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***Examining Lexical and Grammatical
Difficulties Encountered by Iraqi
Students in Learning English as a
Foreign Language***

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by

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**TO MY FAMILY
WITH LOVE
AND RESPECT**

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Abstract

Iraqi EFL learners have a range of difficulties with learning English as a foreign language, so they make errors and mistakes. Most of the errors and mistakes made by the Iraqi learners in learning English as a foreign language are due to difficulties in learning grammar and lexis. In learning a foreign language, Iraqi learner produces many linguistic forms which are not produced by native students of the target language. The present study aims at investigating and identifying the difficulties encountered by Iraqi students in learning English as a foreign language and it is hypothesized that:

- 1.The students commit various errors and mistakes in writing composition or any other essay as a result these difficulties.
- 2.The first source of learner's errors and mistakes is their developing knowledge of the language.
- 3.The second source of learner's errors and mistakes is their interference with their first language.

The sample of this study is limited to third year class students who are learning English as a foreign language at AL-Maamoon University College in Baghdad for the academic year 2012-2013. The samples contains 30 students. The study is carried out by a test to write compositions to achieve the aims based on requirements of grammatical and lexical knowledge. Errors and mistakes which are highly observed in the writing of Iraqi EFL learners make a serious problem in the communicative process as it results into unclear performance in their writing .The results showed a weakness in several areas of writing because of the poor knowledge of lexical and grammatical rules.

Suitable statistical methods are used to score the results of the responses of the students. The study concludes with linguistic fact that the learners have a severe lack of knowledge in grammar and lexis.

This is a very important that this study aims to shed light on better understanding of major difficulties that students often face when they perform language. Finally, Conclusions on the basis of the results were presented in addition to some recommendations.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 The problem

Writing English is an inseparable part of Iraqi students throughout their academic life. They commit different kinds of errors and mistakes in learning English as a foreign language which are due to poor knowledge with grammar and lexis, so it often appears to be a difficult task for them. These errors and mistakes are very obvious in writing composition or any other essay. In the Iraqi mainstream educational setting, students' potential is not exploited through creative process of thinking and writing. Instead, they are left with learning of some selected items for answer.

To assess semi-broad, broad, paragraph, composition or essay type answers, some of teachers mark student writings on the basis of holistic impression in which there is hardly any scope for learners to see their specific drawbacks. Most of teachers give feedback merely underlining mistakes and errors but hardly provide any constructive comments for correcting writing.

Writing is not often treated as a skill to be developed through process. Iraqi foreign language learners, in general, memorize answers collected from popular notebooks. But in real life situations, many of them are unable to write correct sentences of their own. Despite getting expected grades, they cannot write confidently and correctly. At the secondary levels, word or sentence level accuracy is usually given more consideration in allotting marks for paragraphs, essays, compositions, letters, broad and semi-broad answers .

Due to significant number of mistakes in basic grammar and lexis, good ideas, if any, are not often appreciated. Furthermore, Iraqi teachers are also traditionally preoccupied mostly with dominant sense of grammatical accuracy rather than development of ideas. In this context ,it is crucial to see what level of mistakes students make at their undergraduate level after many years of study in English language and more importantly, what implications it may have for teacher development to guide learners to overcome their problems in writing.

Many English courses at different levels focus on developing writing skills, and when Iraqi EFL students learn how to write and read English, they always face difficulties in acquiring skills of writing, so they make errors and mistakes. Sometimes this situation can turn painful and frustrating. In order not to have the students suffer, teachers should find ways to alleviate this pain and help them to achieve the course objectives in faster and more enjoyable way.

However, the teacher is not the only one who is responsible for this task; learners play a prominent role in this process, and they should be committed to make their biggest efforts to succeed. Reid (1993:121) clearly supports this idea when she mentions the assumptions that underlie the teaching of writing. She claims that effective, appropriate writing is teachable and learnable, but teacher and student commitment, choice and change are necessary for both. In addition, she believes that most successful EFL writing and reading classroom occurs in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust in which teacher responsibility is balanced by learners

responsibility.

A large number of English teachers in Iraq usually follow the same procedures in their lessons. In traditional learning class, the teacher often presents a model passage to the learners, makes pre-writing activities and engage the students in producing the text. This study is later evaluated by the teacher, who provides feedback in various ways by correcting their writings. Once the learners get their writings back, the most challenging task for the teacher is to have the learner analyze this feedback, and to make it a positive and useful learning. Some learners find rewriting their work boring, so the teacher of English in Iraq should be creative and think about possibilities to tackle this problem, then learners can achieve the course objectives. Furthermore the teacher should raise the awareness of the learners about their errors and mistakes, so that they will not make them again in future.

1.2 Aims

The present study aims at:

1. Identifying grammatical and lexical difficulties that cause Iraqi EFL learners commit errors and mistakes in writing composition and provide suggestions for learning composition.
2. Giving linguistic explanations for the occurrences for errors and mistakes by giving linguistic possibilities that cause errors and mistakes in writing composition.

1.3 Hypothesis

It is hypothesized that:

1. Iraqi EFL learners face much difficulty in learning

English so they commit errors and mistakes in writing a composition or any paragraph, these errors and mistakes are mainly due to the lack of grammatical and lexical knowledge .

2. The first source of learners' errors is their developing knowledge of the language

3. The second source of learners' errors is their interference from their first language

1.4 Procedures

The study is carried out through the following procedures:

1- Making a theoretical study of difficulties that cause the learners make errors and mistakes in their writing and the reasons that stand behind making errors and mistakes.

2- Conducting a written test by asking the students to write a descriptive composition to find out the grammatical and lexical difficulties which cause errors and mistakes.

3- Finally analyzing their papers .

1.5 Limits

The study is limited to examining difficulties faced by Iraqi EFL learners that make them do grammatical and lexical errors and mistakes in writing. The sample is limited to third year student in the Department of English/ at AL- Maamoon University College in Baghdad, English department, for the academic year 2012-2013. The sample contains 30 students chosen randomly.

1.6 Value

The fact that particular grammatical and lexical rules are missed or violated in the writing of Iraqi EFL learners, this will lead them commit errors and mistakes in their writing and this will lead to collapse or difficulty in communication, hence, the study will be of great value since it might help teachers and text designers to shed lights on the difficulties learners might encounter while writing. It might also help them to improve the communicative competence when using English.

1.7 Definitions of Basic Terms

Second Language Acquisition : It is learning and acquisition of second language once the mother tongue or first language acquisition is established, it is the process of learning other languages in addition to the native language.

Error Analysis: It is the systematic study of deviation from target language norms in the course SLA specially in the terms of the learner's developing interlanguage.

Language Transfer : It is used to describe what occurs when people who are in the process of learning a new language transfer the applications from their native language or their first language.

Target Language : A language other than one's native language that is being learned.

Contrastive Analysis: It is the study and comparison of two

languages, the aim of contrastive analysis is to establish the inter-relationships in order to create linguistic family tree.

Foreign Language: It is a language indigenous to another country. It is also a language not spoken in the native country of the person referred to.

First Language: It is one's native language, the language learned by children and pass from one generation to the next.

Second Language: It is a language learned by a person after his or her native language, especially as a resident for area where it is in general use.

An Error: It is a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of native speaker, reflect the competence of the learner.

A mistake: It refers to a performance error that is either a random guess or a slip in that is a failure to utilize a known system correctly.

Interlingual Errors: Those attributed to native language. There are interlingual errors when the learner's L1 habits interfere or present him or her, rules and patterns of a second language, Corder (1971).

Interference: It is the negative influence of the mother tongue of the performance of the target language learner, Lado (1964).

Intralingual Errors: Those due to the language being learned, independent of the native language. According to Richards (1967) " they are items produced by the learner which reflect not the structure of the mother tongue but generalizations based on partial exposure to the target language.

CHAPTER TWO

Introduction

2.1 Applied linguistics and Foreign Language Acquisition

Foreign language acquisition is the process by which people learn a foreign language. Foreign language acquisition also refers to the scientific discipline devoted to studying that process. Foreign language refers to any language learned in addition to a person's first language. Although the concept is named it can also incorporate the learning of third, fourth, or subsequent languages. Second language acquisition refers to what learners do; it does not refer to practices in language teaching.

The academic discipline of foreign language acquisition is a sub-discipline of applied linguistics. It is broad-based and relatively new. As well as the various branches of linguistics, second language acquisition is also closely related to psychology, cognitive psychology, and education. FLA research began as an interdisciplinary field, and because of this it is difficult to identify a precise starting date. However, it appears to have developed a great deal since the mid-1960s. The term acquisition was originally used to emphasize the subconscious nature of the learning process, but in recent years learning and acquisition have become largely synonymous.

Most FLA researchers see bilingualism as being the end result of learning a language, not the process itself, and see the term as referring to native-like fluency. Writers in fields such as education and psychology, however, often use bilingualism loosely to refer to all forms of multilingualism. Second language acquisition is also not to be contrasted with the acquisition of a

foreign language; rather, the learning of second languages and the learning of foreign languages involve the same fundamental processes in different situations.

There has been much debate about exactly how language is learned, and many issues are still unresolved. There are many theories of second language acquisition, but none are accepted as a complete explanation by all SLA researchers.

As FLA began as an interdisciplinary field, it is hard to pin down a precise starting date. However, there are two publications in particular that are seen as instrumental to the development of the modern study of SLA. Corder's essay (1967) rejected a behaviorist account of S2LA and suggested that learners made use of intrinsic internal linguistic processes, Selinker's article (1972) argued that second language learners possess their own individual linguistic systems that are independent from their first languages.

In the 1970s the general trend in SLA was for research exploring the ideas of Corder and Selinker, and refuting behaviorist theories of language acquisition. Examples include research into error analysis, studies in transitional stages of foreign language ability and the "morpheme studies" investigating the order in which learners acquired linguistic features. The 70s were dominated by naturalistic studies of people learning English as a second language Asher (1972).

By the 1980s, the theories of Stephen Krashen had become the prominent paradigm in SLA. In his theories, often collectively known as the Input Hypothesis, Krashen (1998:76) suggested that language acquisition is driven slowly by comprehensible input, language input that learners can

understand. Krashen's model was influential in the field of SLA and had also tremendous influence on language teaching, but it left some important processes in SLA unexplained. Research in the 1980s was characterized by the attempt to fill in these gaps. Some approaches included Lydia White's descriptions of learner competence, and Manfred Pienemmm's use of speech processing models and lexical functional grammar to explain learner output. This period also saw the beginning of approaches based in other disciplines, such as the psychological approach of connectionism.

The 1990s saw a host of new theories introduced to the field, such as Michael Long's interaction hypothesis, Merrill Swain's output hypothesis, and Richard Schmidt's noticing hypothesis. However, the two main areas of research interest were linguistic theories of SLA based upon Noam Chomsky's universal grammar, and psychological approaches such as skill acquisition theory and connectionism. The latter category also saw the new theories of processability and input processing in this time period (Krashen(1981). The 1990s also saw the introduction of the socio-cultural theory, an approach to explain second language acquisition in terms of the social environment of the learner.

In the 2000s, research focused much the same on areas as in the 1990s, with research split into two main camps of linguistic and psychological approaches. Van Patten and Benati do not see the state of affairs as changing in the near future; pointing to the support both areas of research have the wider fields of linguistics and psychology, respectively.

2. 1.1 First and Second Language Acquisition

People who learn a second language differ from children learning their first language in a number of ways. Perhaps the most striking of these is that very few adult second language learners reach the same competence as native speakers of that language. Children learning a second language are more likely to achieve native-like fluency than adults, but in general it is very rare for someone speaking a second language to pass completely for a native speaker Asher (1972) . When a learner's speech plateaus in this way it is known as fossilization.

In addition, some errors that second language learners make in their speech originate in their first language. For example, Spanish speakers learning English may say "Is raining" rather than "It is raining", leaving out the subject of the sentence. French speakers learning English, however, do not usually make the same mistake. This is because sentence subjects can be left out in Spanish, but not in French. This influence of the first language on the second is known as language transfer Ellis (1997:95).

Furthermore, when people learn a second language, the way they speak their first language changes in subtle ways. These changes can be with any aspect of language, from pronunciation and syntax to gestures . For example, French speakers who speak English as a second language pronounced the sound /t/ in French differently from monolingual French speakers. This kind of change in pronunciation was found even at the onset of second language acquisition. For example, English speakers pronounced the English sounds /p /t / and /k/ as well as English vowels, differently after they began to learn Korean. These effects of the second language on the first led Vivian Cook to propose the idea of multi-competence, which views languages a

person speaks not as separate systems, but as related systems in their mind.

2.1.2 Language Learning

A learner's language is the spoken or written language produced by a learner. It is also the main type of data used in second language acquisition research. Much research in second language acquisition is concerned with the internal representations of a language in the mind of the learner, and in how those representations change over time. It is not yet possible to inspect these representations directly with brain scans or similar techniques, so FLA researchers are forced to make inferences about these rules from learners' speech or writing Krashen,(1982: 86).

2.1.3 Items and System of Learning

There are two types of learning that second language learners engage in. The first type is learning of formulaic chunks of language, Curran (1972) these chunks can be individual words, set phrases, or formulas like Can I have a tour ? The second type of learning is system learning or the learning of systematic rules .

2.1.4 Interlanguage

Originally, attempts to describe learner language were based on comparing different language on analyzing learners' errors. However, these approaches weren't able to predict all the errors that learners made when in the process of learning a second language. For example, Serbo-Croat speaker learning English may say "What does Pat doing now?", although this is

not a valid sentence in either language.

To explain these kind of systematic errors, the idea of the interlanguage was developed. An interlanguage is an emerging language system in the mind of a second language learner. A learner's interlanguage is not a deficient version of the language being learned filled with random errors, nor is it a language purely based on errors introduced from the learner's first language Asher (1981: 110). Rather, it is a language in its own right, with its own systematic rules. It is possible to view most aspects of language from an interlanguage perspective, including grammar, phonology, lexicon, and pragmatics.

There are three different processes that influence the creation of interlanguages:

- Language transfer: Learners depend on their mother tongue to create their language system. This is now recognized not as a mistake, but as a process that all learners go through.

- Overgeneralization: Learners use rules from the second language in a way that native speakers would not. For example, a learner may say, "I goed home", overgeneralizing the English rule of adding- ed to create past tense verb forms.

- Simplification: Learners use a highly simplified form of language, similar to speech by children or in pidgins. This may be related to linguistic universals Asher(1982).

The concept of interlanguage has become very widespread in SLA research, and is often a basic assumption made by researchers.

2.1.5 Language Transfer

One important difference between first language acquisition and second language acquisition is that the process of second language acquisition is influenced by languages that the learner

already knows. This influence is known as language transfer. Language transfer is a complex phenomenon resulting from interaction between learners' prior linguistic knowledge, the target-language input and their cognitive processes. Language transfer can occur in grammar, pronunciation vocabulary, discourse, and reading

One situation in which language transfer often occurs is when learners sense of similarity between a feature of a language that they already know and a corresponding feature of the interlanguage they have developed (Larsen-Freeman(1991). If this happens, the acquisition of more complicated language forms may be delayed in favor of simpler language forms that resemble those of the language the learner is familiar with. Learners may also decline the use of some language forms at all if they are perceived as being too distant from their first language.

Language transfer has been the subject of several studies, and many aspects of it remain unexplained. Various hypotheses have been proposed to explain language transfer, but there is no single widely-accepted explanation of why it occurs.

2.1.6 Sequences of Acquisition

In the 1970s several studies investigated the order in which learners acquire different grammatical structures. These studies showed that there was little change in this order among learners with different first languages. Furthermore, it showed that the order was the same for adults and children, and that it did not even change if the learner had language lessons Anderson(1983). This proved that there were factors other than language transfer involved in learning second languages, and

was a strong confirmation of the concept of interlanguage.

However, the studies did not find that the orders were exactly the same. Although there were remarkable similarities in the order in which all learners learned second language grammar there were still some differences among individuals and among learners with different first languages Krashen(1981). It is also difficult to tell when exactly a grammatical structure has been learned, as learners may use structures correctly in some situations but not in others. Thus, it is more accurate to speak of sequence of acquisition, where particular grammatical features in a language have a fixed sequence of development, but the overall order of acquisition is less rigid.

2.1.7 Variability

Although second language acquisition proceeds in discrete sequences, it does not progress from one step of a sequence to the next in an orderly fashion. There can be considerable variability in features of learners' interlanguage while progressing from one stage to the next. For example, in one study by Rod Ellis a learner used both "No look my card" and "Don't look my card" while playing a game of bingo. A small fraction of variation in interlanguage is free variation, when the learner uses two forms interchangeably Anerson(1983).

However, most variation is systemic variation, variation which depends on the context of utterances the learner makes. Forms can vary depending on linguistic context, such as whether the subject of a sentence is a pronoun or a noun: they can vary depending on social context, such as using formal expressions with superiors and informal expressions with friends; and also,

they can vary depending on psycholinguistic context, or in other words, on whether learners have the chance to plan what they are going to say. The causes of variability, are a matter of great debate among SLA researchers.

2.1.8 Factors Contributing to Successful Acquisition

There are two kinds of factors that can contribute to successful acquisition of foreign or a second language which are external and internal factors:

2.1.8.1 External factors.

External factors include the following:

2.1.8.1.1 Input and interaction

The primary factor affecting language acquisition appears to be the input that the learner receives. Stephen Krashen (1998) took a very strong position on the importance of input, asserting that comprehensible input is all that is necessary for second language acquisition. He pointed out studies showing that the length of time a person stays in a foreign country is closely linked with his level of language acquisition. Further evidence for input comes from studies on reading: large amounts of free voluntary reading have a significant positive effect on learners' vocabulary, grammar, and writing. Input is also the mechanism by which people learn languages according to the universal grammar model.

The type of input may also be important. One tenet of Krashen's theory is that input should not be grammatically sequenced. He claims that such sequencing, as found in

language classrooms where lessons involve practicing a "structure of the day", is not necessary', and may even be harmful.

While input is of vital importance, only input matters in second language acquisition has been contradicted by more recent research. For example, students enrolled in French-language immersion programs in Canada still produced non-native-like grammar when they spoke even though they had years of meaning-focused lessons and their listening skills were statistically native-level. Output appears to play an important role, and among other things, can help provide learners with feedback, make them concentrate on the form of what they are saying, and help them automatize their language knowledge. These processes have been codified in the theory of comprehensible output (Krashen (1981).

Researchers have also pointed out interaction in the second language as being important for acquisition. According to Long's interaction hypothesis the conditions for acquisition are especially good when interacting in the second language, specifically, conditions are good when a breakdown in communication occurs and learners must negotiate for meaning. The modifications of speech arising from interactions like this help to make input more comprehensible, provide feedback to the learner, and push learners to modify their speech.

2.1.8.1.2 Social Aspects

Although the dominant perspective in second language research is a cognitive one, from the early days of the discipline researchers have also acknowledged that social aspects play an important role. There have been many different approaches to

sociolinguistic study of second language acquisition, and indeed, according to Rod Ellis, this plurality has meant that sociolinguistic SLA is replete with a bewildering set of terms referring to the social aspects of L2 acquisition Gardner (1989) . Common to each of these approaches, however, is a rejection of language as a purely psychological phenomenon; instead, sociolinguistic research views the social context in which language is learned as essential for a proper understanding of the acquisition process.

Ellis (1997:51) identifies three types of social structure which can affect the acquisition of second languages: sociolinguistic setting, specific social factors, and situational factors. Sociolinguistic setting refers to the role of the second language in society such as whether it is spoken by a majority or a minority of the population, whether its use is widespread or restricted to a few functional roles, or whether the society is predominantly bilingual or monolingual. Ellis(ibid) also includes the distinction of whether the second language is learned in a natural or an educational setting. Specific social factors that can affect second language acquisition include age, gender, social class, and ethnic identity, with ethnic identity being the one that has received most research attention. Situational factors are those which vary between each social interaction. For example, a learner may use more polite language when talking to someone of higher social statues, but more informal language, when talking to friends Gardner(1981).

There have been several models developed to explain social effects on language acquisition. Schumann's Acculturation Model proposes that learners' rate of development and ultimate level of language achievement is a function of the "social distance" and the "psychological distance" between learners and

the second language community, In Schumann's model the social factors are most important, but the degree to which learners are combatable with learning the second language also plays a role. Another sociolinguistic model is Gardner's socio-educational model, which was designed to explain classroom language acquisition; the liner-group model proposes "ethno-linguistic vitality" as a key construct for second language acquisition. Language socialization is an approach with the premise that "linguistic and cultural knowledge are constructed through each other", and saw increased attention after the year 2000. Finally, Norton's theory of social identity is an attempt to codify the relationship between power, identity, and language acquisition.

2.1.8.2 Internal Factors

Internal factors affecting second language acquisition are those which stem from the learner's own mind. Attempts to account for the internal mechanisms of second language acquisition can be divided into three general strands: cognitive, socio-cultural and linguistic. These explanations are not all compatible, and often differ significantly.

2.1.8.2.1 Cognitive Approaches

Much modern research in second language acquisition has taken a cognitive approach. Cognitive research is concerned with the mental processes involved in language acquisition, and how they can explain the nature of learners' language knowledge. This area of research is based in the more general area of cognitive science, and uses many concepts and models used in more general cognitive theories of learning. As such, cognitive theories view second-language acquisition as a special

case of more general learning mechanisms in the brain. This puts them in direct contrast with linguistic theories, which posit that language acquisition uses a unique process different from other types of learning.

The dominant model in cognitive approaches to second-language acquisition, in all second language acquisition research, is the computational model Gardner (1989). The computational model involves three stages. In the first stage, learners retain certain features of the language input in short-term memory. (This retained input is known as intake.) Then, learners convert some of this intake into second-language knowledge, which is stored in long-term memory. Finally, learners use this second language knowledge to produce spoken output. Cognitive theories attempt to codify both the nature of the mental representations of intake and language knowledge, and the mental processes which underlie these stages.

In the early days of second language acquisition research interlanguage was as seen as the basic representation of second language knowledge; however, more recent research has taken a number of different approaches in characterizing the mental representation of language knowledge. There are theories that hypothesize that learner language is inherently variable and there is the factionalist perspective that sees the acquisition of language as intimately tied to the function it provides. Some researchers make the distinction between implicit and explicit language knowledge, and some between declarative and procedural language knowledge. There have also been approaches that argue for a dual-mode system in which some language knowledge is stored as rules and other language knowledge as items.

The mental processes that underlie second language acquisition can be broken down into micro-processes and macro-processes. Micro-processes include attention, working memory; integration and restructuring, the process by which learners change their interlanguage systems; and monitoring, the conscious attending of learners to their own language output. Macro-processes include the distinction between intentional learning and incidental learning; and also the distinction between explicit and implicit learning.

Other cognitive approaches have looked at learners' speech production, particularly learners' speech planning and communication strategies. Speech planning can have an effect on learners' spoken output, and research in this area has focused on how planning affects three aspects of speech: complexity, accuracy, and fluency. Of these three, planning effects on fluency has had the most research attention. Communication strategies are conscious strategies that learners employ to get around any instances of communication breakdown they may experience. Their effect on second language acquisition is unclear, with some researchers claiming they help it, and others claiming the opposite.

2.1.8.2.2 Socio-Cultural Approaches

While still essentially being based in the cognitive tradition, socio-cultural theory has a fundamentally different set of assumptions to approaches to second language acquisition based on the computational model. Furthermore, although it is closely affiliated with other social approaches, it is a theory of mind and not of general social explanations of language acquisition. According to Ellis (1997: 67) "It is important to recognize that this paradigm, despite the label 'socio-cultural' does not seek to

explain how learners acquire the cultural values of the L2 but rather how knowledge of an L2 is internalized through experiences of a socio-cultural nature.

2.1.8.2.3 Linguistic Approaches

Linguistic approaches to explaining second-language acquisition spring from the wider study of linguistics. They differ from cognitive approaches and socio-cultural approaches in that they consider language knowledge to be unique and distinct from any other type of knowledge. Two main strands of research can be identified in the linguistic tradition: approaches informed by universal grammar, and typological approaches.

The theory of universal grammar was proposed by Noam Chomsky in the 1950s, and has enjoyed considerable popularity in the field of linguistics. It is a narrowly-focused theory that only concentrates on describing the linguistic competence of an individual, as opposed to mechanisms of learning. It consists of a set of principles, which are universal and constant, and a set of parameters, which can be set differently for different languages. The "universals" in universal grammar differ from typological universals in that they are a mental construct derived by researchers, whereas typological universals are readily verifiable by data from world languages.

Typological universals are principles that hold for all the world's languages. They are found empirically, by surveying different languages and deducing which aspects of them could be universal; these aspects are then checked against other languages to verify the findings. The interlanguages of second

language learners have been shown to follow typological universals, and some researchers have suggested that typological universals may constrain interlanguage development (Tharp, 1988).

2.1.8.2.4 Individual Variation

There is considerable variation in the rate at which people learn second languages, and in the language level that they ultimately reach. Some learners learn quickly and reach a near-native level of competence, but others learn slowly and get stuck at relatively early stages of acquisition, despite living in the country where the language is spoken for several years. The reason for this disparity was first addressed with the study of language learning aptitude in the 1950s, and later with the good language learner studies in the 1970s. More recently research has focused on a number of different factors that affect individuals' language learning, in particular strategy use, social and societal influences, personality, motivation, and anxiety. The relationship between age and the ability to learn languages has also been a subject of long-standing debate (Skehan, 1989).

The issue of age was first addressed with the critical period hypothesis. The strict version of this hypothesis states that there is a cut-off age at about 12, after which learners lose the ability to fully learn a language. This strict version has since been rejected for second language acquisition, as adult learners have been observed who reach native-like levels of pronunciation and general fluency. However, in general, adult learners of a second language rarely achieve the native-like fluency that children display, despite often progressing faster in the initial stages. This has led to speculation that age is indirectly related to other,

more central factors that affect language learning.

There has been considerable attention paid to the strategies which learners use when learning a second language. Strategies have been found to be of critical importance, so much so that strategic competence has been suggested as a major component of communicative competence. Strategies are commonly divided into learning strategies and communicative strategies, although there are other ways of categorizing them. Communicative strategies are strategies a learner uses to convey meaning even when she doesn't have access to the correct form, such as using pro-forms like *thing*, or using non-verbal means such as gestures.

2.2 Theories of Second Language Learning

2.2.1 The Audio-lingual Method

The entry of the United States into second World war had a significant effect on language teaching in America. To supply the U.S. government with personnel who were fluent in German, French, Italian, Chinese Japanese, Malay, and other languages, and who could work as interpreters, code-room assistants, and translators, it was necessary to set up special language training program. The government commissioned American universities to develop a foreign language programs for military personnel. Thus, the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) was established in 1942. Fifty-five American universities were involved in the program by the beginning of 1943.

The objective of the army programs was for students to attain conversational proficiency in a variety of foreign languages. Linguists, such as Leonard Bloomfield and Yale,

had already developed training programs as part of their linguistic research that were designed to give linguists and anthropologists mastery of American Indian languages and other languages they were studying who served as a source of phrases and vocabulary and who provided sentences for imitation, and a linguist, who supervised the learning experience.

The linguist did not necessarily know the language but was trained in eliciting the basic structure of the language from the informant. Thus, the students and the linguist were able to take part in guided conversation with the informant, and together they gradually learned how to speak the language, as well as to understand much of its basic grammar. Students in such courses studied 10 hours a day, 6 days a week. There were generally 15 hours of drill with native speakers and 20 to 30 hours of private study spread over two to three 6-week sessions. This was the system adopted by the army, and in small classes of mature and highly motivated students, excellent results were often achieved.

The Army Specialized Training Program lasted only about two years but attracted considerable attention in the popular press and in the academic community. For the next 10 years the "Army Method" and its suitability for use in regular language programs were discussed. But the linguists who developed the ASTP were not interested primarily in language teaching. The "methodology" of the Army Method, like the Direct Method, derived from the intensity of contact with the target language rather than from any well-developed methodological basis Brown (1980). It was a program innovative mainly in terms of the procedures used and the intensity of teaching rather than in terms of its underlying theory. However, it did convince a number of prominent linguists of the value of an intensive, oral-based approach to the learning of a foreign language.

2.2.2 Communicative Method of Language Learning

Communicative Method of Language Learning is the name of a method developed by Charles A. Curran (1976:88) and his associates. Curran was a specialist in counseling and a professor of psychology at Loyola University, Chicago. His application of psychological counseling techniques to learning is known as Counseling-Learning. Communicative Language Learning represents the use of Counseling-Learning theory to teach languages. As the name indicates, CLL derives its primary insights, and indeed its organizing rationale, from Rogerian counseling Rogers (1951:126). In lay terms, counseling is one person giving advice, assistance, and support to another who has a problem or is in some way in need. Communicative Language Learning draws on the counseling metaphor to redefine the roles of the teacher (the counselor) and learners (the clients) in the language classroom. The basic procedures of CLL can thus be seen as derived from the counselor-client relationship.

CLL techniques also belong to a larger set of foreign language teaching practices sometimes described as humanistic techniques Moskowitz (1978:17) Moskowitz defines humanistic techniques as those that blend what the student feels, thinks and knows with what he is learning in the target language. Rather than self-denial being the acceptable way of life, self-actualization and self-esteem are the ideals the exercises pursue. [The techniques] help build rapport, cohesiveness, and caring that far transcend what is already there., help students to be themselves, to accept themselves, and be proud of themselves., help foster a climate of caring and sharing in the foreign language class. Moskowitz (1978:2)

In sum, humanistic techniques engage the whole person, including the emotions and feelings (the affective realm) as well as linguistic knowledge and behavioral skills.

Another language teaching tradition with which Communicative Language Learning is linked to a set of practices used in certain kinds of bilingual education programs and referred to by Mackey (1972: 46) as "language alternation." In language alternation, a message/lesson/class is presented first in the native language and then again in the second language.

Students know the meaning and flow of an L2 message from their recall of the parallel meaning and flow of an L1 message. They begin to holistically piece together a view of the language out of these message sets. In CLL, a learner presents a message in L1 to the knower. The message is translated into L2 by the knower. The learner then repeats the message in L2, addressing it to another learner with whom he or she wishes to communicate. CLL learners are encouraged to attend to the "overhears" they experience between other learners and their knowers. The result of the "overhear" is that every member of the group can understand what any given learner is trying to communicate La Forge (1983: 45).

Curran himself wrote little about his theory of language. His student La Forge (1983:7) has attempted to be more explicit about this dimension of Communicative Language Learning theory. La Forge accepts that language theory must start, though not end, with criteria for sound features, the sentence, and abstract models of language La Forge (1983:4). The foreign language learners' tasks are "to apprehend the sound system, assign fundamental meanings, and to construct a basic grammar of the foreign language." La Forge goes beyond this structuralist

view of language, however, and elaborates an 'alternative theory of language, which is referred to as Language as Social Process.

Communication is more than just a message being transmitted from a speaker to a listener. The speaker is at the same time both subject and object of his own message. Communication involves not just the unidirectional transfer of information to the other, but the very constitution of the speaking subject in relation to its other.... Communication is an exchange which is incomplete without a feedback reaction from the destine of the message. La Forge (1983: 3)

This social-process view of language is then elaborated in terms of six qualities or sub-processes. La Forge also elaborates on the interactional view of language underlying Community Language Learning. "Language is people; language is persons in contact; language is persons in response" La forge (1983: 9). CLL interactions are of two distinct and fundamental kinds: interactions between learners and interactions between learners and knowers. Interactions between learners are unpredictable in content but typically are said to involve exchanges of affect. Learner exchanges deepen in intimacy as the class becomes a community of learners. The desire to be part of this growing intimacy pushes learners to keep pace with the learning of their peers.

Interaction between learners and knowers is initially dependent. The learner tells the knower what he or she wishes to say in the target language, and the knower tells the learner how to say it. In later stages, interactions between learner and knower are characterized as self-assertive (stage 2), resentful and indignant (stage 3), tolerant (stage 4), and independent (stage 5). These changes of interactive relationship are paralleled by five stages of language learning and five stages of affective conflicts

La Forge (1983: 50).

Curran's counseling experience led him to conclude that the techniques of counseling could be applied to learning in general (this became Counseling-Learning) and to language teaching in particular (Communicative Language Learning). The CLL view of learning is a holistic one, since "true" human learning is both cognitive and affective. This is termed whole-person learning. Such learning takes place in a communicative situation where teachers and learners are involved in "an interaction.., in which both experience a sense of their own wholeness" Curran (1972: 90). Within this, the development of the learner's relationship with the teacher is central. The process is divided into five stages and compared to the ontogenetic development of the child.

In the first, "birth" stage, feelings of security and belonging are established. In the second, as the learner's abilities improve, the learner, as child, begins to achieve a measure of independence from the parent. By the third, the learner "speaks independently" and may need to assert his or her own identity, often rejecting unasked-for advice. The fourth stage sees the learner as secure enough to take criticism, and by the last stage, the learner merely works on improving style and knowledge of linguistic appropriateness. By the end of the process, the child has become adult. The learner knows everything the teacher does and can become knower for a new learner. The process of learning a new language, then, is like being reborn and developing a new person, with all the trials and challenges that are associated with birth and maturation.

2.2.3 Translation Method

Grammar Translation Method is the offspring of German scholarship, the object of which, according to one of its less charitable critics, was "to know everything about something rather than the thing itself" W. H. D. Rouse, quoted in Kelly (1969:53). The principal characteristics of the Grammar-Translation Method were these:

1. The goal of foreign language study is to learn a language in order to read its literature or in order to benefit from the mental discipline and intellectual development that result from foreign language study. Grammar Translation is a way of studying a language that approaches the language first through detailed analysis of its grammar rules, followed by application of this knowledge to the task of translating sentences and texts into and out of the target language. It hence views language learning as consisting of little more than memorizing rules and facts in order to understand and manipulate the morphology and syntax of the foreign language. "The first language is maintained as the reference system in the acquisition of the second language" (Stern 1983: 455).

2. Reading and writing are the major focus; little or no systematic attention is paid to speaking or listening.

3. Vocabulary selection is based solely on the reading texts, and words are taught through bilingual word lists, dictionary study, and memorization. In a typical Grammar-Translation text, the grammar rules are presented and illustrated, a list of vocabulary items is presented with their translation equivalents, and translation exercises are prescribed.

4. The sentence is the basic unit of teaching and language

practice. Much of the lesson is devoted to translating sentences into and out of the target language, and it is this focus on the sentence that is a distinctive feature of the method. Earlier approaches to foreign language study used grammar as an aid to the study of texts in a foreign language. But this was thought to be too difficult for students in secondary schools, and the focus on the sentence was an attempt to make language learning easier Howatt (1984: 131).

5. Accuracy is emphasized. Students are expected to attain high standards in translation, because of "the high priority attached to meticulous standards of accuracy which, as well as having an intrinsic moral value, was a prerequisite for passing the increasing number of formal written examinations that grew up during the century" Howatt (1984: 132).

6. Grammar is taught deductively - that is, by presentation and study of grammar rules, which are then practiced through translation exercises. In most Grammar-Translation texts, a syllabus was followed for the sequencing of grammar points throughout a text, and there was an attempt to teach grammar in an organized and systematic way.

7. The student's native language is the medium of instruction. It is used to explain new items and to enable comparisons to be made between the foreign language and the student's native language.

2.2.4 Cooperative Language Learning Method

Cooperative Language Learning (CLL) is part of a more general instructional approach also known as Collaborative Learning (CL). Cooperative Learning is an approach to teaching

that makes maximum use of cooperative activities involving pairs and small groups of learners in the classroom. It has been defined as follows:

Cooperative learning is group learning activity organized so that learning is dependent on the socially structured exchange of information between learners in groups and in which each learner is held accountable for his or her own learning and is motivated to increase the learning of others. Olsen and Kagam (1992: 8).

Cooperative Learning has antecedents in proposals for peer-tutoring and peer-monitoring that go back hundreds of years and longer. The early twentieth century U.S. educator John Dewey is usually credited with promoting the idea of building cooperation in learning into regular classrooms on a regular and systematic basis Rogres (1951:96). It was more generally promoted and developed in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s as a response to the forced integration of public schools and has been substantially refined and developed since then. Educators were concerned that traditional models of classroom learning were teacher-fronted, fostered competition rather than cooperation, and favored majority students. They believed that minority students might fall behind higher-achieving students in this kind of learning environment. Cooperative Learning in this context sought to do the following:

- Raise the achievement of all students, including those who are gifted or academically handicapped
- Help the teacher build positive relationships among students
- Give students the experiences they need for healthy social, psychological, and cognitive development
- Replace the competitive organizational structure of most

classrooms and schools with a team-based, high-performance organizational structure (Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec (1994:2).

In second language teaching, CL (where it is often referred to as Cooperative Language Learning-CLL) has been embraced as a way of promoting communicative interaction in the classroom and is seen as an extension of the principles of Communicative Language Teaching. It is viewed as a learner-centered approach to teaching held to offer advantages over teacher-fronted classroom methods. In language teaching its goals are: - to provide opportunities for naturalistic second language acquisition through the use of interactive pair and group activities

- to provide teachers with a methodology to enable them achieve this goal and one that can be applied in a variety of curriculum settings (e.g., content-based, foreign language classrooms; mainstreaming)

- to enable focused attention to particular lexical items, language structures, and communicative functions through the use of interactive tasks

- to provide opportunities for learners to develop successful learning and communication strategies

- to enhance learner motivation and reduce learner stress and to create positive affective classroom climate

. CLL is thus an approach that crosses both mainstream education and second and foreign language teaching.

Cooperative learning advocates draw heavily on the theoretical work of developmental psychologists Jean Piaget (1965: 96) stressed that the central role of social interaction in learning. As we have indicated, a central premise of CLL is that learners develop communicative competence in a language by conversing in socially or pedagogically structured situations. CLL advocates have proposed certain interactive structures that

are considered optimal for learning the appropriate rules and practices in conversing in a new language. CLL also seeks to develop learners' critical thinking skills, which are seen as central to learning of any sort. Some authors have even elevated critical thinking to the same level of focus as that of the basic language skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking Kagan (1992:23). One approach to integrating the teaching of critical thinking adopted by CLL advocates is called the Question Matrix Wiederhold (1995). Wiederhold has developed a battery of cooperative activities built on the matrix that encourages learners to ask and respond to a deeper array of alternative question types.

Activities of this kind are believed to foster the development of critical thinking. (The matrix is based on the well-known Taxonomy of Educational Objectives devised by Bloom (1956) which assumes a hierarchy of learning objectives ranging from simple recall of information to forming conceptual judgments.) Kagan(1992:77) and other CL theorists have adopted this framework as an underlying learning theory for Cooperative Learning.

2.2.5 Multiple Intelligence Method

Multiple intelligences (MI) refers to a learner-based philosophy that characterizes human intelligence as having multiple dimensions that must be acknowledged and developed in education. Traditional IQ or intelligence tests are based on a test called the Stanford-Binet, founded on the idea that intelligence is a single, unchanged, inborn capacity. However, traditional IQ tests, while still given to most schoolchildren, are increasingly being challenged by the MI movement. MI is based on the work of Howard Gardner of the Harvard Graduate School

of Education Gardner (1993 :124).

Gardner notes that traditional IQ tests measure only logic and language, yet the brain has other equally important types of intelligence. Gardner argues that all humans have these intelligences, but people differ in the strengths and combinations of intelligences. He believes that all of them can be enhanced through training and practice. MI thus belongs to a group of instructional perspectives that focus on differences between learners and the need to recognize learner differences in teaching.

Learners are viewed as possessing individual learning styles, preferences, or intelligences. Pedagogy is most successful when these learner differences are acknowledged, analyzed for particular groups of learners, and accommodated in teaching. In both general education and language teaching, a focus on individual differences has been a recurring theme in the last 30 or so years, as seen in such movements or approaches as Individualized Instruction, Autonomous Learning, Learner Training, and Learner Strategies. The Multiple Intelligences model shares a number of commonalities with these earlier proposals.

Gardner (1993:72) proposed a view of natural human talents that is labeled the "Multiple Intelligences Model." This model is one of a variety of learning style models that have been proposed in general education and have subsequently been applied to language education . Gardner claims that his view of intelligence(s) is culture-free and avoids the conceptual narrowness usually associated with traditional models of intelligence (e.g., the Intelligent Quotient [IQ] testing model).

The idea of Multiple Intelligences has attracted the interest of many educators as well as the general public. Schools that use MI theory encourage learning that goes beyond traditional books, pens, and pencils. Teachers and parents who recognize their learners'/children's particular gifts and talents can provide learning activities that build on those inherent gifts. As a result of strengthening such differences, individuals are free to be intelligent in their own ways.

2.2.6 The Direct Method

The German scholar F. Franke (1984:12) wrote on the psychological principles of direct association between forms and meanings in the target language and provided a theoretical justification for a monolingual approach to teaching. According to Franke (1984:8) *a language could best be taught by, using it actively in the classroom*. Rather than using analytical procedures that focus on explanation of grammar rules in classroom teaching, teachers must encourage direct and spontaneous use of the foreign language in the classroom. Learners would then be able to induce rules of grammar. The teacher replaced the textbook in the early stages of learning. Speaking began with systematic attention to pronunciation. Known words could be used to teach new vocabulary, using mime, demonstration, and pictures.

These natural language learning principles provided the foundation for what came to be known as the Direct Method, which refers to the most widely known of the natural methods. Enthusiastic supporters of the Direct Method introduced it in France and Germany . In practice it stood for the following principles and procedures:

- 1-Classroom instruction was conducted exclusively in the target language.
- 2- Only everyday vocabulary and sentences were taught.
- 3- Oral communication skills were built up in a carefully graded progression organized around question-and-answer exchanges between teachers and students in small, intensive classes.
- 4- Grammar was taught inductively.
- 5-New teaching points were introduced orally.
- 6-Concrete vocabulary was taught through demonstration, objects, and pictures; abstract vocabulary was taught by association of ideas.
- 7-Both speech and listening comprehension were taught.
- 8-Correct pronunciation and grammar were emphasized.

These principles are seen in the following guidelines for teaching oral language, which are still followed in contemporary Berlitz schools:

- Never translate: demonstrate
- Never explain: act
- Never make a speech: ask questions
- Never imitate mistakes: correct
- Never speak with single words: use sentences
- Never speak too much: make students speak much
- never use the book: use your lesson plan
- Never jump around: follow your plan
- Never go too fast: keep the pace of the student
- never speaks too slowly: speak normally
- Never speak too quickly: speak naturally
- Never speak too loudly: speak naturally
- Never be impatient: take it easy

The Direct Method was quite successful in private language

schools, where paying clients had high motivation and the use of native-speaking teachers was the norm. But despite pressure from proponents of the method, it was difficult to implement in public secondary school education. It overemphasized and distorted the similarities between naturalistic first language learning and classroom foreign language learning and failed to consider the practical realities of the classroom. In addition, it lacked a rigorous basis in applied linguistic theory, and for this reason it was often criticized by the more academically based proponents of the Reform Movement.

The Direct Method represented the product of enlightened amateurism. It was perceived to have several drawbacks. It required teachers who were native speakers or who had native like fluency in the foreign language. It was largely dependent on the teacher's skill, rather than on a text book, and not all teachers were proficient enough in the foreign language to adhere to the principles of the method. Critics pointed out that strict adherence to Direct Method principles was often counter productive, since teachers were required to go to great lengths to avoid using the native language, when sometimes a simple, brief explanation in the student's native language would have been a more efficient route to comprehension.

The researcher believes that the suitable method to be applied for Iraqi English language learners is the Translation Method because they used to use Arabic translation in understanding English.

2.3. Factors Affecting Second Language Learning

2.3.1 Intelligence

Intelligence has multiple types: traditionally, intelligence

refers to the mental abilities that are measured by an IQ, (intelligence quotient) test. It usually measures only two types of intelligence: verbal intelligence and mathematical logical intelligence; there are other types of intelligence such as spatial intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, musical intelligence And interpersonal intelligence.

Linguistic intelligence includes speaking, using words, writings, giving presentations, solving word problems, logical mathematical intelligence using numbers, logic, calculations; learning and understanding grammar rules .

Special intelligence includes drawing, painting, using color, art, graphics, pictures, maps, and charts. Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence includes muscular coordination, athletic skill, body language, drama and theater. Musical intelligence encompasses using music, tones, hearing; producing the intonation and rhythm of a language. Interpersonal Intelligence refers to talking with other people, understanding them, using language to communicate. However Intrapersonal intelligence has self-knowledge, self-confidence, using language to analyze yourself, especially measured by verbal IQ tests, which may be a strong factor when it comes to learning that involves language analysis and rule learning. On the other hand, intelligence may play a less important role in language learning that focuses more on communication. It is important to keep in mind that "intelligence" is complex and that a person has many kinds of abilities and strengths an individual with strong academic performance does not necessarily mean that she/he is a successful second language learner.

2.3.2 Aptitude

Aptitude refers to potential for achievement. An aptitude test is designed to make a prediction about an individual's future achievements. Aptitude for language learning is usually composed of four different types of abilities: 1. The ability to identify and memorize new sounds 2. the ability to understand the function of particular words in sentences 3. the ability to figure out grammatical rules from language samples 4. the ability to memorize new words.

Earlier research revealed a substantial relationship between aptitude for language learning and performance in foreign language that was taught with grammar-translation or audio-lingual methods. However, aptitude seems irrelevant to L2 learning with the adoption of a more communicative approach to teaching (i.e., with a focus on meaning rather than on form). Successful language learners are not necessarily strong in all of the components of aptitude (e.g., some may have strong memories but only average ability to figure out grammatical rules.) Teachers can select appropriate teaching approaches and activities based on learners' aptitude profiles to accommodate their differences in aptitude Corder (1989).

2.3.3 Personality

There are numbers of personality characteristics that are likely to affect L2 learning, such as Extroversion vs. introversion, Inhibition vs. risk-taking, Self-esteem (self-confidence) Anxiety Empathy. Some studies have found that learners' success in language learning is associated with extroversion such as assertiveness and adventurousness, while others have found that many successful language learners do not

get high scores on measures of extroversion. Inhibition is a negative force for second language pronunciation performance. However, in general, the research does not show a clearly defined relationship between personality and SLA. The major difficulty is identification and measurement of personality characteristics. Personality may be a major factor only in the acquisition of conversational skills (i.e., oral communicative ability), not in the acquisition of literacy skills (i.e., reading and writing skills).

2.3.4 Motivation

Learning a second language would not be occurred without a key factor-motivation. Crookes perceives the major approaches towards motivation as social and physical. He states that motivation has been consistently linked with attitudes towards the community of speakers of the target language with interest in interacting with such speakers, and with some degree of self-identification with the target community(Crookes:70-1). Keeping in mind, there are three different types of motivation; that is integrative motivation, instrumental and intrinsic motivation.

2.3.4.1 Types of Motivation

1. Integrative Motivation: It involves the interest in learning a second language because of a sincere and personal interest in the people and culture represented by the other language group. Integrative motivation on the other hand is the combination of learning the language.

2. Instrumental Motivation is the need and the desire to achieve the reward of the achieving a high level of English. It is important to distinguish between orientation and motivation

when referring to instrumental motivation, the concept of orientation involved learners regarding as important for performing one's profession or reading technical literature.

3. Intrinsic Motivation: It is related to the learner's context of learning second language, so the methodology of teaching is too constant, habitation will occur

2.3.4.2 Attitudes Towards Second Language Community

Positive learning L2 is enrichment. Negative learning L2 is resentment Social dynamics and power relationships between L1 and L2. Minority group members learning the language of a majority groups may have different attitudes and motivation from those of majority group members learning a minority language. Think of why an ESL learner's and an EFL learner's attitude may differ in motivation and attitude.

2.3.4.3 Motivation in the Classroom Setting

Its motivating students in to the lesson, varying the activities, tasks, and materials to increase students' interest levels, using cooperative rather than competitive goals to increase students' self-confidence, creating a supportive and non-threatening learning atmosphere.

2.4 Learning Styles.

A learning Style is student consistent way of responding to and using stimuli in the context of learning. Reid(1999:89) defined learning styles as the composite of characteristic cognitive, affective and physiological factors that serve as relatively stable indicators of how a learner perceive, interact

with, and responds to the learning environment .

2.4.1 Perceptual Learning Styles:

Visual learner learns more effectively through the eyes (seeing), Auditory, (aural) learners: learns more effectively through the ears (hearing). Haptic learner learns more effectively through touch and body movement (a combination of the kinesthetic and tactile styles). Kinesthetic learner: learns more effectively through concrete body experience (body movement). Tactile learner learns more effectively through touch (hands-on).

2.4.2 Cognitive learning Styles

Cognitive learning style is related to classroom language learning that involves analysis, attention to details, and mastering of exercise, drills, and other focused activities . FD is related to the communicative aspects of language learning that require social outreach, empathy, perception of other people, and communicative skills. Reflectivity vs. impulsivity reflective learners tends to make a slower, more calculated decision. They are usually more systematic and more cautious in learning L2. Impulsive learners tend to make a quick or gambling guess at an answer to a problem. They are usually more intuitive and more willing to take risks in learning L2.

Every person, student or teacher, has a learning style; therefore, there is no particular teaching or learning method that can suit the needs of all learners. Learning styles exist on wide continuums, although they are often described as opposites. Learning styles are value-neutral; that is, no one style is better than others. Very little research has examined the interaction

between different learning styles and success in L2 learning; however, students should be encouraged to "stretch" their learning styles so that they will be more empowered in a variety of learning situations.

2.4.3 Learner Beliefs

Learner Beliefs virtually all learners, particularly older learners, have strong beliefs about how their language instruction should be delivered. Learner beliefs are usually based on previous learning experiences and the assumption that a particular type of instruction is better than others. The available research indicates that learner beliefs can be strong mediating factors in learners' L2 learning process. e.g., L2 learners' progress was negatively affected by an instructional approach that was not consistent with their beliefs about the best ways for them to learn, whether due to their learning styles or to their beliefs about how language are learned, will influence the kinds of strategies they choose to learn new material. Teachers can use this information to help learner's expand their repertoire of learning strategies and thus develop greater flexibility in their second language learning.

2.4.4 Age of Acquisition

The relationship between a learner's age and his/her potential for success in second language learning is complicated. The relationship needs to take into account 1) the stage of L2 development, 2) the goals of learning L2 (i.e., in what aspects of the L2 the learner has achieved), and 3) the context in which the learner learns L2 (including language input, learning environment, and socio-cultural context). L2 development in informal language learning environments where the TL is used

primary: Children can eventually speak the L2 with native-like fluency, but their parents and older learners (i.e., post-puberty learners) are hard to achieve such high levels of mastery of the spoken language, especially in pronunciation/accent. Adults and adolescents can make more rapid progress toward mastery of an L2 in contexts where they can make use of the language on a daily basis in social, personal, professional, or academic interaction. Skehan (1989) Learners who began learning an L2 at the elementary school level did not necessarily do better in the long run than those who began in early adolescent, it is more difficult for post-puberty learners to attain native-like mastery of the spoken language, including pronunciation, word choice, and some grammatical features.

2.5 Native Language Interference with Second Language

The second language learning environment encompasses everything the language learner hears and sees in the new language. It may include a wide variety of situations such as exchanges in restaurants and stores, conversations with friends, reading street signs and newspapers, as well as classroom activities, or it may be very sparse, including only language classroom activities and a few books Larsen- Freeman(1991).

Regardless of the learning environment, the learner's goal is mastery of the target language. The learner begins the task of learning a second language from point zero (or close to it) and through the steady accumulation of the mastered entities of the target language, eventually amasses them in quantities sufficient to constitute a particular level of proficiency Dulay, Burt & Krashen (1982: 76) and Ellis (1984:116).

This characteristic of language learning entails the successful mastery of steadily accumulating structural entities and organizing this knowledge into coherent structures which lead to effective communication in the target language. If this is the case, then we would expect that well-formed accurate and complete target language structures would, one after another, emerge on the learner's path towards eventual mastery of the language. If the learner went on to master the language, we could, in principle, tabulate the expansion of his/her repertoire up to the point where all of the well-formed structures of the target language had been accounted for Beardsmore (1982).

In reality this is not the case. Second language learners appear to accommodate structural entities of the target language but demonstrate difficulty in organizing this knowledge into appropriate, coherent structures there appears to be a significant gap between the accumulation and the organization of the knowledge. This then raises a critical question - what kinds of language do second language learners produce in speaking and writing? When writing or speaking the target language (L2). Second language learners tend to rely on their native language (L1) structures to produce a response. If the structures of the two languages are distinctly different, then one could expect a relatively high frequency of errors to occur in L2, thus indicating an interference of L1 on L2 Ellis (1997:56).

Dulay et al (1982:135) define interference as the automatic transfer, due to habit, of the surface structure of the first language onto the surface of the target language. Lott (1983: 256) defines interference as 'errors in the learner's use of the foreign language that can be traced back to the mother tongue'.

Ellis (1997:51) refers to interference as 'transfer', which he says is 'the influence that the learner's L1 exerts over the

acquisition of L2' He argues their transfer is governed by learners' perceptions about what is transferable and by their ,stage of development in L2 learning In learning a target language. Learner constricts their own in-ter-im rules Selinker (1988) and Ellis (1997: 62) with the use of their L1 knowledge, but only when they believe it will help them in the learning task or when they have become sufficiently proficient in the L2 for transfer to be possible.

Ellis (1997:65) raises the need to distinguish between errors and mistakes and makes an important distinction between the two. He says that errors reflect gaps in the learner's knowledge; they occur because the learner does not know what is correct. Mistakes reflect occasional lapses in performance; they occur because, in a particular instance, the learner is unable to perform what he or she knows

2.6. The use of Translation in English Language Learning

It is necessary to discriminate between the teaching of translation as a vocational skill and the use of the mother tongue in the teaching situation as an aid to language learning. The need for some translation in language learning is usually supported by non-native teachers. Native teachers of English argue that foreign language learning needs as much exposure to the L2 as possible during precious classroom time, and any usage of the L1 or translation is a waste of time.

In the past, most methods in L2 language pedagogy dictated that L1 should be prohibited in the classroom. Communicative approaches to language learning in the 1970s and 1980s considered the use of the L1 as undesirable. However, recently the attitude to mother tongue and translation in language classes has undergone a positive change.

Translation is sometimes referred to as the fifth language skill alongside the other four basic skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Translation holds a special importance at an intermediate and advanced level: in the advanced or final stage of language teaching, translation from L1 to L2 and L2 to L1 is recognized as the fifth skill and the most important social skill since it promotes communication and understanding between strangers' Ross (2000:63).

Mother tongue has potentially both positive and negative consequences: it may serve social and cognitive functions Carless (2008:331). It is claimed that students working in groups do not have to speak English all the time. Use of mother tongue relates to learner identity. Negative impact of mother tongue use is that too much reliance on the L1 may undermine the interaction in English.

However good the students are at comprehending authentic reading or listening materials, the majority keeps mentally translating from L2 into L1 and vice versa. This fact makes teachers of foreign languages aware of the importance of translation in language classrooms.

Why do students use the mother tongue in class? According to J. Harmer (2001: 131), a principal cause of the L1 use is required by the activity, if students are linguistically incapable of activating vocabulary for a chosen task. Another reason is that translation is a natural thing to do in language learning, and code-switching between languages is regarded as naturally developmental. The amount of L1 use by particular students may well have to do with differing learner styles and abilities.

Evidence from research into the crucial issue of the L1 use

in classrooms around the world was analyzed by G. Mattioli (2004:118). For instance, LI use in the Chinese classrooms offers evidence that L1 is a valuable tool for socio-cognitive processes in language learning. Another reason for L1 use in the classroom relates to the fostering of a positive affective environment. C. W. Schweers (1999: 6) encourages teachers to insert the native language into lessons to influence the classroom dynamic, provide a sense of security and validate the learners' experiences.

The real usefulness of translation in English classes lies in exploiting it in order to compare grammar, vocabulary, word order and other language points in English and the student's mother tongue. According to N. J. Ross (2000:26), if students are aware of the differences, language interference (transfer) and intervention from their own language are likely to be reduced.

It is known that linguistic awareness can be either conscious or unconscious Odlin (1996:81). Cross-linguistic similarities and differences can produce positive transfer or negative transfer such as under production, overproduction, production errors, and misinterpretation. It should be emphasized that transfer is not always caused by the influence of native language.

Numerous studies indicated that both negative and positive transfer between the L1 and L2 was important for development of the interlanguage, the complex system of the learners' L2. Many teachers recognize that the L1 in the classroom is a positive representation of the interlanguage. The data on the interlanguage and language transfer show that it is highly probable that L2 learners will always think most often in their L1, even at the advanced level Mahmoud (2006: 29). Moreover, translation in the L2 classroom offers a way to highlight

similarities and differences between L1 and L2 forms. The translation is useful for L2 acquisition because, firstly, it uses authentic materials, secondly, it is interactive, thirdly, it is learner-centered, and finally it promotes learner autonomy Mahmoud (2006: 30).

Regarding the use of the L1 in the L2 classroom, it is important to find out how students themselves feel about it. C. Schweers (1999:7) conducted research into this issue and found that a high percentage (88.7%) of the participants felt that mother tongue should be used in their English classes. Moreover, if learners of a second language are encouraged to ignore their native language, they might well feel their identity threatened. The formal study into the use of native language in our settings has shown that as many as 86% out of 110 respondents felt that a native language should be used in the classroom, particularly to explain difficult concepts (90%), introduce new material (57%), define new vocabulary (74%), explain the link between English and mother tongue (55%) Schweers (1999:9).

It is noteworthy that in teaching / learning English there has been a long-felt dissatisfaction, mainly on the students' part, about excluding or minimal use of translation in mastering complex issues. Learners constantly wanted to check the exact meanings of the occurring terms in their native language by consulting bilingual dictionaries or asking for teacher's explanations.

CHAPTER THREE

English Writing and Grammar Difficulties Introduction

Learning English as a foreign language or any other second language is always a challenge especially if you are from a place where people hardly use the second language in their regular life- Language learner's face several difficulties gaining good command over a foreign language. Even the level of difficulty raises higher when the targeted language is learnt with the help of no professionals or institutes dedicated to teach the language. The degree of the efficiency of learner of a second language needs depends on the sector she or he is targeting to apply . For instance, students, whose medium of education is a foreign language, need a good understanding of the language and freely writing ability, but for using foreign language is not only achieving the knowledge to use the language properly but also acquiring the power to write in a way that attracts people to read and feel what has been written rather than just conveying meaning. There are many reasons affecting learning English as a second language properly.

1. Learners learn the meanings of thousands of unrelated words but don't really learn their applications therefore, can't capitalize them.
2. Learners learn grammar but hardly get the challenge to apply them in a large context.
3. Whatever learners learn could be handsome enough but they don't get any opportunity to communicate with the native speakers or even they don't communicate with themselves that

really don't help us to preserve what they have learned .They miss the communicative competence.

4. The degree that their native language differs from a second language is very vital. So very often learners find it boring and difficult to learn a second language that is very much different from the native language.

5. They hardly listen to English news or read literature, article or any thing that enhances the learner skill. They miss out their listening and reading skills which are very important to acquire mastery or proficiency of English as a second language

6. In schools, students are being taught that English is an international language. To learn this language requires constant practice and patience. The kind of feeling that privileges among students is that it is not possible to get fluency or mastery over English language. This kind of tendency prevents students from learning new languages like English. Since most of the students are first generation learners, how can a student get acquainted with the foreign language with regard to English without any guidance from their parents and others? Even though students are studying English, they are not able to produce even a single sentence without any grammatical error in English. The reason stated for this is that they study subjects from the examination point of view only. This is true with English language too. Our examination system is such that it makes students' rote memorization rather than testing their analytical and creative skills. In this process, they memorize lessons, reproduce them in exam halls and forget them in the same day itself.

7. Learners learn basic grammar at school level for the purpose of passing the tests and not to face any real life

situations. Application-oriented advanced grammar is not taught in schools. Furthermore, adequate practice is not given to students to learn a language. After this phase, a student enters into college life. This period is considered as a transition period. The system followed in colleges is different from that of schools. Moreover, students have their own whims and fancies about college life because of the tremendous influence of mass-medias like theatres and satellite channels on them. These Medias project a false perception about colleges and students. On seeing such things in movies, students take it for granted. As a result of this, they have formed an image for a college and want to act upon that image.

8. During twelve years of school life students learn consistency, discipline, determination, order and obedience. The moment he/she enters into college life, he/ she thinks as if he/she got freedom. He/she forgets good things, which he learnt through twelve years of rigorous training in school. The general thinking about college among student community is that college is very liberal in dealing with the students Brown (1994). No one cares for anything. They do not have responsibilities at all. Whatever they think they can implement . Attending class is not compulsory. Keeping these views in mind they find it difficult to sit in classrooms and listen to the lessons being taught to them. All their views about a college are shattered into pieces the moment a teacher enters in a classroom and begins to teach and impose certain restrictions on them. At this juncture, severe problems start with the slow-learners. These students too passed in the higher secondary examinations. For them, sitting and listen a language class is something an uphill task, while others listening to the class with rapt attention

There are two problems which a language teacher faces at

this critical point of time. First, a teacher has to manage all the students in a classroom. If any one of the students creates problems it is an embarrassing situation for him/her. Second, the teacher identifies the students who create problems. It is not advisable to punish such boys in front of others. This is so because students will be affected psychologically. Sometimes students may turn against teachers. Simultaneously, they begin to see a teacher as his adversary. This is not a healthy trend. At the same time, to correct them inside the classroom will reduce the teaching time. There is also a danger of deviation from the teaching of subject too. The very day a student enters in a college, he associates himself with a student of college as shown in movies. The problem arises at the initial stage itself with such students. So, the primary task of teachers is to guide them in proper way and make them realize the value of college life.

Teachers' responsibility lies not only with the average students but also with below average/slow learners. In short, a good teacher has to handle classes for all the students in a classroom. Individual attention will solve all kinds of problems which arise while taking classes. As a remedial measure, slow-learners should be given extra coaching and counseling. If a student errs in a class he/she should not be scolded or punished for his/her misbehavior in the class itself. This will make them weaken psychologically. Instead, call such students individually after class hours are over and provide valuable advices and counsel them the significance of college life. This will create a congenial relationship between staff and students.

To ease problems from day one itself, an English teacher has to encourage the students to talk in English only, this act makes them confident. By taking extra care, the English teacher will impart the nuances spoken aspects of a language once/twice

in a week as a remedial measure. When such type of spoken English classes begins, student-friendly or learner-centric environment will certainly prevail, as more and more students will participate in the session Combs (1976:138).

Teachers should motivate students for participative learning. This will solve all the stumbling blocks in students. Teaching learning is not a one-way process. It is a multi-way process. As soon as the teaching is over, students should raise their doubts, clarification, etc. By doing so, students' communication skills in English will grow. To develop this, sufficient practice must be given to students in their preliminary stage. While maintaining classroom management consonantly learner-friendly atmosphere should also prevail there. This ensures students to learn more and participate more. Above all, a teacher is not only a teacher but also a friend, guide and a philosopher to students. He/she guides students not only to pass in the exam but also to face challenges and take right decisions during the time of crisis in life. This is, of course, a real and tough task ahead of a good teacher types.

3.1 Importance of Writing Skill in Learning A foreign Language

According to Cottrel (2008) writing skill is usually considered as a clear proof whether learners learnt English well or not. Learners sit for different examinations and get grades on the basis of writing ability .Writing ability is assessed for grades or scores in the examination .This is apparently a vast area of language production that our students and teachers are concerned with. Khan (1999:66) addressed the issue of assessment in writing English based on empirical data that were collected from composition writing of learners and their higher

secondary level. On the other hand Khan shows frequency of word and sentence level errors in writing paragraph by EFLs through a small scale investigation. He suggests that there should be more effective ways of correcting student writing with plausible feedback. Practicing writing in the classroom and its problems can be a practical area for assessment and for writing development. In this regard we do not have many investigative reports revealing a detailed picture of problems in student writing that could have provided professional insights for teacher development. However, various studies have been carried out, Nada (2002:54) made an empirical study on error analysis of ELL of Arabic L1 background that encompasses a broad based scenario of Arabic learners' tendency, categories of frequency of error making in EFL learning.

3.1.1 Lack of Proficiency in Written English

Some learners have developed an attitude of not bothering to learn the correct written form of some aspects of English. It would appear from the range of errors that learners make on the basis of that writing is the most difficult of all the language skills. The more inaccurate the learner is in written English, the more likely he or she is to perform very poorly in all subjects taught through English.

The writing skill, particularly in English, is arguably a major factor in determining the success or failure of learners at secondary schools. It is responsible for the marks that the learners get at the end of the year. In this case, English has considerable influence on the validity of learners' evaluations, that is, the extent to which their examinations measure what they are meant to measure. The examinations that learners take are supposed to measure their knowledge of selected areas of

content in particular subjects (for example: History, Agriculture, Biology, Geography, Biblical Studies, etc.), but their limited language proficiency (i.e. what is not supposed to be measured by the examinations) influences their results. This suggests that the examination results obtained by the learners who are L2 speakers of English might well be invalid, in that they may reflect not the lack of knowledge of the subject matter purportedly being tested, but rather the learner's competence in English Brown (1982).

The final result is that a learner who is good at language but does not know the content will fail, while the one who knows the content but is poor at language may also fail. The latter is the one that is of utmost importance to this study, because learners who are good at language struggle only to master the content, while those who are poor at language struggle with both the content and the language.

When marking the written examinations, in fact, the learners understand the content but have a problem when it comes to conveying that information through the medium of English. In the assessment of learners through written texts, it would appear that the validity of the results is questionable, because the focus is on language knowledge rather on content knowledge.

Linguistic theorists divide language knowledge into two major aspects: competence and performance. Competence refers to the extent to which an individual knows the language, that is, knowledge of what is grammatically and socially correct (socially appropriate and acceptable register) in a language. Performance refers to what an individual produces when he speaks, reads or writes the language. Performance is that which

occurs in practice. However, performance is an aspect of competence. The mentalist model of language learning puts emphasis on competence as an important component of language use, while the behaviorist model of language learning puts emphasis on performance as an important component of language use Hubbard et al (1986:48). Chomsky argues strongly that performance is not a true reflection of one's language competence: it is but the tip of an iceberg. According to him an individual has more competence than his/her performance reveals Hubbard et al (1986:51). Consequently, the written work of learners (i.e. performance) is not a true reflection of their competence. So examinations fail to measure the linguistic competence of learners.

There is a problem among graduates of secondary school students of not being able to express their thoughts accurately in written English. They make a wide range of errors which often renders their writing difficult to understand.

There is also a problem of differences in the perception of these errors by different people according to their linguistic background. For example, an L1 speaker of English who has no training in second language learning might perceive Sesotho speakers' errors to be signs of cognitive problems and consequently be led to award the learners lower marks than they truly deserve. First language -speaking marker might recognize the errors as being typical of all first language speakers and not as signs of intellectual weakness Crown (1982). Such a marker might award a higher mark for the same piece of work. This problem may affect both the validity and the reliability of the examinations.

3.1.2.1 Composition Theory of Writing

First, it is important to define writing. Although writing can take on many forms (creative, expository, editorial, epistle etc.) and can be accomplished in various modes (pen to paper, finger to keyboard), writing in the classroom should be a public act, be interpretive. Writing should be a shared process amongst students, take the students into a higher order thinking pattern, and always come from a specific point of view. In addition, Gary Olson has compiled the "10 Essentials to Process Writing". A set of the beliefs held for decades regarding the key points to effective composition Combs (1976). They can be found below.

- 1- Writing is an activity, an act composed of a variety of activities.
- 2- The activities in writing are typically recursive, rather than linear.
- 3- Writing is, first and foremost, a social activity.
- 4- The act of writing can be a means of learning and discovery.
- 5- Experienced writers are often aware of audience, purpose, and context
- 6- Experienced writers spend considerable time on invention and revision
- 7- Effective writing instruction allows students to practice these activities.
- 8- Such instruction includes ample opportunity for peer review
- 9- Effective instructors grade student work not only on the finished product but on the efforts involved in the writing process
- 10- Successful composition instruction entails finding appropriate intervene in each student's writing process.

The ultimate goal is to push students from being beginner writers to expert writers. To do so, a teacher must help students become aware of the methods used to become an effective writer in the field.

Every classroom, depending on the discipline, will approach writing in a different way. While in science class, students should be thinking and writing like scientists; in math class, thinking and writing like mathematicians. Students first need to acquire the terms specific to the discipline. Then, in acts of writing, students can use these terms in authentic tasks. They will think in terms of the discipline and how to interact with the world with regards to the field.

By giving students the chance to write in authentic environments, students will show their affinity to a specific discipline. If for example, a student is successful in writing scientific reports, a teacher may be able to encourage a student towards pursuing a science career. Teachers will be able to see if a student has the "it factor" for future real world success in a discipline.

While writing, students will be setting goals, planning, searching their memories, problem solving, evaluating, and diagnosing. Through these activities associated with writing, students will be able to enter a "new stage of thinking" by understanding the material on a deeper level .

Through a process referred to as "cognitive refrigeration", the act of writing can even change and transform previous knowledge, or even past biases. Students will be able to create new thoughts related to old information.

The same is for writing in a classroom. A student may have thoughts about a subject or topic, but as soon as they spend the time to write it down, it becomes a conscious act of synthesis that can be referred back to. The material takes on a whole other form.

"Composition theory" has become a buzzword representing the range of beliefs that writing in the classroom can help promote cognitive development. There are critics, such as Robert Mahon, who say that all the hype around composition theory is essentially "endlessly reinventing those wheels while slacking off on the basics" Mahon (1991:61). He calls for a return to the basics of teaching students how to be clear, concise, and focused in their writing, as opposed to all the bells and whistles that certain professional development conferences and methods attached to composition theory offer.

There can still be much benefit from supporting a teaching method with highly acclaimed theorists. Composition theory is a melding of cognitive science and linguistic theory. In the classroom it is often referred to as "Writing to Learn", yet it is more than a basic post-reading activity to keep students busy.

As the next section will show, using writing in the classroom can aid in a student's development and teachers can create learners for life.

3.1.2 Writing Composition

When a student is asked to write a composition of 150 words, although shorter, but students face much difficulty that a longer composition doesn't. The student must be concise, and have one main point and stick to it. Nevertheless, in writing an effective short composition, he/she will be using the fundamentals of good

composition writing that apply to any composition regardless of length. The following points must be taken into consideration in writing any composition:

1- He/ She must begin composition by doing some basic pre-writing. This might include brainstorming or a simple outline.

2- Develop a 30-40 word introduction. This introduction should begin with a broad context, such as "the difficulty of choosing a major in college," and then work towards his specific topic.

3- He has to move to a single body paragraph of 50-80 words. This paragraph should basically provide support for his statement.

4- He has to end his composition with a 30-50 - word conclusion that re-state his paper and reviews the main points. Leave the reader with insight into the topic, this could be personal insight or into the subject itself Brown (1982).

5. He has to proofread his paper carefully for grammar and spelling errors and any problems with clarity .One effective method of proofreading is to check his composition starting from the end and backwards (last sentence, second to last sentence, and so on.) This method will prevent him from focusing on his content and will allow him to concentrate strictly on sentence-level errors.

3.1.2. 2 Language Learning and Development

As it is understood, there are three basic schools of thought when it comes to learning and development. Jean Piaget believed that development had to come before a child could learn. On the other hand, Lev Vygotsky proposed that learning comes before development. There is still another belief that learning and development happen at the same time.

To look at composition theory through Piaget's eyes would make writing in the classroom nothing more than identifying, rehearsing, organizing, and reinforcing. If a child is already developed to the fullest at his appropriate stage, then writing to learn would make no impact on his growth. It would be impossible for a child to enter new realms of thinking.

If one were to look at writing to learn through the view that learning happens at the same time as development, writing becomes more effective. Students will be able to focus on genre specific writing, and small waves of development could occur from small bits of learning. They would be able to acquire a few new skills and accumulate bits of knowledge in their writing process.

However, in order to gain the most benefit from writing, one should approach the task through the eyes of Vygotsky. When learning happens before development, "learning prepares the learner for new stages of development". Therefore, writing goes beyond the rote recitation of what was learned, as a way to improve the whole child. Students can reflect, perceive, and gain perspectives as they write.

As alluded to earlier, writing can influence and restructure prior knowledge. With regards to his theory of the zone of proximal development (ZPD), students learn first socially and then internalize the information. In other words, the material is first interpersonal, and becomes intrapersonal. It is just like how a child learns a language: first the child learns through social interaction and language is attached to the world in which she lives, and then it becomes privatized, most seen through private speech.

Following this trend of language acquisition, students can learn information first socially, and in the broader classroom setting, and then through writing it can be internalized. Thus, the child is pushed further in his or her development

3.1.3 Rules to Avoid Making Mistakes in English Writing

There are some rules that should be followed in order to avoid making mistakes in writing:

1. The learner should use simple language. Some learners try to build very complicated sentences with things like the present perfect tense or conditionals. They make horrible mistakes. He/ She should write what he /she can write (simple sentences that he/she has seen many times) not what he/she want to write (complicated sentences). He/ She may feel he is talking like a child or that he/she is not expressing his/her thoughts, but don't worry about that. Right now, his/ her task is not to express his/ her thoughts freely; his/ her task is to learn the language.

2. He/ She must be slow and careful. He/ She should write very slowly. If he/she needs two hours to write 150 word composition, with correct sentences, that is good. That is better than writing it in one hour. Why should it take so long? Because he/she should read his sentences many times, looking for mistakes. He/ She should correct his/her own sentences frequently. He/ She should check if his/her sentences are correct by using a dictionary. And he/she should look for example sentences to imitate.

3. If he/she is not sure how to write something, he/she must not write it. If he/she can write something correctly, it is almost always better not to write it. He/ She must not teach

himself/herself the wrong way to write it. He/ She can try to look for the correct sentence in a dictionary, but when writing, usually he/she does not have a time for that. So it is a good idea to write something else-something that he/she knows is correct. It can even be something on a different subject.

4. When writing, he/she always should look things up. Whenever he/she is not sure how to use a word, he/she should look it up in a dictionary to find example sentences with it.

5. He/ She should know when he/she makes bad writing . Some learners do not even realize how different English is from their native language. When writing, they translate word for word from their native language, and they think their sentences are right. When reading or listening to English, he/ she should use the "pause and think" technique; pay close attention to things like word order, articles, prepositions, and tenses.

3.2 Grammatical Knowledge

Grammar is the study of rules governing the use of language, thus, each language can be said to have its own distinct grammar. Grammar is part of the general study of language called linguistics.

The ability to communicate is not the same thing as the ability to use proper grammar, knowing proper grammar merely allows you to express ideas in ways that are acceptable to a certain class of people or to control the nuances of grammar to convey things subtly. But communication skills can be quite good even if one's grammar is not perfect, communicative competence means someone has the ability to make himself or herself understood, despite distinct shortcomings in grammar.

Good grammar is not prerequisite for communicative competence.

Grammar is an important essence because it contributes to good structure of sentences and it can help in how we well communicate .One who has a good writing is an effective communicator because he/ she will usually be able to catch on to the social rules which help us our communication. If one has poor grammar, he/ she will not be able to communicate effectively, some grammar errors are acceptable during communication but some are not, make any sense, the other speaker may 'reply with what are you trying to tell me or what are you trying to say.

3.2.1 Importance of Grammar in Writing

Language is used every day for communication. When people want to communicate with those around them, they send a message: they open their mouths and speak, sign with their hands, or put pen to paper and write. Those around them then receive the messages either by using their ears to listen or by using their eyes to read. In order to be this communication process is effective, all of the people involved in it must be familiar with both these processes of communication and the language used for communicating.

Being familiar with a language requires much more than knowing every possible vocabulary word or reciting every possible verb form. Indeed, It requires knowing about the system of rules for the language, rules that provide instructions for using the language. This system of rules is more commonly known as "grammar".

Every language has a grammar that outlines its conventional or acceptable use in both oral and written communication. Although this grammar has many fixed rules, or "conventions," about how to put messages together, it is usually quite dynamic—that is, it changes over time as the language changes. Consequently, while it is important to understand the conventions of a grammar, it is also important to recognize these conventions are likely to change over time.

Grammar is an important aspect in expressing thoughts by writing, it is the most important element of written language, when the learner is well mastered with grammar, he can easily communicate with others through writing. Good writing indicates good learning.

Grammar is the sound, structure and meaning system of language. All languages have grammar, and each language has its own grammar. People who speak the same language are able to communicate because they intuitively know the grammar system of that language - that is, the rules of making meaning. They recognize the sounds of English words, the meanings of those words, and the different ways of putting words together to make meaningful sentences. However, while students may be effective speakers of English, they need guidance to become effective writers. They need to learn how to transfer their knowledge of grammatical aspects from oral to written language.

Effective grammar instruction begins with what learners already know about grammar, and it helps them use this knowledge as they write. By connecting their oral language to written language, teachers can identify abstract grammatical terminology so that students can write and read with greater

competence and confidence. Researchers strongly suggest that the most beneficial way of helping learners improve their command of grammar in writing is to use the learner's writing as the basis of discussing grammatical concepts. Researchers agree that it is more effective to teach punctuation, sentence variety, and the usage in the context of writing the topic by teaching isolated skills (Harris (1962).

3.2.2 Problems Caused by Using Incorrect Grammar

Grammar is the study of words and how they can be used to form sentences. It can include the inflections,, syntax ,and word formation of the language, as well as the pronunciation ,meaning, and the linguistic theory of the particular word. Unclear communication is the biggest issue caused by incorrect grammar when writing and speaking. Consider the following sentences:

"I don't want nothing from you".

"I don't want anything from you".

While the first sentence uses two negatives to create positive construction, the second example uses one negative and one positive to create negative construction. If you are trying to state that you want a book, a new shirt, or some other item, the first sentence is correct. However, if you are trying to tell a friend that you already have everything you need, the second sentence is correct.

In addition to creating communication, misunderstanding incorrect grammar also makes a poor first impression .If you are a jobseeker with grammatical errors in your resume, a company recruiter may see you less intelligent than a candidate who has a similar skills but was also to proofread properly. If you own a

business and have a grammatical errors in your marketing materials, potential customers may see these mistakes as an indication that your company is sloppy or simple unreliable.

3.2.3 Strategies of Teaching and Learning Grammar

Grammar instruction is most naturally integrated during the revising, editing and proofreading phases of writing process. After learners have written their first drafts and feel comfortable with the ideas and organization of their writing, teachers may wish to employ various strategies to help students to see grammatical concepts as language choices that can enhance their writing purpose. Learners will soon grow more receptive to revising, editing and proofreading their writing. In writing conferences, for example teachers can help learners revise or effective word choices. As the teacher and the learner discuss, the real audience for the writing, the teacher can ask the learners to consider how formal or informal the writing should be, and remind the learners that all people adjust the level of formality in oral conversation, depending on their listeners and the speaking context. The teacher can then help the learner identify words in his or her writing that change the level of formality of the writing.

To help learners revise boring monotonous sentences, teachers might ask learners to read their writing aloud. This strategy helps both the partner and the writer to recognize, when for example, too many sentences begin with "it is" or "there are". Both the partner and the writer can discuss ways to vary the sentence beginning. After the writer revises the sentences, the partner can read the sentences aloud. Then both can discuss the effectiveness of the revision

Teachers can help learners edit from passive voice to active voice by presenting a mini lesson .In editing groups, learners can exchange papers and look for verbs that often signal the passive voice, such as "was" and "been". When learners find these verbs, they read the sentence aloud and discuss the whether the voice is passive and, if so, whether an active voice verb might strengthen the learners .The writer can then decide which voice is more effective and appropriate to the writing purpose and audience.

Teachers can help learners become better proofreaders through peer editing groups. Based on the writing abilities of the learners; teacher can assign different proofreading tasks to specific individuals in each group. For example, one person for agreement errors, another person for fragments and run-ons, another person for punctuation errors. As learners develop increasing skill in proofreading areas, they become responsible for more proofreading areas. Collaborating with classmates in peer editing groups helps improve their own grammar skill as well as understand importance of grammar as a tool for effective communication. As teachers integrate grammar instruction with writing instruction, they should use the grammar terms that make sense to the learners by incorporating theses terms

3.2.4 Common Problems in Learning Grammar

There are many problems that students face in learning grammar and the following are the most common ones

3.2.4.1 Word Order

In English, word order is more important than it is in many other languages. Very often EFL students produce sentences that sound strange to the native's ear because the order of the

words in the sentences is wrong. The basic pattern for English statements is: subject-verb-object(s)-place- time . Sentences do not have to have all of these parts, but if all of the parts do occur, they most likely will occur in this order. If a sentence has both a place and time, one of these is frequently moved to the front of the sentence.

A change in basic sentence order can make an English sentence nonsensical or make it mean something completely different. For example, if part of the verb is moved so it comes before the subject, we have a question. (e.g. "John will be home at eight" becomes "will John be home at eight?") If you switch the time phrase with the place word you get an understandable sentence that no native speaker would ever say, "John will be at eight home." Word order is also important in English with phrases smaller than a sentence.

3.2.4.2 Present Tense:

The present tense in most languages refers to actions that are taking place in the present. In English, this is not really true. We use present tense to refer to actions that are habitual, repeated, or always true. (e.g., The sun rises in the East; I get up every day at 6:00 a.m.; We celebrate Thanksgiving in November). English uses present progressive (present continuous) to express actions that are taking place in the present (e.g., I'm reading a teacher training manual; I'm teaching an ESL class; you're preparing to take your GED).

3.2.4.3 Past Tense

Past tense indicates experiences and events that are over and done in the past, one problem is that people tend to use present

tense to tell about personal experience in the past. If we are writing about an experience that occurred in the past, we should use the past tense. Using present is correct when they talk, but writing is some more formal, so that we need to follow the rules and keep the verb tenses consistent. A second common problem is when students use "would + verb" to describe an event that happened in the past. This is correct in speech but it is not correct in writing.

3.2.4.4 Two-Word Verbs:

Some actions in English are expressed by phrases that consist of a verb and a preposition or adverb. The action is not expressed by the verb alone. For example, "get" means 'to obtain, to acquire, to receive, etc.' while "get over" means 'to recover from an illness,' and "get up" means 'to arise from a reclining position.' There are hundreds of such phrases in English. These are problems for EFL students because they are often not listed in the dictionary in a separate form and their meaning is hard to find. A good textbook will probably teach many of these two-word verbs, but if yours does not. Some of them must have their two parts together in a sentence while others may have their parts separated by other things in the sentence.

Examples:

The teacher always calls on students who are prepared
She asked me to call her up after dinner.

The two-word verbs that can not have their parts separated are called "inseparable" and file others are called "separable" .
Look at the examples below.

Examples:

"They wanted to look over the car".

"They wanted to look the car over".

"They wanted to look it over.

But not: Students wanted to look over it.

3.2.4.5 The Verb Do

In English, we use the verbs "do, did, does, done, etc.") in at least four different ways:

1. As a verb like other verbs: Jennifer did the dishes
2. As a sign of emphasis: I did comb my hair.
3. As a verb that can be placed in front of the subject to form a question or to which can not be attached to form a negative statement: Do they want more bread? Mr. Jones doesn't know if the clock is correct.
4. As a substitute to save repetition of another verb or verb phrase: My sister needs a new coat and I do too. They didn't finish their tests, but I did. Iraqi students will probably have difficulty with all of the uses of "do" except the first example.

3.2.4.6 Prepositions

English prepositions are a problem because different languages use different prepositions to express the same idea. It will help your students if you do not teach too many prepositions at one time. Also, it will help if you are sure to put the prepositions in context (in a situation where the use is natural).

3.2.4.7 Nouns

In English, as in many other languages, nouns are classified as countable and non-countable. If something is countable, it can have a plural form. If it is non-countable, it can not have a plural form and the singular form is used to refer to any quantity. Some of the things that we consider non-countable in English are: abstractions, ideas, ideals, emotions, gasses, fluids, materials with particles too small to be conveniently counted, and fields of study. Many languages have the same concept of count and non-count but they do not always put items in the same category as we do in English. For example, in English, "homework" and "housework" are generally non-countable. (We do not say "housework").

In other languages, these nouns are countable and they do have plural forms. Students have to learn which nouns are which in English because it affects other grammar principles as well (e.g. whether to use "a little or a few" before the noun. There are other problems with English grammar but most good textbooks can guide you along. The pointers included here are mentioned only to make you aware that there are many aspects of English that are not problems at all for native speakers (even uneducated ones), but which might cause problems for your students.

CHAPTER FOUR

Procedures

The major aim of this chapter is to discuss the details of procedures followed in the present study of achieving the aims. First of all, there is a discussion of the population then sample selection. Finally, there is a comprehensive and detailed presentation of the procedures of building up the test designed for the purpose of the study.

4.1 The Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the study is college students studying English as a foreign language. The sample includes 30 students at third stage at Al- Maamoon University College in Baghdad for the academic year 2012-2013. The choice of the students is made deliberately.

4.2 Procedures of Constructing the Test

The test has been designed and prepared for the purpose of the present study, has passed through several stages. The first is the choice of the items insuring its validity and reliability, then forming the scoring scheme. There is also a presentation of the administration of the test and the statistical methods used. After all these steps, a pilot Test is formed to check any missing point needed.

4.2.1 Choice of the Items

To verify the aims of the present study, the choice of the items of this test was made to suit the student. The first item

contains a letter to be sent to a friend has kindly offered to look after student's dog while he is a way in a holiday while the second item contains a descriptive essay about an excursion the student planned (appendix 1).

Consequently, the test contained items that require writing a composition that requires the performance of adequate grammatical and lexical rules.

4.2.2 Face Validity

Tyler (1963: 28) consider validity as "the most important consideration in the construction and use of test". Thus, the test is valid when it is accurate in measuring what ought to measure. In a way or another, face validity means the degree to which a test measures what it claims to measure efficiently Lado(1960:169). To determine face validity, the test has been exposed to a jury of the following

1. Prof. Nidham Sheet Ph.D in linguistics College of Arts/ University of Baghdad.
2. Prof. Abdullatif AL- Jumeili Ph.D in applied linguistics. University of Duhok
3. Asst prof. Zaidan Khalaf Ph.D in linguistics, College of Education /University of Anbar
4. Instructor. Ridha Ghanim Ph.D in English literature College of Basic Education / Mustansiriya University

The experts commented on the test providing their suggestions, modifications and additions then finally were satisfied after taking into consideration all necessary remarks.

4.2.3 Test Reliability

One of the necessary characteristics of a test to be good is reliability. A reliable test is the one that produces essentially the same results consistently on different occasions when the conditions of the test remain the same Hagen (1977)

4.2.4 The Pilot Test

The pilot test refers to a try-out of the test to a small but representative group of tested students Heaton(1975: 158) .

The aims of the Pilot Test can be summed up in the following:

- 1.It provides information about test items to determine whether they are easy or difficult to the students.
2. It establishes a reasonable time limit that the students should take in the main test, and it discovers whether they are of the test AL-Zobaide and AL-Hammash (1982: 13) .

In order to assure the reliability of the test, the researcher corrected the compositions written by the students twice.

4.2.5 Administration of the Test

After achieving face validity and reliability, the procedure followed for the administration of the test can be summed up as follows:

- 1- papers (which contained the item of the test) are given to them and they are read by the researcher.
- 2- Each student is given forty minutes to think and write a composition of 80 words.

4. 2. 6 Criteria for Correcting and Scoring

The criteria for correcting the compositions of the students is mainly suggested by the supervisor. It was agreed that each grammatical mistake or error is considered to be false, while making sentences according to grammatical and lexical rules is considered to be correct. Here, it is worthy mentioning that errors and mistakes made by students in their writing reflect their poor knowledge of grammar.

4.3 Theoretical Error Analysis

The historical development of types of analysis of data that have been used by researchers indicates that there have been many changes in the way in which second language deviations have been viewed. First, it was contrastive analysis which was based on the similarities and differences between the mother tongue and the target language in order to make predictions about the errors that a learner could commit Dulay & Burt, as cited in Larsen-Freeman & Long (1991: 64). This was followed by error analysis, which was based on the premise that the starting point should be errors that learners make and then an attempt must be made to analyze their possible sources.

The major criticism leveled against error analysis was that focusing on errors denied researchers access to the whole picture of learners' competence, and that it was impossible to come up with a definite source of an error, because the cause of an error may be ambiguous Larsen-Freeman & Long (1991:68). After error analysis come performance analysis, this focused on the analysis of learners' inter language performance. The criticism against it was that it focused only on the learner's

performance. Last was discourse analysis, which examined both the learner's performance and the input to the learner (Larsen-Freeman & Long (1991:70).

A closer look at the various approaches mentioned above shows that some of them are subsumed in others and that many of them overlap with each other.

Error analysis is a type of linguistic analysis that focuses on the errors learners make. It consists of a comparison between the errors made in the Target Language (TL) and that TL itself. Pit Corder is the "Father" of Error Analysis (the EA with the "new look"). It was with his article entitled "The significance of Learner Errors" Corder (1967:132) that EA took a new turn. Errors used to be "flaws" that needed to be eradicated.

Corder (1976:133) presented a completely different point of view. He contended that those errors are "important in and of themselves." For learners themselves, errors are 'indispensable,' since the making of errors can be regarded as a device the learner uses in order to learn. Gass & Selinker (1974:86) defined errors as "red flags" that provide evidence of the learner's knowledge of the second language. Researchers are interested in errors because they are believed to contain valuable information on the strategies that people use to acquire a language Richards (1974:167) Taylor (1979:58) Duly and Burt (1974). Moreover, according to Richards and (1974: 15), "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), 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." And 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 and mistakes 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 (1967:56) at a given point during the learning process and prognostic because it can tell course organizers to reorient language learning materials on the basis of the learners' current problems.

Error analysis was established in the 1960s by Stephen Pit Corder and colleagues. Error analysis was an alternative to contrastive analysis. Error analysis showed that contrastive analysis was unable to predict a great majority of errors, although its more valuable aspects have been incorporated into the study of language transfer.

A key finding of error analysis has been that many learner errors are produced by learners making faulty inferences about the rules of the new language. Although error analysis is still used to investigate specific questions, the quest for an overarching theory of learner errors has largely been abandoned. Contrastive analysis emphasized the study of phonology and morphology. It did not address communicative contexts, i.e. contrasting socio-pragmatic conditions that influence linguistic

production. Recent work in error analysis has emphasized errors as a source of knowledge of a learner's inter language and linguistic hypotheses.

Brown (1993: 205) differentiates between mistakes and errors. A mistake refers to a performance error that is either a random guess or slip in that it is a failure to utilize a known system correctly. All people make mistakes, in both native and second language situations. Native speakers are normally capable of recognizing and correcting such mistakes, which are not the result of a deficiency in competence but the result of some sort of breakdown in the process of production. Corder in Larsen (1992:62) claims that a mistake is a random performance slip caused by fatigue, excitement, etc. and therefore can be readily self-corrected.

An error is a noticeable deviation, reflecting the competence of the learner. It is a systematic deviation made by the learner who has not yet mastered the rules of the target language. The learner cannot self correct an error because it is a product reflective of his or her current stage of L2 development, or underlying competence Larsen (1992: 59).

Error analysis is the study of kind and quantity of error that occurs, particularly in the fields of applied linguistics. These errors can be divided into three sub-categories: overgeneralization, incomplete rule application, and the hypothesizing of false concepts, reflected a learner's competence at a certain stage and thereby differed from learner to learner.

The methodology of error analysis (traditional error analysis) can be said to have followed the steps below:

1. Collection of data.
2. Identification of errors and mistakes (labeling with varying degree of precision depending on the linguistic sophistication brought to bear upon the task, with respect to the exact nature of the deviation.
3. Classification of error types
4. Statement of relative frequency of error types
5. Identification of the areas of difficulty in the target language;
6. Therapy (remedial drills, lessons, etc.).

While the above methodology is roughly representative of the majority of error' analyses in the traditional framework, the more sophisticated investigations went further, to include one or both of the following:

1. Analysis of the source of the errors (e.g. mother tongue interference, over-generalization, inconsistencies in the spelling system of the target language, etc.);
2. Determination of the degree of disturbance caused by the error (or the seriousness of the error in terms of communication, norm, etc.).

Error analysis was criticized for misdiagnosing student learning problems due to their "avoidance" of certain difficult L2 elements. The result today is that both contrastive analysis and error analysis are rarely used in identifying L2 learner problem areas.

The debate over contrastive analysis and error analysis has virtually disappeared in the last ten years. Most researchers agree that contrastive analysis and error analysis alone can't predict or account for the myriad errors encountered in learning English Corder (1967:68)

There are two major theoretical frameworks of error analysis that are relevant to this study, namely: contrastive analysis and developmental analysis.

4.3.1 Contrastive Analysis of Learner Errors

According to Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991:78), from the 1940s to the 1960s, contrastive analysis was the most dominant form of data analysis. Much emphasis was placed on the role of the mother tongue in second language learning. Contrastive analysis was based on the premise that linguistic differences could be used to predict learning difficulty Hatch (1983:38) Klein (1986) Larsen – Freeman & Long (1991:51) Brown(1994) James, (1998:112). It involves the systematic comparison of the two languages, that is, the mother tongue of the learner and the target language. The objective is to identify points of similarity and differences between the two languages.

There was a strong belief that the learning of an L2 would be facilitated when similarities and differences were taken into consideration. That conviction gave rise to what became known as the contrastive analysis hypothesis. That hypothesis stipulated that where two languages were similar, positive transfer would occur, but where they were different, negative transfer, or interference Klein, Larsen-Freeman & Long(1991:53). This hypothesis was founded on behaviorism, which held the view that language learning was a product of habit formation.

The relationship between language learning and habit formation is summed up succinctly as follows:

Foreign language learning was viewed as a process of overcoming the habits of the native language in order to acquire the new habits of the target language. This was accomplished through pedagogical practices of dialogue memorization, imitation and pattern practice. Overlearning and thus automaticity was the goal. The contrastive analysis hypothesis was important to this view of language learning, since if trouble spots in the target language could be anticipated, errors might be prevented or at least held to a minimum. In this way the formation of bad habits could be avoided. Larsen-Freeman & Long (1991: 55)

That hypothesis can be supported if a learner makes many errors in the areas of difference between the mother tongue and the target language, and makes relatively few or no errors in the areas where the two languages are similar. But, if a learner makes errors in the areas of similarity or makes relatively few or no errors in the areas of differences, the hypothesis is rejected Hoff-Ginsberg (1997).

Following this hypothesis, errors were classified on the basis of the mother tongue of the learner. In other words, interlingual errors were used as the category of errors that learners committed which could be traced to mother-tongue interference. Thus errors were conceived of as a result of interference between first and second language Steinberg. According to Wardhaugh Larsen-Freeman & Long (1991:57), this is the

strong version of the contrastive analysis hypothesis.

4.3.2 Developmental Analysis of Learner Errors

According to Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982), the major contribution of error analysis is the controversial discovery that the majority of grammatical errors second language learners make do not reflect the learner's mother tongue but are very much like those young children make as they learn a first language. Chomsky was opposed to the view of language learning as a product of habit formation. His view was that language is a result of rule formation.

Chomsky posited a theory in which humans were thought to possess a certain innate predisposition to induce the rules of the target language from the input to which they were exposed. Once acquired, these rules would allow learners to create and comprehend novel utterances, utterances they would neither have understood nor have produced were they limited to imitating input from the environment. Larsen-Freeman & Long, (1991: 57)

This theory received support from researchers. The errors that were found by researchers indicated that L2 learners committed similar errors regardless of their mother tongue, and that there were similarities between L2 errors and errors made by LI children learning their own language. These were often referred to as developmental errors, although Richards (as cited in Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991) called them intra lingual errors. In brief, developmental errors occur when learners attempt to apply the rules of the target language; that is, the difficulties in target language rules induce them to commit errors. Developmental errors can be classified into four

categories, which are overgeneralization, redundancy reduction, communication-based errors, and induced errors.

Richards (as cited in Larsen-Freeman & Long, (1991) argues that overgeneralization is caused by the learner's failure to observe the boundaries of a rule. Selinker (1974:86) describes communication-based errors as those which occur when speakers invoke communicative strategies, and Stenson (as cited in Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991) describes induced errors as those which are brought about by a teacher's sequencing or presenting two linguistic items in a way which creates confusion in the mind of the language learner.

Corder(1974:89) strongly maintains that errors are invaluable in the study of the language learning process. Learners' errors are not seen as something to be prevented, but as signs that learners are actively engaged in hypothesis testing which would ultimately result in the acquisition of target language rules. In his own words he maintains that:

A learner's errors provide evidence of the system of the language that he is using (i.e. has learned) at a particular point in the course (and it must be repeated that he is using some system, although it is not yet the right system). They are significant in three ways.

First to the teacher, in that they tell him, if he undertakes a systematic analysis, how far towards the goal the learner has progressed and, consequently, what remains for him to learn.

Second they provide to the researcher evidence of how language is learned or acquired, what strategies or procedures the learner is employing in his discovery of the language.

Thirdly (and in a sense this is their most important aspect) they are indispensable to the learner himself because we can regard the making of errors as a device the learner uses in order to learn. It is a way the learner has of testing his hypotheses about the nature of the language he is learning. The making of errors then is a strategy employed both by children acquiring their mother tongue and by those learning a second language. Corder (1974).

This is supported by Dulay, Burt, and Krashen. (1982: 138), who argue that "people cannot learn language without first systematically committing errors" According to them:

Learners' errors provide data from which inferences about the nature of the language learning can be made and indicate to teachers and curriculum developers which part of the target language students have most difficulty producing correctly and which error types detract most from a learner's ability to communicate effectively.

Viewpoints like this one gave rise to the analysis of the language system that a learner uses in an endeavor to comprehend and master a second language. Such a language system is neither a learner's mother tongue nor the second language that he/she attempts to learn ,but a system between the two Selinker (1974:72). Brown (1994:24) maintains that by trial and error a learner gradually comes closer to the approximations of the language system used by mother tongue speakers of the target language. This intermediate stage is called the "idiosyncratic dialect" Corder (1974), or "the approximative system" Nemser (1974:68), or" inter language" Selinker (1974). These three concepts have one thing in common, that is, a

learner forms his/her own language system when trying to learn a second language. According to Brown (1994:26) the most viable way of analyzing inter language is the study of learners' speech and writing.

4.4.. Sources of Errors

The issue of sources of errors is a difficult one because there is a great deal of speculation involved in determining them. Brown (1994 :215) identifies inter lingual transfer, intra lingual transfer and context of learning as sources of error. Intra lingual transfer is said to be a source of errors in the early stages of second language learning. Intra lingual transfer serves as a source of errors when learners have acquired parts of a second language and generalize what they acquired within the target language. The context of learning is said to be a source of errors when the materials and teachers lead a learner to make faulty hypotheses about the language. Brown (1994: 215) asserts that "students often make errors because of a misleading explanation from the teacher, faulty presentation of a structure or word in a textbook, or even because of a pattern that was rootely memorized in a drill but not properly contextualized."

4.5. Error Classification Systems

There are several taxonomies that are used to classify errors. According to Dulay (1982), the most useful and commonly used bases for the descriptive classification of errors are linguistic category, surface strategy, comparative analysis and communicative effect.

Linguistic category taxonomies classify errors according to

either language components or the particular linguistic constituent the error affects. Language components include phonology (pronunciation), syntax and morphology (grammar), semantics and lexicon (meaning and vocabulary) and discourse (style). This taxonomy is used by many researchers as a reporting tool to classify the errors they have collected.

A surface strategy highlights the ways surface structures are altered. Learners may omit necessary items or add unnecessary ones, they may misform or misorder them. Omission errors are characterized by the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance. Additions are characterized by the presence of an item which must not appear in a well-formed utterance; examples are double markings and regularizations. Misformation is characterized by the use of the wrong form of the morpheme or structure. Misordering is characterized by the incorrect placement of a morpheme or group of morphemes in an utterance.

The advantage of an error analysis process based on this taxonomy is that it helps with the identification of cognitive processes that underlie learners' reconstructions of the new language and brings to the fore that learners' errors are based on some logic. They are not the result of laziness or sloppy thinking, but of the learner's use of interim principles to produce a new language.

The classification of errors in a comparative taxonomy is based on comparisons between the structure of L2 errors and certain other types of constructions. Usually the comparison is made between L2 errors and errors made by children learning the target language as their L1. This comparison has yielded the two major error categories in this taxonomy: developmental and interlingual errors.

The communicative-effect classification deals with errors from the perspective of their effect on the listener or reader. It focuses on distinguishing between errors that seem to cause miscommunication and those that do not. There are two major error categories in this taxonomy: global and local. Global errors affect the overall organization of the sentence and hinder successful communication, while local errors affect a single element of a sentence and usually do not hinder communication.

Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982: 138-139) identify the following six categories as being among the most common errors: (1) Omission of grammatical morphemes (which are items that do not contribute much to the meaning of sentences), as in "he hit car." (2) Double marking a semantic feature (e.g. past tense) when only one marker is required, as in "she didn't went back." (3) Regularizing rules, as in "womans" for "women." (4) Using archi-forms, one form in place of several, such as the use of her for both she and her, as in "I see her yesterday. Her dance with my brother." (5) Using two or more forms in random alternation, even though the language requires the use of each under certain conditions, as in the random use of he and she regardless of the gender of the person of interest. (6) Misordering items in constructions that require a reversal of word-order rules that had been as in "what you are doing?" or misplacing items that may be correctly one place in the sentence, as in "they are all the time late."

James (1998: 129) argues that errors can be classified on the basis of modality, medium and level. Modality refers to whether the learner's behavior was receptive (reading or listening) or productive (speaking or writing), medium indicates whether the language produced or received was spoken (speech sounds) or written (written symbols) and level indicates the

specific level of language in which the error was made. Three levels are identified: substance, text and discourse. The substance level involves errors of encoding (misspelling and mispronunciation) and decoding (miscues and misperception) which are made when a learner is operating the spelling (graphological) and pronunciation (phonological) systems. The discourse level involves errors of misformulation (misrepresenting speech and miscomposing text) and misprocessing (the misconstrual of speech and the misinterpretation of text) which occur in spoken and written discourse James (1998:135). The text level involves errors of composing (misspeaking and miswriting) and norms of the parts of speech. Syntax handles structures larger than single words Syntax errors affect phrases , clauses sentences, and paragraphs

4.6 Error Correction

Before errors can be corrected they must be identified and classified. According to James (1998:138) the process of error analysis involves four steps, namely: (1) the detection of an error in writing or speech, (2) the location of an error, (3) the description of an error; and (4) the classification of an error. The detection of an error involves sensing that there is an error in a sample text or speech. The location of an error involves specifying where an error has occurred (that is, in a sentence, a word, etc.). The description of an error involves describing an error in detail, and classification follows on description by categorizing an error into its specific category. These steps are reinforced by Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (as cited in James,(1998: 104-105), who assert that "the linguistic category classification carries out specification of errors in terms of

linguistic categories, in terms of where an error is located in the overall system of the target language based on the linguistic item which is affected by the error."

According to Brown (1980:168) there are four categories of errors, namely: substitution, omission, addition and word order. This model is useful for the description of errors which have been identified, described and classified, the process of correcting them may start. However, the correction of errors that are made by second language learners seems to be a highly debatable issue.

There is apparently no agreement among authors on this issue about the manner in which it must be carried out. However, there is no doubt that some form of error correction is necessary and it is a positive step towards second language learning. Hendrickson (as cited in Brown (1987: 221) asserts that teachers should differentiate between global and local errors. Global errors need to be corrected because they hinder communication by preventing the hearer or reader from understanding the message, which usually not the case with local errors that usually affect a single element of a sentence.

Klein (1986) argues strongly that error correction should be confined more to "manipulative grammar practice," leaving communicative activities free from a focus on error correction. Specifically, according to him, errors are those that impair communication significantly, those that have effect on the listener or reader, and those that occur frequently in students'

speech and writing. He also argues that errors should be corrected by the teacher, the learner making the errors and the other learners.

The Teachability and Learnability Hypothesis of Pienemann (as cited in Larsen-Freeman & Long (1991: 272-280) and Ellis (1997: 82) seems to caution that there are some errors that cannot be corrected as long as learners are not linguistically ready to learn them. In a way, this hypothesis puts a teacher in a difficult situation because it might be too difficult for the teacher to know which learners are ready for certain linguistic structures and which learners are not yet ready for such structures.

The Natural Hypothesis of Krashen and Terrell (1983) recommends no direct treatment of errors at all, this again puts teachers in a difficult situation because teachers see it as their business to correct errors. They fear that if they leave all errors to occur without making corrections, such errors may be reinforced and be regarded as correct by the learners.

Long (as cited in Brown, 1994: 220) suggests that after the teacher has noticed an error, he/she must decide whether it needs correction or not. Such a decision will be made on the basis of "the importance of the error to the current pedagogical focus on the lesson and the teacher's perception of the chance of eliciting correct performance from the student if the negative feedback is given."

Brown (1994 :210) argues, in his analysis of Vigil and Oller's model for theory of error correction, that cognitive feedback must be optimal in order to be effective. There must not to be negative correction because it may make learners refuse to learn a second language, as they get almost everything wrong. On the other hand there must not be too much positive feedback because it may lead to fossilization of the errors.

Finally it becomes clear that a teacher is left to make informed decisions concerning the correction of errors.

4.7 Identifying Errors

One of the common difficulties in understanding the linguistic system of both first and second language learners is the fact that such systems cannot be directly observed. They must be inferred by means of analyzing production and comprehension data. What makes the task even thornier is the instability of learners systems. Systems are in a constant state of flux as new information flows in and causes existing structures to be revised. Repeated observations of a learner will often reveal apparently unpredictable or even contradictory data. In undertaking the task of performance analysis, the teacher and researcher are called upon to infer order and logic in this unstable and variable system.

Corder (1971) provided a model for identifying erroneous or idiosyncratic utterances in a second language. According to the model, any sentence uttered by the learner and subsequently transcribed can be analyzed for idiosyncrasies. A major distinction is made between overt and covert errors. If a

plausible interpretation can be made of the sentence, then one should form a reconstruction of the sentence in the target language, compare the reconstruction with the original idiosyncratic sentence, and then describe the differences. If the native language of the learner is known, the model indicates using translation as a possible indicator of native language interference as the source of error. In some cases, no plausible interpretation is possible at all, and the researcher is left with no analysis of the error Brown (1980:220).

4.8 Types of errors

Jack Richards (1974) classifies errors into two kinds, they are:

4.8.1 Interlingual Errors

Richards (1974:173) says that interlanguage errors are caused by the interference of the learner's mother tongue. Through the meaning of inter language errors, can be seen and becomes clear that this kind of errors needs a contrastive analysis. The interference mentioned above means the interference of native language into foreign learning and indicates the learning process.

4.8.2 Intra lingual and Developmental Errors

Richards (1974: 174) says that intra lingual and developmental errors emphasize the reflection of the learners' competence at a particular stage, and illustrate some of general characteristics of language acquisition and the details, intra lingual errors are those that reflect the general characteristics of rule learning, such as faulty generalization, incomplete

application of rules and failure to learn conditions under which rules apply and developmental errors illustrate the learner attempting to build up hypotheses about the English language from the limited experience in the classroom or textbook.

4.8.3 Common Errors of English Language Learners

Group A: These first five errors usually have a big impact on a reader and are rule based. If these occur repeatedly, it makes sense to address them first and to consult resources as needed. Tutors will find scaffolding a useful technique here. [

1. Subject-Verb Agreement Errors

This kind of error occurs when the subject does not agree with the verb.

Example: He walk every morning

Correction: He walks every morning

2. Verb Tense Errors

This error occurs when an incorrect time marker is used.

Example: I was working on my paper since 6:00 am.

Correction: I have been working on my paper since 6:00 am.

3. Verb Form Errors

This error occurs when a verb is incorrectly formed.

Example: I will driven to the airport next week.

Correction: I will drive to the airport next week.

Another Example: I was cook dinner last night when you

called.

Correction: I cooked dinner last night when you called

4- Singular/Plural Noun Ending Errors

It often occurs when there is confusion about which nouns are countable.

Example: I have turned in all my homework's this week.

Correction: I have turned in all my homework this week.

Another Example: I set up six more desks for the afternoon class.

5- Word Form Errors

This error usually occurs when the wrong part of speech is chosen.

Example: I'm happy to live in a democracy country.

Correction: I'm happy to live in a democratic country. These errors may or may not be rule-based, depending on the error, the tutor may need to act as the native speaker resource to help resolve the issue.

6- Sentence Structure Errors

Sentence structure errors refer to a broad range of errors that occur for a variety of reasons: a word (often a to be verb) is left out; an extra word (often a duplicate subject) is added; word order is incorrect; or clauses that do not belong together are punctuated as one sentence. Sentence structure errors often contain other types of errors within them. They may be repeated or may vary greatly. The best strategy for this is asking the intended meaning.

7- Word Choice Errors

They refer to a broad range of errors ranging from completely incorrect use to connotation being off. Students need to consult advance dictionaries.

8-Phrasal Verbs

These may include the occasional idiom, cultural references, more complicated lexical questions, and exceptions to rules. For this type of issue, unless they have specialized ELL training or access to appropriate resources, tutors should feel free to act as the native speaker resources.

CHAPTER FIVE

Data Analysis

The study examined lexical and grammatical errors made by learners in written EFL. The major objective is to locate the source of such errors. Various kinds of grammatical errors made by the learners will be examined first, the overall percentage of all learners in each error sub – category will be described, then lexical errors will be examined. Other errors that were made but recorded in the table will be given and finally the overall performance of the learners will be given

After collecting data, these mistakes and errors presented to find the most frequently ones. Errors and mistakes are divided such in the following categories. After collecting papers of students, a table is tabulated. we found that students made many errors and mistakes.

Table 1
Coding System of Grammatical Errors

Grammatical categories	Classification of errors
Verb	Missing Redundant Wrong choice Tense
Preposition	Missing Redundant Wrong choice
Singular	Singular for plural Plural for singular
Pronouns	Missing Redundant Wrong choice

As can be seen above, taxonomy of traditional grammatical category has been used to organize the errors collected.

Ultimately, the most frequent errors grouped into (a) grammatical, (b) lexical and other errors. Grammatical errors were grouped into four categories, namely: verb errors, preposition errors, singular – plural errors and pronoun errors. The verb errors were sub – categorized into missing verbs (auxiliary and main verbs were not used when they should have been used), wrong verb choice (using verbs inappropriately), tense (using the present tense when a past tense should have been used and vice versa) and redundant verbs (verbs and auxiliary verbs that were used when they should not have been

used). Proposition errors were sub – categorized into missing, redundant and wrong preposition choice.

Plural – singular noun errors were sub – categorized into singular for plural (using a singular form where a plural form should have been used and plural for singular (using plural form where a singular form should have been used).

Pronoun errors were sub – categorized into missing, redundant and wrong choice. Lexical errors are a category of their own. They were grouped into spelling and semantic errors. The semantic errors were those involving confusion of sense relations in which learners used the wrong word from a set of near – synonyms. This category covered errors involving the use of a word incorrectly because its meaning was not well – understood.

5.1 Verb Errors

5.1.1 Verb Tense Errors

Verb tense errors were the most frequent kind of errors in this category. They accounted for 44.5% (120 out of 270) of all verb errors made by the learners. (see Table 3)

Examples:

The street* is (was) covered with mud.

I cancel (cancelled) the excursion.

I *suggest (suggested) to make a small party.

The cat cannot* drunk (drink) milk.

I *go (went) to bring food.

I start (started) to print a picture.

when I finish (finished) my homework, I decided to go out.

In some instances students made errors because of wrong verb inflections. Some of them are inflected for the past tense or the main verb instead of the auxiliary verb, for example: "when you look outside, you can saw* (can see) the clouds."

" If you are tired, I can helped you (can help you)."

5.1.2 Missing Verbs

The students usually commit mistakes of missing verbs. (auxiliary and main verbs) statically speaking ,the students commit errors of verbs of 18.5% percentage (50 out of 270) of verb errors (see Table3).

The following examples show some of these mistakes;

The rain *no stop (did not stop).

Because the weather *bad (was bad),I stayed at home.

When the cat *hungry (was hungry), he didn't feed it.

I didn't *out (go out) because of the bad weather.

5.1.3 Wrong Verb Choice

The students usually commit mistakes in term of semantics ,and these mistakes of wrong verb choice have 22% percentage (60 out of 270) of verb errors. See (Table 3). The reason is that the students are not linguistically competent in the target language. The following examples show some of these mistakes

He was *eating (feeding) the cat.

The man thinks to *show (see) movies

I *excepted (expected to stop raining).

He *presented (offered) to look after my dog.

5.1.4 Redundant Verbs

Sometimes, the students use improper verbs which are entirely redundant. The reason is that they do not have sufficient knowledge in the target language. Generally, redundant verbs are made by 15% percentage. (40 out of 270) of verb errors. (see Table 3)

For example:

If I *will (omit) stay at home, I will make good things.

I *am (omit) wake up early every day.

Then it *was (omit) started to rain.

In other instances the learners inflected the past tense in infinitive construction.

For example:

My friend came to *visited (visit) me.

I invited my friends to *played (play) chess.

I wanted to *saw (see) her.

In many instances, the learners inflected continuous tense in the infinitive construction.

For example:

I want to *telling (tell) another thing.

My neighbor accepted to *looking after (look after) my dog.

I asked her to *playing (play) with me.

As can be seen in the table above, learners some times have difficulties in different grammatical categories and some times in the same category.

5.2. Preposition Errors

5.2.1 Wrong Preposition Choice

Errors involving the wrong choice of prepositions were the most frequent in this sub – category. They are accounted for 41.6% percentage (40 out of 96) of preposition errors (see Table4).

For example:

Thank you for looking *for (after) my dog.

My friends agreed to go to an excursion (on an excursion)."

I hope you pay attention *from (to) my dog.

My dog eats its breakfast *in (at) nine o'clock in the morning.

I stayed *in (at) my home.

5.2.2 Missing Preposition

Missing preposition errors are accounted for 31.4% percentage (30 out of 96) of preposition errors. The following examples show the common mistakes made by the students.

I wrote a letter *thank him (to thank him) for looking after my dog.

I have stayed *home (stayed at home).

It is my pleasure to take care* (take care of) my dog.

At the end* day (end of the day),I felt comfortable.

We agreed to go* an excursion (to go on an excursion)

5.2.3 Redundant Preposition

Redundant preposition errors are accounted for 27% percentage (36 out of 96) of preposition errors (see table 4).

For example:

I hope *for (omit) you to be happy

I wish *to (omit) you accept *on (omit) my offer.

I shall go to (omit) home," if it rains.

At (omit) next time, I shall do my homework.

At (omit) First, I wanted to thank you.

5.3 Pronoun Errors

5.3.1 Missing Pronoun

Missing pronouns are accounted for 41.5% percentage (25 out of 60) (see Table5).

For example:

I realized *will continue (it will continue) raining.

I hoped that *stop (it will stop) raining.

Most of my friends* attended (who attended) the party were very happy.

I thanked my neighbor *looked after (who looked after) my dog.

5.3.2 Wrong Pronoun Choice

Wrong pronoun choice are accounted for 33% percentage (20 out of 60) of pronoun errors. (see Table 5).

When she arrived, I called *them (her) to join the party.

One of my friends *which (who) arrived late, was very tired.

5.3.3 Redundant Pronouns

Redundant pronouns are accounted for 25% percentage (15 out of 60) of pronoun errors (Table 5).

For example:

But my mother *she (omit) refused.

After that, I became so sad and I* (omit) stayed at my home.

I hoped that the weather *it (omit) will be nice.

I felt very happy when the party *it (omit) started.

5.4 Singular/ Plural Noun Errors

The use of the singular instead of the plural form of nouns was the most frequent error in this sub – category. It is accounted for 60% percentage (15 out of 25) of errors. (see Table6). The following are common examples of errors made by the students.

All my *friend (friends) attended the party.

After attending the party, I did many *thing (things).

When all my *friend (friends) arrived, I asked them to start the party.

For many *day (days) on holidays, I go on excursions.
I present my best wish (wishes) to your family.

The use of plural instead of the singular is accounted for 40% percentage (10 out of 25) of the singular/plural errors. (see Table 6) as in the following examples

While we were eating *fishes, (fish) one of my friends came.

My dog used to drink *milks (milk) in the morning.

My neighbor presents *foods (food) to my dog every day.

Our party lasted two *hour (hours).

5.5 Lexical Errors

There were instances in which learners used wrong spelling of English words such as the following errors:

I would like to tell you that my dog is kind and nice *speciely (specially) with kind people.

I prepered (prepared) my food.

I called my *frend (friend) to come with me.

On Freday (Friday), I decided to travel.

I will find some thing to make me *heppy (happy).

I *waked (walked) quickly.

Then, I desided (decided) to go out.

Me and my *falmily (family) went on an excision.

I thanked my nabor (neighbor) when I came back.

I felt very sade (sad) when my friend travelled.

They were *pleasent (pleasant) during the excursion

I haited (hated) this dog.

The number of spelling mistakes made by the learners recoded the second highest (n.130). (see examples in appendix2).

There are very few errors of confusion of sense relations in which near synonyms were used as shown in the following examples:

The first thing you meet (come across) when you arrive is a big garden.

The garden is *wide (the biggest) in our city.

My house is very * long (far away from) this street.

I passed *with (continued in) a taxi straight in this street.

5.6 Other Errors

5.6.1 Capitalization Errors

Learners made many errors in capitalizing small letters in into capital letters and vice versa. These errors were because they don't know the meaning of words and also the rules of capitalization. Capitalization errors are recorded the third highest (n.100) as in the examples below:

I hope you *Pay (pay) attention to *My (my) dog.

*the (The) Bad Day (bad day).

*after (After) that, I did my home work.

*but (But) my mother refused.

I can't do *That (that).I promised my sister to visit her.

I will suggest *To (to) you *To (to) take your bird.

I decided to visit my friend on *sunday (Sunday).

There are *Many (many) things came to our minds.

We can invite our *Friends(friends).

We can go to our close *Neighbor (neighbor).

Few things can be *More (more) unpleasant than boring
*To (to) cancel that excursion.

I *Felt (felt) very happy.

The *Weather (weather) began raining.

I *Finished (finished) all *My *Things (my things).But
*The (the) weather was *Raining (raining).

I *Think (think) to do any *Thing (thing).

The rain will *Stop (stop).But *That (that) it will
continue."

I can't do any *Thing (thing)."

I *Thought (thought) *To (to) go *ouT (out) in *The (the)
morning.

5.6.2 Wrong Inflection of Adjectives

There were instance in which learners inflected adjectives
wrongly as in these sentences below:

I felt *sadness (sad) when some of my friends didn't come.

It was very *beautifully (beautiful) garden.

5.7 Summary of Results

The results are summarized in the following tables.
Percentage within error categories in these tables have been
rounded to the nearest whole number.

Table 2
Different Kinds of Categorized Errors Made by the learners
Ranked by Frequency and There Percentages.

Frequency order	Error category	Number of errors	Percentage
1	Verb	270	60%
2	Preposition	96	21.2%
3	Pronoun	60	13.3%
4	Singular and plural	25	5.5%
	Total	451	100%

As can be seen in the table above, the areas of difficulty for learners in descending order of frequency were verb errors, the use of prepositions, pronoun errors and the use of singular and plural forms.

Table 3
Different Kinds of Verb Errors in Each Sub – Category
and Their Percentages

Verb Error Category	Number of Errors	Percentage
Verb Tense Errors	120	44.5%
Wrong Choice Verb	60	22%
Missing Verb Errors	50	18.5%
Redundant Verb Errors	40	15%
Total	270	100%

Table 4
Different Kinds of Preposition Errors in Each Sub –
Category and Their Percentages

Preposition Error Category	Number of Errors	Percentage
Wrong Choice Preposition Errors	40	41.6%
Missing Preposition Errors	30	31.4%
Redundant Preposition Errors	26	27%
Total	96	100%

Table 5
Different Kinds of Pronoun Errors in each sub
Category and Their Percentages.

Pronoun Error Category	Number of Errors	Percentage
Missing Pronoun Errors	25	41 %
Wrong Choice Pronoun Error	20	34%
Redundant Pronoun Errors	15	25%
Total	60	100%

Table 6
Different Kinds of Singular and Plural Errors in Each
Sub – Category and Their Percentages

Singular and Plural Error Category	Number of Errors	Percentage
Singular Form Instead of Plural	15	60 %
Plural Form Instead of Singular	10	40%
Total	25	100%

Table 7**Overall Errors of All Sub- Categories and Their Percentages**

Verb Errors	Number of Errors	Percentage
Tense Errors	120	26.6%
Wrong Choice Errors	60	13.3%
Missing Errors	50	11%
Redundant Errors	40	9%
Sub-Total	270	59.9%
Preposition Errors	Number of Errors	Percentage
Wrong Choice Errors	40	8.9%
Missing Errors	30	6.6%
Redundant Errors	26	5.8%
Sub-Total	96	21.3%
Pronoun Errors	Number of Errors	Percentage
Wrong Choice Errors	25	5.5%
Missing Errors	20	4.4%
Redundant Errors	15	3.4%
Sub-Total	60	13.3%
Singular and plural forms	Number of Errors	Percentage
Singular Form Instead of Plural	15	3.3%
Plural Form Instead of Singular	10	2.2%
Sub-Total	25	5.5%
Total of Errors	451	100%

CHAPTER SIX

Results, Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Results

The major purpose of this study is to examine difficulties of Iraqi learners in learning English as a second language specially in writing which cause them make errors and mistakes and their sources . It was found that errors made by learners fall into two categories: grammatical and lexical.

1. This study has revealed many errors in the written English of Iraqi undergraduate learners. The major question that remains is "What is the source of these errors?" That is, are they interlingual or developmental in nature? Lightbown and Spada (1999: 165) argue that "the transfer of patterns from the native language is one of the major sources of errors in learner language."

2. They also argue that there are many errors made by learners when they try to internalize the rules of the target language, which are referred to as developmental (errors which might very well be made by children acquiring their first language). These errors are sometimes referred to as overgeneralization (errors caused by trying to use a rule in a context where it does not belong), and simplification (where elements of a sentence are left out, or where all verbs have the same form regardless of person, number, or tense) Lightbown&Spada (1999: 56).

3. The three hypotheses for this study are:

a. learners make errors in the areas of grammar and lexis when they write in English.

b. One source of learners' errors will be their developing

knowledge of the language (developmental or intralingual errors)

c. One source of learners' errors will be the interference from their L1 (interference errors). The results clearly supported the three hypotheses.

4. Verb tense errors may be a result of the fact that the learners seem not to have been sure about the tense that they must use in the given composition task. For example:

"At my home we *had (have) a beautiful garden"

5. Wrong inflections of the past tense of verbs seem to be developmental errors. The learners might have been taught that verbs take on different forms when they change to the past tense. The learners might have learnt and or have been drilled in the long list of the forms of verbs in the present and past tenses. In an attempt to apply this rule, the learners might be going straight to the verbs in the sentences and changing them to the past tense irrespective of what precedes them and the context in which they are used. It appears that learners have learnt the correct past tense form of the verbs because they are able to write the correct form of irregular verbs .

6. Missing verbs may be a result of the fact that auxiliary verbs are not used in Arabic or they may be a result of an absence of a verb "to be" in Arabic. Examples:

"My dog *clever (is clever)".

"My friend *polite (is polite)".

7. Wrong verb choice seems to be a result of the fact that learners are not yet fully competent in their English vocabulary. They may also not be sure about the spelling of some of the

words. This may result from the fact that learners in the study lacked contact with English outside the classroom. It seemed that they spoke English in a limited range of circumstances, and communicated in their mother tongue.

8.Redundant verbs seem to be an interference error from Arabic or overlearning. The learners seem to have made literal translations from Arabic in which a subject concord is used. Example:

They *are (omit) waited their friend.

9.Missing prepositions may be a result of mother tongue interference. The learners seem to have made literal translations from Arabic. Example:

"I will visit my uncle* Sunday (on Sunday)."

"I went *to home (went home)."

There is also some likelihood that learners might have resorted to "error avoidance" techniques to cover up for their uncertainty about the correct prepositions to be used.

10.Redundant prepositions seem to be a result of mother tongue interference. The learners seem to have translated literally from Arabic. Examples:

"We reached *to (omit) the party."

"I sent *to him (omit) a message."

11. The use of the plural noun form instead of the singular noun form may be a developmental error which learners make when they have learnt that in English the plural form of some words is formed by adding an "s" to the word. The learners might have generalized the rule to all words irrespective of the number involved.

12. The problem of missing pronouns may be a developmental

error which the learners tried to apply the target language rule that a noun and its pronoun are not used immediately after each other. They had not attained its mastery, they left pronouns out even where they were needed. The use of redundant pronouns may be a result of the influence of Arabic.

6.2 Conclusions

On the basis of the results outlined in this chapter, the following conclusions have been drawn.

1. Errors and mistakes that seemed to have resulted from mother – tongue interference showed that learners might have first thought in their mother tongue and then translated into English. Some sentences were purely Arabic sentences, in terms of structure, with English words.
2. The researcher concluded that writing skill is probably receiving too little attention in the teaching and learning of EFL. This is certainly one explanation for the fact that learners who have been taught many subjects for many years through EFL, are still making errors that render their writing difficult to understand.
3. Semantic errors in lexis seem to have greater obstructive value than grammatical errors in impeding communication, and thus in deciding whether a learner is good or bad at English i.e. a few lexical errors may merely irritate the reader. This implies that errors differ in their impact on communication. This is supported by James (1998:144) when he asserts that "native speakers consider lexical errors in learners to be more disruptive and irritating than other types". This also implies that learners who make grammatical errors made many spelling errors which seem to arise from auditory misperception. This

implies that learners do very little reading and / or they have a poor visual image of the words.

4. Learners made a wide range of errors which rendered their writing difficult to be understood and they seemed to have information and knowledge about the content of the composition given but failed to express themselves coherently and correctly.

5. The frequency of errors and mistakes identified in the 30 sample writing of study perhaps indicate that ineffectiveness of current practice of teaching and learning English writing. Most of student writings in this study show a sharp decline in the quality of the writing skills the learners were generally exposed to.

6. There may be other reasons such as a lack of or absence of nurturing learning styles and a lack of grammar knowledge besides heavy dependence on memorization, large classes, individual and peer correction training, consciousness rising, inter language problems, ineffective feedback and mechanism by teacher etc.

7. The almost inherent ethos of teachers 'writing as a product', has been held one major reasons of poor quality writing albeit most teachers are not either trained or accustomed to the system of teaching process writing that fosters student writing development over a period of time through planning, system drafting and rewriting etc.

8. It is being an entirely pedagogic issue that primarily needs a policy change in English language education and curriculum. Aims and objectives should be appropriately designed and utilized to make sure it is effectively linking the praxes of writing which is inevitably essential in today's English teaching and context.

6.3 Recommendations

6.3.1 Recommendations to Educational Officials and Teachers

The recommendations to all educational officials, teachers, instructors and institutions dealing with teaching and learning is that:

1. They must be united in an endeavor to prevent and remedy poor EFL skills.
2. There should be some consistency in the teaching and evaluation of writing based on accepted principles. It is possible that there will be some progress when all teachers "pull and push" in the same directions.
3. The process of teaching EFL at various grade levels should have one goal in mind: to help learners acquire EFL listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.
4. There should be standards set down at each level which learners should satisfy before they progress to the next grade level or next phase of education. For example, at the end of each phase (phase I [grade 6], phase 2 [grade 9], phase 3 [grade 12] and phase 4 [grade 16]), there should be common ESL standards that all learners must satisfy. This could be of great help in preventing learners' difficulties with ESL or remedying them before errors become fossilized.
5. Correctness and appropriateness should be emphasized at all levels of written English namely: letter level, word level, sentence level, and text/discourse level.
6. Teachers should expose learners to as much English as

possible. Learners should be made to read widely in class and at home. Reading remains the main source of academic information. It is reading that will help learners to have a visual image of the target language and provide models for coherent and cohesive writing Krashen (1984). Learners should be encouraged to listen, speak and write as often as they can. They should speak it with their friends and teachers both at school and outside it, and be exposed to English language media wherever these are available and accessible.

7. Teachers should aim at improving learners' confidence in using English by their teaching, feedback and by making learners aware that in EFL learning they will make some errors and mistakes but that should not discourage them from using it.

8. Teachers should attempt to create a classroom atmosphere that is conducive to EFL acquisition. However, teachers should be careful not to monopolize interaction in the classroom so much that learners are deprived of opportunities to use English themselves.

9. Learners should be encouraged to write discourse that the learners write sentences and paragraphs, the more they are likely to internalize spelling and sentence structures that are appropriate. This will help learners to interact directly with the language that they are learning and pick up many of the language forms unconsciously.

10. Learners should be helped to learn the meanings and spelling of words in context, as many language elements are context bound. Learning in this way will eliminate problems such as words with similar pronunciations but different spelling.

11. While it is good to use the communicative approach to increase fluency, learners should still be taught the basic rules of grammar to improve accuracy .

12. Errors and mistakes should be corrected to avoid fossilization. There is a great danger, in not correcting errors with the hope that they will automatically fade away. There is a greater likelihood that leaving them uncorrected will serve the purpose of reinforcing them in the minds of learners. However, the manner in which errors are corrected should be well-planned to avoid discouraging the learners. Errors should not only be corrected by making learners aware of them but there should be some focus-on-form exercises to help learners internalize the appropriate FSL forms.

13. Teachers should note common errors down and these should be given special attention, with a period set aside for the correction of such errors. Where possible, computer programs and games that assist with the teaching and learning of English should be acquired and used.

14. Teachers must always encourage and motivate the EFL learners to have a wide range of practice as much as possible not only inside the classrooms but also outside classrooms where students might talk and write to each other using English.

15. Teachers can also ask students a written question to answer and hence developing their writing and finding out what sort of errors and mistakes they might face trying to correct the input of the learners through giving them different linguistic information

ranging from grammar and even proper spelling of the words they may use.

16. When students make an error or a mistake in writing, teachers should immediately or without delay correct them. This correction will probably have positive influence on writing skills of the learner's. Thus, it will enhance and consolidate the learner's skills.

17. All grammatical information given to the learners during past stages of their learning should not be neglected later on. Moreover, grammatical information might be better understood and used by learners if they are given the authentic materials. Such information should always be repeated or used by the teachers.

18. Teachers must provide the language support on every single topic and act as promoters to assist the learners at time; they should also engage the learners in memory vocabulary games.

19. Teachers of writing should use different techniques of correction flexibly and effectively because simply presenting the data repeatedly and going through the same set of drills and exercises can make students bored. Besides, effective error correction requires that the teacher understands the source of the errors in order to provide appropriate remedy, which will resolve the learner's problems and allow them to discover the relevant rules. However, it is better that the teachers would not correct the students' errors directly but should put marks indicating there is something wrong with the sentence, word.

6.3.2 Recommendations to EFL Learners

According to this study, Iraqi EFL learners face three kinds of problems in writing: incomplete learning of grammar rules, incomplete learning of writing paragraphs and incorrect vocabulary. In order to achieve effectiveness in paragraph writing, the following points should be paid more attention to:

1. First of all, it is necessary to raise student' awareness of the importance of writing English paragraph.
2. Students should be equipped with a deep theoretical insight into the elements of a good paragraph.
3. Students should know how to build a topic sentence and develop supporting ideas coherently.
4. They should write their first drafts carefully and list ideas relevant to the topic.
5. Among the causes leading to the students' errors, the influence of mother tongue is a major one. In order to reduce this kind of errors, it is necessary to have students recognize the differences between the usage of English and Arabic in writing.
6. Regarding the writing rules, it is necessary to raise student's awareness of problems they often face writing a paragraph and how to correct their own errors.
7. It is obvious that the most important thing to do is practicing writing .The students need to write in class and at home.
8. It would be very useful to increase the number of the exercises and activities for writing. Consequently, students can

develop their skill of writing and for self-correction. It is crucial that error correction should be carried out frequently.

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Appendix 1

Items of the test

Q-1 A friend has kindly offered to look after your dog while you are away on a holiday. Write a letter pointing out a few things which you think he should know.

Q-2 Write a descriptive essay using the following paragraph as your first one. Choose suitable title and give a plan.

Few things can be more unpleasant than having to cancel an excursion because of the weather. Your first glimpse of the morning you hoped would be so fine is not very encouraging by the time you have washed, dressed and had breakfast it has begun to rain. At last, you realize sadly that it will continue raining all day long and you will have to stay at home. But once you have made up your mind that. You will not be going out; it is always easy to find interesting things to do indoors.

Appendix 2

Wrong Spelling Words

The wrong spelling of words	The right spelling of words
Deciesion	decision
Waike	wake
Falmily	Family
Heat	hate
Avery → s	every
Any think →s	realize
Fin	Fun
Contries	Countries
Nighbou	Neighbor
Wether	Weather
Kichen	Kitchen
Feal	Feel
Sade	Sad
Basy	Busy
Befor	Before
Plussar	Pleasure
Pleasant	Pleasant
Thanke you	thank you
Prepared	Prepared
Freday	Friday
Togethar	Together
Pospoted	Postponed
Weak up	woke up
Disappointment	Disappointment
Speciel	special
Haped	Hoped
Stuy	Stay
a massage	a message
Notics	Notices
Museing	musings
Upsteires	Upstairs
Surprised	Surprised
Hir	Her
Hopped	Hoped
Entersting	interesting
Nise	Nice
Wont	Want
Hait	Hate

المستخلص

يواجه الطلبة العراقيون متعلمي اللغة الانكليزية كلغة أجنبية صعوبات عديدة لذلك يرتكبون اخطاء وهفوات. تعزى معظم هذه الاخطاء والهفوات التي يرتكبها الطلبة العراقيون متعلمي اللغة الانكليزية كلغة أجنبية إلى بعض الصعوبات لدى تعلمهم النحو والمفردات .

ينتج المتعلم العراقي صيغ لغوية عديدة لا ينتجها طلبة لغة الهدف الاصليين.تهدف الدراسة إلى بحث وتشخيص الصعوبات التي يواجهها الطلبة العراقيون لدى تعلمهم اللغة الانكليزية كلغة أجنبية على أساس الافتراضات التالية:

1.يرتكب الطلبة اخطاء وهفوات عديدة في كتابة الانشاء او اي مقاله اخرى نتيجة لهذه الصعوبات

2.ان المصدر الاول لهذه الاخطاء والهفوات هو بسبب معرفتهم التطويرية للغة.

3. ان المصدر الثاني لهذه الاخطاء والهفوات هو بسبب التداخل مع لغتهم الاولى.

تم تحديد عينه من طلبة السنة الثالثة متعلمي اللغة الانكليزية كلغة ثانيه من كلية المأمون الجامعة في بغداد للسنة الدراسية 2012-2013.تم تنفيذ الدراسة من خلال اختبار الطلبة لكتابة إنشاء لتحقيق الأهداف المبنية على أسس متطلبات المعرفة النحوية والمفرداتية.

تشكل الأخطاء والهفوات التي ملاحظتها في كتابة الطلبة العراقيين مشكله خطيرة في عملية الاتصال نتيجة للأداء غير السليم في كتابتهم.بينت النتائج ضعفا في مجالات عديدة في الكتابة بسبب المعرفة الهشة للقواعد النحوية والمفرداتية. تم استخدام طرق إحصائية مناسبة لحساب نتائج الاجابات. استخلصت الدراسة إلى حقيقة لغوية ان المتعلمين يعانون من نقص حاد في معرفتهم للنحو والمفردات.ان ذلك مهم جدا حيث تهدف الدراسة لإلقاء الضوء لفهم هذه الصعوبات التي غالبا ما يواجهها الطلبة في اداءهم اللغوي وأخيرا تم تقديم الاستنتاجات على اساس النتائج المقدمه بالإضافة إلى عدد من التوصيات.

دراسة الصعوبات التي يواجهها الطلبة
العراقيون متعلمي اللغة الانكليزية كلغة
أجنبية

أطروحة دكتوراه

مقدمه الى مجلس جامعة سانت كليمنتس
البريطانية وهي جزء من متطلبات نيل
درجة الدكتوراه في علم اللغة الانكليزية
وآدابها

تقدم بها

فخري سدخان شنين

بإشراف

الاستاذ المساعد الدكتور

محمد عبدالقادر عجاج

2013

2013

We certify that we have read this thesis titled " *Examining Lexical and Grammatical Errors and Mistakes Encountered by Iraqi Learners as A foreign Language* " and as Examining Committee examined the student in its Contents

and that in our opinion, it is adequate for the P.h.D.in English Language and linguistics.

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