners' errors", among which we encounter the following:

1. The learner determines what the input is. The teacher can present a linguistic form, but this is not necessarily the input, but simply what is available to learn.
2. Keeping the above point in mind, learners' needs should consider when teachers/linguists plan their syllabuses. Before Corder's work, syllabuses based on theories and not so much on learners' needs.
3. Points out that the learners' built-in syllabus is more efficient than the teacher's syllabus. Corder adds that if such a built-in syllabus exists, then learners' errors would confirm its existence and would be systematic.

4. Corder introduced the distinction between systematic and non-systematic errors. Unsystematic errors occur in one's native language; Corder calls these "**mistakes**" and states that they are not significant to the process of language learning. He keeps the term "**errors**" for the systematic ones, which occur in a second language.
5. Errors are significant in three ways:
 - To the teacher: they show a student's progress
 - To the researcher: they show how a language is acquired, what strategies the learner uses.
 - To the learner: he can learn from these errors.
6. When a learner has made an error, the most efficient way to teach him the correct form is not by simply giving it to him, but by letting him discover it and test different hypotheses. (This is derived from Carroll's proposal (Carroll 1955, cited in Corder), who suggested that the learner should find the correct linguistic form by searching for it.
7. Many errors are due to that the learner uses structures from his native language. Errors in this case are not inhibitory, but rather evidence of one is learning strategies.

Corder introduced the distinction between *errors* (in competence) and *mistakes* (in performance).

Dulay and Burt, (1974)

Who proposed the following three categories of errors: developmental, interference and unique.

Stenson, (1974)

The writer proposed another category, that of induced errors, which result from incorrect instruction of the language.

Taylor, (1986)

Reminded researchers of its importance and suggested ways to overcome these weaknesses.

Kroll and Schafer

"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.

Claude Hagège, 1999.

Concentrated on those errors, which demonstrate the influence of one's native language to second language acquisition, interference errors can be facilitative and provide information about learning strategies. According

to Hagège, interference between L1 and L2 observed in children as well as in adults. In adults, it is more obvious and increases continuously, as a monolingual person gets older and the structures of his first language get stronger and impose themselves more and more on any other language the adult wishes to learn. In contrast, as regards children, interference features will not become permanent unless the child does not have sufficient exposure to L2. If there is sufficient exposure, then instead of reaching a point where they can no longer correct (as often happens with phonetics features), interference features can easily eliminate. Hagège stresses that there is no reason for worry if interference persists more than expected. The teacher should know that a child that is in the process of acquiring a second language would subconsciously invent structures influenced by knowledge he already possesses. Some hypotheses he forms may constitute errors. These errors, though, are completely natural; we should not expect the child to acquire L2 structures immediately.

Thanh Ha Nguyen, 1995 The writer conducted a case study to demonstrate first language transfer in Vietnamese learners of English. He examined a particular language form, namely oral competence in English past tense making. He tried to determine the role of L1 transfer in the acquisition of this English linguistic feature as a *function of age, time of exposure* to English, and *place and purpose of learning* English.

Lakkis and Malak, 2000

Who concentrated on the transfer of Arabic prepositional knowledge to English (by Arab students) Both positive and negative transfer 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, "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".

Carroll, 1955

The writer shows that the most efficient way to teach a student the correct linguistic form is to let him test various hypotheses and eventually find the right form, Hagège points out the importance of self correction. According to Hagège, it is useful always perform an error analysis based on written tests administered by the teacher, but without informing the student of the purpose of the test. On that basis, self-correction is preferable to correction by the teacher, especially if the latter done in a severe or intimidating way. Self-correction is even more efficient when it has done with the help of children's classmates. According to teachers, the younger the children, the greater the cooperation among them and the less aggressive or intimidating the corrections. Hagège "What is The Importance of treating errors in a positive way". He notes that it is

useless, if not harmful, to treat errors as if they were “diseases or pathological situations which must be eliminated”, especially if this treatment becomes discouraging, as occurs when teachers lose their patience because of children numerous errors. This, of course, does not mean that corrections should avoid; after all, it is the teacher’s duty to teach the rules of the L2. Nevertheless, the correction of every error as soon as it occurs not recommended.

Walz, 1982

Another important criterion that must consider by the teacher is individual students' needs. Each student is different and thus may react differently to error correction. The teacher must perform two main tasks: first, assess some specific character traits of students, such as self-confidence and language acquisition capability. Self-confident, capable students can profit from even minor corrections, while struggling students should receive correction only on major errors.

Porte, 1993

Stress the importance of self-correction. Porte refers to Corder's distinction of errors and mistakes and points out that many students do not know the difference. It is important, Porte notes, that students know how to identify an error in order to avoid it in the future. She agrees with Corder that it is more efficient for learners to correct themselves than be corrected by the teacher, and goes on to suggest a four-step approach for self-correction. This approach consists of questions that the teacher

provides to students. After writing an essay, students should read it four times, each time trying to answer the questions included in each of the four steps. Thus, in each re-reading task (each step) they concentrate on a different aspect of their essay. In brief, the first task asks them to highlight the verbs and check the tenses; in the second task students concentrate on prepositions; the third task requires them to concentrate on nouns (spelling, agreement between subject and verb); finally, in the fourth task students should try to correct potential personal mistakes. Porte also offers some clarification of what meant by personal mistakes, in order to help the students identify them.

Chapter Three

Chapter 3

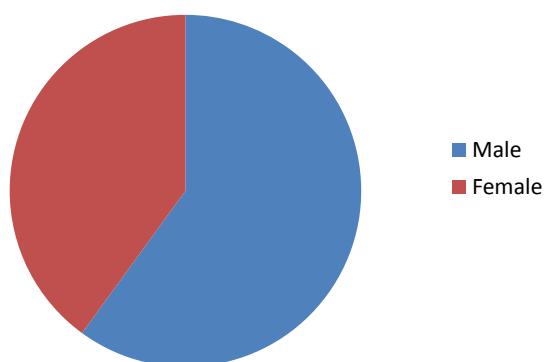
Methodology and Procedures of the study

Population and Sample:

The *population* of the study consists of all the Twelfth Grade English students (male and female) who study in Jericho governmental schools of the academic year 2008-2009 the total number is (460) students, female (266) and male (194).

Sample: The sample of this study consists of two schools; one is for girls, Jericho Secondary Girls School (86) female students. The second is Al-Bohtoray Secondary Boys School (133) male students.

Sample distribution according to the gender



Research Design:

This study is descriptive analytical in nature, therefore I had asked the students to write a composition similar to the task they are likely to encounter in the TAWJIHI standard examination, which consists of three choices “essay and letter” and I had given them some ideas and words which may help them.

Variables:

This study includes the following variables:

* **Sex**: two levels; male and female.

* **Years of learning English**: are 12 and 8 years.

* **Stream**: is literary stream.

Table (3 – 1) Sample Distribution According to Sex

Percentage	Number	Sex
60%	133	Male
40%	86	Female
100%	219	Total

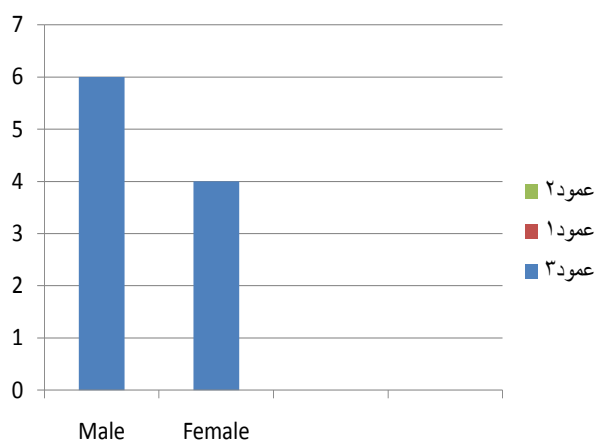
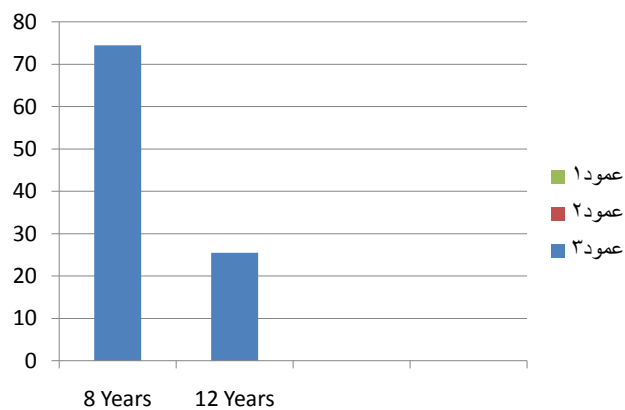


Table (3 – 2) Sample distribution according to the year of learning English

Percentage	Number	Learning of learning English
74.5%	163	8 Years
25.5%	56	12 Years
100%	219	Total

Sample Distribution According to the year of learning English



Instruments of the Study:

Exam with three choices

After the instrument (which is a written exam) prepared, the researcher maintained connection with his respondents in schools, and explained to them the purpose of the study and its importance by meeting them in their schools. The teachers and the students were assured that their responses would be only used for academic purposes. In addition, the students had to write the exam in the classroom in person at the same

time with the English teacher's observation and their responses will be confidential.

Write a *composition* of about 120 words on:

- 1- *Jerusalem Is the Capital of Arabic Culture.*
- 2- *“The Green Palestine”.*
- 3- Write *A Letter* of about 80 words to your friend in London to tell him/ her about *A Summer Camp in Palestine.*

In order to assist these students to objectively do the exam, the following steps were followed:

- 1- There was an Arabic instruction in order to avoid any hesitation or time loss in looking up an unknown word or idea in the English instructions.
- 2- Letters of authorization were obtained from the head office of the graduate studies in Al-Quds University/ Department of Education, to the ministry of Education in Ramallah and others to the Education Office in Jericho to provide permission to conduct the study on the selected students' population. See appendix (A).
- 3- The researcher prepared a test for the teachers to simultaneously give to their students in the two schools. (Albohtory Boys' and Jericho Secondary Girls' school). The researcher personally corrected the 205 papers.
- 4- The collected data were computed. Then, the researcher started to analyze and describe the results.

The students' sheets were marked by the researcher, and then the writing errors of each student were underlined and corrected. Later, the participants of the study were categorized into 4 levels A, B, C, and D according to their marks in the exam (see table 1). The errors made by the students were then classified into six comprehensive types: semantic, syntactic, coordination, rhetorical, punctuation and the Arabic language effect (see table 2). Then, the semantic errors were classified into three types: lexical (confusion, redundancy, and malformation) see table (3). After that, the syntactic errors were classified into eleven types: pronouns, articles, quantifiers, adjectives, prepositions, third person (s), plural, tenses, word order, WH questions, and negative sentence; (see table 4). Then, there were classifications of coordination and subordination; (see table 5). The rhetorical errors were classified into 4 types: repetition, parallelism, cohesion, and shifting from direct to indirect discourse; (see table 6). Punctuation and spelling errors were classified as well; (see table 7). Finally, the researcher classified the errors made by the effect of Arabic on English; (see table 8). Each classification was divided into various subtypes according to the causes and sources of the errors.

Data Collection

The following steps were followed in collecting data:

First, the researcher took the letters of authorization taken from the head office of the graduate studies in Al – Quds University/ department

of education to the ministry of Education in Ramallah and other to the education office in Jericho see appendix (A).

Second, the researcher made a test for the teachers to give to their students in the two schools at the same time (Albohtory for boys and Jericho secondary school for girls).

Third, the exam made in the two schools.

Fourth, the collected data computed. Then, the researcher started to analyze and describe the results.

Data analysis:

The obtained data were analyzed through the descriptive statistics were used in order to respond to the research questions, the researcher put in his plan to find the errors and stratified them under these categories:

1. Semantic errors
2. Syntactic errors
3. Coordination and subordination errors
4. Rhetorical errors
5. Punctuation and spelling errors

For the selection of a corpus of language, following the guidelines offered by Ellis (1995), a sample of written work as collected from 10 students. Those students are in 10th grade. They have been studying English since nursery, and have taught English mainly by American & Canadian teachers. However, there is a point that needs to mention here.

In fact, most of them speak Arabic at home with their parents and at school with their friends.

These students provided with the topic ‘what are your plans for the future’? In addition, asked to write on it in 200 to 250 words. They were given sufficient time to write (Ellis 1997, p. 114). They had to start with an outline, then a first draft and a final draft .This was their mid – term examination at school.

Error Identification & Categorization:

As a first step, we developed, based on the literature (Corder, 1974; Richards, 1974; James, 1998; Selinker, 1972 in Richards, 1974; Richards & Sampson 1974), Taxonomy for Error Analysis including the following categories and sub – categories: **grammatical** (prepositions, articles, reported speech, regular/ plural. Adjectives, relative clauses, irregular verbs, tenses and possessive case), Syntactic (coordination, sentence structure, nouns and pronouns, and word order), **Lexical** (word choice), **Semantic & substance** (mechanics: punctuation & capitalization, and spelling), as for the **organizational/ discourse** errors. We shall mention them but will not quantify them since, first it is difficult to do so, and second, we had trained our students, prior to the exam, to write a well – organized essay (thesis statement, restatement of the thesis, and the use of transition words).

After setting the categories, the researcher chose, also based on the literature, the error sources that the researcher wanted to study, and they

are mainly **Interlingual (negative L1 transfer) & Intralingua (Developmental)**.

Therefore, the errors explained in grammatical terms, and thoroughly examined to find their sources, paying particular attention to negative L1 transfer.

Summary:

This chapter considers the methodology and procedures used to conduct this study. It deals primarily with the research design, which described as a descriptive design. The population distribution was presented clearly in table (3-1); on the other hand show the sample distribution in accordance with sex and years of learning English in other tables.

Chapter Four

Chapter Four

The Results of Study

This chapter presents the findings of the study. The purpose of this study is to find and analyze the writing errors made by Palestinian EFL learners in Jericho governmental schools; it also aims to know the sources for these errors and to put some principles for teachers and students to avoid such writing errors.

Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis

Analysis of the errors that the students made in the exam -which the researcher had made- were used to answer the first research question ,of course the errors had to be classified into certain areas(Semantic, Syntactic, Rhetorical, Punctuation, Spelling, Coordination , subordination errors, and the errors made because the effect of L1(Arabic language)on L2 (English language) .

Research Question One:

What are the types of errors made by EFL learners in Jericho governmental schools?

The researcher found the following types of errors:

Types of errors

1. Semantic Errors:

Semantic: this subject deals with the meaning of words and utterances. Errors classified into three types Lexical confusion, Lexical Redundancy and Lexical Malformation.

Lexical confusion: These errors are because of the interference from Arabic “the mother language, and the learner’s over literal translation from (L1).

For example:

- Gaza lives in a hard situation (situation) the student is confusing with (condition).

1- Lexical Redundancy: This means the repetition of the same word, synonyms, e.g.,

- I live in a happy life, and I like this life.
- I write my name, and write my address.

2- : Lexical Malformation This means creating words which do not exist in the L2, e.g.,

- Such as “Happy Enid” Eid is in English means, “feast”.
- Kanon is in Arabic, but in English “barbecue”.

The sources of lexical errors are:

1. A student writing has interference from Arabic language.
2. A carry – over from the tendency in Arabic of tolerate repetition of lexical items for emphasis.
3. Learners attempt to translate literally from both “standard and colloquial” Arabic.

Syntactic Errors

Syntactic errors classified into four types:-

1. The noun phrase
2. The verb phrase
3. The sentence
4. The noun phrase

The Arab learners made errors in the use of the constituents of the “pronouns, articles, quantifiers, adjectives, prepositions”.

First:

Pronouns

- a. Personal possessive pronoun:
 1. Many ideas of (me) the correct is (mine).
 2. He gave the papers to (our); the correct is (us).
 3. (Me) friend, the correct is (my).
- b. Subject – object pronoun:-
 1. For (I) - the correct is (me).
 2. (Me) ate the meal – the correct is (I).
- c. Possessive pronouns:-
 - He helps mine father: the correct is (my).
- d. Personal pronoun addition:-
 1. Ahamd, he is....
 2. The care, it is not.

Second:

Articles

The researcher found the errors in the use of the definite and indefinite articles as following

a. Adding the definite article where no article is needed:-

1. They may help the human beings.
2. She goes by the car.
3. We faced many problems in the life.

The errors above are because English abstract nouns and nouns used generally usually take zero articles.

b- Adding the indefinite article to the plural nouns

- 1- A people
- 2- A three active girls were in the street.

C-Errors are in putting zero article (-----) when the definite article is needed.

1. They looked to ... Sky.
- 2-We eat in ... Morning.
- 3-I love ... English language.

Third:

Quantifies

They are words to modify nouns, and there are quantifiers, which modify countable nouns (boys, cars, men).

For example:

1. I bought many books.
2. There were a few teachers.
3. It is a small hospital, which has few doctors.

In addition, there are uncountable nouns (tea/ water), which modify by the quantifiers, such as (much/ a little/ little).

For example:

1. Much tea
2. A little water
3. We bought little concrete.

The students confuse in using quantifiers by replacing “a lot”, with too much.

Fourth:

Adjectives

- The adjectives describe the nouns.
- The adjectives are classified into two types:

A-Present participle adjective (ing)

The learners' errors in the use of English adjectives,

For example,

1. The interested film, this means the film is human and effected.

B-Past participle adjective (ed)

For example:

1-When I saw the film I was boring and the film was bored.

(Boring) means that I affected in the film and made it bored.

Fifth

Prepositions

English prepositions such as (in, on, at, from, for, between).

a-The errors in using prepositions may classify into three types:-

1-Errors in adding the preposition,

For example

* I returned to the home "returned means "to""

*The exam affected on the students.

B-Errors are in omitting the preposition.

*He was waiting the plane, the verb “wait” followed by the preposition (for).

Sixth:

1-Omission of the (s) morpheme marks the third person, singular verb.

e.g.:

*He come back.

*Each like the play.

1. Using singular noun form of the instead of the plural.

e.g.:

*Many job

*Their life

*Few month

*This men

Syntactic Errors

The verb phrase

1-Tenses:-

Each tense has special adverbs and one rule, for example: - The words (now, at the moment, lock”, show that we have to use the present progressive “is, am, are + verb + ing”.

e.g.:

- I am reading now.

- They are playing now.
- Look! She is dancing.

And as result, the Arab learners, use a tense instead

Examples:-

1-Since I saw her, this adverb is used with “present, perfect tense “has, have + past participle.”

2-When I came she cooked the food.

3-While they wrote their home works I came.

4-I am decided to go.

5-When I have my Tawjehe grades

6-I could finished it.

7-It would died. :-

8-He must to go

9-The passive form

*Ali put in the prison by.

*She will destroy by.

*It was slept.

10-Using catenative verbs:-

*He started to crying.

*He makes me staying.

Syntactic errors:

the sentence:

The errors made in the use of the English sentence in three areas: - Word order, WH – questions, Negative statements, Coordination and subordination.

Word order:

The students tend to retain subject – auxiliary inversion in nominal clauses.

For example,

1- How beautiful is it for me to ...

2- He does not know what is school.

1. Misordering adverbs in a sentence

- I stayed a week in the village.
- They took him in the winter to a great city.

2. Misordering objects in a sentence

For example,

1. He made for him a big problem.

2. I explained them everything.

3. Common errors in misordering

For example,

1- It was a day very hard.

2-I found it the thin modern in my house.

3- Must not leave any people their country.

Wh. questions

1. Absence of subject
 - Auxiliary inversion
 - a. What he can make?
 - b. How it will be?
2. Auxiliary (do) omission
 - a. What you want?
 - b. Why they go?
3. Replacing (Do) instead of (Be)
 - a. Why do they here?
 - b. When did she coming?

Negative statement:

Errors made in these areas:-

1. Adding the operator (Do)
 - a. She can don't swim.
2. Do omission: Omitting the operator (Do)
 - a. My teacher says no come late.
 - b. She not swim in the pool.
3. Putting the verb in past participle after (Do)
 - a. She didn't went to school yesterday.
 - b. I didn't wrote my works.

4. Using (Be) instead of (Do)
 - a. He isn't know how to drive cars.
 - b. I am not like to live in Jericho.

Coordination and subordination errors:

1. Coordination creates compound sentences

- a. Excessive use of “and”

e.g.: I took my bag and I go to school, and the teacher met me in the street.

“This sentence consist of four independent clause strung together with (and)

- b. Use of “and” at the beginning of the sentences.

It is common for learners to use “and” at the beginning of the sentences.

For example, and is at the beginning.

2. Subordination: - creates complex sentences, subordination is advice used to show that one clause is less important than another. Errors are the use of subordination presented here according to the type of subordinate clause in which the error occurs.

e.g.: I asked her “what did she do?”

Retaining auxiliary – subject inversion, which is obligatory in direct question formation.

Errors made by the effect of L1 (Arabic language) on L2 (English language) writing

The ability to write well is not a naturally acquired skill; it usually learned or culturally transmitted as a set of practices in formal instructional settings or other environments. Writing skill must practiced and learned through experience. Writing also involves composing, which implies the ability either to tell or retell pieces of information in the form of narrative or description, or to transform information into new texts, as in expository or argumentative writing. Perhaps it best viewed as a continuum of activities that range from the more mechanical or formal aspects of “writing down” on the one end, to the more complex act of composing on the other end (Omaggio Hadley, 1993). It is undoubtedly the act of composing, though, which can create problems for students, especially for those writing in a second language (L2) in academic context. Formulating new ideas can be difficult because it involves transforming or reworking information, which is much more complex than writing as telling. 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 requires conscious efforts 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 acquire proficiency in the use of the language as well as writing strategies, techniques and skills.

They might also have to deal with instructors and later, faculty members, who may or may not get beyond their language problems when evaluating their work. Although a certain amount of consciousness- rising on the part of the readers may be warranted, students want to write close to error-free texts and they enter language courses with the expectations of becoming more proficient writers in the L2. [-1-]

This study explores errors in writing in relation to particular aspects of second language acquisition and theories of the writing process in L1 and L2. I argue that the process approach to instruction, with its emphasis on the writing process, meaning making, invention and multiple drafts (Raimes, 1991), is only appropriate for second language learners if they are both able to get sufficient feedback with regard to their errors in writing, and are proficient enough in the language to implement revision strategies.

A brief survey of the nature of L2 writing and L1 models of the writing process illustrate why it is difficult to apply L1 research to a model for second language writing. Further, certain cognitive factors related to second language acquisition show that strategies involved in the language learning process also affect L2 writing. With a discussion of these factors, fundamental questions about error in writing and L2 proficiency are raised. It should then become apparent that the process approach to writing instruction could only be effective if these two components taken into consideration.

Models of L1 and L2 Writing

Most EFL students studying in post-secondary institutions have writing skills. However, their purposes for writing are sometimes not the kind valued by Western academic communities. The nature of academic literacy often confuses and disorients students, “particularly those who bring with them a set of conventions that are at odds with those of the academic world they are entering” (Kutz, Groden & Zamel, 1993, p. 30). In addition, the culture-specific nature of schemata—abstract mental structures representing our knowledge of things, events, and situations—can lead to difficulties when students write texts in L2. Knowing how to write a “summary” or “analyzing” in Mandarin or Spanish does not necessarily mean that students will be able to do these things in English (Kern, 2000). As a result, any appropriate instruction must take into consideration the influence from various educational, social, and cultural experiences that students have in their native language. These include textual issues. Such as rhetorical and cultural preferences for organizing information and structuring arguments, commonly referred to as contrastive rhetoric (Cai, 1999; Connor, 1997; Kaplan, 1987; Kobayashi & Rinnert, 1996; Leki, 1993; 1997; Matalene, 1985), knowledge of appropriate genres (Johns, 1995; Swales, 1990), familiarity with writing topics (Shen, 1989), and distinct cultural and instructional socialization (Coleman, 1996; Holliday, 1997; Valdes, 1995). In addition to instructional and cultural factors, L2 writers have varying commands of the target language, which affect the way structural errors are treated from both social and cognitive points of view.

Much of the research on L2 writing has been closely dependent on L1 research. Although L2 writing is strategically, rhetorically, and linguistically different in many ways from L1 writing (Silva, 1993), L1 models have had a significant influence on L2 writing instruction and the development of a theory of L2 writing. However, a look at two popular L1 models will give us some insight into the problem of developing a distinct construct of L2 writing. [-2-]

The Flower and Hayes (1980, 1981) model focuses on what writers do when they compose. It examines the rhetorical problem in order to determine the potential difficulties a writer could experience during the composing process. The “problem-solving activity” is divided into two major components: the rhetorical situation (audience, topic, assignment), and the writer’s own goals (involving the reader, the writer’s persona, the construction of meaning, and the production of the formal text). By comparing skilled and less-skilled writers, the emphasis here placed on “students’ strategic knowledge and the ability of students to transform information... to meet rhetorically constrained purposes” (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996, p. 116). However, the social dimension is important too. Writing “should not view solely as an individually-oriented, inner-directed cognitive process, but as much as an acquired response to the discourse conventions... within particular communities” (Swales, 1990, p.4).

In more recent studies that examine the goals students set for themselves, the strategies they use to develop their organizing of ideas

and the met cognitive awareness they bring to both these acts, Flowers and her colleagues (1990) analyze the academic task of reading-to-write to establish the interaction of context and cognition in performing a particular writing task.

One of the problems they note is the transition students are required to make when entering the academic discourse community (a peculiar, socially constructed convention in itself), where student need to learn how to operate successfully in an academic conversation that implies knowledge of the textual conventions, expectation, and formulaic expressions particular to the discourse. According to the researches, “conceptualizing this transition as a social/cognitive act of entering a discourse emphasizes both the problem-solving effort of a student learning to negotiate a new situation and the role the situation will play in what is learned” (p.222). The view that writing is typically a socially situated, communicative act later incorporated into Flower’s (1994) socio-cognitive theory of writing. In the social cognitive curriculum, students taught as apprentices in negotiating an academic community, and in the process develop strategic knowledge. Writing skills acquired and used through negotiated interaction will real audience the expectations, such as in peer group responses. Instruction should afford students the opportunity to participate in transactions with their own texts and the texts of others (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). By guiding students toward a conscious awareness of how an audience will interpret their work, learners then learn to write with a “readerly” sensitivity (kern, 2000).

Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) also propose a model that suggests reasons for differences in writing ability between skilled and less-skilled writers. The basic difference revealed in their two models of writing: the knowledge-telling model, whose basic structure depends on the processes of retrieving content from memory with regard to topical, and genre cues, and the knowledge-transforming model, which involves more reflective problem-solving analyzing and goal setting. The latter model is more important because it opens up the idea of multiple processing, which revealed through writing tasks that vary in processing complexity. The authors discuss the notion of mental representation as a writing strategy. From their research with graduate students, they observe that the students “generated goals for their compositions and engaged in problem solving involving structure and gist as well as verbatim representations” (p. 354). The knowledge-transforming or intentional writing model is different from knowledge telling in that it involves setting of goals that are to achieve through the composing process, and the purposeful achievement of those goals. The composing process does not depend on memories and emotions and on external (teachers) assistance for its direction. In fact, Bereiter and Scardamalia criticize formal schooling that encourages the more passive kind of cognition by “continually telling students what to do,” rather than encouraging them “to follow their spontaneous interests and impulses... and assume responsibility for what becomes of their minds” (p. 361). They also argue that the ability to wrestle with and resolve both content and rhetorical problems calls upon a dialectical process for reflection. If students rarely practice the kinds of

writing tasks that develop knowledge-transforming skills, they are not likely to be able to perform those skills easily. [-3-]

Both the Flower and Hayes, and the Bereiter and Scardamalia writing process models have served as the theoretical basis for using the process approach in both L1 and L2 writing instruction.

Despite their implications for classroom instruction, not all the components of these models are appropriate in an L2 context. The Flower model, in particular, does not recognize cross-cultural differences and issues related to socio-cultural variation in the functions of the written language (Kern, 2000). Additionally, with native speakers, “writing ability is more closely linked to fluency in and familiarity with the conventions of expository discourse” (Kogen 1986, p. 25). L2 writers, however, are in the process of acquiring these conventions and so they often need more instruction about the language itself. Limited knowledge of vocabulary, language structure, and content can inhibit a L2 writer’s performance. In addition, the models do not account for growing language proficiency, which is a vital element of L2 writing development.

Similarly, composing, especially in the revision stage, challenges L2 writers. In his research on how L2 writers revise their work, Silva (1993) observes that learners revise at a superficial level. They re-read and reflect less on their written text, revise less, and when they do, the revision is primarily focused on grammatical correction. On the other hand, L1 writing ability may also transfer to L2. As a result, Students who skilled writers in their native languages and have surpassed a certain

L2 proficiency level can adequately transfer those skills. Of course, they who have difficulty writing in their native language may not have a repertoire of strategies to help them in their L2 writing development (Sasaki & Hirose, 1996). These observations warrant consideration for L2 instruction and course design, especially for those courses in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) writing that includes less-skilled writers or those who have never had the opportunity to engage in more knowledge-transforming tasks in their native language.

In sum, social-cognitive theories of writing show us how social contexts for writing operate together with the cognitive efforts of the writer, just as they do when a person is acquiring a new language. However, the problem with applying L1 theories and subsequent models of instruction (such as the process approach) to L2 instruction is that L2 writing also involves the cognitively demanding task of generating meaningful text in a second language. As a result, L2 students generally want more teacher involvement and guidance, especially at the revision stage. Consequently, in order to provide effective pedagogy, L2 writing instructors need to understand the social and cognitive factors involved in the process of second language acquisition and error in writing because these factors have a silent effect on L2 writing development.

Rhetorical Errors:

This subject Deals with the learners' problems at the sentential (rhetorical) level. Six types of problems will be presented below

repetition, Parallelism, cohesion, introductory statements, and shifting from indirect to direct speech.

Repetition

Arab learners tend to repeat ideas in their writing. This tendency has its origins in one of the rhetorical devices used for achieving emphasis, exaggeration and precaution. It employed in both oral and written discourse to achieve a rhetorical effect on the listener/ reader. The Arab learner transfers this feature of oral style to writing in English, producing repetitious and ornate style.

1. If had a terrible accident which was a car accident.
2. I still remember and I would never forget that day when my arm was broken.

Parallelism

Parallelism is another rhetorical device employed in Arabic prose style. It is a type of repetition; Errors can classify into two types: synonymous and faulty parallelism.

- Synonymous Parallelism

- e.g.: He always come on time and he never come late.

- Faulty Parallelism

The following sentence contains faulty parallelism.

- e.g.: because I like this language and to work in my certificate.

- **Cohesion**

“Relation of meaning that exists within the text, and that defines it as a text”.

Since the Arab learners' command of English is, in general, inadequate, they are unaware of the uses of cohesive relations. This explains the low occurrence of errors in the use of cohesive ties in their writing. Two types of error in the use of conjunction have been identified in the corpus: absence and wrong use of connectives.

1. Absence of connectives

Arab learners tend to string independent clauses without using connectives that are required for achieving cohesion in the text. The absence of connectives creates what Chafe (1980) calls “fragmentation of ideas”, which is a common feature of oral discourse. The resultant choppy sentences strip the text of its connectivity.

e.g.: the child begins his life in school. It prepares him to get in a new life. The first step towards his career life begins at the university. It determines either he is going to be well – educated or only a dimple man. The university fires the student towards his career life. It gives him education career.

2. Misuse of Connectives

Arab learners sometimes misuse connectives to link sentences.

We must found a goal educated people however; I love my country and my parents.

3. Shifting from Indirect to Direct Discourse

Arab learners sometimes shift in the middle of writing from indirect to indirect speech without preparing the reader for this abrupt, inappropriate shift and without providing the proper punctuation marks required for direct speech. Concomitant with this shift is another type of wrong shift in personal pronouns and, sometimes, in auxiliary – subject inversion. This shifting in speech is uncommon in oral discourse.

1. She told me relax and went to saw if there is or not.
2. I told her please call my mother and help me but she was laugh.

Punctuation and spelling errors

Punctuation in English serves syntactic, semantic and pragmatic functions. Punctuation marks set off grammatical units (phrases, clauses and sentences). That is, they reflect the constituent structure of the written text. For example, they can distinguish subordinate from super ordinate boundaries. Semantically, they also distinguish restrictive from nonrestrictive relative clauses. Pragmatically, they function, as

“perceptual cues” that help readers comprehend the structure of written texts.

Comma and periods used most frequently in Palestinian EFL students’ writings. This explains the frequent occurrence of errors in the use of these two marks. These errors covered in this section.

1. The Comma

Errors caused by the excessive use of commas are very frequent in students written texts. Two types of errors are discussed: comma splice and superfluous commas.

Comma Splice:

A comma splice error occurs when two main clauses are linked with only a comma. This error reflects the students, unawareness of how to set off sentence boundaries according to grammatical structure. Put differently, they use commas as terminal marks. The following are examples of comma splice errors.

e.g.: Some people leave their country because their country is small or poor, they cannot find any work.

Omission of the Period:

In the following sentences the student run two main clauses together without any punctuation.

e.g.: I want to help my father in his job I ask my god to carry me to the right way.

Miscellaneous

The following sentences contain misuse of punctuation marks.

e.g.: Another examples; in our country we have what is known or called as uprising.

2. Spelling

Some Palestinian EFL students' written texts contain many misspellings are grouped based on their causes.

Misspellings caused by pronunciation:

Some misspellings in the date reflect confusions of consonants or vowels. For example, the students have some difficulty with the spelling of words that contain /p/ and /b/. Misspellings involving /p-b/ confusion may be explained in terms of overcorrection, which results from the over emphasis placed y the teachers on the pronunciation of /p/ and /b/. The following are examples of this type of error.

- Job
- Happy
- Problems

On the other hand, misspelled words with “b” reflect a pronunciation error involves producing /b/ instead of /p/ since the latter is not a phoneme in Arabic. In other words, these misspelling errors triggered by mispronunciations. The following are examples of this type of error.

- Rabidly
- Respect

Words with the letter ‘e’ pose a problem for Palestinian EFL students. In the following misspelled words the silent letter ‘e’ (word medially and finally) is dropped under the influence of pronunciation.

- Contain
- Hop
- Advancement
- Couplet
- Because

In the following misspelled words the students confuse “I” with “e”

- Benefit
- Deferent
- Different
- Liberty
- Interred
- Enable
- Confident

Students’ Performance in the test:

As demonstrated in tables (1), the number of the students who performed at the (A) level is 41 students, continuing 18.75% of the total number of the participants, while the number of the student who

performed at the (D) level is twenty-two constituting .88% of the participants.

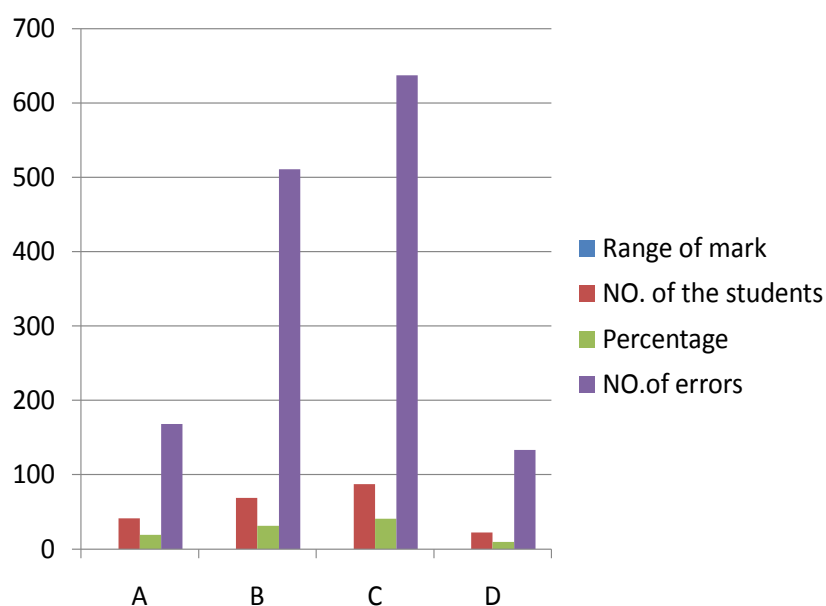
The number of the students who performed at the “B” and “C levels is consecutively 69 and 13 constituting 31.25% and 40.62% of the participants of the study.

Table (1)

Students classified according to their marks in the test

LEVEL	RANGE OF MARKS	NO. OF STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE	NO. OF ERRORS	PERCENTAGE
A	50 – 60	41	18.75%	168	11.59%
B	40 – 49	69	31.25%	511	35.27%
C	30 – 39	87	40.62%	637	43.96%
D	20 – 29	22	09.38%	133	09.18%
TOTAL		219	100%	1449	100%

Students Classified according to their marks in the test



Students' Errors

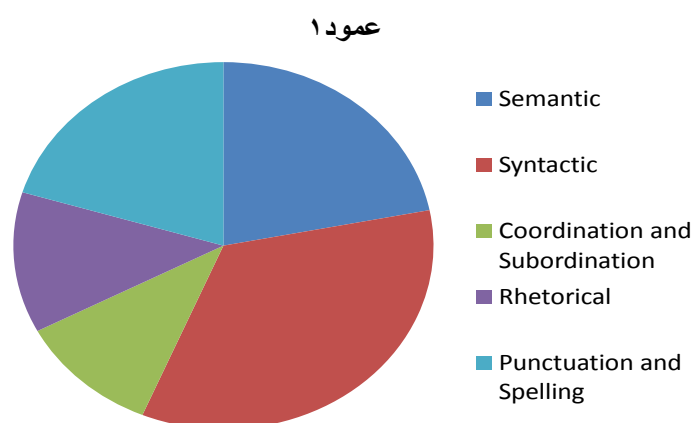
Table (2) displays that the total number of the errors made by the students is 1449, classified into six comprehensive types, semantic, syntactic, coordination and subordination, Rhetorical, punctuation and spelling , the Arabic language effect.

Table (2)

Types of errors made by the students

TYPE OF ERRORS	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Semantic *	317	21.9%
Syntactic ***	499	34.4%
Coordination and subordination	160	11%
Rhetorical	180	12.4%
Coordination and Subordination	293	20.3%
TOTAL	1449	100%

Types of errors made by students



Semantic Errors

The participants of the study made (241) errors constituting 16.6% of the total number of their errors, these errors, as table (3) displays, have been classified into three types, lexical confusion, lexical redundancy, and lexical malformations.

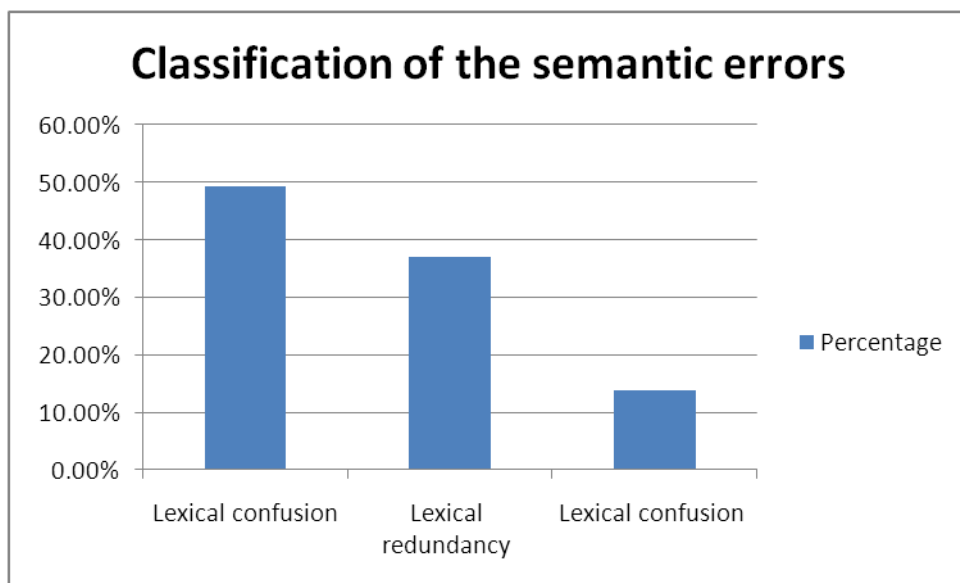
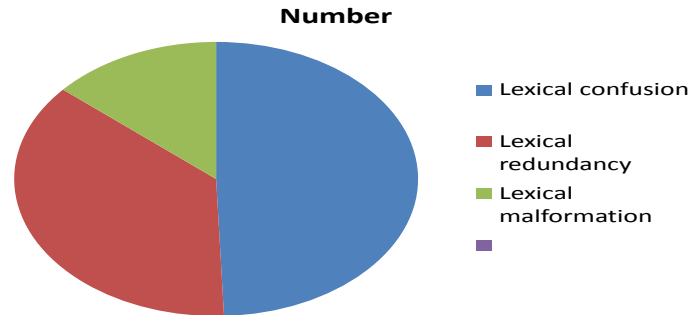
Table (3)

Classification of the semantic errors

TYPE OF ERRORS	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
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Lexical confusion	119	49.3%
Lexical redundancy	89	36.9%
Lexical malformation	33	13.8%
TOTAL	241	100%

Classification of the semantic errors



One major reason of these errors is the difficulty of the target language which is reflected in the general characteristics of rule learning such as wrong generalization, incomplete application of rules, and failure to realize the conditions under which rules apply, as Richards (1971 p.89) suggests.

Syntactic Errors

The participants of this study made 423 errors constituting 29.1% of the total number of their errors, these errors, as in table (4) displays, have been classified into seven types, pronouns, articles, quantifiers, adjectives, prepositions, third person (s), the plural (s)

Table (4)

Classification of Syntactic Errors

TYPE OF ERRORS	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Pronouns	48	11.3%
Articles	40	9.4%
Quantifiers	21	5.2%
Adjectives	27	6.3%
Prepositions	38	8.9%
Third person (s)	33	7.8%
Plural	37	8.7%
Tenses	63	14.8%
Word order	44	10.4%
W.H. – questions	51	12%

Negative sentence	21	5.2%
TOTAL	423	100%

On examining the classification of errors, one can recognize that the majority of these errors involve the tenses, which constitute 14.8% of the total number of the errors made by the students. As such, one might be tempted to conclude that the students fossilized and may not be able to improve their competence. However, the fact is that these errors, do not indicate a sign of fossilization; that is, these nonlinguistic forms are not permanent. Rather, they may destabilize or change into the authentic norms. Fossilization is more likely to take place if the students are not motivated to change. Moreover, these errors are likely to change into slips of the tongue or pen, as Ancker (2000 p.102) has claimed. The students who participated in the study really motivated and have the linguistic competence to eliminate these errors. That is quite clear in the classification, where they have stated that they have made these errors just because of test anxiety, the limited time allotted to the exam and their concentration on content rather than form.

Most of the relative pronoun structures exist in both Arabic and English, but with some differences, which cause some problems to Arab students. In their performance, the participants of the study dropped the relative pronouns and produced incorrect sentences. A possible explanation to such errors is that the students attended an Error Analysis course where they

encountered and analyzed incorrect sentences where relative pronouns used or dropped. As a result, they became oversensitive and aware of such errors and in order not to make them they dropped the relative pronouns where they were supposed to use them. It seems that they have been trying to reduce their linguistic burden by allowing their Arabic system to function instead of that of the target language. Therefore, when the students say in they have produced same and similar errors because of carelessness and test anxiety, there is no reason to doubt their credibility.

The subject-verb agreement errors constitute 44.03% of the total number of the errors made by the students is a high percentage for such somewhat advanced students, who are not supposed to make such many errors. The only possible explanation for these unexpected errors, which provided the students themselves, is the linguistic pressure placed on the students because of the test forced them to allow their Arabic system to function freely. This becomes evident if one realizes that the same students did not produce the same errors in their other written performance such as their homework. The same explanation applies to the redundancy errors.

Coordination and subordination Errors

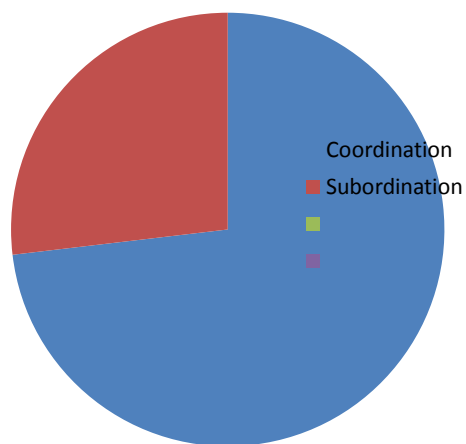
The participation of the study made (84) errors constituting (57) of the total number of the students' errors. These errors as table (5) displays, have been classified into two types "coordination and subordination".

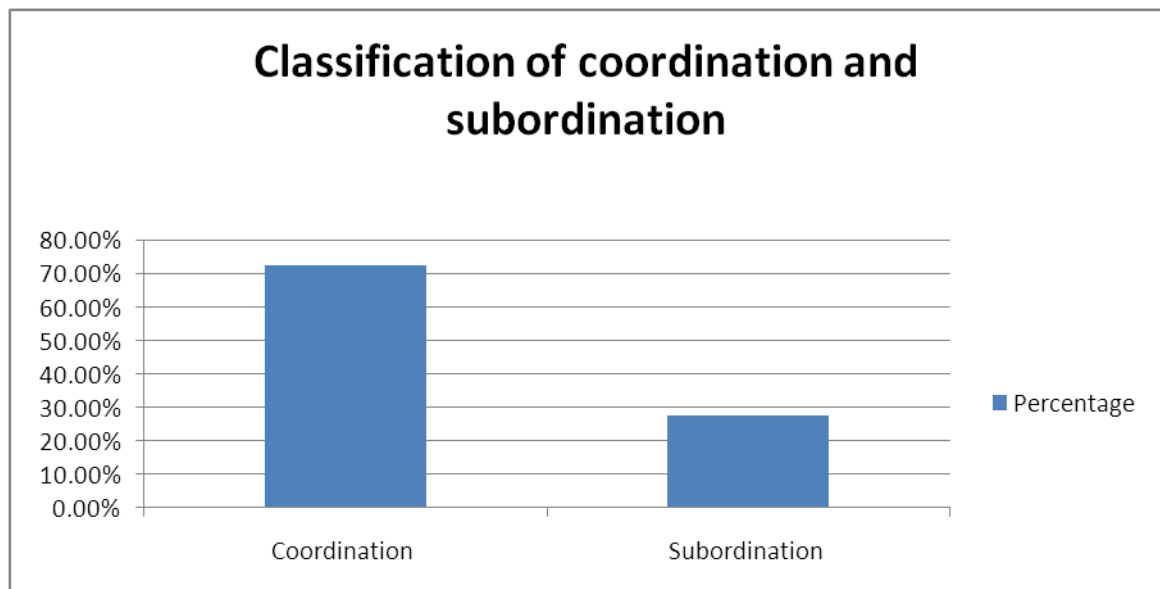
Table (5)

Classification of coordination and subordination

TYPE OF ERRORS	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Coordination	61	72.6%
Subordination	23	27.4%
TOTAL	84	100%

**Classification of coordination
and subordination**





Rhetorical errors

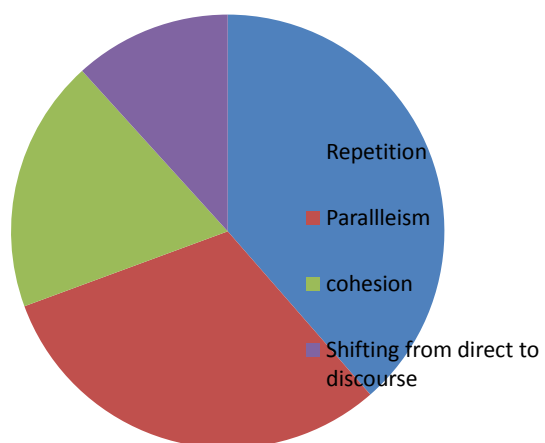
The participants of the study made 103 errors constituting (7.1) of the total number of their errors. These errors, as in table (6) displays, have been classified into, repetition, parallelism, cohesion, and shifting from indirect to direct discourse.

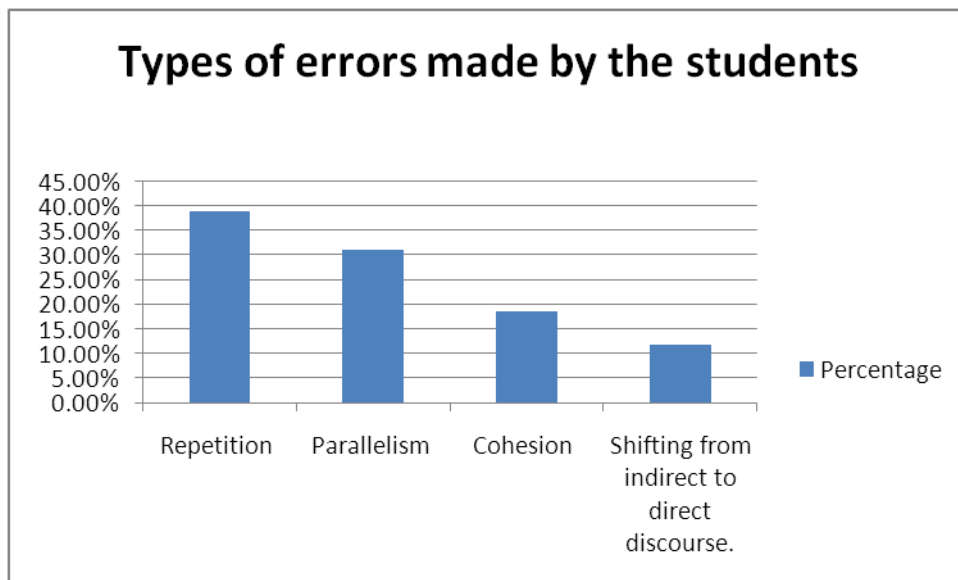
Table (6)

Classification of the Rhetorical errors

TYPE OF ERRORS	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Repetition	40	38.8%
Parallelism	32	31%
Cohesion	19	18.4%
Shift indirect to direct discourse.	12	11.8%
TOTAL	103	100%

Classification of the Rhetorical errors





Punctuation and spelling:

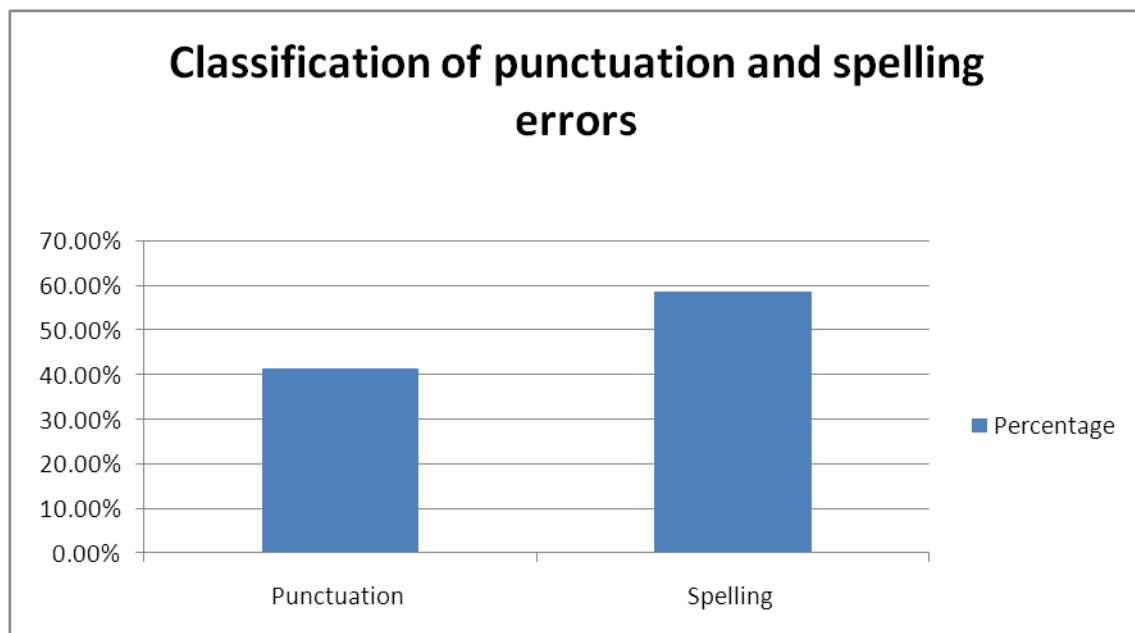
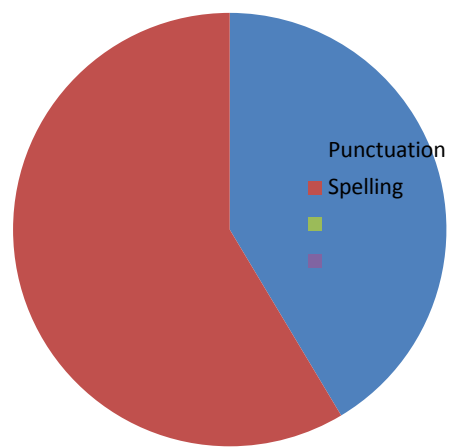
Participation of the study made (217) errors constituting (14.9) of the total number of their errors, these errors as in table (7) displays, have classified into punctuation and spelling.

Table (7)

Classification of punctuation and spelling errors

TYPE OF ERRORS	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Punctuation	90	41.4%
Spelling	127	58.6%
TOTAL	217	100%

Classification of the Punctuation and Spelling errors



The main point to raise here is the participants' misspelled words. It is worthwhile mentioning that when the data collected, the salient spelling errors reflect the learner's linguistic competence only considered. The misspelling the word "tow" considered a serious error and reflects the participants' competence, especially if it repeated in their performance. Some reasons, of course among others, for such spelling errors are the confusing correspondence between sound and script, words that have the same pronunciation but different forms, and finally words that have the letter 'c', which is sometimes pronounced as 'k', and sometimes as 's'. (for more on Arab students' spelling errors, see El-Hibir and Al-Taha, (1992), who convincingly accounted for these spelling errors).

Chapter Five

Chapter Five

Discussion of the findings and recommendation

This chapter discusses the results of the study; the chapter also comprises a section on the recommendation.

Research question one: What are the types of errors made by Arab EFL learners in Jericho Secondary School?

The results of the study revealed the types of errors made by students in Jericho Secondary School.

First: The researcher finds that the main errors type is the syntactic errors. About (423) errors constitutes (29.1%) of the total number of the students errors, moreover that means one major reason of these errors is the target language difficulty reflected in the general characteristics of rule learning such as wrong generalization, incomplete application of rules, and the failure to realize the condition under which rules apply, as (Richards, 1971p.57) suggested.

Second: The errors which come as the result of effect of Arabic as the first language on English. Writing comes the second step, the total of these errors are (381) errors constituting 26.6% of the total errors. Whether an error, mistake, or “detriment,” awkward discourse can occur for a variety of responses, some of which have already mentioned. First, learners translate from L1, or they try out what they assume to be a legitimate structure of the target language though hindered by insufficient knowledge of correct usage. In the learning process, they often experience native language interference from developmental stages of inter-language or from nonstandard elements in spoken dialects. A common occurrence in students writing also occurs 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 unsure of what they want to express, which causes them to make mistakes 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 native English speakers. Rhetoric and writing are direct outcomes of socio-cultural and political contexts; in other words, they are schematic representation of the writer's unique experiences within a particular social milieu. Students may write in accordance with a set of rhetorical norms (such as the "eight legged essay") that differ from those of English (Cai, 1999; Matalene, 1985; Williams, 1989).

Repeating a previous mistake, or backsliding, is a common occurrence in L2 writing. More important, though, is the issue of fossilization – when "learner inter-language competence diverges in more or less permanent ways from the target language grammar" (Odlin, 1994, p. 13). Fossilized errors can be problematic in writing because the ingrained errors, like bad habits, in a learner's repertoire, and they reappear despite remediation and correction. They can be common among immigrants who have learned much of the L2 "on the street where the emphasis is on fluency and not linguistic correctness. Writing errors fossilized or otherwise, are glaring, especially to the reader who has had little experience interacting with L2 speakers and texts.

The other types of errors found are:

- a. Semantic errors (319) with 21.9%
- b. Punctuation and spelling errors (293) with 20.3%
- c. Rhetorical errors (180) with 12.4%
- d. Coordination and subordination errors with (160) 11%

The writers need to be careful here conducting an error analysis study. This study attempted to identify, describe, categorize, and digamous the errors in English essay writing of the Arabic speaking students. Just as George (1972), Lance (1969), Richards (1971), and Brudhiprabha (1972) found that only one third of the second language learners' errors can attributed to NL language transfer. This is what his study came up with. Most of the errors are caused by an over application of L2. We need to encourage our students to speak English at home and with their friends in order to reduce the number of mistakes due to negative transfer from L1. However, we also need to try to teach the rules and conventions of writing more effectively.

However, when trying to solve these problems, we need to bear in mind that L2 users' knowledge of a second language is not the same as that of native speakers even at the advanced levels. L2 users' knowledge of their first language (L1) is not the same as that of monolingual native speakers L2 users think in different ways to monolinguals... trying to get students to be like native speakers is ineffective; their minds and their knowledge of language will inevitably be different. The benefits of learning a second language are becoming a different kind of person, not

just adding another language. The main obstacle to setting the successful L2 user as the goal is the belief that the native speaker speaks the true form of English. This implies the comparison of one group with another: the language of non-natives has always to be compared with that of natives; anything that deviates is wrong. For other areas of language study, Labov established discrimination to treat one group in terms of another group that they can never belong to, whether women as men, black Americans as white Americans, or working – class as middle – class. People must allow being what they are, when this is an unchangeable effect of birth or of early up-bringing.

An appropriate goal for many students is then using the L2 competently for their own purposes and in their own ways, which may very well not be the same as those of a monolingual native speaker and indeed may not involve native speakers at all. Students can become successful L2 users rather than forever “failing” the native speaker target” (Cook, 1999).

Research Question 2: Is there any difference in the errors made by EFL learner in Jericho due to

- a. Gender?
- b. Learning experiences?
- c. Teachers experience?

- The results of the study showed that there is no relationship between gender (male, female) and the errors made by EFL learner in Jericho.
- The results of the study showed that there is no relationship between learning experiences and teacher's experience, and the errors made by EFL learner in Jericho.

Research Question 3: What are suitable recommendations to help students overcome such errors?

First, in light of the results, something has to rectify the opposing viewpoints of the teachers and students concerning the errors made by the students. While teachers consider their students' errors as a manifestation of their poor linguistic competence, students consider them as slip of the tongue or pen. To solve this "problem" teachers should consider the distinction between the errors which reflect the students' linguistic competence and those called performance errors, and accordingly, tell their students in advance which errors will be considered slips of the tongue and which will be considered competence ones. Consequently, teachers' correction will base on that classification of errors. Furthermore, 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 penalize for them. Through such as understanding between teachers and students, it hoped that the students would be able to overcome their test anxiety and, in turn, reduce their errors.

Second, it should know to teacher that error analysis has 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 teacher adjust their teaching methods and understand their student learning strategies. However, errors regardless of the teaching methods employee in the classroom will stay as long as foreign language teaching practiced. Therefore, teachers should not be so worried about them.

Third, much has said about the teaching methods and materials, which based on contrastive analysis. However, the students' perception of their errors urges a new visit to that issue. Since most of the student's errors involve the subject – verb agreement structure which, in part, is due to native language interference, those teaching methods based on contrastive analysis should revise and made less dependent on that analysis. It looks more advantageous to employ authentic materials and when need be, teachers can draw their students' attention to the differences between the native and foreign languages. In this case, second or foreign language learners' sensitively and awareness of these differences will be raised, and that might help students reduce their interference errors.

Fourth, the last indicative pint of this study involves the grammatical drills and exercise used in the EFL classroom. Excessive drills and exercises which are based on aspects of the target language that are different from those if the native language, as is the case in most of our schools, will make the students oversensitive concerning these structures. This oversensitivity will increase the students' tension when they attempt

to use the target language in either their communication or writing production and unintentionally produce interference errors. This indication appears to contradict the previous one, which states that teachers can draw their students' attention to some differences between the native and target language. However, the case is not so. A moderate sensitivity of the differences between the two languages might ease and reduce the student's tension, while oversensitivity may complicate things and lead the students to make unintentional and unnecessary error.

Recommendations

In the light of the study results, the following recommendations have been suggested:

The English language is rich and complex. There are many confusing aspects to the rules of grammar and spelling. Many words are quite similar but have very different meanings. It is almost impossible to avoid common errors in English. There are so many rules to remember and so many confusing words.

Error analysis has been criticized as being an inefficient tool for studying the ways second language learners develop their target language. It is argued that error analysis deals with the learners' productive competence rather than the receptive. It is also an imperfect instrument for categorizing errors and explaining them.

1. However, EFL teachers and researchers cannot ignore error analysis as an important tool by which they can learn more about the psycholinguistic processes invoked in the learning of a second language.
2. Furthermore, EFL teachers observe these errors whenever they read or listen to their student's preference; consequently, they have to deal with and analyze these errors. Accordingly, they improve their teaching methods. In conclusion, error analysis is important to EFL/ESL and SLA teachers.

This study attempted to tackle the question of error analysis from the students' perspective in order to clarify the learning strategies EFL learners employ when they learn a second language.

3. In light of the findings of the study, some important indications have been inferred which help EFL teachers and methodologists improve their teaching methods and help them reduce the errors made by the students.
4. One of the important implications of the study is that second or foreign language learners should be aware of the differences between their native language and foreign languages.

5. However, teachers should not use the drills and exercise which are excessively based on these differences in the classroom; otherwise, the students will be oversensitive.
6. Teachers must employ authentic materials in order to link the learned material with real life situation.
7. Teachers should be trained in creating activities that focus on developing students writing.
8. In participant classes, the students were unable to speak English, therefore emphasis should be placed on promoting speaking via writing.
9. In our classes, the student were unable to speak English properly because they have little experience in listening to real discussion, So teachers are advised to improve receptive skills listening and reading, which lead to develop productive skills (speaking and writing).
10. In teaching English related to its grammar, the teacher should give more easily understood explanation in order to make the students more interested in learning English, especially the writing skills.
11. The teacher should teach the writing elements explicitly with adequate exercises.
12. The teacher should give more exercises in applying writing not only by giving the theory of writing but rather by asking students to practice writing as such. Because, based on the results the students seem not to quite understand how to differentiate when to use the introduction, body, or conclusion with the proper punctuation and spelling.

13. Teachers are advised to apply a method where they explain the correct uses of the verb (when to use past and present) forms, give examples, and tests the students' understanding which will assure the teacher that the students really understand writing as a thinking process. Otherwise, the students will face difficulties in distinguishing the uses of past and present forms of verbs whenever they learn English.
14. The teacher could also apply the communicative language teaching method especially when s/he teaches English writing.
15. In the writing class, the teacher should give more writing exercises to the students so that they become familiar with English writing form.

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الموضوع: تسهيل مهمة

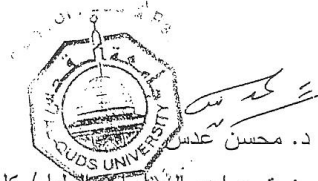
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" Analysis of writing Errors made by Palestinian EFL Learners In Jericho Government Schools "

لذا يرجى من حضرتكم تسهيل مهمة الطالب المذكور أعلاه والتعاون معه.

شاكرين لكم حسن تعاونكم

والله الموفق



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حضرة مدير التربية والتعليم المحترم
مديرية محافظة أريحا

الموضوع: تسهيل مهمة

تحية طيبة وبعد،،

يقوم الطالب: زياد مصطفى محمود دهنون بريقع ورقمه الجامعي (٢٠٣١١٩٤٢)، بدراسة
تتعلق برسالة ماجستير، بعنوان

" Analysis of writing Errors made by Palestinian EFL
Learners In Jericho Government Schools "

لذا يرجى من حضرتكم تسهيل مهمة الطالب المذكور أعلاه والتعاون معه.

شاكرين لكم حسن تعاونكم

والله الموفق



د. محسن عدس
منسق برامج الدراسات العليا / كلية العلوم التربوية

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Palestinian National Authority

Ministry of Education & Higher Education

Directorate Of Education Jericho



السلطة الوطنية الفلسطينية

وزارة التربية والتعليم العالي

مديرية التربية والتعليم / أريحا

الرقم: أ/ع/٥/ ١١

لتاريخ: ٢٠٠٩/٢/٢٥

لمن يهمه الأمر

أفيد حضرتكم بأن أعداد طلبة الثانوية العامة النظاميين في مدارس مديرية أريحا هي كالاتي :

الرقم	اسم المدرسة	العلوم الانسانية	
		ذكور	إناث
١	بنات اريحا الثانوية	٠	٨٦
٢	البحثري الثانوية	١٣٣	٠
٣	ذكور العوجا الثانوية	١٩	٠
٤	بنات العوجا الثانوية	٠	٢٣
٥	الزبيدات الثانوية المختلطة	١١	١٠
٦	مرج نعجة الثانوية المختلطة	٦	٨
٧	الجفتك الثانوية المختلطة	١٥	١٢
٨	فصايل الثانوية المختلطة	٤	٤
٩	فاطمة الزهراء الثانوية	٠	١٠٨
	المجموع	١٩٤	٢٦٦



مدير التربية والتعليم / أريحا

أ : محمد الحواش

مع وافر الاحترام ،،،



عاصمة الثقافة العربية
Capital of Arab Culture
al-QUDS 2009



عزيزتي الطالبة، عزيزي الطالب:
أرجو المساعدة في كتابة هذا الموضوع، استكمالا لرسالة ماجستير يقوم بها الطالب زياد منصور من جامعة القدس، أرجو منكم التعاون للمساهمة في انجاز هذا المشروع التربوي ،
والله الموفق.

Write a composition of about 120 words on one of the following topics.

1- Jerusalem ; The Capital of Arabic Culture

Ideas: *-historical city*
- Religious city
- Old markets, houses, and schools.
- Occupied city

2- Green Palestine:

Write a composition on how Palestine can be changed into a green land.

The following **ideas** will help you:

(Agricultural engineers, Land survey, Land survey, land reclamation, drilling for underground water, fertilizers, machinery).

3- You are Nihad. You live in Nablus, Rafidia Street, building number 10.

You have just returned from a summer camp in Ramallah. Write a letter of about 80 words to your friend Salam telling him / her about this summer camp.

Ideas: objectives: *Encouraging self-reliance / punctuality / loyalty and friendships.*

Activities: *parties / picnics / seminars and lectures.*

Teacher: Ziyad Mustafa .