ESSAY WRITING ERRORS OF ENGLISH FAL FET RURAL LEARNERS IN

MOPANI WEST DISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE: AN ANALYSIS

by

MAPHEFO REBECCA MAILULA

submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree

MASTER OF ARTS

in

ENGLISH STUDIES

in the

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

(School of Languages and Communication Studies)

at the

UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

SUPERVISOR: DR L. J. NGOEPE

i

2021

DECLARATION

I, **MAPHEFO REBECCA MAILULA** declare that the full dissertation entitled **'ESSAY WRITING ERRORS OF ENGLISH FAL FET RURAL LEARNERS IN MOPANI WEST DISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE: AN ANALYSIS'** hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo, for the degree **MASTER OF ARTS IN ENGLISH STUDIES** has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university. I further declare that all sources cited or quoted are indicated and acknowledged by means of a comprehensive list of references.

…………………………..

MAILULA, M. R.

DATE: 2021

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to

- My husband Matome   Mailula; my sons Thabiso Nakampe and Kagiso Makoko, and my daughters Tjelane and Naledi Madisha, my grandchildren Jaeden and Zoe, my son in-law Allistair Burns and my daughter in-law Amantle.

- To my late parents, Makoko Mogano and Madisha Mogano, my late parents-in -law, Mogokgo and Tjelane Mailula. May your lovely souls rest in eternal peace. Your generosity and love will always be remembered.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

The study explored essay writing errors of English First Additional Language (EFAL) FET rural learners. The aim of the study was to analyse essay writing errors of the EFAL FET learners in rural schools. EFAL Grade 11 learners together with their educators from 4 circuits in Mopani West District of Limpopo Province (LP), South Africa (SA), participated in the study. The learners' 40 essays were analysed. Additionally, the learners and educators were interviewed and the data generated were analysed. A qualitative Content Analysis (CA) research method was used to collect data. The sample was made up of 3 instruments; an essay checklist for the 40 essays, EFAL learners' group interviews that consisted of 4 equal groups made up of 10 learners per school, and interviews with 4 educators from each of the school represented. N – Vivo was used for data transcription, storage and analysis. Errors populated in the checklist were arranged into smaller units, identified, analysed, described and reported. Data obtained through semi-structured interviews with EFAL learners and educators were transcribed and analysed thematically. The analysis of the EFAL FET rural learners' essay writing errors revealed weaknesses pertaining to choice of essay topics, proofreading, spelling, punctuation and grammar.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

LIST OF TABLES

Page

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACE: Advance Certificate in Education

BA: Bachelor of Arts

CA: Content Analysis

CA1: Contrastive Analysis

CAPS: Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements

DBE: Department of Basic Education

EA: Error Analysis

EFAL: English First Additional Language

ESL: English Second Language

FET: Further Education and Training

FLI: First Language Interference

HL: Home Language

HLs: Home languages

IE: Interference Errors

L1: First Language

LoLT: Language of Learning and Teaching

LP: Limpopo Province

MTI: Mother-Tongue Interference

NSC: National Senior Certificate

SIDES: Strong verbs, Imagery details, Experiences and Suggestion

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

STD: Senior Teachers Diploma

TL: Target Language

TREC: Turfloop Research Ethics Committee

TV: Television

WHO: World Health Organization

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1   BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

In English First Additional Language (EFAL), essay writing and committing errors tend to be inextricably linked. Thus, analysing learners' errors is a corollary of the essay writing exercise.

Writing is vitally significant for one's academic and professional career (De Smet, Brand - Gruwel, Leitjjten & Kirschner, 2014: 352). Therefore, the development of a learner's writing skills is a clearly formulated academic goal because writing is a composite and challenging skill to master (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 2013: 389; Flower & Hayes, 1980: 1).

The mastery of writing in First Language (L1) is arguably required in order for learners to be able to overcome difficulties of writing in EFAL. However, learners' lack of writing ability makes it inflexible to make revision resolutions and to describe these decisions to feedback providers (Cafarella & Barnett, 2000: 39; Can, 2009: 25; Kamalipour, 2015: 299). Additionally, teachers do express dissatisfaction about lack of knowledge and skills necessary for essay writing among non-native English speakers. These skills include defining, rephrasing, paragraphing and recapping (Al-Shabanah & Maher, 2005: 2).

An essay is a written composition made up of paragraphs that develop a particular topic (Checkett & Checkett, 2010: 287). It consists of several paragraphs supporting an idea (Langan, 1989: 215). However, some of the most common errors in essay writing pertain to language, syntax and pronouncement, poor referencing, poor demonstration, too much explanation

and too little critical analysis, poor introductions and conclusions, not following instructions for presentation and word limits, poor design, inappropriate use of supplements, failing to respond to the question and overuse of sentences (Greasley, 2011: 11).

EFAL is the Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT) in most South African schools. Writing in EFAL remains challenging to learners whose native language is not English, which is why learners' errors sometimes affect meaning. Repeated errors include verb-tense, word choice, the grammatical arrangement of words in sentences, prepositions and auxiliaries. Five most frequent errors in explanation and comparison are articles, sentence structure, word choice, singular and plural forms, subject-verb agreement and paragraphs. Thus, EFAL teachers should practise analysing learners' errors committed when writing because learners find it difficult to master essay writing in that context. Consequently, Error Analysis (EA) could be one of the solutions to spelling and error problems (Maruma, 2017: 8801; see 3.2).

Errors committed by learners are highly remarkable as they are indicators of how they detain the Target Language (TL). Such errors are advantageous not only to learners, but also to teachers as well as researchers. For teachers, errors reveal proof of learners' progress of learning the language while they serve as the language learning resource for learners. In this way, researchers discover evidence of how learners master and acquire the language (Fang & Xue, 2007: 53; Corder, 1967: 48). The purpose of teaching writing must be to equip learners with techniques of writing, which may include choice of topic sentence vitality, the development of paragraphs and interesting and attractive styles. Thus, learners need to communicate effectively in written English (Riddell, 2001: 1; Askes & Kritzinger, 1992: 120).

Writers use complex sentences using connecting words such as 'however', 'who' and 'in addition'. The English teacher, therefore, has the important task of showing learners how to approach writing, by, for example, showing how it is organised and how ideas are knitted together logically (Brown, Robson &

Rosenkjar, 2001: 361; Raimes, 1983: 50). It is against this background that the study aims to analyse essay writing errors of EFAL learners in schools located in rural areas.

1.2   RESEARCH PROBLEM

A written presentation is regarded as one of the most demanding tasks as learners are expected to construct sentences that are in a specific order and connected in specific ways (Canagarajah, 2013: 1; Harris & Cummingham, 1994:1). Additionally, Kurkus (2012: 193) points out that the fraudulent use of English grammatical rules in learners' writing is a consequence of grammatically incorrect sentences such as 'she is smile', 'I see beautiful flowers in garden', 'sara is happy', 'you stick an F', 'there have many trees on a hill', 'she has happy', 'it a big house', 'I watch TV 10 o' clock', 'everybody love her', 'the eggs is cooked', 'I watching a movie', and 'jack is a man diligent'. However, translation errors committed in learners' writing could help them to categorise the real challenges. EA is an effective tool that can reduce the number of errors in learners' work (Presada & Badea, 2014: 49).

Brown (2015: 1) argues that there are interlingual and intralingual errors linked to learners' Home Language (HL), and that Interference Errors (IE) are more traceable to First Language Interference (FLI). The term interlingual refers to the methodical knowledge of language that is self-governing in both learners' HL and the TL. Intralingual errors result from misuse of a specific rule of TL. Examples of errors include stereotypes, unawareness of rule restrictions, insufficient approach of rules and false approaches. Thus, specific errors were found through this research in the selected sample so that identified problems could receive contextualised solutions, even though some errors may be generalisable.

Maruma (2017: 8840) opines that Mother-Tongue Interference (MTI) and knowledge of partial grammar rules are serious causes of the most common

spelling errors committed by learners in essay writing. MTI can be categorised into inter-lingual and intra-lingual errors. Mother tongue interference could be regarded as a major source of spelling errors amongst high school learners.

At Matseke in Motupa Circuit, Mohlatlegomachaba in Tzaneen Circuit, Molabosane in Mafarana Circuit and Sekhukhumele in Rakwadu 2 Circuit, most learners appeared to be not exposed to environments that were conducive to learning the TL, English. If one's goal was to create a rich language environment, learner exposure to a specific language which was meaningful, deliberate, repetitive and engaging was paramount, as it directly involved learners in the sense that they were active participants. Home languages (HLs) spoken by most members of rural households in the villages alluded to were morphologically and syntactically not analogous to the TL. These tended not to facilitate a good foundation in terms of learners' development of writing proficiency since their HLs were mainly Sepedi, Xitsonga and Tshivenda. Learners' written work in this study was found wanting in many ways. This affected their competence in communication and academic development in general.

1.3   PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1.3.1   Aim of the study

The aim of the study was to analyse errors in essay writing of FET learners in rural schools in Mopani District, Limpopo Province.

1.3.2   Objectives

The objectives of the study were the following:

- to identify essay writing errors committed by Grade11 learners in EFAL in rural schools.

- to interpret how EFAL Grade 11 educators perceive essay writing errors committed by learners.

- to classify essay writing errors committed by Grade11 learners in EFAL in rural schools.

- to suggest ways in which essay writing could be approached to avoid errors committed by Grade 11 EFAL learners in rural schools.

1.4   ROLE OF THEORY IN THE STUDY

This study was premised on the Error Analysis (EA) theory. EA is a procedure used by both researchers and teachers. The procedure involves collecting samples of learner language, identifying the errors in sample, describing the errors, classifying them according to the hypothesised causes and evaluating their seriousness (Ellis, 1985: 296). Errors are therefore a conspicuous feature of learner language. Making errors may actually help learners to learn when they self-correct them (Ellis, 1997: 15). The study is about the behaviour of groups of learners such as Grade 11 learners of EFAL in rural schools, in Mopani West District (see 5.2).

1.5   SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

EFAL FET learners, together with their educators will, in the long term, benefit from the envisaged results of this study in that the analysis of essay writing errors will be shared with a wider academic community within and without school settings.

Educators' and learners' skills pertaining to essay writing stand to be developed. This could, in the long term, boost the performance of learners in Paper 3 of EFAL, which includes a section on essay writing. The exercise will also help educators reflect on the quality of learners' essay writing skills, thus fostering educators to realise the significance of errors in essay writing (cf. 3.2.2).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to review literature related to the problems of writing in the context of English as Second Language (ESL). This chapter discusses teaching writing in ESL classes, the theoretical framework, steps in writing, writing approaches, essay writing, types of essays, use of formal language, vocabulary, word classes, sentences, punctuation, tense, paragraphing and logical connectors.

2.2 TEACHING WRITING IN ESL CLASSES

In the South African context, ESL is also known as English First Additional Language (EFAL). According to De Smet, Brand- Gruwel, Leitjten and Kirsschner (2014: 352), writing is an important skill for both one's educational and professional career. The development of learner's writing skills is an explicitly formulated educational goal. Therefore, writing is a complex and demanding skill to master (Flower & Hayes, 1980: 1; Hayes, 1996: Kellogg. 1994).

Learners write every day. Writing is a skill which needs to be taught in the classroom. Learners are required to write in the content subjects that are taught through English as a medium of instruction. Does this help the teacher? Yes, it does, content subjects that are taught through the medium of English help learners by increasing their vocabulary. One may ask the question such as: what is the purpose of writing in the English language classroom? Raimes (1983: 4) points out that writing in the English language classroom helps

learners to communicate with the reader, to express ideas without the presence of face to face communication, to explore a subject, to record experiences, and to become familiar with the conventions of written English discourse. Writing helps learners to learn grammatical structures, idioms and vocabulary that they acquire through teaching. Writing helps learners to be adventurous with the language. When learners write, they become involved in the language, make an effort to express ideas and the contact use of the eye, hand and brain is a unique way of reinforcing learning.

Raimes (1983: 50) argues that writers use more complex sentences using connecting words such as 'however', 'who' and 'in addition'. The English teacher, therefore, has the important task of showing the learners how to approach writing, for example, by showing them how writing is organised and how ideas are knitted together logically.

Askes and Kritzinger (1992: 120) note that the purpose of teaching writing must be to equip learners with techniques of writing. These techniques may include sentence vitality, development of paragraphs, development of interesting and attractive styles, and or the choice of topics. They believe that the aim is to guide learners to communicate effectively in written English. Learners write whatever form of composition they may take, but teachers are basically teaching the child communication.

Checkett and Checkett (2010: 4) state that it is important for a writer to keep his or her writing as simple as possible, without leaving out important information, and make certain that he or she explains each idea fully. It is important to concentrate on details that express the main idea. Writing, with possible exception of short notes and memos to family members, friends, and co-workers, is more formal than talking. When one talks, one uses slang, intonation, facial expressions, and body language to get his or her point across. As a result, while the exact words one uses can be informal, the writer's audience will still understand him or her. Writing should be more precise and formal. Similarly, word choice, sentence structure and paragraph organisation become more important. The purpose of good writing is to deliver information

to someone in a clear and concise manner. Proper punctuation is essential to attain meaning clearly (Checkett & Checkett, 2010: 6).

2.3   THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is underpinned by Error Analysis (EA), which replaced Contrastive Analysis (CA) in the 1970's. This was an attempt at anticipating possible errors that learners tend to commit by finding the structural differences between their first language and target language errors. EA came into existence due to the shortfall associated with CA (Khoshhai, 2017: 91). CA could be viewed as a Second Language Acquisition (SLA) approach which serves to predict and explain learners' problems based on a comparison of their L1s and L2s in order to determine similarities and differences between the two (Saville Troike, 2006: 34). It could be defined as a set of procedures used to compare and contrast linguistic systems or subsystems of languages so as to formulate similarities and differences between them (Solati,2020: 893).

An error is a gross deviation from the norm of the language that could lead to a breakdown in communication orally or in writing (Njoku & Izuagba, 2001: 76). Learners do commit errors that have to do with spelling, word order and subject-verb agreement. However, the most repeated errors committed by learners have to do with the improper use of English articles (Al – Khasawneh, 2014: 85).

The first step in analysing learner errors is to identify them. To do this, it is essential to compare sentences produced by learners with what seem to be normal correct sentences in the target language which corresponds with them (the sentences) (Ellis, 1997: 16).

EA is the analysis of learners' errors compared to what they have learned and what they lack. Errors are categorised as follows: grammatical errors, which include   adjectives,   adverbs,   articles,   nouns,   possessions,   pronouns,

prepositions and verbs; substance errors, which include capitalisation, punctuation and spelling; lexical errors, which include word formation and word selection; syntactic errors, which involve coordination or subordination, sentence structure and ordering; and semantic errors, which include ambiguous communication and miscommunication (James, 1998: 157).

Maruma (2017: 8801) avers that EA is what educators in the rural context need. Learners in rural schools find it difficult to master EFAL. So the solution to spelling problems could be EA. Mother Tongue Interference (MTI), the influence of technological devices and ignorance of language elements seem to be the dominating factors of spelling errors. Furthermore, educators should lay a strong foundation from Grades R-12 in order to produce the best results in essay writing.

Nzama (2014: 32) avers that the influence of mother tongue that the learner is exposed to has features from both the mother tongue and the target language. This declares that the learner's mother tongue influences the learning of the target EFAL. The phenomenon which results when EFAL learners use elements of mother tongue when they use another language (target language) is called language transfer.

According to language transfer ideas, individuals tend to transfer the forms of meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture when attempting to speak EFAL (Nzama, 2014: 33).

2.3.1 Significance of errors

EA is one of the most influential theories of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Stages involved in EA include recognition, description and explanation. The recognition of errors depends on the interpretation of the learner's intention. Description begins when recognition has taken place while explaining errors is regarded as a linguistic activity accounting for why and how errors come about (Corder, 1967: 48). Thus,

the researcher has recognised errors committed by learners when they write essays. These errors will be described, explained and classified in this study.

One of the most significant contributions of EA lies in its success in elevating the status of errors from being undesirable to that of them providing a guide to the inner workings of the language learning process (Ellis, 1985: 53).

Written errors contained in paragraphs, punctuation, articles, spelling and conjunctions are regarded as a device used by the learner to learn. Researchers have provided evidence to emphasise errors as effective means of improving language (Khansir, 2013: 363). The study of errors is part of the investigation of the process of language learning (Corder, 1974: 125). Errors serve as a feedback that can make the teacher more aware of the effectiveness of his or her teaching as well as teaching techniques. They enable the teacher to decide whether he or she must devote more time to the item he or she has been working on (Corder, 1973: 262).

2.3.2 Mistakes and errors

It is important to distinguish between errors and mistakes. Errors reflect a gap in a learner's knowledge since they occur because the learner does not know what is correct. Mistakes occur because the learner is unable to perform what he or she knows; they reflect occasional lapses in performance (Ellis, 1997: 17).

Mistakes can be distinguished from errors by checking the consistency of learners' performance. For example, if 'contain' is consistently substituted with 'contained', this would indicate a lack of knowledge. However, if they sometimes write 'contain' and other times 'contained',

this would suggest that they possess knowledge of the correct form and are just making a mistake (Ellis, 1997: 17).

2.3.3 Identifying errors

The identification and description of errors serve as preliminaries in the task of trying to explain why they occur. To a large extent, errors are systematic, and to some extent, predictable. Errors are not only systematic but universal too (Ellis, 1997: 19).

Another way could be to identify general ways in which learner utterances differ from the reconstructed target-language utterances. These include 'omission', which is about leaving out an item required for an utterance to be considered grammatical; 'misinformation', which is about using one grammatical form in the place of another; and 'misordering', which refers to putting the words in an utterance in the wrong order. Thus, classifying errors in these ways can help researchers or educators to diagnose learning problems at any stage of their development, and to determine how changes in error patterns occur over time (Ellis, 1997: 18).

A grammatical error is defined as a term used in prescriptive grammar to describe an instance of faulty, unconventional or controversial usage of inappropriate verb tense, violation of grammatical rules and mother-tongue influence (Owu-Ewie & Willams, 2017: 84).

Songxaba and Sincuba (2019: 2) declare that learners' use of words from technical devisor has a huge impact on reading and written essays. Inter-lingual errors are identified as transfer errors and an outcome from a learner's first language features, for example, grammatical and lexical errors.

2.3.4 Describing errors

Errors should first be identified and then described, before being classified into types (see 5.2.1). There are several ways of classifying errors. Errors can be classified into grammatical categories. For example, all errors relating to verbs are gathered, and different kinds of verb errors such as errors in the past tense are identified in a given sample (Ellis, 1997: 18).

Errors can have different sources. Learners commit errors of 'omission', 'overgeneralisation' and 'transfer'; learners can leave out articles 'a' and 'the' or the   -s off plural nouns; they may use 'eated' instead of 'ate', and make use of their L1 knowledge, respectively (Ellis, 1997: 19).

2.3.5 Error evaluation

There is a need to evaluate errors for purposes of EA in order to help learners to learn a L2. In this context, some errors will be considered more serious than others because they tend to interfere with the intelligibility of what is being said; that is where teachers may want to focus their attention (Ellis, 1997: 19).

Furthermore, global errors violate the overall structure of a sentence and as a result, make it difficult to process. Local errors affect only a single constituent in the sentence and are highly unlikely to create any processing problems (Ellis, 1997: 20).

EA can be carried out to find out how well learners know the language, and how a person learns a language and obtain information on common difficulties in language learning (Hasyim, 2002: 43).

EFAL learners do commit different types of errors which are manifested in their essay writing. However, these errors are significant in that they help teachers determine the learners' improvement pertaining to writing error-free essays.

2.4   APPROACHES TO TEACHING WRITING

According to Raimes (1983: 5), facilitators use a variety of approaches to develop the teaching of writing in the classroom. The controlled-to-free approach, the paragraph pattern approach, the grammar syntax – organisation approach, the communicative approach, and the process approach are all examples of writing approaches.

2.4.1   The controlled-to-free approach

Learners are first given sentence activities, then paragraphs to copy. For example, changing questions to statements, present tense to past tense, and changing clauses or combining sentences. Learners have a limited time to make mistakes. It becomes easier and quicker for teachers to mark papers. The approach stresses grammar, syntax and mechanics, and emphasises accuracy rather than fluency (Raimes, 1983: 6).

Rus (2016: 1193) states that it is important to use controlled writing tasks with lower level learners. For example, name the object in the image, fill in the blank spaces in a text, put the verbs in the text into the right tense and lastly, join two sentences using appropriate connectors.

2.4.2 The free-writing approach

Most teachers stress quantity of writing rather than quality. They emphasise that learners should put content and fluency first and not worry about form. If learners' ideas are written on paper, grammatical accuracy, organisation, and the rest will gradually follow. Some ESL teachers ask learners to write freely on any topic without worrying about grammar and spelling for five to ten minutes. At first learners find it very difficult, but as they do this kind of writing more and more often, some learners find that they write more fluently, and writing words on paper is no longer a challenge. The teachers just read these pieces of free writing, and comment on the ideas expressed by the writer (Raimes, 1983: 7).

According to Rus (2016: 1195), free writing implies both a higher level of English and a certain expertise in terms of the subject matter; learners are asked to explore ideas and information actively, and to produce their own pieces of writing. In addition, learners should also be given advice regarding the general stages of the writing process described, among others (Rogers, 2012: 6).

2.4.3 The Paragraph-Pattern Approach

The paragraph-pattern approach stresses organisation, that is, using paragraphs which link with the topic and show support, cohesion and unity. Learners copy paragraphs, analyse them and imitate model passages (Raimes, 1983: 7).

2.4.4 The Grammar Syntax Organisation Approach

Raimes (1983: 8) points out that the writer needs simple forms of verbs, an organisational plan based on chronology, sequence words such as first, then, finally and sentence structures like when…, then…

Soles (2010: 113) explains that grammar is the study of order, function, and the form of words in sentences. Grammar and spelling errors diminish the impact of one's essay. The writer should make use of logical connectors to link sentences in a paragraph, for example, when ordering ideas, addition, similarity, contrast, cause or effect, conditions and sequence in time (Department of Basic Education, Republic of South Africa, 2011: 37).

2.4.5 The Communicative Approach

According to Raimes (1983: 8), the above mentioned approach stresses the purpose of a piece of writing and the listeners for it. Learners are encouraged to behave like real writers and ask themselves questions, for example, why am I writing this? Who will read it? In the past, the teacher used to be the audience for learner writing, but writers do their best when writing is truly a communicative act, with a writer writing for a real reader. Therefore, by using the communicative approach, teachers have extended the readership. Other learners in class are able to respond, rewrite in another form, summarise, or make comments.

2.4.6 The Process Approach

Raimes (1983: 10) states that the teaching of writing has begun to move away from concentration on the written product and put more emphasis on the process of writing. All writers are interested in how to begin and how to organise the task. Many learners are dominated by fear when they write.

According to Raimes (1983: 10), learner writers need to realise that what they first put down on paper is not their finished product but just the beginning, discovering new ideas and a draft.

Raimes (1983: 10) emphasises that in the process approach, learners do not write on a given topic in the restricted time and hand in the composition for the teacher to correct or for fault finding, but they explore a topic through writing, showing the teacher and each other their drafts and using what they write to read over, think about and move them on to new ideas.

According to Raimes (1983: 10), it is important to teachers who use the process approach to give their learners two crucial supports, that is, time for learners to try out ideas and feedback on the content of what they write in their drafts. By so doing, the writing process becomes a process of discovery for the learners, for example, they discover new ideas and new language forms to express those ideas.

Chimbganda (1998: 170) states that academic writing pervades the entire school curriculum, and is used by many educational systems as a yardstick to measure learners' academic progress. The process approach develops learners' critical thinking as well as recognise what might be wrong with their work.

Trupe and Martin (2016: 48) state that writing brings fresh experiences of one's writing process and challenges in one's classroom. Experience

revitalises one's instruction. Further, writing in communities creates an audience, a purpose and a sense of connectedness.

Teachers need to teach learners ways to generate ideas and develop fluency. Reading is connected with writing. Wright (2006: 90) indicates that writing is considered an extremely valuable educational activity. Writing and process writing include prewriting activities such as defining the audience, using a variety of resources, planning the writing as well as drafting and revising. The process approach to writing teaching emphasises the writer as an independent producer of text, and the issue of what teachers should do to help learners perform a writing task. It is believed that what applies in first language learning also applies in L2 learning. The process approach to writing was therefore first used in the first language learning classroom.

According to Hyland (2003: 299), educators use several forms of written feedback, for example, rubrics and correction codes. Arbogast (2016: 13) indicates that the conception of the writing process gives teachers a framework for showing learners how to go about writing, and learners a conceptual understanding that writing does evolve over time.

Oshima and Hogue (2006: 16) state that during the writing process, one should begin with a topic sentence and write supporting sentences. After writing the first draft, it is important to do a self-editing worksheet, and write a second draft. Choose a classmate, exchange papers, and check each other's paragraphs using a peer editing worksheet. Discuss with him or her and decide what changes one should make. Write a final copy of one's paragraph, and make improvements on the paragraph discussed with the peer editor. Hand in the first the draft together with the second draft and the page containing the two editing worksheets.

Ideally, EFAL educators need to expose learners to several essay writing approaches. The exposure should, in the long term, put the learners in good stead to debilitate essay writing errors.

2. 5   ESSAY WRITING

According Kavanagh (2006: 395), an essay is described as a piece of writing on a particular subject. Checkett and Checkett (2010: 287) describe an essay as a written composition made up of paragraphs that develop a particular topic. Additionally, Langan (1989: 215) describes an essay as a paper of several paragraphs, rather one paragraph that supports each point.

Lutrin and Pincus (2007: 75) indicate that personal writing reflects reality. It involves the sharing of ideas, thoughts and feelings, and usually written in the first person. This type of essay is based on personal experience.

A writer can use a five-paragraph model to introduce the basic elements of the essay. Therefore, all essays should have a title, which should be a catchy or dramatic phrase. The first word of the title should be capitalised as well as all the other words except articles and prepositions. It should also be at the centre of the page (Checkett & Checkett, 2010: 288).

According to Oliva (2021: 69), an essay normally begins with an introduction which summarises points to be discussed and explains the limits of the discussion.

The introductory paragraph introduces the reader to the topic of the essay. This should be followed by the body paragraphs, which develop, support and explain the topic idea. They consist of a topic sentence followed by supporting sentences (Checkett and Checkett, 2010: 288). Langan (1989: 219) states that the writer should start with a broad, general statement of his or her topic, and narrow it down to his or her thesis statement. It is important for the writer to start with an idea, which is the opposite of the one he or she will develop. The writer should explain the importance of his or her topic.

Soles (2010: 6) states that an academic essay is a written text with less than 500 words on a topic related to a course taught at school, college or university.

Pat and Hoy (1992: 102) state that it is important to begin with an image of experience when writing an essay. After one has developed his or her image of

an important memory, they reconstruct their image of their ideas. Let the idea serve as a milestone, and develop an exploratory essay about one's idea.

Finally, the essay ends with a concluding paragraph. The main purpose of a concluding paragraph is to bring the essay to a conclusion. A conclusion should emphasise a call to action, a prediction, or an evaluation of important points. This gives the reader a sense of completeness. It helps to convince the reader that the writer's ideas are valid (Checkett and Checkett, 2010: 288).

McMillan and Weyers (2010: 3) argue that the writing of an essay or assignment brings together all the writer's relevant knowledge and understanding of a topic in response to a particular task. A writer needs to have information and organise and structure his or her writing skills to meet the requirements of a given task. In addition, it is important for the writer to learn to use language appropriately. Writing skills demonstrate one's ability to group ideas in a logical way; they make the writer express his or her thoughts clearly, and draw the reader's attention and interest.

McMillan and Weyers (2010: 6) state that writing is an expression of logic that produces thinking and one's intellectual abilities. An understanding of a topic shows evidence of one's critical thinking.

EFAL learners are expected to express logic in paragraphs which comprise ideas in the form of introductions, bodies and conclusions to show their understanding of chosen essay topics (cf. 2.6).

2.6   TYPES OF ESSAYS

Types of essays to be discussed include the narrative, the persuasive and the expository ones. EFAL learners are at liberty to choose the type of essay to write on. Such options corroborate the fact that learners have different needs and interests which should be taken into consideration. This consideration also promotes variety in a learning environment which is likely to improve errors that learners commit when writing essays.

2.6.1 The narrative type

All people have stories to share, and because of this, all writers can write narratives (Mora-Flores, 2009: 14). Narrative writing tells a story. Its introduction represents time, setting and introduces the main character. Mostly children love to hear, read and enjoy stories, which are known as narratives.

English learners cannot write until they have mastered a conversational level of English language. Narrative writing involves the development of a story with particular elements, that is, setting character, plot, point of view and theme. At the beginning of a narrative, a setting is identified, characters are introduced, readers are engaged with an enticing opening, and events are identified, leading toward a problem (Mora-Flores, 2009: 15).

The body includes the development which may lead to a climax. It is usually written in the past tense (I, she, he, they, and them) (Lutrin & Pincus, 2007: 75). Additional roadblocks are set up to throw off the main characters' attempts to solve a problem, and help in writing more elaborative, interesting stories (Mora-Flores, 2009: 15). At the end, the problem is resolved, and there is a point made about the story as a whole. The story schema of narratives is introduced to the learners to emphasise background information and narration setting foreshadowing characters. Through reading aloud, learners will be able to hear what a narrative story sounds like. Teachers lay the foundation of the narrative essay through circular, cumulative, episodic and linear plotlines.

Mora-Flores (2009: 38) argues that narrative writing comes from our life experiences, and all learners have ideas for writing narratives because they have all had opportunities to experience life. Whatever the narrative topic might be, one needs to take time to analyse the structure of the narrative with learners.

2.6.2 Persuasive writing

Persuasive writing or rhetoric symbolises that one has a belief, a point of view or an opinion; and it is the writer's objective to influence the readers to agree with the writer (Lutrin & Pincus, 2007: 76).

Soles (2010: 6) suggests that a persuasive essay also presents its readers with knowledge in support of a thesis. The other name of persuasive essay is the argumentative essay. The main aim of a persuasive or argumentative essay is to convince readers that one's opinion on an issue is thoughtful, reasonable and therefore valid. In addition, argumentative essays often include an emotional appeal, and rarely part of an exposition (Soles, 2010: 59).

According to Mora-Flores (2009: 70), learners spend their days and nights preparing for persuasive writing. Day in and day out, learners are working tirelessly to convince their parents, their friends and their teachers of many things. Persuasive writing is intended to convince the reader that a certain point of view is the right one, and utilises logic and reason to show that one's idea is more legitimate than the other.

According to Mora-Flores (2009: 71), a child can accomplish this in the formal operations stage. Children are able to think abstractly and understand multiple perspectives, for example, the ability to understand someone else's thoughts, feelings and perspectives of the intended audience. For example, when one hears a child tries to convince their parents to let them play outside a little longer, his or her reasons typically consist of, 'because I want to', or 'it's fun', or 'why not?'. To provide the foundation for persuasive writing, English learners need to learn a basic discourse structure for preparing and defending an argument. The difficulty of writing a persuasive essay is to prepare the argument. Learners need to collect multiple perspectives and opinions to strengthen their arguments.

In studying thought processes of writers of argumentative essays in both Turkish and English, Uysal (2008) concludes that the writers preferred some rhetorical patterns related to text organisation and cohesive devices in both languages, though dissimilarities also emerged between the Turkish and English essays. The Turkish essays were unclear, unlike the English ones. Uysal (2008) notes, however, that the essays in this study had to be written in a very limited time, that is, fifty minutes, which could have had a heavily abbreviated brainstorming, outlining, writing and revision, both during and after finishing writing (Incecay, 2015: 140).

Finally, an argument includes an acknowledgement and refutation of the opposing point of view (Soles, 2010: 59). Therefore, a strong argument needs not only solid facts, evidence, statistics, examples and details, but also a strategy of planning and presenting such information. Some basic knowledge of these systems will help one to gather the information one needs to argue effectively and to plan a strategy for presenting the information clearly, and will suggest methods of conveying that information convincingly (Soles, 2010: 60).

Mora-Flores (2009: 86) states that children are surrounded with examples of persuasive writing. They see, hear and read a variety of sources of information that influence their thoughts and actions. In conclusion, the power of an argument is in the presentation of supporting evidence and opinions.

2.6.3 Expository writing

Discursive writing or expository writing is like a debate as both sides of an argument are presented; the usage of facts, evidence, examples, statistics and opinions to support your argument (Lutrin & Pincus, 2007: 76).

Soles (2010: 6) denotes that an expository or informative essay presents an interesting, informative and important knowledge that explains, supports and justifies a central idea known as a thesis. This type of essay presents primarily factual information.

According to Mora-Flores (2009: 43), an expository writing is when learners get to share information that they have learned. The facts are the main challenge in the expository writing. The main aim of expository writing is to inform, explain, clarify, define or instruct. Expository essays may take a variety of organisational forms, including time-order, cause and effect, problem-solution, and compare and contrast. Learners need to understand how to write to inform, which is different from what they learned about narrative writing (Mora-Flores, 2009: 45).

To the researcher, this suggests a possible transfer from the objective to the first language in terms of rhetorical patterns, which is proper with the results found by Akyel and Kamish (1996), who evaluated learner essays before and after a writing instruction. The two authors also mentioned that writers could transfer rhetorical knowledge to their L1 (Incecay, 2015: 140).

The various developmental patterns for expository academic essays include, for example, process or analysis, cause or effect, comparison or contrast, analysis or interpretation, and problem or solution (Soles, 2010: 54). The writer has to develop an outline as a pre-writing activity, for example, draft, and revise. The essay requires more than one developmental pattern. Expository essays present information to the reader. An expository essay might describe a process, explain the cause of an important event, and recount how an important event affected the society, that is, compare and contrast related entities. An expository essay will often combine a number of development patterns to support its main idea. Another expository mode is the cause and or effect essay. For example, writing an essay in which one explains the causes of inflation or the effects of inflation on a certain community. Comparison or contrast essay is another expository mode. For example, compare

and contrast the developmental theories of Piaget and Bruner (Soles, 2010: 25). To compare and contrast requires one to point out similarities and differences between two items that are the subject of the writer's essay. An analysis or interpretation essay is also an expository mode, for example, analyse and interpret Book 1 of John Milton's Paradise Lost. When one analyses, he or she examines closely one or more of the component parts of the process, usually as part of the larger process of analysing the whole (Soles, 2010: 18). A persuasive or argumentative essay might also describe a process, present details and examples, give causes and effects, make comparisons and contrasts, but the persuasive essay bears the additional burden of trying to convince readers that the writer's opinion on a controversial issue is valid (Soles, 2010: 93). An argumentative essay is a written text that makes a claim or asserts a thesis, on an issue in which there is a disagreement, which provides a clear evidence in the support of the claim, and summarises and refutes evidence in opposition to the claim (Soles, 2010: 58).

According to Soles (2010: 58), an argument does not necessarily urge change in outlook while a persuasion does. An argument is more dispassionate than a persuasion.

According to Soles (2010: 56), during the compare or contrast essay, the learner is asked to discuss similarities and differences between two related subjects. The compare or contrast essay demands a higher level of thinking than an expository essay. The common traits method is used if one is writing primarily an informative essay. For example, if a learner is asked to compare and contrast two cities, one might isolate common traits of climate, ethnic diversity and architecture, and discuss each trait in the context of the two cities. The similarities or differences method is best used if a compare or contrast essay has a persuasive edge to it.

It is important for teachers to support learners in the development of their writing lives, habits and preferences for life outside school. The key writing exposition with learners is the development of background knowledge through ample time for researching (Mora-Flores, 2009: 67).

2.7   STEPS IN WRITING

Steps in writing mainly include preparation, implementation and reviewing. The steps in EFAL essay writing are similar in that learners are expected to plan for, implement and review their essay writing in an attempt to produce texts containing minimal errors.

According to Department of Basic Education, Republic of South Africa (2011: 35), writing and presenting combine the following three elements: using the writing process where the main focus is on content and planning worth thirty marks, learning and applying the knowledge of the structure and features of different text types which emphasises mainly language and style that is used of literal and figurative language. There is editing which counts fifteen marks, and learning and applying knowledge of paragraph and structure as well as punctuation which counts five marks.

Writing instruction will involve working through the process writing. However, not every step of the process writing will be used on every occasion. For example, if learners are writing a familiar text type, they will not need to analyse the structure of the text and language features in detail. There may be occasions when teachers are bound to focus on sentence construction or paragraph writing, or learners write texts without drafts in preparation for their examination.

Murray and Moore (2009: 6) specify that writing involves starting, progressing and finishing a highly complicated, challenging combination of tasks. It requires one to activate different skills and orientations at different stages and phases in the process, sometimes all at the same time. As writing involves starting and finishing, both require kinds of orientation such as listening, which is guided by voices by others, but demands one's confidence and willingness to present one's own voice, perspectives and interpretations.

Arbogast (2016: 13) states that the conception of the writing process gives the lecturer a framework for showing students how to go about writing, and gives

students a conceptual understanding that writing does involve over time, but has a rather stilted style.

2.7.1 Brainstorming

Checkett and Checkett (2010: 131) postulate that brainstorming is a process by which people develop ideas by supporting examples, or new topics, or by tossing out ideas for general discussion. Brainstorming can be in the form of a group or individually. For example, learners could form a group of three and choose a topic. Group members discuss the topic, taking turns for five minutes. One group member may record ideas.

The learner who did the recording can report to the class. Raimes (1983: 10) argues that 'brainstorming' is the production of words, phrases and ideas without concern for appropriateness, order or accuracy. It can be done aloud in class, in a group or individually on paper. The reader responds only to the expressed ideas. Brainstorming ideas for the topic that is being discussed helps the writer to jot down spontaneous ideas using key words and phrases. This enables the learner to plan one's work and formulate plot lines, flow charts or mind maps.

McMillan and Weyers (2010: 96) state that brainstorming and analysing the instruction should give one an indication of how one can construct the content of one's paper as a logical discussion, by considering how it might fit into one of several classic structural models. For example, Checkett and Checkett (2010: 130) point out that another type of brainstorming is by using cubes to generate new approaches to a topic.

One may write questions on each side of a cube. For example, the topic could be described or could be contracted, free associated, analysed, argued for or against and lastly be applied. The writer should approach his or her topic from each of the above perspectives. Jordaan, Neumann

and Smith (2015: 213) argue that when one brainstorms a topic, they write the topic of one's choice either in the centre of the page or at the top. Write down ideas which come to one in order to make sure that one has information to support one's point if the writer is writing an argumentative essay. It is important for the writer to decide on the order in which one will present one's point and number them on one's mind-map. An introductory paragraph should be written on the topic as a whole.

2.7.2 Mind-mapping

Forming a mind-map which is also known as clustering during the pre-writing phase is another helpful strategy. Writers need to map out exactly what they want their documents to look like. Houghton-Hawksley (2012: 260) states that a mind-map represents a theme or topic in which key words and ideas are organised graphically. Houghton-Hawksley (2012: 221) advises writers to use the mind-map as the basis for writing the first draft of their work, and then rewrite it to improve on it. The mind-map visualises thoughts, symbols, words and even ideas. This can help manage the process of writing in EFAL.

Lutrin and Pincus (2007: 71) indicate that a learner can also make use of a mind-map which is made up of headings, words, diagrams or pictures. It is a wonderful tool which helps the writer to see if he or she has enough ideas. If not, the writer may change his or her topic at an early stage.

The mind-map helps learners focus on their thoughts and ideas. It orders the writer's thoughts logically and sequentially. Forming a mind-map during the pre-writing phase is another helpful strategy. When mapping an essay, the writer writes the topic in the centre of a page and arranges the relevant ideas (key words or phrases) around it. These words or

phrases support the topic, and usually from the paragraphs, an essay is made up (Lutrin & Pincus, 2007: 71).

The mind-map is the skeleton of an essay (English Work, 2002), and is adapted or changed in the process of planning the final essay because writing involves thinking, writing, revising, erasing, shortening phrases, or changing words and editing. It is believed that once a learner writer has generated various ideas related to the given topic, he or she can reflect on the structure of the essay.

Houghton-Hawksley (2012: 221) proposes that it is important to use a mind-map to plan how to link the topic, main and supporting ideas, sentences and paragraphs. A mind-map is used as a basis for writing the first draft of one's work, and then rewriting it to improve on it.

According to Checkett and Checkett (2010: 129), the technique of mind mapping is similar to listing but less structured. The topic is written at the centre, related ideas are placed   in circles, circles are connected with lines and related ideas are grouped. The cluster of ideas that develops the topic is selected.

2.7.3 Listing

Checkett and Checkett (2010: 128) explain that the writer writes the topic at the top of a blank sheet of paper, then list any ideas that pop into his or her head. The writer is advised not to edit, correct, or revise what he or she shall have written. It is important to keep on writing for ten minutes to inspire more thoughts. The act of writing normally helps the thinking processes for many people. It is important to look at the writer's list and check which topics are related. The topics should be grouped in the correct order and one's topic should be formerly outlined.

According to Raimes (1983: 89), lists are highly neglected as part of writing in a second language. Most people write lists to help them to

remember, for example, what to do when they do shopping lists, lists of people to invite to a party and list of things to do the following day. Lists are the basis for a lot of conceptual activities. In addition, an everyday task of making a shopping list may be developed into an activity that is useful for writing an essay.

For example, one may ask the students to write a list of things that they want to buy the next day on the board. If they send one person to go and buy those things, he or she should group the items such as all food together, the clothes, the toiletries and the household items. Students will now see that the principle of looking, seeing similarities and grouping is important in both cases.

2.7.4 Planning

Some theorists regard planning before writing as an important starting point. Singleton (2005: 8) argues that when planning to write, an English as a Second Language (ESL) learner ought to be taught that the choice of suitable words is important in expressing ideas. These words, which express the writer's ideas, should be contained in well-structured sentences, which in turn are grouped in paragraphs. Therefore, planning helps when drafting an essay.

In addition, McMillan and Weyers (2010: 30) state that planning enables the writer to save time to produce a quality end-product. It also allows the writer to balance the time spend on different components such as editing and proof reading.

Soles (2010: 53) demonstrates that planning shows the steps of process writing. Planning an academic essay is an ongoing process. According to Soles (2010: 53), many writers produce a point form summary of main ideas and supporting ideas that they want to include in their essay.

2.7.5 Getting started

Getting started is another step of writing. Learners need to be frequently encouraged and helped to get started with writing. There are various ways to do this (Langan, 2000; Blackburn-Brockman, 2001; Singleton, 2005). Singleton (2005: 20) refers to starting to write as 'getting started'. The educator could bring photographs to class, as a start, and then set questions to be answered by learners in groups. For example, learners can guess a person's age, guess whether the person is married or single, describe his appearance, and so on. All these questions are answered in written form.

McMillan and Weyers (2010: 29) state that writers should have knowledge and understanding of the topic. They should be able to organise supporting information and evidence within a structured piece of academic writing.

Lutrin and Pincus (2007: 69) argue that plot lines enable the writer to plan his or her work in a vertical or horizontal fashion. A flow-chart is a diagram which shows the different stages of a complex activity. It helps learners to structure their work correctly, follow a chronological order and include all necessary elements. Similarly, this encourages lateral thinking. Writing instruction involves working through the writing process. For example, if learners are writing a familiar text, they will not need to analyse language features in detail. There may be occasions when teachers need to focus on sentence construction or paragraph writing, or learners write texts without drafts in preparation for the examination (Department of Basic Education, Republic of South Africa, 2011: 35).

2.7.6 Drafting

In order to manage the writing process, the learner is bound to draft his or her essay first. Once a topic has been brainstormed, reflected upon, and information gathered, then writing down the thoughts takes place. Singleton (2005: 10) maintains that the first draft comes after planning what to write. After planning, the writer is ready to write his or her first draft. The writer should relax and be comfortable, and present a first draft in an interesting way and not mind about making mistakes, as this stage is followed by editing.

Soles (2010: 71) states that an introductory paragraph should draw the attention of the readers, and encourage them to read on, not because they have to but because they want to. The first introductory paragraph is the opening paragraph of an essay. The second introductory paragraph should engage the interest of the readers. The third introductory paragraph should capture the reader's interest in its first few sentences. The fourth introductory paragraph begins an anecdote, a story, which will engage readers' interest effectively. The fifth introductory paragraph is a very good start for an academic essay. It engages readers by clearly presenting an interesting topic. It establishes the historical context for the topic and readers know what to expect from the rest of the topic (Soles, 2010: 75). The drafting stage is a rough work stage.

Murray and Johanson (1991: 26) hypothesise that the following may happen in the mind of the learner writer: Here is what the learner regards as imperfect but he or she will be doing it again and again until a clear well-structured argument is presented. This is just the first draft where learners simply put pen to paper with the purpose of constructing the foundation on their writing.

Houghton-Hawksley (2012: 221) suggests that the writer needs to plan what he or she is going to write. A mind-map is a useful tool to use when

planning. The use of mind map as the basis for writing results in the final draft. Experience is the best teacher, even experienced writers rework and edit their work. The first draft helps the writer to improve style and make sure that his or her main and supporting ideas are logically and grammatically arranged.

According to Checkett and Checkett (2010: 1148), when one writes the first draft of any paragraph, one should combine the topic and the controlling idea to create a topic sentence. Thereafter one needs to write a sentence for each of the specific ideas, and when one matches one's topic sentence with one's support sentences, one will have a first or rough draft paragraph. No one, not even professional writers, creates a perfect paragraph in the first draft. That is why it is known as the first draft or rough draft, it is because there are always some rough spots to smooth out. To improve what one has written in the first draft, one must revise by answering questions such as, is the topic or subject clear? Will the controlling idea develop the subject adequately? Do my support sentences consist of specific facts, details, and examples? Is there sentence variety? Negative comments on a draft may have a strong impact on a learner's confidence (Hyland & Hyland 2001), and may affect the relationship between the teacher and the learner (Hyland, 2003). In general, many teachers fear discouraging learners by being too critical, yet a soft approach may not direct learners properly. This may be because learners may focus heavily on sentence level problems rather than ideas and organisation, so their comments may be vague and unhelpful. Kasanga (2004: 86) confirms that learners prefer teachers' responses to peer responses, perhaps because the teacher is perceived as the final arbitrator. For this reason, learners should be guided quite precisely regarding the process (Wright, 2006: 92).

2.7.7 Revision stage

Revision means to check one's ideas not to check one's grammar. Revision is a component in the process of writing. Revision is hard work. In revision, the writer is advised to find out whether all the sentences relate to the main idea, whether the paragraphs contain any irrelevant sentences, whether the writer includes everything he or she wanted to write about, and whether it is necessary to add anything more (Singleton, 2005: 12). The process of revision helps thoughts to generate new ideas.

Langan (1989: 103) explains that an effective paper is never written at once. It is a step by step process in which one takes his or her paper through a series of stages, from prewriting to the final draft. In the first stage, one gets his or her initial ideas and impressions about the subject down on paper; one accumulates raw material. One does this through brainstorming, free-writing, and making lists and scratching outlines. In the second stage, one shapes, adds to, and perhaps subtracts from one's raw material as the writer takes his or her paper through a series of two, three, or four rough drafts. The writer works to make clear the single point of his or her paper. In the last stage, the writer edits and proofreads. One edits the next to final draft, that is, the writer checks it carefully for the correctness of sentence skills, for example, grammar, mechanics, punctuation and usage. Then, one proofreads the final copy of the paper for any typing mistakes. Editing and proofreading are important steps that some people avoid, because they have worked so hard on previous stages.

2.7.8 Editing

Editing is the correction of grammar and style. This means checking grammar in a written task. Singleton (2005: 12) advises that it is always

best to revise first and then edit because it saves time. Unedited work makes it difficult to read paragraphs with understanding. An editing checklist is a tool used to double check. The following questions may serve as strategies in the management of the process of writing to check writing. Do all verbs agree with their subjects? Does every sentence have a subject and a verb? Are all the verbs in the correct tense? Are all the verbs in the correct form? Does each sentence end with the correct punctuation mark? Is each word spelt correctly? (Singleton 2005: 12). Editing, therefore, gives a piece of writing a scholarly aspect. The above checklist items are essential tools for learner-writers' effective writing.

Although learner-writers can do most of their own editing, they also need help from peer reviewers (McMillan & Weyers, 2007: 173). The Motupa circuit learners can also benefit from such editing exercises. At this stage, a learner writer performs the role of an editor. This implies that one looks critically at one's text for content, relevance, sense, layout, grammar, punctuation and spelling (McMillan & Weyers, 2007: 167). McMillan and Weyers (2007: 173) state that it is important to create time for checking. Do not spoil your hard work by skimping on the final stage.

Houghton-Hawksley (2012: 221) predicates that the first step in editing one's writing is to ensure that one's sentences are varied in structure. The different sentence structures help to vary the way the paragraphs are started, and this adds interest and originality to writing.

Chimbganda (1998: 171) adds that the importance of editing as a form of revision is that it sharpens students' cognitive awareness and develops their critical thinking. The value of editing involves the teacher making useful comments such as changing the meaning of the text in response to a realisation that the original meaning is somehow faulty. The other comment that teachers make is to ensure that grammatical sentences are more readable by deleting, reordering and restating as well as correcting errors of diction, transcription and syntax that may obscure the meaning.

According to Soles (2010: 112), editing is the process of improving and correcting the sentences and words within a written text. During editing, the writer checks good grammar, effective sentence structure, proper punctuation and clear diction.

Langan (1989: 512) adds that people often find it hard to edit and proofread a paper carefully. Most people put so much effort into their writing that it becomes painful for them to look at the paper one more time. It is very important for one to force himself or herself to edit and proofread. When one eliminates sentence skill mistakes, this will improve his or her paper and help one get used to the habit of using the sentence skills consistently.

According to Soles (2010: 92), revision is the process of altering, improving, and clarifying the overall structure of a written text and of reviewing the content of the text to make certain that it satisfies the needs and expectation of readers. When revising a work, the writer makes sure the essay meets the needs and expectations of his or her readers. It is also important to double check the presence of cohesive ties between sentences and paragraphs. During the revision stage, it is also important for the writer to check and reconsider the style in which his or her paper is written, to make sure that the sentence structure is varied, and that the writer's voice or tone such as the attitude to the topic that the author conveys to his or her readers is effective and appropriate.

2.7.8.1 Editing of grammar

Grammar is the study of the word order in the sentences, the function and the rules that govern this order, function and form. Grammar and spelling errors diminish the impact of one's essay. It is important to check one's grammatical mistakes when one revises and edits one's academic essay because readers are not likely to take the writer's ideas seriously, especially if the writer's

paper contains grammatical errors. The writer should always make sure that the verbs agree with their subject, the pronouns clearly refer to the correct nouns, the case of one's pronouns is correct, and the verb tense is correct (Soles, 2010: 113). During subject-verb agreement, singular subjects take singular verbs and plural subjects take plural verbs. For example, 'my books are out of print'; 'one of my books is out of print'. A collective noun is one that identifies a group, such as family, team, orchestra, class and audience. Normally, a collective noun takes a singular verb. For example, the press is not welcome. When the collective noun is not acting as a unit but rather emphasises individual members, the writer uses the plural form of the verb, for example, 'the press are arguing about who will get the interview' (Soles, 2010: 114).

2.7.8.2   Editing of the sentence structure

According to Soles (2010: 125), a sentence is a communication unit that describes at least one act that is in the verb and one agent that is the subject undertaking the action. Learners should always check the structure of each sentence such as sentence fragments, run-on sentences, misplaced or dangling modifiers, faulty parallelism and wordiness.

Paraskevas (2004: 44) states that learners also ask about using and beginning their sentences or using 'I' in their writing, which points to another aspect of convention and mechanics, known as sentence structure and word choice.

2.7.9 Sentence Fragments

A sentence fragment is an incomplete sentence masquerading as a complete one, but without a subject and a verb, because a complete sentence contains a subject and a verb (Soles, 2010: 125). A run-on sentence consists of two complete sentences which are incorrectly joined together, either by a comma or without any punctuation at all (Soles, 2010: 127).

Soles (2010: 129) states that a misplaced modifier is a word or group of words that explains a word in a sentence other than the word it is supposed to describe. A dangling modifier is explained as a word or a group of words that is/are supposed to modify a word in a sentence but that word dangles because that needed word is missing from the sentence (Soles, 2010: 130). Faulty parallelism is a mistake in sentence structure that occurs when words or phrases that should be equal within a sentence are not. Faulty parallelism affects the balance of a sentence. Sometimes the writer uses more words than necessary to express the ideas the sentence contains, which is known as wordiness.

2.7.10 The final stage

This is the stage where learner writers should be able to say with confidence that their essays, their products, are easy to read, and are pleasant to look at. It is assumed that the final version should be free from careless mistakes. It is expected that a final version is a product ready for submission, or to be published and be read. Most writers desire their final version to be read by others. Such writing should therefore show that a complex thought process was involved in bringing it out. It should show that the text is coherent

and ideas have been arranged in a logical manner (Checkett & Checkett, 2010: 150). Most importantly, Haughton-Hawksley (2012: 221) advises that it is significant to rewrite an essay neatly, after one shall have applied all the editing techniques.

In line with the aim of the study on essay writing errors of EFAL learners in Limpopo Province, the final stage is tantamount to the culmination of an error-free essay writing experience. This is what the EFAL learners ought to strive for.

2.8   USE OF FORMAL LANGUAGE

McMillan and Weyers (2010: 105) state that sentence construction should be grammatically correct and formal. This would be about objective language which involves the use of language techniques that maintain a tone and a vocabulary that is brief and clearly expressed.

Furthermore, Haughton-Hawksley (2012: 224) argues that it is important to write in a formal, impersonal style without using emotional language. A topic sentence is useful for each paragraph and develops its theme. The usage of contractions and colloquial language ruins the writing. Using personal examples should be avoided, and a point in each paragraph should be introduced using linking words such as, for example, for instance and similarly.

To this effect, formal language helps the writer to avoid poor grammar, the use of personal pronouns, and colloquial language such as idioms, slang, clichés, big words, spelling and punctuation. Slang and confusing expressions are usually understood by a select group of people. They make the reader difficult to understand the meaning (Checkett & Checkett, 2010: 6).

Vicary (2014: 81) emphasises that to show logical links, the writer should use sentence connecting words to link an idea to a previous sentence and practise using linking words and phrases to link clauses and sentences.

It is important to avoid personal pronouns such as I, me, one, you, we or us in writing. The use of passive voice carries volume than active voice. Structures such as it is, there is…, or there are…, are elegant to introduce sentences (Houghton-Hawksley, 2010: 225).

Lutrin and Pincus (2007: 40) adjure that one uses figures of speech to create images or mind pictures in order to express oneself visually, imaginatively, and powerfully.

On the other hand, with language usage, one may be formal, informal or emotive, depending on its purpose and the relationship between its user and recipient (Lutrin & Pincus, 2007: 44). Formal language is the language that is needed in situations which demand respect and sophistication, for example in a job interview, debate or written essay. The writer dwells much on vocabulary to express himself or herself accurately and coherently. Sentence structure is the way a sentence is arranged, grammatically.
Language usage should be formal. The tone may be serious and polite.

On authority of Lutrin and Pincus (2007: 44), informal language is used in everyday speech when less formality is required. For example, this could be between parent and child, or between peers. Vocabulary usage is less accurate and less sophisticated. Simple sentences are mainly used and grammar may be informal. Tone is warm and friendly. It is only acceptable when one uses abbreviations to express units. Abbreviations such as e.g., i.e., viz, spoil one's writing. When making use of acronyms which is a kind of abbreviation formed by taking the initial letters of a name of an organisation, then one uses letters instead of writing out the title in full. For example, World Health Organization becomes WHO.

It is implicit that EFAL learners should be adept at differentiating between formal and informal language. They should also be taught how to use formal language in an academic essay writing context.

2.9   VOCABULARY

Word choice is the best way of smart academic writers. It is known that vocabulary means words. Houghton-Hawksley (2012: 226) indicates that we have an active speaking vocabulary which is huge, a writing vocabulary that is more limited, and a recognition vocabulary, which is the largest of the three. It is important for learners to keep a vocabulary book; this helps mainly with words and phrases that can be used often in their own writing. It is also important to encourage learners to read and comment on one another's work.

The Department of Basic Education, Republic of South Africa (2011: 46) indicates that the use of synonyms, antonyms, paronyms, polysemes, homonyms, homophones, one word for a phrase, figures of speech, idiomatic expressions, borrowed and inherited words, new words and etymology build our vocabulary and language development.

According to Palfreyman and Karaki (2017: 2), vocabulary development may be studied using vocabulary by analysing the vocabulary used in the learner's production.

Schumitt (2010: 4) points out that in educational systems, learners, educators, material writers and researchers agree that the learning vocabulary is an important part of mastering a second language. However, vocabulary is a complex phenomenon in the nature of language that has always puzzled researchers and educators.

EFAL learners' vocabulary development supports successful essay writing. EFAL learners and teachers need to work together towards perennial vocabulary development.

2.10   WORD CLASSES/PARTS OF SPEECH

Although word classes play different roles in a sentence, they also carry different meanings. They also help structure sentences. Examples of word classes are nouns, pronouns, determiners, adjectives, adverbs, verbs, prepositions, conjunctions and so on. If EFAL learners can be assisted to choose and use word classes appropriately when constructing sentences, essay writing errors will be reduced.

2.10.1 Nouns

The Department of Basic Education, Republic of South Africa (2011: 46) discusses the use of nouns and their types such as countable nouns such as pen or pens; and uncountable nouns such as furniture; common nouns like woman or man; proper nouns such as Rebecca; abstract nouns such as love, fear, respect and honesty; possessive forms of nouns like Maphefo's book; collective nouns and classifiers, for example, a swarm of bees, a bar of soap; build our vocabulary and language use.

Lutrin and Pincus (2007: 15) maintain that each word in a sentence is named after its function. The correct use of parts of speech plays an important role in good writing.

According to Houghton-Hawksley (2012: 241), the basic parts of speech are nouns, adjectives, pronouns, verbs, conjunctions, adverbs, prepositional phrases and exclamations to start one's sentence and to add variety to one's writing style. For example, nouns are recognised as being the subject or object of a verb.

Burger and Buhrmann (2016: 239) describe a noun as a name of things such as everyday things known as common nouns; people and places called proper nouns; group of things (collective nouns) and things that

one cannot see with one's five senses known as abstract nouns. Articles are put in front of nouns to show whether these nouns are specific or general.

Lutrin and Pincus (2007: 16) regard a noun as a naming word. Every person, place or thing is identified with a name. Common nouns are names given to ordinary objects. They are identified by the, a, or an that precede them. For example, the ocean, a bee and an apple. They follow possessive adjectives like his book and its tail. They do not start with capital letters unless they start a sentence. Common nouns are a reflection of what people are. For example, teacher, pastor and doctor. A noun has gender; it is either masculine (king) or feminine (queen). Two nouns together are known as compound nouns, for example, hand plus bag equals to handbag.

2.10.2 Pronouns

McMillan and Weyers (2010: 244) view a pronoun as a word that replaces a noun: I, you, he, she, it, we and they. According to Burger and Buhrmann (2016: 239), pronouns normally take a place of nouns in a sentence. For example, he instead of the man, she instead of the woman, it instead of the instrument, they instead of the dancers, ours instead of our towels, and theirs instead of their possessions.

Furthermore, the writer should be able to use and know types of pronouns. For example, a personal pronoun as a subject, such as I, you, she, it, we, they; and a personal pronoun as direct or indirect object, such as me, you, him, her, it, us and them. However, there are still reflexive pronouns like myself or yourself. In the same way, there are relative pronouns such as which, that, whose and where. For example, whose book is that? All these help in language enrichment during process writing (Department of Basic Education, Republic of South Africa, 2011: 46).

Lastly, if the word a pronoun refers to is singular, the pronoun should be singular; if that word is plural, the pronoun should be plural. When one writes a paper, it is important to be consistent in using first-, second-, or third- person pronouns (Langan, 1989: 400).

According to Payne (2006: 119), types of pronouns include personal pronouns, relative pronouns, possessive pronouns, demonstrative pronouns and interrogative pronouns.

Soles (2010: 115) maintains that the noun that the pronoun replaces is known as the antecedent of that pronoun. There are three types of pronoun cases, for example, subjective, objective and possessive pronoun cases. Pronouns in the subjective case are used as subjects of the verb, whereas pronouns which are in the objective case are used as objects of verbs, and pronouns in the possessive case are used to show possession (Soles, 2010: 118).

The writer uses pronouns to eliminate repetition and to identify the subject. Pronouns can be divided into many categories such as personal pronouns, relative pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, indefinite pronouns and reflexive pronouns. Relative pronouns are pronouns that are used to introduce an explanatory or a qualifying clause. For example, who made the phone call? The sentence shows that who is used as the subject. The phone call was made by whom? In this sentence whom is used as an object. Demonstrative pronouns are used to specify or point out certain people, places or things. Indefinite pronouns refer to general or indeterminate people, places or things. For example, everyone, both and many. A reflexive pronoun adds -self or   -selves to the pronoun and is used to indicate the action performed to or on the antecedent. For example, we gave ourselves a party to celebrate the end of the year. John found himself in trouble. Pronoun antecedent agreement shows that pronouns agree with their antecedents, such as all students must do their assigned reading before class (Checkett & Checkett, 2010:314).

2.10.3 Determiners

Vicary (2014: 8) states that a determiner is a word that precedes a noun phrase. For example, all, the, a, several, some, my, his, this, one, two and many. Determiners are words which indicate something about nouns but not in a descriptive manner (Houghton-Hawksley, 2012: 255). Determiners such as a, an, and the are also called articles (Houghton – Hawksley, 2012: 216).

In addition, there are determiners such as indefinite articles such as a book, an apple; definite articles such as the book, that furniture and the apples; demonstratives such as this, that, those and these; quantity number one, for example, most teachers dressed formally; quantity number two like both learners stood up, both, either and neither; and quantity number three such as much, little, many, few, more, less and fewer, for example, the school has many teachers; and quantity number four such as some, any, another, other, each and every, for example, each guest received a plate at the wedding (Department of Basic Education, Republic of South Africa, 2011: 46).

2.10.4 Adjectives

Burger and Buhrmann (2015: 239) define an adjective as a word that describes nouns and pronouns. For example, a gifted teacher and he is happy, whereas Houghton- Hawksley (2012: 250) postulate that an adjective is a word that tells us more about a noun, for example this is a useful chapter.

The Department of Basic Education, Republic of South Africa (2011: 46) stipulates that the writer should be able to differentiate adjectives in writing such as an adjective that comes before a noun, such as the poor

man, an old house; those that come after a verb such as the boy was mischievous.; adjectives ending in -ing, for example, amazing, boring, exciting, for example, the lesson is boring; moreover, adjectives ending in -ed, for example amazed, bored and excited, for example, the learners were bored. On the other hand, there is a comparison of adjectives like happy, happier, the happiest; intelligent, more intelligent, most intelligent; for example, it was the happiest day of my life; she is the most intelligent girl in our class. A writer becomes smart if he/she is able to utilise adjectives differently.

According to Checkett and Checkett (2010: 346), although adjectives usually come before the nouns that they describe, they can also follow the noun. For example, the glistening ocean sparkled in the sunset. The coffee tasted bitter. Adjectives can be objective or subjective. For example, objective adjectives describe nouns with sensory detail; glowing and crashing are objective adjectives. Further, subjective adjectives describe concepts, feelings and ideas in more general terms such as beautiful, harsh, painful, annoying and loving.

2.10.5 Adverbs

Lutrin and Pincus (2007: 33) define adverbs as words that modify or tell us more about verbs. They might also modify adjectives, other adverbs or even the tone of the whole sentence.

Houghton-Hawksley (2012: 250) describes an adverb as a word that tells readers more about the noun. There are seven types of adverbs: the adverb of manner, for example quietly and softly; adverb of time such as yesterday and tomorrow; adverb of frequency like always and usually; adverbs of probability contain words such as certainly and definitely; whereas adverbs of duration deal with words like still, yet and any more; then adverbs of degree use words like completely, strongly, totally, quiet

and rather; lastly, adverbial phrases for example, in the garden and on the table.

According to Checkett and Checkett (2010: 348), adverbs may describe the action of a passage; in some cases, they refer to other adverbs in order to intensify meaning, for example, Lisa stormed angrily up the stairs. Angrily modifies the verb stormed. He was very cold, very modifies the adjective cold. The guests were too early to dinner, too modifies the adverb early.

Pavey (2010: 206) argues that adjuncts are an open set of lexical items such as adverbs and adpositional phrases. Adjuncts modify various levels of the clause depending on their meaning. Adjuncts modifying the clause include Heather will probably find her keys tomorrow that is epistemic. Tim has evidently won the lottery which is evidential. Adjuncts modifying the core express three types of meaning, that is time, pace and manner. For example, Oscar runs quickly. Grace carefully unwrapped the present (Pavey, 2010: 207). Adjuncts modifying the nucleus tell us something about the duration or completion of the event. For example, I have completely finished my homework and I am continuously sneezing (Pavey, 2010: 208).

2.10.6 Prepositions

Houghton-Hawksley (2012: 263) states that a preposition should be followed by a noun to form a prepositional phrase. There are prepositions of place and direction such as below and under; likewise, the writer may use adjective plus a preposition such as afraid of, ashamed of; finally, and the learner may use a noun plus a preposition, for example invitation to, reason for, and comment on.

Prepositions create order during sentence construction. Burger and Buhrmann (2016: 239) describe prepositions as words that show the

relationship between different nouns. For example, the musician is on the stage, the two nouns are musician and stage.

Lutrin and Pincus (2007: 36) state that a preposition is a small word that usually relates two words or phrases to one another. Prepositions usually refer to place, position, time, manner, or reason. According to McMillan and Weyers (2010: 244), a preposition is a word that marks the relation between words or phrases; it always indicates time, place, or direction. It usually comes before the word it controls, for example, at noon, in the bus, to the north.

Payne (2006: 124) points out that adpositions express a relationship between its complement which is called object of the adposition and the rest of the clause in which it appears. Adpositions can be subdivided into prepositions and postpositions. They are called PREpositions because they come before their complements, for example, in the basket, under the place.

Vicary (2014: 8) explains a preposition as a small word which shows the relationship between two ideas, for example, The Prime Minister of Great Britain lives at 10 Downing Street in London.

2.10.7 Verbs

Houghton-Hawksley (2012: 270) sees a verb as a word that carries an action in a sentence, for example, when he arrives home, he takes off his shoes and puts on sleepers. A verb is a doing word (Lutrin & Pincus, 2007: 28).

According to Vicary (2014: 10), a verb shows a physical action, a state of being and a mental process, such as the student read the book and the campus is attractive. Payne (2006: 104) explains that verbs are

words that describe visible events that produce changes in the world, for example die, run, break, cook and explode.

Soles (2010: 121) denotes that verbs express action, and forms or tenses change to indicate whether that action is taking place in the present, has taken place in the past, or will take place in the future. Verbs add the suffix -ed to indicate past tense. In other words, an auxiliary or helping verb establishes the precise tense of the main verb that follows it, for example, was hidden; will stay. When an auxiliary or helping verb precedes the past tense, that form of the past tense is called the past participle. For example, she has attended Brown University (Soles, 2010: 122). Perfect verb forms are sentences with more than one verb and ultimately, they often require more than one verb tense, for example, she knows she saw him last Tuesday and I know you will win (Soles, 2010: 122).

Checkett and Checkett (2010: 19) state that action verbs describe an activity that the subject is performing whereas linking verbs indicate a condition or state of being. The linking verb connects the subject with a word or phrase describing something about the subject, for example, Dr Smith is a surgeon. A combination of helping verbs and main verbs to form group of words is known as a verb phrase. A helping verb gives the main verb a specific meaning.

Checkett and Checkett (2010: 27) point out that time is called tense, and is more accurately called verb tense. It is important to know whether an action verb is in the past, present, or future tense.

According to Checkett and Checkett (2010: 326), a verb is a word indicating action, feeling or being. Verbs are divided into three classes that is action verb, linking verb, and helping verbs. In addition, the form of the verb can indicate the time of the action, present, past, and future which is also known as tense. The most common tenses used are simple present and simple past.

Houghton-Hawksley (2012) postulates that a phrasal verb is formed by adding a preposition to a verb in order to make a new verb. Further, a phrasal verb is a combination of a verb and a preposition to form a new verb with its own meaning. After adding a preposition to a verb, then the sentence changes its meaning. For example, he ran to the organiser and collected his prize. 'Ran' means he moved quickly, whereas the following carries a different meaning, let's run through arrangements again, run through means revise quickly. I ran across an old friend in soccer yesterday, ran across means met by chance. Do not run down other people, run down means criticise.

2.10.8 Conjunctions

Burger and Buhrmann (2014) state that conjunctions are words that join different parts of a sentence. For example, and, but, yet and before. According to Checkett and Checkett (2010: 349), a conjunction is a connecting word. There are three categories of conjunctions discussed in this text, for example, coordinating conjunctions, subordinating conjunctions and adverbial conjunctions. Coordinating conjunctions join two equal words or groups of words. For example, but, or, yet, for, and, nor, and so. For example, Gloria is sweet, but she becomes angry if she is deceived. Subordinating conjunctions connect a dependent clause with an independent clause, that is, after, although, as, because, before, if, since, though, unless, until, when, whenever, wherever, whether and while. For example, before the game was over, several members of the team were injured. Adverbial conjunctions are connecting words that transit from one idea to the next, such as accordingly, additionally and also. For example, the winter days dragged in February; additionally, blizzards left six feet of snow on the ground.

Moreover, Raimes (1983: 27) posits that because everybody likes to look at pictures, their use in the classroom provides a stimulating focus for

students' attention. Pictures bring the outside world into the classroom in a strong and concrete way. A picture is a valuable resource as it provides a shared experience in the classroom, common language forms, and a variety of tasks to be used and to develop focus and interest in students.

2.11   SENTENCES

Pauley and Riordan (1987: 490) describe a sentence as a group of words having a subject and a predicate which expresses a complete thought. Lutrin and Pincus (2007: 6) argue that each sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with a period, a question mark and an exclamation mark, depending on the frame and meaning of the sentence. A complete sentence contains a subject and a finite verb. Sentences can be classified as simple, compound or complex.

Sentences are made up of clauses and phrases. There are two kinds of clauses, namely: independent clause and dependent clause. All sentences should have at least one independent clause. Another name for an independent clause is the main clause, and another name for dependent clause is subordinate clause. A clause is a group of words that contains a finite verb. Some sentences have the main clause and subordinate clauses. The main clause is the main point of the sentence. The main clause communicates a complete thought and can stand on its own as a sentence. The subordinate clause does not communicate a complete thought and needs to be joined to an independent clause to become a complete sentence. It usually begins with a word such as although, while, because, who and others. Subordinate clauses support information (Coetzee, Holland, Anhuizen & Duffett, 2013: 146).

2.11.1 Simple sentence

According to Lutrin and Pincus (2007: 6), a simple sentence has only one finite verb and deals with one idea. For example, Mary plays soccer. A simple sentence has one clause which is an independent clause. Simple sentences can also contain phrases, so that they are often long and complicated. A phrase is a group of words which either does not have a subject or a finite verb. However, simple sentences still have only one subject and one finite verb (Stephenson, Bauchop & Petchey, 2006: 244).

2.11.2 Compound sentence

Lutrin and Pincus (2007: 6) argue that a compound sentence has more finite verbs and is joined by co-ordinating conjunctions such as and, nor and but. For example, Mary plays netball at school and works on her computer at home.

A compound sentence has two or more independent clauses. Each clause has nearly equal importance. The clause may be joined in the following four ways: it can be joined with a coordinating conjunction such as but, or, for, nor, yet or so; with a correlate conjunction such as not only…but also and so on; or with a semi-colon and another kind of link word called a conjunctive adverb. Examples are furthermore, however, therefore, in contrast and similarly (Rozakis, 2020: 50).

2.11.3 Complex sentences

Lutrin and Pincus (2007: 6) state that a complex sentence has one main clause and subordinate clauses which are joined by subordinating conjunctions. For example, Joyce obtained her promotion while she was recuperating in hospital after she had suffered from her headache.

A complex sentence has one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses. In these type of sentences, the clauses do not have equal importance. The independent clause, which is also known as the main clause, contains the most important idea; and the dependent clause adds extra information. The two clauses are linked by a subordinate conjunction placed at the beginning of the dependent clause. For example, although, because, just as, whereas, unless and even though (Rozakis, 2020: 258).

EFAL learners can use different types of sentences to structure a variety of paragraphs in a bid to creatively address given essay topics. Educators should scaffold learners' writing practice to increase essay writing errors' attrition rate.

2.12   PUNCTUATION

Paraskevas (2004: 41) maintains that during punctuation, commas guide speakers to pause briefly while full stops or periods guide orators to stop for a longer period of time.

According to Paraskevas (2004: 42), most high school and college students know how to use terminal punctuation, quotations, commas for items in a list or introductory phrases, and colons to introduce certain lists. But few students know how to use rhetorical punctuation as a tool to add meaning to their text. Punctuation marks are vital as they make the written text easier to read and understand. Punctuation marks separate periods, and semicolons separate independent clauses; dashes and colons separate either independent clauses

from each other; and commas separate independent elements from independent clauses Paraskevas (2004: 43).

Lutrin and Pincus (2007: 10) motivate that writing without punctuation would not make sense.

Houghton-Hawksley (2012: 264) shows that punctuation are marks or signs in written language that help the reader to understand exactly what has been written. They include full stops, commas, semicolons, colons, exclamation marks, question marks, inverted commas and quotation marks.

The Department of Basic Education, Republic of South Africa (2011: 48) states that writers should make a dictionary his or her constant companion and look up difficult words.

As a writer, it is important to know and be able to use punctuation marks appropriately.

To this effect, the appropriate use of punctuation marks breathes life into written text. They make it reader-friendly, thus assisting the writer to communicate effectively. Implicitly, educators should, when teaching punctuation, impress it upon EFAL learners that effective essay writing depends on the appropriate use of punctuation marks.

2.12.1 Capital letters

As a writer, always start sentences with capital letters, (Lutrin & Pincus, 2007: 10). Words such as proper nouns, proper adjectives, titles of books and first word in direct speech need capital letters.

Langan (1989: 411) indicates that the writer should always use capital letters with the first word in a sentence or direct quotation; names of persons, particular places and days of the week,

months and holidays; names of commercial products and organisations; and titles of books, magazines, newspapers and articles. Capital letters are used with names that show family relationships, titles of persons, languages, geographic locations, historical periods and events, races, nations and nationalities, and opening and closing of a letter where one capitalises only the first word in a closing.

Checkett and Checkett (2010: 375) state that it is important to capitalise proper nouns, names of people, places, specific products, days of weeks, and the first word of every sentence.

2.12.2 Full stops (.)

When a writer puts a full stop, it indicates the end of a sentence (Lutrin & Pincus, 2007). Full stops are written after certain abbreviations. The other name for a full stop is a period.

Houghton-Hawksley (2012) states that it is the punctuation mark that ends sentences. Therefore, Soles (2010: 134) states that it is important to use a period at the end of most declarative and informative sentences.

2.12.3 Commas (,)

A comma separates words or phrases in a sentence (Lutrin & Pincus, 2007). Writers put a comma at the end of a phrase or clause. Avoid using a comma between two main clauses. When using conjunctions such as however and nevertheless, we place a comma before or after such words.

Burger and Buhrmann (2016: 246) pronounce that a comma is a punctuation mark that indicates a pause. Commas are used to separate items in the list, to separate adjectives and to separate direct speech.

Langan (1989: 440) suggests that commas often indicate a minor break, or pause in a sentence. They are used to separate items in a series and to set off introductory material. They are used on both sides of words that interrupt the flow of thoughts in a sentence, between two complete thoughts connected by and, but, for, or, nor, so, yet; again, and used for certain everyday material (Langan, 1989: 441).

According to Langan (1989:441), the final comma in a series is optional, but often used. A comma is used between two descriptive words only if and is inserted between words that sound natural, for example, Superman believes in truth, justice and American way. Mark grabbed a tiny towel bolted out of the bathroom, and ran towards the ringing phone. A comma is used after an introductory material. For example, when the president entered, the room became hushed (Langan, 1989:442).

A comma is used around words interrupting the flow of thought. For example, Wilson Hall, which the tornado destroyed, was ninety years old. In the above mentioned statement, the words which the tornado destroyed are extra information; they are not needed to identify the subject of the sentence (Langan, 1989: 443). A comma is used between complete thoughts. For example, the wedding was scheduled for four o'clock, but the bride changed her mind at two. Further, the comma is optional when the complete thoughts are short. For example, her soda turned watery for the ice melted quickly. If a sentence has one subject and a double verb, do not use a comma. For example, Bill will go partying tonight and forget all about tomorrow's exam. In the above sentence, Bill is the subject, will go and forget are double

verbs, so no comma is needed (Langan, 1989: 444). A comma works with direct quotations, for example, his father shouted, "why don't you go out and get a job?" Here, commas and periods at the end of a quotation go inside quotation marks (Langan, 1989: 446).

A comma with everyday material is used when persons are spoken to, when one mentions dates, when one writes addresses, and when one writes numbers (Langan, 1989: 447).

Soles (2010: 135) argues that in a compound sentence, a comma always comes before a coordinate conjunction. Further, commas separate a non-restrictive word, phrase, or clause from the rest of the sentence.

Paraskevas (2004: 43) states that commas differ from dashes and colons with respect to the boundaries that they mark. Commas can only separate independent clauses from independent elements.

2.12.4 Semi-colon (;)

The semi-colon balances two equally important related or parallel ideas. It may often be replaced by a full stop or by conjunctions such as and, but, so, for and although (Lutrin & Pincus, 2007).

Burger and Buhrmann (2016: 248) predict that a semi-colon is a punctuation mark that separates parts in a sentence. It shows the relationship between statements that are very closely linked. For example, we wondered where dad was; he had never been late before. It can replace a coordinating conjunction such as and or but. For example, we looked at each other; we laughed.

Soles (2010: 137) states that one may use a semicolon to separate two complete but related sentences. It is also important

to use a semicolon to separate two phrases or clauses in a series when there are commas within those phrases.

The important use of the semicolon is to mark the break between two complete thoughts (Langan, 1989: 452).

2.12.5 Colon (:)

A colon shows that a list, an explanation or idea is following. During dialogue writing, a colon follows the speaker. It introduces a quotation as well (Lutrin & Pincus, 2007: 11).

Houghton- Hawksley (2012: 252) describes a colon as a set of two vertical dots that normally introduces a list. Checkett and Checkett (2010: 89) point out that colons are used to introduce lists, to tell time, and to separate titles and subtitles of books or movies.

Soles (2010: 137) points out that a colon could come between two sentences if the second sentence explained or clarified the first. For example, he adhered to the golden rule: Do unto others as you would have others do unto you. A colon also precedes a phrase or a word that explains or clarifies a sentence.

Paraskevas (2004: 43) states that a colon separates two independent clauses. The colon separates an independent clause from a dependent element. For example, "These stops are among the last places in the state where you'll find a doorway into the early days of the Alaska frontier: the roadhouse."

2.12.6 Question marks (?)

Question marks are written at the end of a question. Rhetorical questions also end in a question mark (Lutrin & Pincus, 2007: 11). Bekker and Cliff (2007) confirm that a question ends with a question mark and normally needs an answer.

Moreover, Houghton-Hawksley (2012: 265) maintains that normally questions ask for or require information. In direct speech, questions end with a question mark not a full stop.

According to Soles (2010: 42), questions should be clear, succinct and unambiguous. Questions should be phrased in such a manner to ensure that all respondents understand them in the same way. Vague questions rarely elicit useful information.

2.12.7 Ellipses (…)

The three dots indicate that a sentence is incomplete. The reader makes use of his or her own words to find the meaning from the context of the sentence (Lutrin & Pincus, 2007: 12).

Soles (2010: 139) states that the ellipsis mark (a succession of three dots: …) is an important punctuation mark in academic writing, used to indicate that unnecessary words have been omitted.

2.12.8 Concord

Houghton - Hawksley (2012: 253) hypothesises concord as an agreement of a subject with verb in number. For instance, a singular subject has a singular verb and a plural subject must have a plural verb. Examples include Peter is my cousin; Joyce is my cousin; and Peter and Joyce are my cousins.

Similarly, Lutrin and Pincus (2007: 34) agree that concord is also called agreement because the words in a sentence must agree with one another. It is an agreement between nouns and pronouns. For example, the girl left her book at home. The girls left their books at home.

Furthermore, Van Heerden (2006: 246) argues that when two singular subjects are joined by and, the verb is in the plural form. However, when two subjects are joined by or and as well as, the verb is written in the singular form.

2.12.9 Apostrophe (')

Checkett and Checkett (2010: 378) indicate that the apostrophe is used to show contractions, possession or ownership. For example, some words can be combined, but by using apostrophe, it becomes a contraction, is plus not becomes isn't, could plus not becomes couldn't. If one adds an apostrophe plus -s to a noun, it indicates possession. For example, Anna's files were left in the office. An apostrophe plus -s may be used to form plurals in figures, letters and words. For example, the 1970's were confusing years.

According to Soles (2010:139), apostrophes are used in nouns to prove ownership. However, they are also used in contractions. Langan (1989: 424) states that a contraction is formed when two words are combined to form one word. An apostrophe is used to show where letters are omitted in making the contraction. The apostrophe plus -s is often the quickest and easiest way to show possession. For example, he's goes with the possessor or owner and there should always be a break between the word and 's. If a word ends in -s, it shows possession by adding only an apostrophe and most plurals that end in -s show possession by adding the apostrophe as well.

2.12.10 Quotation mark ("-------- ")

Bekker and Cliff (2007: 78) argue that quotation marks are double upper case commas, whereas inverted commas are single upper case commas. Punctuation marks group words grammatically into sentences and phrases so that the meaning becomes clear.

Checkett and Checkett (2010: 432) assert that quotation marks are used to set written or spoken words apart. Periods and commas are located inside quotation marks, semi-colons and colons are located outside quotation marks. For example, "do bats fly at night?" she asked. Single quotation marks are used to indicate a quotation within a quotation. For example, Tasha said, "My favorite song is 'Layla' performed by Eric Clapton."

Langan (1989: 433) states that the writer uses quotation marks when he or she wants to show the exact words of a speaker or writer. Furthermore, quotation marks are used to set off the titles of short works such as articles in books, newspapers or magazines; chapters in books; short stories, poems and songs.

One may underline the title of books, newspapers, magazines, plays, movies, record albums and television shows.

Checkett and Checkett (2010: 390) advise that when one uses titles of books, magazines, journals, CDs, plays, ships, airplanes and trains, underlining is important. If one does not underline, then write in italics.

2.12.11 Parentheses ( )

Parentheses are used to set off incidental extra information from the rest of a sentence (Langan, 1989: 454). Checkett and Checkett (2010: 384) argue that parentheses are used to set off specific details by giving additional information and explanations of the main idea in a sentence. For example, Tom Sawyer (1876) is one of Mark Twain's most surviving works. The period of the sentence is placed outside the closing parentheses.

According to Soles (2010: 139), parentheses enclose information of the borderline importance to a sentence. For example, information that a writer decides to include but is not considered very important such as the first volume (in a twelve-volume series) should be published before the end of the month.

2.12.12 Brackets [   ]

Checkett and Checkett (2010: 285) state that brackets are used when one uses quoted material to set editorial explanations apart. For instance, the tenor sang "Angel of Music" [original version sung by Michael Crawford] for his encore. They are also used to

indicate editorial corrections to quoted material. For example, the dean wrote, "All faculty must teach summer [sic] school."

2.12.13 Dash (-)

Checkett and Checkett (2010: 387) point out that a dash is used to separate parenthetical information that needs more emphasis. For example, Irene's new teacher – a dynamic English teacher – helped her to understand American society. It is important to use a dash before a statement that summarises the preceding statement. For example, he studied for the exam for two days – then fell sleep before he finished. A dash shows a degree of pause longer than a comma but not as complete as a period.

Additionally, a dash is used to set off words for dramatic effect (Langan, 1989: 452).

2.12.14 The Hyphen (-)

Checkett and Checkett (2010: 389) indicate that hyphens are used to join descriptive adjectives before a noun such as, a well-spoken speech, a forty-year old man. Some compound words require a hyphen, for example, twenty-five, fifty-six, mother-in-law.

According to Soles (2010: 140), hyphens are used within compound words and to join two or more words that modify a noun that they precede. Langan (1989: 453) posits that a hyphen is used with two or more words that act as a single unit to describe a noun and to divide a word at the end of a line of typing or writing.

2.13   TENSE

The use of past tense in an academic writing describes or comment on things that have already happened (Houghton-Hawksley, 2012). Pavey (2010: 67) indicates that tense expresses the relationship between the reference time and the time of the described event. Tense is regarded as a clause operator because it relates the time of the whole situation to a reference time. Writers refer to past, present and future as tense. Tense can be expressed lexically, or morphologically.

According to Raimes (1983: 97), when students write a controlled composition exercise, they are given a passage to work with. They have to look at the content, organisation, find ideas and formulate sentences. Students are given a passage to make few specified changes. Controlled composition makes the student to focus mostly on specific features of the written language. This method of writing reinforces grammar, vocabulary and syntax in context.

Tense, which expresses time, tends to be confusing to EFAL learners who are second language (L2) speakers of English. This apparent confusion could be attributed to the first language interference when they have to write essays in English, which is an L2 to them and a medium of instruction. Teachers' strategic expression of time that takes EFAL learners' First Languages (L1s) into consideration could help reduce essay writing errors.

2.14   PARAGRAPHING

Kavanagh (2006: 844) describes a paragraph as a distinct section of a piece of writing indicated by a new line. Checkett and Checkett (2010: 133) further explain a paragraph as a group of sentences concerned with expressing a single topic. This entails that a paragraph can be a complete piece of writing

grouped together in longer pieces of writing, such as essays, letters, reports, research papers and chapters in a novel or non-fiction work. A paragraph is a group of sentences developing or expressing a single topic or one main idea.

Oshima and Hogue (2006: 2) point out that a paragraph is a group of related sentences that discuss one main idea. The paragraph should be long enough to develop the main idea clearly and can be as short as five sentences or as long as ten sentences. A learner writer should begin with a topic sentence that includes controlling ideas (Oshima & Hogue, 2006: 11).

There are two types of sentences in a paragraph, that is, a topic sentence and a support sentence. Checkett and Checkett (2010: 134) mention that the topic sentence tells the reader what the main idea of the paragraph is. It is important to make a topic sentence the first sentence in the paragraph as it will organise and develop the topic easier. The topic sentence is followed by a support sentence that explains, clarifies and defines the topic. The topic sentence has two parts namely, the topic or subject and the controlling idea. The topic sentence is known as the subject of the paragraph, whereas the controlling idea states what the writer will be developing about the subject of the paragraph, and it contains the writer's attitude towards the subject.

According to Checkett and Checkett (2010: 139), support sentences follow the topic sentence and develop the subject using specific examples, details and facts. These support ideas should be consistent with the controlling idea. It shows that the controlling idea unifies the paragraph by determining the kind of support one can use in the support sentence. Before one begins writing, one may want to sketch out major ideas that will appear in one's paragraph. This can help one to discover whether the writer has a topic, controlling idea and support idea that work together for proper development.

Lague (2012: 15) asserts that a well-written paragraph contains the topic sentence which has the main idea of the paragraph. Developing sentences that are linked together form an idea in the writer's topic sentence. A paragraph

should have an ending sentence that ends the writer's paragraph and links it to the next paragraph.

The writer should use paragraphs to indicate logical order and progression of his or her ideas. The opening paragraph should introduce the topic accurately. When it comes to the body of an essay, paragraphs develop separate aspects of the topic. The final paragraph should round off the topic with a general statement. Writers should formulate a strong last sentence which will remain in the mind of the reader. Houghton-Hawksley (2012: 221) proposes that when editing, one should check if sentences in each paragraph are grouped around a central theme. Similarly, a topic sentence should stand out in and often start each paragraph. Thus, Langan (198: 220) maintains that most essays have three supporting points, developed in two, three, four or more supporting points.

Paragraphing in essay writing is salient regarding logical order. If EFAL learners could grasp that paragraphs express various ideas, essay writing errors could be debilitated. The arrangement of paragraphs can guide the reader pertaining to what and how the essay writer wants to present content.

2.15   LOGICAL CONNECTORS

In line with paragraphing, logical connectors amplify the expected order which should be portrayed in essay paragraphing (see 2.14). This emphasises that successful writing, particularly in essay writing, is manifested in how EFAL learners arranged and linked paragraphs in a written essay.

Houghton-Hawksley (2012: 260) asserts that connectors are words that link information with what has already been stated. Logical connectors improve the logic of the text. For example, in the first place, in the second place, and finally. The writer should note that words that are not conjunctions may be used as logical links to lead from one sentence or form to another or from one paragraph to the next. For example, a linking adverb is a word like therefore, or however, that begins a sentence and links it logically to a previous sentence.

Logical connectors are always separated by a comma from the rest of sentences. For example, first, you scrape away the top soil. Such words are known as logical connectors (Houghton-Howksley, 2012: 114). Sentence structures of an essay without logical connectors are boring. However, without logical connectors, the essay may still make sense.

2.16 EFAL FET RURAL LEARNERS IN CONTEXT

Grade 11 English FAL FET rural learners in Mopani West District, Limpopo Province, like other learners in the province, experience challenges pertaining to the subject, EFAL. These include committing essay writing errors (cf. 4.2.1.2). These challenges could be attributed to learners' and their educators' poor English language background. For example, the learners seem to lack essay writing essentials such as word classes, tense, paragraphing and logical connectors (see 2.7; 2.10). These essay writing building blocks ought to be taught in the lower levels before the learners could even reach Grade 11. The apparent educators' poor language background tends to affect how they dispense and assess the aspects essential to essay writing (see 4.2.3.1).

The challenges are corroborated by Greasley (2011: 11), who argues that some of the common errors in essay writing pertain to language, syntax and pronouncement. Due to a shortage of libraries, most learners end up with poor referencing, poor introductions and conclusions, not following instructions for presentation and word limits, failing to respond to questions and overuse of sentences.

Furthermore, English is mostly an L2 to South African EFAL rural learners and educators. South African rural areas are mainly monolingual and lack amenities such as libraries. This implies that EFAL learners do not have the advantage of being exposed to other language speakers such English language speakers. They cannot benefit from English language resources normally found in libraries.

Moreover, some learners in the rural areas grow up without parental supervision due to socio-economic challenges such as the embedded migratory labour system in South Africa as well as breakdowns of the nuclear families. Others could have lost parents as a result of the AIDS pandemic. This impacts negatively on the motivation of the learners who should be supported in their essay writing endeavours.

In line with the above, EFAL educators have to continue discharging their essay writing responsibilities against all odds. The situation is compounded by having to teach large classes with minimal resources, including the human resource that is not sufficiently qualified to teach the levels they are assigned to teach.

More research into the EFAL essay writing situation coupled with educators' short term intervention strategies seem imperative. Synergies between the Department of Basic Education (DBE), English language advisory division and educators can increase the attrition rate of EFAL essay writing errors in Limpopo Province.

2.17   CONCLUSION

EFAL learners tend to commit numerous essay writing errors in an ESL South African context. Potential errors include word classes, vocabulary, sentences, punctuation and logical connectors. These could manifest during interactions between learners and educators in a bid to follow steps for essay writing as well as approaches to essay writing.

This chapter has discussed the teaching of writing in ESL classes, approaches to teaching writing, essay writing, types of essays, steps in writing, use of formal language, vocabulary, word classes, sentences, punctuation marks, concord, paragraphing, logical connectors, and the role of theory in the study.

The teaching of writing in EFAL classes implies that learners are required to write content in English, which is a medium of instruction. However, when learners practise essay writing, they are expected to learn and apply

grammatical structures and vocabulary that one acquires through teaching. Educators scaffold learners through a variety of approaches such as the controlled-to-free approach, the paragraph pattern approach, the grammar syntax-organisation approach, the communicative approach and the process approach. Educators must also expose them to the narrative, persuasive, and expository essays, for example.

As writing should have the beginning and the end, brainstorming, mind-mapping and planning should be done when drafting essays. So should revision and editing of drafted essays. Appropriate choice and use of word classes, sentences as well as punctuation marks can be developed into paragraphs expressed in the correct tense using logical connectors.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1   INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the research methodology of the study. This is made up of the research design, sampling, data collection, data analysis, quality criteria and ethical criteria.

3.2   RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design of this study is descriptive. Bhat (2019:1) defines descriptive research as a method that describes the characteristics of the phenomenon which is being studied. It can be used in multiple ways, for multiple reasons. Thus, in this study, essay writing errors of Grade 11 EFAL rural learners were described on the basis of a checklist for essays errors, learner interviews with groups of learners as well as interviews with educators (see Appendix A, Appendix B and Appendix C).

Moreover, descriptive research allows the research to be conducted in a natural environment of the respondents to ensure that high quality and honest data is collected (Bhat, 2019: 6).

The research approach in this study was qualitative. A qualitative approach deals with human behaviour within the context in which it can occur naturally (Suleiman, Hanafi & Tanslikhan, 2018: 1). It looks into the quality of 'social life' regarding essay writing errors of EFAL FET rural learners. It locates the study within particular settings, which provide opportunities of describing all possible

social variables within a specific context. It also sets manageable boundaries (see Appendix B & Appendix C).

3.3   SAMPLING

The sample of the study was selected from a population of EFAL Grade 11 learners together with the essay writing errors that they commit, as well as EFAL Grade 11 educators in Limpopo Province. Dornyei (2007: 98) argues that a good sample is similar to the target population in its general characteristics; it is a subset of the population that is representative of the whole population.

Sampling is a decision one makes in relation to where and from whom one will gather the data one needs to respond to posed research questions (Ravitch & Carl, 2010: 126). EFAL Grade 11 learners written essays, EFAL learners and educators were selected from Mafarana, Motupa, Rakwadu2 and Tzaneen Circuits in Mopani West District of Limpopo Province, South Africa. Therefore, this sample was made up of Molabosane, Matseke, Sekhukhumele and Mohlatlego Machaba High Schools in the circuits mentioned above. It comprised four circuits out of 13, together with 4 educators from the 4 schools out of a total of 109 as well as 40 EFAL learners and 40 EFAL written essays.

Furthermore, purposive sampling is a sample that is selected based on the population and objectives of the study in order to elicit data that the researcher is interested in (Mackey & Gass, 2005: 120). Thus, purposive sampling was used to select the 4 circuits, the 4 schools, the 40 EFAL written essays, the 40 learners and the 4 educators.

3.4   DATA COLLECTION

Data collection is a series of interconnected activities used to gather information in order to address the research question being asked (Creswell & Clark, 2011: 171). During data collection, researchers depend on methods of gathering information such as participation, observation, interview and document analysis (Flick, 2018: 109; Marshall & Rossman, 2006: 61). In this study, data was collected from the EFAL Grade 11 learners' written essays and semi-structured interviews with the EFAL learners as well as the educators. Hsieh and Shannon (2005: 1278) aver that qualitative Content Analysis (CA1) is one of the research methods which can be employed to collect data. Qualitative CA1 emphasises language characteristics such as communication with specific attention to the contextual meaning of texts (see 4; Appendix A). Thus, an essay checklist was used to identify EFAL learners' errors.

Furthermore, semi-structured interviews tend to be less rigid. The researcher can use a list of questions as a guide while having the freedom to digress and probe for more information (Mackey & Gass, 2005: 173). Therefore, learners' group interviews were conducted and recorded while the educators' interview responses about errors committed by learners when they write essays were also recorded.

In a nutshell, the sample size consisted of 3 instruments which were used to gather data: an essay checklist for the 40 essays, EFAL learners' group interviews consisting of 4 equal groups made up of 10 learners per school, and interviews with 4 EFAL educators (see Appendices A, B & C).

3.5   DATA ANALYSIS

As enthusiasm for Contrastive Analysis (CA1) developed, interest in Error Analysis (EA) declined. CA1 was an attempt at anticipating possible errors that learners tend to commit by finding structural differences between their first

language - and their target language errors (Khoshhal, 2017: 91). However, in the late 1960s, there was a resurgence of interest in EA. In order to analyse errors, a corpus of language can be selected, and errors in the corpus identified (Singleton & Rynan, 2004: 54).

Between the 1950s and 1960s, learning language structures moved from memorising to the acknowledgement of the influence of psychology on the theories of language acquisition to the application of the communicative approach to learning. EA developed into a preferred tool of studying second language analysis (Okoro, 2017: 65; Choon, 1983: 1).

Moreover, EA is the analysis of learners' errors by comparing what they have learnt with what they lack. Errors are categorised as follows: grammatical errors; which include adjectives, adverbs, articles, nouns, possessions, pronouns, prepositions and verbs; substance errors, which include capitalisation, punctuation and spelling; lexical errors, which include word formation and word selection; syntactic errors, which involve coordination or subordination, sentence structure and ordering; and semantic errors, which include ambiguous communication and miscommunication (James, 2013: 157).

The main aim of CA1 is to provide knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon under study (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992: 314), such as essay writing errors of rural EFAL learners in Mopani West District. Thus, essay writing errors of EFAL learners in rural schools was analysed, counted and compared as keywords. This was followed by the interpretation of the underlying essay writing context.

N–Vivo was used for data transcription, storage and analysis. Errors populated in the checklist were arranged into smaller units. They were then identified, analysed, described and reported. Data obtained through the semi-structured interviews with EFAL learners and educators was transcribed and analysed thematically in line with Braun and Clarke's (2006: 7) six phases of thematic

analysis. The six-step process consists of familiarising oneself with data collected, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing the themes, defining and naming themes as well as producing the report (see Appendice B & Appendix C).

3.6   QUALITY CRITERIA

Qualitative criteria in line with this study include credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability.

3.6.1 Credibility

Ravitch and Carl (2016: 188) argue that credibility is achieved by structuring a study in order to attend to complexity throughout the recursive research design process. Credibility is the researcher's ability to account for the complexities that were presented in the study, and to deal with patterns that one cannot explain easily. Consequently, data collected from EFAL Grade 11 learners' written essays, the learners' interview responses together with their educators' interview responses were presented without any alteration.

3.6.2 Dependability

Dependability is a reliable qualitative concept, which is described as consistent and stable over time. The researcher has to reason how data was collected (Ravitch & Carl, 2016: 189). Since the data should be consistent, the researcher ensured consistency and stability; a detailed process of the research study was documented so that the research can be replicated by other researchers.

3.6.3 Transferability

Ravitch and Carl (2016: 189) state that transferability refers to the degree to which the study results of qualitative research can be transferred to other settings or contexts with other respondents. Therefore, the researcher ensured that this qualitative research on essay writing errors of EFAL FET rural learners would be transferrable to other settings or contexts.

3.6.4 Confirmability

Ravitch and Carl (2016: 189) assert that confirmability is the qualitative equivalent of the concept of objectivity. Therefore, in line with confirmability, the researcher crosschecked the sources, recordings and transcripts to ensure that the data collected were not misrepresented.

3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Permission to conduct the research was sought from Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC), the District Director of Mopani West District and from the respective circuit managers as well as the four identified schools in Mafarana, Motupa, Rakwadu 2 and Tzaneen Circuits.

Consent letters were written and distributed among parents of participating EFAL learners who were underage in line with the Children's Act 2018, but learners above the right age signed for themselves. Educators also signed consent forms. EFAL Grade 11 educators were individually requested to participate in the interviews.

The researcher explained to the participants what the study entailed and then reassured them that privacy and confidentiality would be maintained; no names

would be used in the study, instead codes would be used. The study ensured that participants were treated with respect and that their dignity was maintained throughout the study.

Participants were also allowed to withdraw from the study at any time.

3.8 CONCLUSION

The research methodology of the study discussed the research design, sampling, data collection, data analysis, quality criteria and ethical considerations in the context of EFAL learners' essay writing errors.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to present, analyse and interpret data collected for the study. This study used the qualitative research methodology which included interviews with learners as well as educators to seek detailed information on how they made sense of their experiences on phenomena through open-ended questions (cf. Mohajan, 2018: 2). Additionally, a checklist was also used to identify essay writing errors (see Appendix A).

4.2 DATA COLLECTED ON ESSAY WRITING ERRORS

The data of this study was collected through the essay checklist, and interviews with EFAL learners and EFAL educators.

In Second Language Acquisition (SLA), EA is one of the most influential theories. Stages involved in EA include recognition, description and explanation. The recognition of errors depends on the interpretation of the learner's intention. Description begins when recognition has taken place, while explaining errors is regarded as a linguistic activity that deals with accounting for why and how errors come about (Fang & Jiang, 2007: 10). Thus, the researcher has recognised errors committed by Grade 10 EFAL learners when they write essays. These errors were described, explained and classified in this study.

One of the most significant contributions of EA is elevating the status of errors from not being desirable to that of a guide to how the language learning process works (Singleton et al., 2004: 53). Researchers do provide evidence which emphasises errors as an effective means of improving language (Khansir, 2013: 363).

4.2.1 Checklist for Identifying Learners' Essay Errors

Errors should first be identified and then be described before they are classified into types (cf. 4.2.1.1 & 4.2.1.2). There are several ways of classifying errors. Errors can be classified into grammatical categories. For example, all errors relating to verbs are gathered, and different kinds of verb errors such as errors in the past tense are identified in a given sample (Singleton et al., 2004: 18; Ellis, 1997: 18).

4.2.1.1 Structural errors

Data collected on structural errors are presented mainly in tables.

All the learners (100%) in Schools 1, 2, 3 and 4 were allocated 1 hour for essay writing, which they finished in time. Learners in the 4 schools chose descriptive types of essays. Thus, this type of essay was common to all the 4 schools. It is implicit that the descriptive type of essay was popular among EFAL learners.

Table 1: The number of learners who submitted mind maps per school

School	Yes	No
1	10	0
2	5	5
3	10	0
4	2	8
Total	27	13

In Table 1, the number of learners who submitted mind maps is presented. Equal numbers of learners, totalling 10 each in Schools 1 and 3 submitted the mind maps. However, 5 learners in School 2 did submit while only 2 in School 4 submitted. Thus, 67% of the learners planned their work while 33% did not. This suggests that they could have planned for their essays, and their imagination could have been stimulated. It is therefore encouraging that most learners planned for their essays, and this could lead to a reduction in essay writing errors.

Table 2: Marked mind maps

School	Yes	No
1	10	0
2	5	5
3	10	0
4	2	8
Total	27	13

Table 2 presents the number who marked mind maps. An equal number of learners, that is, 10 in Schools 1 and 3 had marked the mind maps. However, 5 learners in School 2 marked the mind maps, while only 2 learners in School 4 did the same. Thus, 67% of the learners planned their work, while 33% did not. This suggests that learners who did not mark the mind maps gave the reader a poor idea about planning their essay writing. This could have resulted in poorly written essays. This also suggests that EFAL educators should plan for essay writing differently.

Table 3: Learners who submitted 1st drafts

School	Yes	No
1	10	0
2	1	9
3	1	9
4	0	10
Total	12	28

Table 3 depicts that all the learners (10) in School 1 submitted their 1st drafts. However, 1 learner each of Schools 2 and 3 submitted their 1st drafts. None of the learners in School 4 submitted their 1st draft. Thus, 30% of the learners drafted their work while 70% did not. This suggests that some of the learners' ideas on specific topics could not be refined. These could not be traced back to their original thoughts for further assistance by their educators. Additionally, this finding suggests that the educators could not intervene, given the circumstances.

Table 4: Total Number of drafts submitted

School	Yes	No
1	10	0
2	1	9
3	0	10
4	0	10
Total	11	29

An equal number of learners in School 1 submitted 1st and 2nd drafts, whereas 1 learner in School 2 submitted 1st and 2nd drafts. Further, no learner submitted the 1st draft in Schools 3 and 4. Thus, 28% of learners wrote 2 drafts and could not be assisted timeously as they started on a wrong footing, while 72% of learners did not write 2 drafts and their essays were full of errors.

In support of the above, there is a need to evaluate errors for purposes of EA in order to help learners learn an L2. In this context, some errors can be considered more serious than others as they tend to interfere with the intelligibility of sentences (Singleton et al., 2004: 19; Ellis, 1997: 19).

Furthermore, global errors violate the overall structure of a sentence and, as a result, make it difficult to process. Local errors affect only a single constituent in the sentence and therefore, are highly unlikely to create processing problems (Singleton et al., 2004: 20; Ellis, 1997: 20).

Table 5: Learners writing full sentences

School	Yes	No
1	5	5
2	4	6
3	4	6
4	5	5
Total	18	22

An equal number of learners, which are 5 and 5, in Schools 1 and 4 used full sentences. However, an equal number of learners in Schools 2 (4) and 3 (4) did not write in full sentences. It is implicit that more learners used fragmented sentences, rendering their essays difficult to understand and not reader-friendly (cf.2.7.9).

All the learners in Schools 1, 2, 3 and 4 presented their essays in paragraphs. However, none of the learners in Schools 1, 2, 3 and 4 employed cohesive devices. This implies that there were no linking devices used to connect sentences and paragraphs in their essays. Additionally, only 1 learner in School 4 (3%) used sequence words in their essays, while 39 learners in Schools 1, 2 and 3, which is 97%, did not (cf. 2,15).

Although all the learners from Schools 1, 2, 3 and 4 wrote an introduction for their essays, some did not conclude their essays as shown in Table 6 below.

This suggests that the majority of the students did not write full sentences, and others did not use linking expressions. Further, EFAL learners need more practice in writing essays.

Table 6: Concluding an essay

School	Yes	No
1	9	1
2	9	1
3	10	0
4	9	1
Total	37	3

According to Table 6, 10 learners in School 3 concluded their essays, while an equal number of learners (9, 9 and 9) in Schools 1, 2, and 4 did provide a sense of closure. Thus, the majority of learners concluded their essays. This indicates that EFAL learners in all the 4 schools are aware that a conclusion should be included in the structure of an essay.

All learners in Schools 1, 2, 3 and 4 wrote essays within the confines of their classrooms. The implication is that none of the learners in Schools 1, 2, 3 and 4 wrote essays as a homework activity. This finding suggests that essay writing could have been timed as it was written during EFAL allocated slots under the supervision of the educator.

Table 7: Appropriate length of essay

School	Yes	No
1	1	9
2	4	6
3	3	7
4	6	4
Total	14	26

The number of words required to submit an acceptable essay range between 250- 300 words. Based on the above results, only 14 of the learners in Schools 1, 2, 3 and 4 met the minimum requirements when writing their essays, while 14 (65%) learners did not meet the minimum requirements. This suggests that most of the learners did not follow instructions pertaining to the appropriate length of a given essay because they failed to present essays in line with the stipulated length. The finding also indicates that EFAL learners need more practice regarding writing the correct length of an essay.

Table 8: Marks allocated according to structure, content and language

School	Yes	No
1	2	8
2	10	0
3	10	0
4	10	0
Total	32	8

Based in Table 8, the educator allocated marks for essays according to the following format: structure, content and language. Two essays (2) in School 1 and an equal number of essays (10, 10 and 10) in Schools 2, 3 and 4 were marked according to the stipulated format. Thus, 32 of the marked essays reviewed in Schools 1, 2, 3 and 4 were correctly marked in line with the above mentioned format, while for 20% of learners in School 1, marks were not allocated according to structure, content and language on the script. This suggests that the marking guidelines were not being strictly followed in School 1. It suggests that the subject head at the said school needs to strategically intervene and redress the significance of marking guidelines.

All the essays (100%) submitted in Schools 1, 2, 3 and 4 were marked out of a total score of 50. Therefore, it could be implied that the rubric was helpful for standardising essay marking for different schools in the district.

The total number of learners in Schools 1, 2, 3 and 4 were 63, 152, 22 and 250, respectively. Further, all the learners (100%) in Schools 1, 2, 3 and 4 were given feedback when the scripts were returned to them. Implicitly, on the whole, the learner educator ratio is high. The high number of EFAL learners accommodated in one class makes it difficult for educators to give individual attention essential for essay writing.

4.2.1.2 Grammar Errors

Errors can have different sources. Learners commit errors of 'omission', 'overgeneralisation' and 'transfer'; they can omit articles 'a' and 'the' or the -s off nouns in plural form; they may use 'eated' instead of 'ate'; and they may make use of their L1 knowledge (Singleton et al., 2004: 19; Ellis, 1997: 20). Hence, a discussion of grammar errors in the sampled 4 schools.

Findings of the study revealed that in School 1, a few learners (3) used informal language and slightly more learners (6) committed concord errors. Noun errors, pronoun -, collocation – incomplete – and logical

ones were relatively more accounting for 10 errors each and were followed closely by adjective errors and paragraphing ones (11). There were 13 adverb errors committed, 14 verb errors, 15 determiner errors, 16 conjunction errors, 17 preposition errors and 18 word order errors, respectively. The number of spelling errors (24) was high, tense errors were slightly higher (29), and punctuation errors were the highest (66) of them all.

Furthermore, in School 2, one learner (1) used informal language. Two equal number of learners committed contraction - and concord errors, respectively. Another set of equal numbers of noun – determiner – adjective – adverb -, preposition -, conjunction -, collocation - and logical connector errors (10) were committed. A slightly higher equal number (11) of pronoun -, incomplete sentence – and tense errors were committed. Further, a reasonably higher number of spelling (12) as well as paragraphing errors (12), word order errors (15) and verb errors were committed. A much higher number of punctuation errors (42) were committed.

Moreover, in School 3, learners committed incomplete sentence errors totalling 8. This total was followed closely by an equal number of pronoun-, determiner-, preposition-, collocation – and logical connector errors committed, which accounted for 10 errors each. This number was followed closely by noun – and conjunction errors, totalling 11 errors each. There were 12 adjective – and word order errors committed, 14 verb –, adverb – and paragraphing errors committed. Tense errors were slightly higher (20), and this was followed closely by spelling errors (22). Punctuation errors were the highest (46) in this school.

In School 4, there were 8 paragraphing errors committed, while an equal number of pronoun-, determiner-, adjective-, adverb-, collocation-, word order- and logical connector errors, accounting for 10 each, were committed. A slightly higher equal number (11) of noun, preposition - and conjunction errors were committed, respectively. However, a relatively higher number (16) of incomplete sentence errors were committed. The

number of tense errors committed (17) was equal to that of spelling errors (17). However, many more punctuation errors (69) were committed in this school.

In a nutshell, a relatively few learners in the 4 sampled schools committed errors pertaining to use of informal language, paragraphing and incomplete sentences in their essays. This was followed closely by a reasonable number of noun –, pronoun - determiner – adjective – adverb -, preposition -, conjunction -, collocation - and logical connector errors which were committed. Spelling and tense errors committed by EFAL learners were slightly higher while punctuation errors were the highest in all the schools.

4.2.2 Interviews with learners

The interview questions were repeated for ease of reference (See Appendix B).

• How many essays have you written so far?

Learners in three schools stated that they wrote one essay. However, learners from one school indicated that they wrote three essays.

• Do you write essays in class or at home?

Based on the results, none of the learners in Schools 1, 3 and 4 stated that they engaged in essay writing as a homework activity. Only learners in School 2 indicated that they wrote essays in class and at home.

• If you wrote essays in class what was the duration?

Learners from Schools 1 and 2 mentioned that they were allocated 2 hours for essay writing; learners from School 4 stipulated that they wrote

for 1 hour; while learners from School 3 confirmed that they wrote for 40 minutes.

• What were the topics of the essay that you wrote?

Learners in School 1 stated that they wrote an essay on 'The day I will never forget, COVID 19 is here'; while learners in School 4 mentioned 'The day I will never forget'; and how did COVID 19 affect learners'. However, learners from School 2 mentioned 'What I will be in 20 years' time', 'The day I will never forget', 'If I could turn back years of time', and 'If I have listened to my parents'. Learners in School 3 did not remember the topics of the essay that they wrote.

• Describe the steps you normally follow when you write an essay.

All the learners in Schools 1, 2, 3 and 4 pointed out similar steps that they normally follow when they write an essay such as the use of the mind map, introduction, body and conclusion. However, School 1 added first draft and second draft, and School 4 included drafts as well. Learners in School 3 added, 'additional part' to an essay as one of the steps that they normally follow when they write essays.

• Were there specific errors that you committed?

All learners in the four schools seem to be aware of specific errors that they committed during essay writing but they did not mention them. Learners in School 4 indicated their specific errors as spelling, repetition of points and misuse of conjunctions.

What do you like most about essay writing?

Learners in the 4 schools said that they like expressing their feelings, coming up with many ideas and gaining more knowledge from writing an essay, getting a random topic and then telling a story in their own words, being able to narrate one's story which gave them a chance to express themselves on a certain topic and getting to be creative as one expresses how one feels about something.

- What do you dislike about essay writing?

Learners stated that they dislike 250 to 300 words which make a learner run short of ideas, creating a story out of a picture, a topic that they could not relate to, being out of points, drafting the topic, the first draft and second draft, and writing a mind map, about essay writing.

- How can the process of writing essays be improved?

All learners from the four schools complained about the number of words in an essay, which they say should be reduced. Learners in School 1 requested for an opportunity to come up with their own topics and to avoid first and second drafts. School 2 learners would like to be given more time. Those in school 3 needed topics of their choice, that the number of words should not be stipulated, the duration be extended, the number of words should not be stipulated, the duration be extended and first and second drafts be done away with. Meanwhile, learners in School 4 indicated that they should be given essays only, not letters and other things. The number of words should not be given, and the second draft should also be given and first draft should also be avoided.

Responses of EFAL learners suggest that schools teach different numbers of essays. Some educators give essays as classwork while others give them as homework. Thus, there is no apparent uniformity. Although there is concern that the learners are allocated different essay writing durations, there is variety in essay topics. Learners were encouraged to plan for essay writing, they enjoyed the writing experience and did run out of ideas due to the stipulated 250 to 300 words essays.

4.2.3   Interviews with educators

The interview questions will be repeated for ease of reference (see Appendix C).

4.2.3.1 Biographical Details

- What is your highest academic qualification?

Two educators indicated that they held Honours Degrees in Education Management, one stated that he had a Senior Teachers Diploma (STD) and the fourth one stated that he had a Bachelor of Arts Degree (BA)

- Indicate years and months of your teaching experience.

All the four educators only mentioned the number of years they have taught but did not mention the number of months. Two educators argued that they taught for 24 years, one educator explained that he taught for 20 years and the other teacher said that she taught for 27 years. This suggests that all educators had a teaching experience of longer than 20 years.

- What is your highest English Language teaching qualification?

The third educator mentioned that she had English one. The other 3 educators gave irrelevant answers which were C symbol in English, a Senior Teachers Diploma and Honours in Education Management.

- Besides Grade 11, which other grades do you teach?

The first educator stated that besides Grade 11, he also taught all the FET Grades, English FAL and Geography; the second educator mentioned Grade 12 History; the third educator indicated Grade 12 English and the fourth said that Senior Phase grades. Thus, all the educators were responsible for Grade 12 learners. This suggests that all 4 educators were overloaded with teaching responsibilities.

- What is the total number of learners in Grade 11?

All educators indicated that the total number of learners in Grade 11 were 63, 152, 22 and 250, respectively. Educators stated that they

experienced a heavy workload. With the exception of 1 school, the educator pupil ratio was relatively high at the participating schools.

- Do you have progressed learners in Grade 11?

Three out of 4 educators stated that they had progressed learners in their Grades.

- If the answer in 4. 4.1. 6 is yes, how many?

Two out of 4 educators confirmed that they had progressed learners in Grade 11. Two educators out of 3 indicated that they had 12 and 3 learners while the third one stated that the number needed to be confirmed.

4.2.3.2 The essay writing exercise

4.2.3.2.1 Structure

- How many essays do you give learners per term?

Out of the four, 2 educators said that they gave learners 1 essay each; one educator indicated that he gave learners 2 essays while the fourth educator indicated that he gave learners 6 to 8 essays in a term.

- What type of essays do you find common among learners?

All the four educators indicated that learners chose the narrative essay type. However, in the fourth school, the educator responded that learners also chose the experimental essay in addition to the narrative one.

This suggests that the total number of essays learners wrote per term differed from school to school. It was also found that the learners preferred writing narrative types of essays.

• Please explain your answer above.

The educators indicated that learners in the 4 schools wrote about storytelling which is experience-based. However, in the fourth school, the educator agreed that learners in the sciences prefer to solve problems.

• What is the normal length of an essay?

Out of four schools, 2 educators said that the length of an essay was 250 to 300 words while 1 educator mentioned 250 words. The fourth educator stated one and half pages which is about 250 words.

• How should the structure of an essay be?

Based on the results, 3 educators mentioned similar essay structures which were the topic, introduction, body and conclusion. However, the third educator added that the structure of an essay is formed by a mind map and paragraphs. Further, the fourth educator argued that the structure of an essay included planning and brainstorming. This implies that educators held different views regarding what an essay structure should look like.

• Are learners' ideas expressed in paragraphs?

All educators agreed that learners' ideas were expressed in paragraphs.

4.2.3.2.2 The actual essay writing experience

- Are essay topics suitable for the grade being assessed?

  Three out of 4 educators stated that essay topics were suitable for the grade being assessed. One of them also indicated that the essay topics were sometimes suitable.

- Are instructions to the learners unambiguous?

  Based on the results, 3 educators concurred that instructions to learners were unambiguous while one said that they were sometimes unambiguous.

- Do learners introduce their essays appropriately?

  One educator out of 4 indicated that a few learners introduced their essays appropriately. However, another educator stated that most of learners did not introduce their essays appropriately while the third indicated that some did. The fourth mentioned that none of the learners introduced their essays appropriately.

- Do you allow learners to draft essay?

  All educators concurred that they allowed learners to draft essays. Thus, drafts tend to help learners edit their work.

- Do you allocate marks for draft?

  Only 2 out of 4 educators indicated that they allocated marks for the drafts. The rest, which is 2, indicated that they did not allocate marks for drafts.

- Do learners finish write essays in time?

  Only 1 educator out of the 4 interviewed responded that that her learners did not finish writing in time. The rest indicated that learners finished writing in time.

- Please explain your answer above.

Only one educator explained that learners wrote slowly; the other three educators' indicated that the question was not applicable.

- Does the essay writing task comply with CAPS? Please explain.

Based on the results, all the four educators stated that essays given to the assessed grade were suitable and in line with CAPS standards.

4.2.3.2.3 Marking

- Do the essay questions cover low, medium and higher order thinking skills?

  Based on the results, all the educators agreed that essay questions covered low, medium and high order thinking skills.

- Do you use the correct rubric when marking?

  The educators were also unanimous that they used the correct rubric when marking.

- Are learners penalised for spelling mistakes?

Two educators indicated that they did not penalise learners for spelling mistakes;

Instead, they used marking symbols and highlighted misspelled words. On the contrary, the third teacher stated that they got instructions from rubric while the fourth educator indicated that it depended on the rubric.

- How do you tackle spelling mistakes?

Educators collectively stated that they did passage reading, dictation, classwork, underlining of misspelled words and provided the correct spelling for mistaken ones.

- How long does it normally take you to mark an essay?

Two educators stated that it took them two to three days to mark their learners' essays. Nevertheless, one educator stated that it took her two months to mark learners' essays. The last one said that it would depend on time.

- Do you give learners feedback?

Out of the four educators interviewed, all the educators stated that they gave feedback after marking learners' essays.

4.2.3.2.4 Errors

- Do the learners use linking devices?

Two educators stated that learners used linking devices, 1 indicated that learners did not use linking

devices; and the fourth educator mentioned that some used them.

- Give examples of common word class errors.

    All the four educators gave irrelevant answers. It would seem none of them was sure what word classes were.

- Do they use the correct tense?

    All the 4 educators indicated that the majority of learners used the correct tense.

4.2.3.2.5 EFAL Learners

- What are the major challenges for EFAL learners' essay writing?

The 4 educators identified the major challenges for EFAL learners' essay writing as follows: selection of wrong topics, learners not understanding the topic, translation, no logical sentences, no factual arrangement, wrong paragraphing and lack of vocabulary. This implies that challenges differed from one school to the next.

Educators from the 4 schools indicated that spelling patterns of their respective learners should follow pronunciation patterns. This suggests that there must be a correlation between English words articulation and how these learners spell and write. For example, one educator stated that learners tended to omit some letters when they spelled words.

One educator indicated that learners would write 'were' instead of 'where' and 'scool' instead of 'school'. This happens due to lack of knowledge since English is not a phonetic language. Another educator from another school supported this by arguing that learners spell words in their mother tongue, and the way they pronounce them was the way they would write them. For example, learners would write words the way they say them, such as 'phictures' instead of 'pictures', and this would lead to words that are phonetically misspelled. The third one indicated that unorganised paragraphs, spelling and vocabulary were the contributing factors while the fourth educator mentioned that many learners were unable to arrange facts logically. One of the educators added that a learner would talk about two things in a single paragraph or one matter in two paragraphs.

- What type of essays do you find common among those that learners write?

All the 4 educators confirmed that learners in the 4 schools chose the narrative type essays. Thus, this type of essay was common to all the four schools. This suggests that learners like storytelling, and that their writing is based mostly on the events that they have experienced. The fourth educator added that learners wrote experimental essays.

- What is the normal length of an essay?

  Three educators argued that they gave learners a 250 to 300-word essay, while one educator mentioned that she gave learners a 250-word essay.

- Are learners able to assume responsibility for tasks in the classroom situation?

All the four educators indicated that their learners assumed responsibility for tasks given in the classroom.

- How do your learners react to criticism or failure?

Educators indicated that the reactions of their learners to criticisms or failure differed. Two out of 4 stated that their learners appreciated criticisms, and one of them added that learners highlighted areas of improvement while others showed no interest. One educator said that she did not criticise her learners at all; instead she offered them guidance and support. The fourth educator mentioned that science and commerce learners set targets for themselves and compete with one another.

The findings of the interviews imply that some of the educators did not have relevant qualifications to teach EFAL even though all the educators' teaching experience was more than 20 years. All the educators seemed overloaded due to the relatively high learner-educator ratio. Additionally, the presence of progressed learners presupposed more hard work for the educators. Educators were at liberty to decide on the total number of essays that learners could write while the latter could choose essay topics. Drafts were edited by the learners themselves. Some educators penalised the learners for spelling errors while others did not. The learners got feedback from their educators. Challenges experienced by the learners included selecting wrong topics, wrong paragraphing and lack of vocabulary.

4.3   CONCLUSION

This chapter presented, analysed and interpreted data collected qualitatively on EFAL Grade 11 essay writing errors. In line with the research objectives, the essay writing errors committed by Grade11 learners in EFAL rural schools were identified and classified, how the educators perceive the errors was interpreted and ways in which essay writing should be approached were suggested.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

This chapter deals with two portions, namely, conclusions and recommendations. It aims to recall the objectives of the study and summarise the key findings. The first portion presents the conclusions derived from the study, while the second portion presents suggestions intended for further research.

5.1   OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study were meant to guide essay writing errors analysis of EFAL FET learners in rural schools, in Mopani District, Limpopo Province. The following objectives guided the study:

- to identify essay writing errors committed by Grade11 learners in EFAL in rural schools.

- to interpret how EFAL Grade 11 educators perceive essay writing errors committed by learners.

- to classify essay writing errors committed by Grade11 learners in EFAL in rural schools.

- to suggest ways in which essay writing should be approached to avoid errors committed by Grade 11 EFAL learners in rural schools.

5.2   SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

What follows here is the presentation of data as collected through a checklist for essay errors (see Appendix A), and interviews from four selected schools. Interviews were held with learners (see Appendix B) and later with educators (see Appendix C). From each 10 learners were chosen and they were all asked similar questions as explained in the previous chapter. From each of the four schools, only one educator was interviewed. The researcher started with learners' responses and then those of educators.

5.2.1 Checklist errors

A relatively few number of learners in the 4 sampled schools committed errors pertaining to the use of informal language, paragraphing and incomplete sentences in their essays. This was followed closely by a reasonable number of noun –, pronoun - determiner – adjective – adverb -, preposition -, conjunction -, collocation - and logical connectors errors that were committed. Spelling and tense errors were slightly higher while punctuation errors were the highest.

5.2.2 Learners' responses

In question one, 30 learners from the three schools wrote one essay. However, 10 learners from one school declared that they wrote three essays. In question two, 30 learners from the three schools write essays at school. However, 10 learners from one school indicated that they wrote essays in class and at home. In question three, 20 learners from

the two schools mentioned that they were allocated 2 hours for essay writing, and 10 learners from the 4th school argued that they wrote for 1 hour, while 10 learners from the 3rd school confirmed that they wrote for 40 minutes. In question four, 30 learners from the four schools were able to recall the topics of the essays they wrote. In question five, 30 learners from the four schools were able to describe the steps they normally follow when they write an essay. In question six, 40 learners from the four schools accept that there are specific errors that they committed during essay writing e.g. spelling punctuation, noun, pronoun, determiner, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, conjunction, collocation, incomplete sentence, word order, tense, paragraphing and logical connectors. In question seven, 40 learners from the four schools liked to express themselves, to improve the mood and to maintain mental performance. In question eight, 40 learners disliked first drafts, suggested that the length of an essay should be reduced, and wanted to write their own topics. In question nine, all 40 learners from the four schools wanted to do away with the first draft, complained about the number of words in an essay. However, 20 learners from two schools requested that they need topics of their choice, whereas 10 learners in another school indicated that time frame is one of the contributing factors. Meanwhile, 10 learners in the 4th school indicated that they should be given essays only.

5.2.3 Educators' responses

According to biographical details, 2 teachers indicated that they held Honours Degrees in Education Management; 1 teacher declared that he had a Senior Teachers Diploma (STD), and 1 teacher averred that he has a Bachelor of Arts Degree (BA). All 4 teachers from the four schools had experience of more than 20 years. The four teachers did not mention the number of months in terms of teaching experience. The 2 indicated

that they taught for 24 years; 1 teacher explained that he taught for 20 years and the other teacher indicated that she taught for 27 years. Only 1 teacher mentioned that he has symbol C in English and 1 teacher asserted that she has Honours Degree in Education Management. The 1st teacher stated that he taught all FET Grades, English FAL and Geography; the 2nd teacher mentioned that he taught Grade 12 History; the 3rd teacher indicated that she taught Grade 12 English FAL and the 4th teacher said that he taught English FAL in all Senior Phase grades, which means all FET phase. Only one school had 22 Grade 11 learners, the other school had 63 Grade 11 learners, the 3rd school had 152 Grade 11 learners while the 4th school had 250 Grade 11 learners. 3 learners out of four schools were progressed.

5.3   CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

The teachers were able to identify essay writing errors committed by learners, which links with the objectives of the study. The teachers are able to classify essay writing errors committed by Grade 11 learners. According to literature review, it is the responsibility of the teacher to supervise all aspects of the essay writing process, including planning, drafting and making the final copy (Department of Basic Education, 2018: 5).

Essay writing errors illustrate weaknesses in the proofreading of essays, spelling, structure, grammar and the use of colloquial terms that are related to language and expression (Greasly, 2011: 11). This research provided evidence which emphasises errors as an effective means of improving language. This is supported by Khansir (2013: 363).

5.4   RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Essay writing errors of Grade 12 EFAL learners should be researched in a bid to complement this study, which focused on Grade 11 learners. The research would augment this study's findings on learners' essay writing errors.

EFAL educators could be interviewed about essay writing errors of FET learners in Limpopo Province. Their responses would help increase and balance their input regarding errors committed by learners.

English Subject Advisors (ESAs) in Limpopo Province should be interviewed about essay writing errors of EFAL learners. The ESAs stewardship of the ESAs could help foster collaboration and co-operation among EFAL educators regarding debilitating learners' essay writing errors.

Senior Certificate (SC) EFAL exam markers should be requested to fill in a questionnaire on FET learners' essay writing errors. The markers are better positioned to give insights into essay writing errors at the SC summative level.

6.   REFERENCES

Aboa, J. & Kuchar, M. 2021. Ako Learning & Teaching Week. Lincoln: http://hub.lincoln.ac.nz/news/pages/2021-Ako-.

Akom, A. A. A. 2011. Black emancipatory action research: integrating a theory of structural racialization into ethnographic and participatory action research methods. *Ethnographic and Education,* 6(1):113-131. Online. Available at DOI: 10.
1080/17457823.2011.553083
https://doi.org/10,1080/174557823.2011.553083. Accessed?

Al-Khasawneh, F. M. 2014. Error analysis of written English paragraphs by Jordanian undergraduate students: A case study. *International Journal of English Language, Literature and Humanities* 2(8): 2321-7065.

Al-Shabanah, A. I. 2005. *Summarization strategies adopted by the senior level female students of the Department of English.* M. A. thesis, King Saud University, Saudi Arabia.

Amoakohene, B. 2017. Error Analysis of Students Essays: A Case of First Year Students of the University of Health and Allied Sciences. Department of General and Liberal Studies. Ghana: *International Journal of Higher Education* 6(4): 54-68.

Arbogast, D. 2016. Linear or Recursive? Do Our Models of Writing Process Reflect the Ways We Actually Write? *The Virginia English Journal,* 66(1):13 15.

Askes, H. & Kritzinger, W. H. C. 1992. *Teaching English as a Second Language*:
Methods and techniques. Pretoria: Via Afrika.

Awerbuck, D. Dyer, D. Nonkwelo, N. Norton, J. Pillay, N. Ralenala, M. 2011. *Platinum Caps English First Additional Language Grade 10.* Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman (Pty) Ltd.

Azlan, M. A. K., Yusoff, W., Shaharuddin, W., Berhanuddin, Q. F. & Baharuddin, K. H. 2016. *Five Most Common Grammatical Errors in Narrative Essay*. Malaysia: University of Malaysia.

Bekker, C. & Cliff, M. 2007. *Fast Track English First Additional Language Grade 10.*

Giyani: Lingua Franca Publishers.

Bereiter, C. & Scardamalia, M. 2013. *The psychology of written compositions.* Routledge: Taylor & Francis Group.

Bhat, A. 2019. *Descriptive research: definition, characteristics, methods, examples and advantages.* Online. Available at https://www.questionpro.com/blog/descriptiveresearch/ Accessed: 11 October 2019.

Bless, C., Higson-Smith, C. & Kagee, A. 2007. Fundamentals of social research methods, an African perspective. *(*4th Ed). Cape Town: Juta & Co. Ltd.

Bogdan, R. C. & Biklen, S. K. 2003. *Qualitative research for education: an introduction to theories and methods.* Boston: Pearson Education.

Bogdan, R. C. & Biklen, S. K. 2018. *Qualitative research for education: an introduction to theories and methods.* Boston: Pearson Education.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. 2006. Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3(2): 77-101.

Brown, H. D. 2000. *Principles of language and teaching*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc.

Brown, J. D., Robson, G. & Rosenkjar, P. R. 2001. Personality, motivation, Anxiety, strategies, and language proficiency of Japanese students. (In Schmidt, R. (ed.), *Motivation and second language acquisition)*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Brown, H. D. 2015. *Principles of language and teaching*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc.

Burger, J. & Buhrmann, R. 2015. *Spot on Caps English Grade 10.* Cape Town: Pearson Marang (Pty) Ltd.

Burger, J. & Buhrmann, R. 2016. *Spot on Caps English First Additional Language Grade 12*. Cape Town: Pearson Marang (Pty) Ltd.

Caffarella, R. S. & Barnett, B. G. 2000. Doctoral students writing: Where's the pedagogy? Teaching doctoral students to become scholarly writers: The importance of giving and receiving critiques. *Studies in Higher Education,* 25 (1): 39-52.

Can, G. 2009. *A model for doctoral students' perceptions and attitudes towards written feedback.* M. A thesis, Utah State University, Logan UT.

Canagarajah, A. S. 2013. *Critical academic writing and multilingual students.* University of Michigan Press, Project MUSE. Online. Available at muse.jhu.edu/book/25170. Accessed: 11 October 2019.

Checkett, G. & Checkett, L. 2010. *The Write Start Sentences to Paragraphs.* (4th Ed.).

Boston: Wadsworth.

Chimbganda, A. B. 1998. Communication strategies used in the writing of answers in

Biology by ESL first year science students of the University of Botswana. *SAALT Journal for language Teaching,* 32(2): 61-81.

Choon, T. G. 1993. *Error analysis and correction in seminar at the language lectures and teachers' seminar at Mekala*, Vol. 22. (In Okoro, O. G. Error

Analysis of the Written English Essays of Junior Secondary School. Two students in Qwerri North.

International Journal of Education and Evaluation 3(5): 1-11.

Coetzee, M. Holland, L. Anhuizen, N. & Duffett, A. 2013. *GRADE 11 CAPS English First Additional Language.* Claremont: Pty, Ltd.

Corder, S. P. 1967. The significance of learner's errors. *International Review of Applied Linguistic in Language Teaching* 5(4): 161-170.

Corder, S. P. 1973. *Introducing applied linguistics.* Harmonds Worth: Penguin.

Corder, S. P. 1974. Error Analysis. (In Allen, J. L. P. & Corder, S. P. *Techniques in Applied Linguistics.*) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Creswell J. W., Vickl L. & Clark P. 2011. *Second edition designing and conducting mixed methods research.* London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Demegan, C. & Fleming, D. 2007. *Marketing research: Theory and practice. (*3rd Ed.). Dublin: Gill & MacMillan.

Department of Basic Education Republic of South Africa. 2011. *Curriculum and assessment policy statement Grades 10-12 English First Additional Language*. Cape Town: Government Printing Works.

Department of Basic Education Republic of South Africa. 2011*. National policy pertaining to the programme and promotion requirements of the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12*. Cape Town: Government Printing Works.

Department of Basic Education Republic of South Africa. 2011. *National protocol for assessment Grades R - 12.* Cape Town: Government Printing Works.

Department of Basic Education Republic of South Africa. 2014. *Guideline for teaching and writing essays and transactional text.* Pretoria: Government Printing Works.

Department of Basic Education Republic of South Africa. 2018. *English teachers' resource book school based assessment, languages, literature and creative writing.*
Polokwane: Government Printing Works.

Department of Basic Education Republic of South Africa. 2018. *Teacher toolkit: EFAL CAPS planner and tracker term 4*: nect. org.za. Accessed: 1 June 2019.

De Smet, M. J. R., Broekkamp, H., Brand Gruwel, S. & Kirschner, P. A. 2011. Effects of electronic outlining on students 'argumentative performance. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning,* 27(6): 557- 574.

De Smet, M. J. R., Brand-Gruwel, S., Leijten, M. & Kirschner, P. A. 2014. Computers & Education*: An International Journal,* 78: 352-366.

Dornyei, Z. 2007. *Research methods in Applied Linguistics.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Downe-Wamboldt, B. 1992. Content analysis: Method, applications and issues. *Health Care for Women International,* 13: 313-321.

Ekanjume-Ilongo, B. & Morato-Maleke, M. 2020. Error Analysis in the Essays of Second Year Students of the National University of Lesotho. *Journal of African Languages and Literary Studies (JoALLS),* 1(1): 71-91.

Ellis, R. 1985. *Understanding second language acquisition.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ellis, R. 1997. *Second language acquisition.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Enginarlar, H. 1993. Enhancing Students' Fluency in Writing: *Student response to teacher feedback in EFL writing,* 21: 193-204.

Fang, X. & Jiang, X. 2007. Error analysis and the EFL classroom teaching. *US-China education review,* 4(9): 10-14.

Fang, J. & Xue, Q. 2007. (In Mwanza, D. S. The Eclectic Approach to Language Teaching; Its Conceptualisation and Misconceptions.) *International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education* (IJHSSE) 1: 53-67.

Flick, U**.** (Ed). 2018. *Designing qualitative designs.* Berlin: SAGE.

Flower, L. S. & Hayes, J. R. 1980. The dynamics of composing: making plans and juggling constraints. (In Gregg, L. W. & Steinburg, E. R. (Eds.), *Cognitive process in writing: An interdisciplinary approach*.) Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Greasley, P. 2011. *Doing essays & assignments essential tips for students.* London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Harris, G. J. & Cunningham, H. D. 1994. *The Simon and Schuster guide to writing.* New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs.

Hayes, J. R. 1996. A new framework for understanding cognition and affect in writing. (In C. M. Levy, & S. Ransdell (Eds.). *The science of writing: Theories, methods, individual differences, and applications*) (pp.1-28). Mahwah, N. J.: Erlbaum.

Hasyim, S. 2002. Error analysis in teaching of English. *Abstracting and Indexing – Journal Kata* (1): 42-50.

Houghton-Hawksley, H. 2012. *Clever English Caps First Additional Language Grade 11.* Northlands: Macmillan (Pty) Ltd.

Hsieh, H. F. & Shannon, S. E. 2005. Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis. *Qualitative health research,* 15(9): 1277-1288.

Hyland, K. 2003. *Second Language Writing. Foreign Language Study.* University of Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Incecay, V. 2015. Contrasting Rhetorical Patterns: Discovering Effects of First and Second Language Writing Conventions. Yeditep University. *Eurasian Journal of Research,* 61:137-154.

James, C. 2013. *Errors in language learning and use: exploring error analysis.* London and New York: Routledge.

Jordan, S., Neumann, T. & Smith, K. 2015. *Keys to English Caps Grade 10.* Sandton: Heinemann Publishers (Pty) Ltd**.**

Kamalipour, Y. R. 2015. *Research on international student flows from a macro perspective-Global Communication: A Multicultural Perspective* (3rd Ed.). New York: North Carolina A & T State University.

Kavanagh, K. P. J. 2006**.** *South African Concise Oxford Dictionary.* Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Kellogg, R. T. 1994. *The psychology of writing.* New York, NY: University Press.

Kenton, W. 2018. *Systematic sampling: Investopedia academy's.* New York: New York University.

Khansir, A. A. 2013. Error analysis and second language writing. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 3(2): 363-370.

Khoshhai, Y. 2017. An Analysis Case Study: Out of Context Translation of Persian Sentence into English for Elementary EFL Learners. *Educational Process: International Journal* 6(4): 89- 100.

Kukurs, R. 2012. *3 killer tips on how to write in English like a native speaker.* Online. Available at http:// www.englishharmoney.com/write -like-a-native speaker/. Accessed: 1 June 2019.

Lague, P. 2012. *Study & Master English Caps Grade 10.* Cape Town: Cambridge University Press.

Langan, J. 1989. *Sentence skills: A Workbook for Writers: Form B.* MaGrow Hill: MacGrow Hill publishers.

Langan, J. 2000*. College writing skills.* (5th Ed). Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Lutrin, B. & Pincus, M. 2007**.** *English hand book and study guide****.* Birnam Park: Berlut   Books CC.

Mackey, A. & Gass, S. M. 2005. *Second language research: methodology and design.* London: Lawrance Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

McMillan, K. & Weyers, J. 2010. *How to Write Essays & Assignments****.* Cape Town: Pearson Education Limited.

Marshall, C. & Rossman, G. B. 2006. *Designing qualitative research.* London: Sage.

Maruma, M. W. 2017. School of Education. *Gender & Behaviour* 15 (2): 8808-8817.

Mohajan, H. (2018). Qualitative research methodology in social sciences and related subjects. *Journal of Economic Development, Environment and People*. 7:23-48.

Mora-Flores, E. 2009. *Writing instruction for English learners.* California: Corwin Press.

Murray, S. & Johanson, L. 1990. *Write to Learn: A course in writing for Academic Purposes.* Randburg: Hodder & Stoughton Educational.

Murray, S. & Johanson, L. 1996. *Write to Learn.* Fort Worth: Harcount Brace College Publishers.

Murray, R. & Moore, S. 2009.*The Handbook of Academic Writing: A Fresh Approach.* England: McGraw-Hill Open University Press.

Ngoepe, L. J. 2017. Ethnographically oriented assessment of an emergent multidisciplinary science ESP group project module. *South African Journal of Higher Education* 31(2): 172-191.

Ngoepe, L. J. 2020. Debilitating colonialism through ethnographic user-oriented evaluation of a collaborative science ICL course. *South African Journal of Higher Education* 34(4): 230-250.

Njoku, T. & Izuagba, A. C. 2001*. New approach to English language & literature teaching.* Owerri: Versatile Publishers.

Nndwamato, N.M. 2017. *An analysis of written concord errors among Grade 12 First Additional Language learners in Vhembe District of Limpopo Province, South Africa.* Vhembe District: University of Venda.

Nzama, M. V. 2014. Error Analysis: *A study of errors committed by Isizulu speaking learners of English in selected schools.* KwaZulu-Natal: University of Zululand.

Okoro, O. G. 2017. Error Analysis of the Written English Essays of Junior Secondary School. Two students in Qwerri North*. International Journal of Education and Evaluation* 3(5): 64-74*.*

Oliva, A. 2021. *Essays and Interviews: Essay and other Writing.* New York. Penguin random House.

Oshima, A. & Hogue, A. 2006. *Writing Academic English (*4th Ed.) Pearson.

Owu-Ewie, C. & Williams, R. 2017. "Grammatical and Lexical Errors in Students' English Composition Writing: The Case of Three Senior High Schools (SHS) in the Central Region of Ghana" *Sini –US English Teaching,* 14(8): 463-482.

Palfreyman, D.M. & Karaki S. 2017. *International of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism.* Pretoria: Unisa Library.

Paraskevas, C. 2004. The Craft of Writing: Breaking Conventions. *The English Journal. Teaching the Many Conventions of Language,* 9*3*(4): 41-46.

Pat, C. & Hoy, 11. 1992. *Reading and Writing Essays the Imaginative Tasks.* Horward University: McGraw -Hill, Inc.

Pauley, S. E. & Riordan, D. G. 1987. *Technical report writing today*: Houghton Mifflin. Cengage Learning.

Pavey, M. L. 2010. *The Structure of Language, an Introduction to Grammatical Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Payne, T. E. 2006. *Exploring Language Structure: A Student's Guide*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

Presada, D. & Badea, M. 2014. The effectiveness of error analysis in translation classes. *Porta Linguarum Revista internacional de didactica de las lenguas extranjeras* 22: 49 – 59.

Poonpon, K. 2017. Enhancing English skills through project-based Learning. *The English Teacher*, 6: 1-10, Thailand: Khon Kaen University.

Raimes, A. 1983. *Techniques in teaching writing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ravitch, S. M. & Carl, N. M. 2010. *Qualitative research: bridging the conceptual, theoretical and methodical.* Pennsylvania: Sage Publishers.

Ravitch, S. M. & Carl, N. M. 2016. *Qualitative research: bridging the conceptual, theoretical, and methodical.* Pennsylvania: Sage Publishers.

Riddell, D. 2001. *Teaching English as a foreign/second language.* London: Hodder Headline Plc.

Republic of South Africa, 2018. Government Gazette: *Children's Amendment Act* 41(513): 1-116.

Republic of South Africa, 2016. Government Gazette: *Children's Amendment Act,* 17: 1-9.

Richards, J.C. & Schmidt, R. 2002. *Dictionary of language teaching & applied linguistics* London: Pearson Education Limited.

Rogers, L. 2012. *Approaches to writing in EAP*. Online. Available from http://oupeltglobalblog.com/2012/09/18/ approaches to writing – in eap/. Accessed February 15, 2013.

Rozakis, L. 2020. *English grammar for utterly confused.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Rus, D. 2016. A didactic approach to writing skills in a technical learning environment. *Procedia Technology,* 22: 1191-1196.

Saville-Troike, M. 2006. *Introducing Second Language Acquisition*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Schmitt, N. 2010. *Researching Vocabulary: A Vocabulary Research Manual.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Shrivastava, A. 2020. Some Real-World Examples of Ethnographic Research. Singapore: hello@idstats.org;anila@idstats.org.

Songxaba, S. L. & Sincuba, L. 2019. The effect of social media on English second language essay writing with special reference to WhatsApp. *Reading & Writing* 10(1):179.

Singleton, D. M. & Ryan, L. 2004. Language acquisition: The age factor. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters. (In Fang, X. & Xue-mei, J. Error analysis and the EFL classroom teaching) .*US-China education review* 4(9): 10–14.

Singleton, J. 2005. *Writing at work*: *The paragraph.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Soles, D. 2010. *The essentials of academic writing*. Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Spengler, V.E. 1997. *An Ethnographic Study of a Group of First Language Standard Eight Pupils in a "Model C" School Attempting to Communicate Meaning in Writing*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town.

Suleiman, Y., Hanafi, Z. & Tanslikhan, M. 2018. 'Perceived Influence of Library Service on Students' Academic Achievement in Secondary Schools in Kwara State, Nigeria.' *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal),* 1744: 1-40. Online. Available At? Accessed: 1 June 2019.

Suleiman, R. & Muhajir, 2019. The Difficulties of Writing Scientific Work of the English Education Students. *Journal of English Education* 4(1): 54-60.

Trupe, A. L. & Martin, J. M. 2016. Revisiting the writing process: the teacher writer in the workshop. *The Virginia English Journal* 66 (1): 1-15.

Van Heerden, M. 2006. *New English Made Easy Grade 11.* Cape Town: Nasou via Afrika. Vicary, A. 2014. *Grammar for Writing:* UK: Garnet Publishing Ltd.

Wright, J. 2006**.** Reflection on Process Writing. *Journal for Language Teaching* 40(2): 216-221.

7. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: CHECKLIST FOR IDENTIFYING LEARNERS' ESSAY ERRORS

1. Structural errors

Item(s) included in essay writing process	Yes (Y) or No (N)	Comment
1.1 Sufficient time allotted for essay writing		Stipulate allotted time _____
1.2 Essay was written		
• Narrative		
• Descriptive		
• Expository		
• Argumentative/Persuasive		
• Discursive		
• Reflective		
1.3 Mind map submitted		
1.4 Marked mind map		
1.5 1st Draft submitted		
1.6 Total Number of drafts		
1.7 Full sentences were used		
1.8 Paragraphs were used		

1.9 Cohesive devises were used		
1.10 Sequence words were used		
1.11 Is there an introduction?		
1.12 Is there a conclusion?		
1.13 What is the total mark?		Total mark :
1.14 Essay written in class?		
1.15 Was the essay written as homework?		
1.16 Is the length of the essay appropriate?		
1.17 Marks were allocated according to structure, content and language		
1.18 Is there a total score?		Total score:
1.19 Total number of learners in class		Number of learners:
1.20 Was feedback given?		

2 Grammar errors

Probable Error	Actual Error	Frequency	Comment
2.1 Noun			
2.2 Pronoun			
2.3 Determiner			
2.4 Verb			
2.5 Adjective			
2.6 Adverb			
2.7 Preposition			
2.8 Conjunction			
2.9 Collocation			
2.10 An incomplete sentence			
2.11 Word order			
2.12 Tense			
2.13 Paragraphing			
2.14 Logical connector			
2.15 Punctuation			

3 Additional errors per essay

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX B: LEARNER GROUP INTERVIEWS

A: Background Information

Circuit: _____

Name of School: _____

No. of learners in class: _____

No. of EFAL educators in school: _____

School Term: _____

Duration: **_____**

Date: _____

Time: _____

B: Essay Writing

1. How many essays have you written so far?

2. Do you write essays in class or at home?

3. If you wrote essays in class, what was the duration?

4. What were the topics of the essays you wrote?

5. Describe the steps you normally follow when you write an essay.

6. Were there specific errors that you committed?

7. What do you like most about essay writing?

8. What do you dislike about essay writing?

9. How can the process of writing an essay be improved?

Thank you for participating.

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEWS WITH EFAL EDUCATORS

1 Biographical Details

1.1 What is your highest academic qualification?

1.2 Stipulate year(s) and month(s) of your teaching experience.

1.3 What is your highest English language teaching qualification?

1.4 Besides Grade 11, which other grades do you teach?

1.5 What is the total number learners in Grade 11?

1.6 Do you have progressed learners in Grade 11?

1.7If the answer in 1.6 is yes, how many are they?

2 The Essay Writing Exercise

2.1 Structure

1.5.1 How many essays do you give learners per term?

1.5.2 What type of essays do you find common among those learners that write?

1.5.3 Please explain your answer for 2.1.2

2.1.4 What is the normal length of an essay?

2.1.5 How should the structure of an essay be?

2.1.6 Are learners' ideas expressed in paragraphs?

2.2 The Actual Essay Writing

2.2.1 Are essay topics suitable for the grade being assessed?

2.2.2 Are instructions to learners unambiguous?

2.2.3 Do learners introduce their essays appropriately?

2.2.4 Do you allow learners to draft an essay?

2.2.5 Do you allocate marks for drafts?

2.2.6 Do learners finish writing in time?

2.2.7 Please explain 2.2.6.

2.2.8 Does the essay writing task comply with CAPS? Please explain.

2.3 Marking

2.3.1 Do the essay questions cover low, medium, and higher order thinking skills?

2.3.2 Do you use the correct rubric when marking? Please explain.

2.3.3 Are learners penalised for spelling mistakes?

2.3.4 How do you tackle spelling mistakes?

2.3.5 How long does it normally take you to mark learners' essays?

2.3.6 What is the learners' essay class average performance?

2.3.7 Do you always give feedback after marking your essays?

2.4 Errors

2.4.1 Do the learners use linking devices?

2.4.2 Give examples of common word class errors.

2.4.3 Do they use the correct tense?

2.4.4 Do they commit punctuation errors?

2.4.5 Give examples of common spelling errors.

2.5 EFAL Learners

2.5.1 What are the major challenges for EFAL learners essay writing?

2.5.2 What type of essays do you find common among those that learners write?

2.5.3 What is the normal length of an essay?

2.5.4 Are learners' able to assume responsibility for tasks in the classroom situation?

2.5.5 How do your learners react to criticism or failure?

Thank you for your contribution.

Sample Permission - and Consent Letters

APPENDIX D: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION FROM DISTRICT DIRECTOR OF MOPANI WEST DISTRICT

P O Box 327

TZANEEN

0850

Date…………

The District Director

Mopani West District

Private Bag x 4032

TZANEEN

0850

Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA

I am writing to request permission to collect data from the following schools in Mopani West District: Matjeke (Motupa Circuit), Molabosane (Mafarana Circuit), Mohlatlego Machaba (Tzaneen Circuit) and Sekhukhumele (Rakwadu2 Circuit).

I am a registered Masters student in the School of Languages and Communication Studies and my study is entitled 'Essay writing errors of English FAL FET rural learners in Mopani West District, Limpopo Province: Analysis'.

Data will be collected through observations and interviews of written assessment (essays) in English First Additional Language (EFAL) learners and educators. Twenty EFAL learners will be sampled from each school. Four educators responsible for teaching EFAL will be selected.

Your assistance in this regard will be greatly appreciated. Should you have any query, you may contact my supervisor Dr L. J. Ngoepe, at lucia.ngoepe@ul.ac.za or 015 268 3056.

Yours faithfully

………………………………………

Mailula M. R. (Student No. 9021644).

APPENDIX E: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION FROM CIRCUIT MANAGER OF MAFARANA IN MOPANI WEST

P O Box 327

TZANEEN

0850

Date………………

The Circuit Manager

Mafarana Circuit

Tivumbeni EMPC

Bankuna Street

NKOWANKOWA

0850

Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA

I am writing to request for permission to collect data from Molabosane High School at Mafarana Circuit in Mopani West District.

I am a registered Masters student in the School of Languages and Communication Studies and my study is entitled 'Essay writing errors of English FAL FET rural learners in Mopani West District, Limpopo Province: An analysis.

The study will comprise of English First Additional Language (EFAL) learners and one educator. Data will be collected through observations, interviews and written assessments, e.g. learners' essays.

Your assistance in this regard will be greatly appreciated. Should you have any queries, you may contact my supervisor Dr L. J. Ngoepe at lucia.ngoepe@ul.ac.za or 015 268 3056.

Yours faithfully

………………………………………

Mailula, M. R. (Student No. 9021644)

APPENDIX F: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION FROM CIRCUIT MANAGER OF MOTUPA CIRCUIT IN MOPANI WEST DISTRICT

P O Box 327

TZANEEN

0850

Date………………

The Circuit Manager

Motupa Circuit

38 Agatha Street

TZANEEN

0850

Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA

I am writing to request permission to collect data at Matseke High School in Motupa Circuit in Mopani West District.

I am a registered Masters student in the School of Languages and Communication Studies and my study is entitled 'Essay writing errors of English FAL FET rural learners in Mopani West District, Limpopo Province: An analysis'.

The study will comprise of English First Additional Language (EFAL) learners and one educator. Data will be collected through observations, interviews and written assessments, e.g. learners' essays.

Your assistance in this regard will be greatly appreciated. Should you have any query, you may contact my supervisor Dr L. J. Ngoepe at lucia.ngoepe@ul.ac.za or 015 268 3056.

Yours faithfully

………………………………………

Mailula, M. R. (Student No. 9021644)

APPENDIX G: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION FROM CIRCUIT MANAGER OF RAKWADU CIRCUIT IN MOPANI WEST DISTRICT

P O Box 327
TZANEEN
0850
Date………………

The Circuit Manager
Rakwadu 2 Circuit
P/bag x 738
GaKgapane
0838

Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA

I am writing to request for permission to collect data from Sekhukhumele Sec School at Rakwadu2 Circuit in Mopani West District.

I am a registered Master's student in the School of Languages and Communication Studies and my study is entitled 'Essay writing errors of English FAL FET rural learners in Mopani West District, Limpopo Province: An analysis'.

The study will comprise of English First Additional Language (EFAL) learners and one educator. Data will be collected through observations, interviews and written assessments, e.g. learners' essays.

Your assistance in this regard will be greatly appreciated. Should you have any query, you may contact my supervisor Dr L. J. Ngoepe at lucia.ngoepe@ul.ac.za or 015 268 3056.

Yours faithfully

…………………………………………
Mailula, M. R. (Student No. 9021644)

APPENDIX H: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION FROM CIRCUIT MANAGER OF TZANEEN CIRCUIT IN MOPANI WEST DISTRICT

P O Box 327

TZANEEN

0850

Date………………

The Circuit Manager

Tzaneen Circuit

38 Agatha Street

TZANEEN

0850

Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA

I am writing to request for permission to collect data from Mohlatlego Machaba High School at Tzaneen Circuit in Mopani West District.

I am a registered Masters student in the School of Languages and Communication Studies and my study is entitled 'Essay writing errors of English FAL FET rural learners in Mopani West District, Limpopo Province: An analysis'.

The study will comprise of English First Additional Language (EFAL) learners and one educator. Data will be collected through observations, interviews and written assessments, e.g. learners' essays.

Your assistance in this regard will be greatly appreciated. Should you have any query, you may contact my supervisor Dr L. J. Ngoepe at lucia.ngoepe@ul.ac.za or 015 268 3056.

Yours faithfully

………………………………………

Mailula, M. R. (Student No. 9021644)

APPENDIX I: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION FROM THE PRINCIPAL OF MATSEKE HIGH SCHOOL, MOTUPA CIRCUIT IN MOPANI WEST DISTRICT

P O Box 327

TZANEEN

0850

Date………………

The Principal

Matseke High school

P O Box 2131

TZANEEN

0850

Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA

I am writing to request for permission to collect data from Matseke High School at Motupa Circuit in Mopani West District.

I am a registered Master's student in the School of Languages and Communication Studies and my study is entitled 'Essay writing errors of English FAL FET rural learners in Mopani West District, Limpopo Province: An analysis'.

The study will comprise of 20 Grade 11 English First Additional Language (EFAL) learners and one educator. Data will be collected through observations, interviews and written assessments, e.g. learners' essays.

Your assistance in this regard will be greatly appreciated. Should you have any query, you may contact my supervisor Dr L. J. Ngoepe at lucia.ngoepe@ul.ac.za or 015 268 3056.

Yours faithfully

………………………………………

Mailula, M. R. (Student No. 9021644)

APPENDIX J: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION FROM THE PRINCIPAL OF MOHLATLEGO MACHABA HIGH SCHOOL, TZANEEN CIRCUIT IN MOPANI WEST DISTRICT

P O Box 327

TZANEEN

0850

Date………………

The Principal

Mohlatlego Machaba High School

Box 3959

TZANEEN

0850

Sir

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA

I am writing to request for permission to collect data from Mohlatlego Machaba High School at Tzaneen Circuit in Mopani West District.

I am a registered Masters student in the School of Languages and Communication Studies and my study is entitled 'Essay writing errors of English FAL FET rural learners in Mopani West District, Limpopo Province: An analysis'.

The study will comprise of 20 Grade 11 English First Additional Language (EFAL) learners and one educator. Data will be collected through observations, interviews and written assessments, e.g. learners' essays.

Your assistance in this regard will be greatly appreciated. Should you have any query you may contact my supervisor Dr L. J. Ngoepe, at lucia.ngoepe@ul.ac.za or 015 268 3056.

Yours faithfully

………………………………………

Mailula, M. R. (Student No. 9021644)

APPENDIX K: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION FROM THE PRINCIPAL OF MOLABOSANE HIGH SCHOOL, MAFARANE CIRCUIT IN MOPANI WEST DISTRICT

P O Box 327

TZANEEN

0850

Date………………

The Principal

Molabosane High School

P O Box 547

Lenyenye

0857

Sir

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA

I am writing to request for permission to collect data from Molabosane High School at Mafarana Circuit in Mopani West District.

I am a registered Masters student in the School of Languages and Communication Studies and my study is entitled 'Essay writing errors of English FAL FET rural learners in Mopani West District, Limpopo Province: An analysis'.

The study will comprise of 20 Grade 11 English First Additional Language (EFAL) learners and one educator. Data will be collected through observations, interviews and written assessments, e.g. learners' essays.

Your assistance in this regard will be greatly appreciated. Should you have any query, you may contact my supervisor Dr L. J. Ngoepe at lucia.ngoepe@ul.ac.za or 015 268 3056.

Yours faithfully

………………………………………………

Mailula M.R. (Student No: 9021644)

APPENDIX L: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION FROM THE PRINCIPAL OF

SEKHUKHUMELE SEC SCHOOL, RAKWADU CIRCUIT IN MOPANI WEST DISTRICT

P O Box 327

TZANEEN

0850

Date………………

The Principal

Sekhukhumele Sec School

P O Box 1702

Ga-Kgapane

0838

Sir

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA

I am writing to request for permission to collect data from Sekhukhumele Sec School at Rakwadu2 Circuit in Mopani West District.

I am a registered Masters student in the School of Languages and Communication Studies and my study is entitled 'Essay writing errors of English FAL FET rural learners in Mopani West District, Limpopo Province: An analysis'.

The study will comprise of 20 Grade 11 English First Additional Language (EFAL) learners and one educator. Data will be collected through observations, interviews and written assessments, e.g. learners' essays.

Your assistance in this regard will be greatly appreciated. Should you have any query, you may contact my supervisor Dr L. J. Ngoepe at lucia.ngoepe@ul.ac.za or 015 268 3056.

Yours faithfully

 ………………………………….

Mailula, M. R. (Student No. 9021644)

APPENDIX M: SAMPLE OF CONSENT LETTER TO THE PARTICIPANTS (PARENTS/EDUCATORS

School of Languages and Communication studies

University of Limpopo

Private Bag X 1106

Sovenga

0727

Date

Dear Participant

I am a Masters student in the School of Languages and Communication Studies, Faculty of Humanities at the University of Limpopo. I would like to request you to participate in my study, which focuses on Essay writing errors of English FAL FET rural learners in Mopani West District, Limpopo Province. The main objective of my study is to identify essay writing errors committed by Grade 11 learners in EFAL in rural schools. Confidentiality and privacy will be maintained. Data collected will be solely used for purposes of this study.
I anticipate your kind cooperation and positive response. Yours sincerely

 Yours faithfully

……………………………………..

Mailula, M. R. (Student No. 9021644)

PPENDIX N: SAMPLE CONSENT FORM FOR PARENTS

Encircle your choice and sign below.

Yes, I allow my child to participate in the study.

No, I do not allow my child to participate in the study.

Particulars of the learner:

First name _____

Middle name   Surname

                                                        _____

            _____

Learner Date of Birth _____mm/dd/yyyy

Name of School _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian: _____ Date: _____

 Name and Surname of Parent or Guardian: _____ (Please print)

APPENDIX O: TREC CERTIFICATE

University of Limpopo
Department of Research Administration and Development
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 3935, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email: anastasia.ngobe@ul.ac.za

---

TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

MEETING: 12 August 2020

PROJECT NUMBER: TREC/148/2020: PG

PROJECT:

Title:	Essay writing errors of English FAL FET rural learners in Mopani West District, Limpopo Province: An analysis
Researcher:	MR Mailula
Supervisor:	Dr LJ Ngoepe
Co-Supervisor/s:	N/A
School:	Languages and Communication Studies
Degree:	Master of Arts in English Studies

PROF P MASOKO
CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: **REC-0310111-031**

Note:

i) This Ethics Clearance Certificate will be valid for one (1) year, as from the abovementioned date. Application for annual renewal (or annual review) need to be received by TREC one month before lapse of this period.

ii) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee, together with the Application for Amendment form.

iii) PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.

Finding solutions for Africa

APPENDIX P: PROVISION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH ESSAY WRITING

LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
MOPANI WEST DISTRICT

Ref: 2/2/2

Enq: MPENYANA M. B   Tel: 015 306 6800   Cell: 082 954 0919

To : Ms Mailula, M. R

SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: ESSAY WRITING ERRORS OF ENGLISH FAL FET RURAL LEARNERS IN MOPANI WEST DISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE. ANALYSIS'.

1. The above matter refers.
2. The Department wishes to inform you that your request to conduct research on the above mentioned topic has been approved.
3. Your focus should only be limited to the learners and educators of the following selected schools: Matseke (Motupa Circuit), Motoboume (Mafarana Circuit), Mahlatlego Machaba (Tzaneen Circuit) and Sekhukhumele (Rakwadu Circuit).
4. The following conditions should be considered:
4.1 Arrangements should be made with the principals, learners and educators of the affected schools in these circuits.
4.2 The research should not be conducted during examinations.
4.3 During research, applicable research ethics should be adhered to, in particular the principle of voluntary participation in the study.
4.4 Upon completion of the research study, the researcher shall share the findings and recommendations with the Department.
5. The research should not have any financial implications to the Department of Education, Limpopo Province.
6. You are expected to produce this letter to the circuits and schools you intend to conduct your research.

The heartland of South Africa– development is about people!

7. The Department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success i your research.

_____   10 September 2020
DISTRICT DIRECTOR   **DATE**

138

APPENDIX Q: THE DEPARTMENT'S POLICY ON MARKING ESSAY WRITING

THE DEPARTMENT'S POLICY ON MARKING WRITING PAPER

Dear markers

You are advised to use the following indicators or symbols to indicate any errors which the learner's writing might contain.

Code	Descriptor
√	For approval
?	For puzzlement
l	For language error
t	For tense error
ꓔ	For omission error
O	Encircle the word/take it off
=	Paragraph the work
/	Divide the word
c	Capital letter/cap-capitalisation
p	For punctuation error
co	Concord/agr-no agreement between the subject and verb used.
sp	Spelling error
Ls	Long sentence distract the meaning.
amb	Ambiguity/unclear/double meaning.
log	Logic/points do not follow coherently.
prep	Have used the wrong preposition
pron	Have used wrong pronoun
rep	Repetition/do not repeat the same idea over and over.
exp	Expression wrongly used.
syn	Syntax error/surface constructed incorrectly.
voc	Vocabulary error/used the wrong word/could have used a better one.
art	Wrong article used
inc	Incomplete sentence, grammatically incorrect.
wo	Word order error/should rephrase the sentence.
Gen	Generalisation/writing two generally incorrect.
Intro	Introduction fail to capture the marker's attention.
conc	Conclusion fail to draw the threads of points written above.

APPENDIX R: ASSESSMENT RUBRIC FOR ESSAY – FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

ASSESSMENT RUBRIC FOR ESSAY – FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE [50 MARKS]

Criteria		Exceptional	Skilful	Moderate	Elementary	Inadequate
CONTENT & PLANNING (Response and ideas) Organisation of ideas for planning; Awareness of purpose, audience and context **30 MARKS**	Upper level	**28–30** -Outstanding/Striking response beyond normal expectations -Intelligent, thought-provoking and mature ideas -Exceptionally well organised and coherent (connected), including introduction, body and conclusion/ending	**22–24** -Very well-crafted response -Fully relevant and interesting ideas with evidence of maturity -Very well organised and coherent (connected), including introduction, body and conclusion/ending	**16–18** -Satisfactory response -Ideas are reasonably coherent and convincing -Reasonably organised and coherent, including introduction, body and conclusion/ending	**10-12** -Inconsistently coherent response -Unclear ideas and unoriginal -Little evidence of organisation and coherence	**4-6** -Totally irrelevant response -Confused and unfocused ideas -Vague and repetitive -Unorganised and incoherent
	Lower level	**25–27** -Excellent response but lacks the exceptionally striking qualities of the outstanding essay -Mature and intelligent ideas -Skilfully organised and coherent (connected), including introduction, body and conclusion/ending	**19–21** -Well-crafted response -Relevant and interesting ideas -Well organised and coherent (connected), including introduction, body and conclusion	**13–15** -Satisfactory response but some lapses in clarity -Ideas are fairly coherent and convincing -Some degree of organisation and coherence, including introduction, body and conclusion	**7–9** -Largely irrelevant response -Ideas tend to be disconnected and confusing -Hardly any evidence of organisation and coherence	**0–3** -No attempt to respond to the topic -Completely irrelevant and inappropriate -Unfocused and muddled
LANGUAGE, STYLE & EDITING Tone, register, style, vocabulary appropriate to purpose/effect and context; Word choice; Language use and conventions, punctuation, grammar, spelling **15 MARKS**	Upper level	**14-15** -Tone, register, style and vocabulary highly appropriate to purpose, audience and context -Language confident, exceptionally impressive -Compelling and rhetorically effective in tone -Virtually error-free in grammar and spelling -Very skilfully crafted	**11-12** -Tone, register, style and vocabulary very appropriate to purpose, audience and context -Language is effective and a consistently appropriate tone is used -Largely error-free in grammar and spelling -Very well crafted	**8- 9** -Tone, register, style and vocabulary appropriate to purpose, audience and context -Appropriate use of language to convey meaning -Tone is appropriate -Rhetorical devices used to enhance content	**5- 6** -Tone, register, style and vocabulary not appropriate to purpose, audience and context -Very basic use of language -Tone and diction are inappropriate -Very limited vocabulary	**0 - 3** -Language incomprehensible -Tone, register, style and vocabulary less appropriate to purpose, audience and context -Vocabulary limitations so extreme as to make comprehension impossible
	Lower level	**13** -Language excellent and rhetorically effective in tone -Virtually error-free in grammar and spelling -Skilfully crafted	**10** -Language engaging and generally effective -Appropriate and effective tone -Few errors in grammar and spelling -Well crafted	**7** -Adequate use of language with some inconsistencies -Tone generally appropriate and limited use of rhetorical devices	**4** -Inadequate use of language -Little or no variety in sentence -Exceptionally limited vocabulary	
STRUCTURE Features of text; Paragraph development and sentence construction **5 MARKS**		**5** -Excellent development of topic -Exceptional detail -Sentences, paragraphs exceptionally well constructed	**4** -Logical development of details -Coherent -Sentences, paragraphs logical, varied	**3** -Relevant details developed -Sentences, paragraphs well constructed -Essay still makes sense	**2** -Some valid points -Sentences and paragraphs faulty -Essay still makes some sense	**0–1** -Necessary points lacking -Sentences and paragraphs faulty -Essay lacks sense
MARK RANGE		**43-50**	**33–40**	**23-30**	**13-20**	**0–10**