WRITTEN GRAMMATICAL ERRORS COMMITTED BY ENGLISH LANGUAGE, NON-NATIVE FIRST ENTERING STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO: AN EXPLORATION

by

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DEDICATION

This research study is dedicated to my mother, Makobotšeng, and brother, Thabiso Nkgadima for the moral support and unwavering love I received from them throughout my studies, and who, since I started with my studies, supported me with words of encouragement.

DECLARATION

I declare that '**WRITTEN GRAMMATICAL ERRORS COMMITTED BY ENGLISH LANGUAGE, NON-NATIVE FIRST ENTERING STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO: AN EXPLORATION**' hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo for the degree of Master of Arts in English Studies is entirely my own work, that all materials that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references. Further, I declare that this mini-dissertation has not been previously submitted at this university or any other educational institution for degree purposes.

Godfrey Mapase Nkgadima   2021/09/11

Full Names   **Date**

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Signature

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ABSTRACT

This study explores written grammar errors committed by UL first entering non-native English language students. The problem is that the standard of English among non-native English language students does not seem to improve due to the recurrence of errors, and this has always occupied the attention of many L2 researchers. First year English language lecturers participated in the study; they were interviewed by the researcher to better understand issues related to errors committed by the students. The study is underpinned by Error Analysis theory. Content Analysis (CA) was employed to analyse the qualitative data obtained from the 30 students' assignment scripts to obtain grammatical errors in the following: word classes, sentences, tense, punctuation, and paragraphing. The findings indicate that English non-native students committed errors in punctuation, sentence structure, noun, pronoun, subject-verb agreement– determiner–, spelling-, logical connectors-, contraction-, preposition-, incomplete sentence and wrong topic sentences errors. It recommends that the Department of Languages should introduce an annual English language competency test at the beginning of each year to access students' English competency level. This will allow the ELLs to revise and develop teaching materials according to the language needs of the first-year students in the university.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CA1	-	Contrastive Analysis
CA2	-	Content Analysis
EA	-	Error Analysis
ELL	-	English Language Lecturers
ENNS	-	English non-native students
ESL	-	English Second Language
FoF	-	Focus on Focus
FoM	-	Focus on Meaning
HE	-	Higher Education
L1	-	First Language
L2	-	English language
MoI	-	Medium of Instruction
NL	-	Native Language
NS	-	Native Speaker
SLA	-	Second Language Acquisition
TA	-	Thematic Analysis
TL	-	Target Language
TREC	-	Turfloop Research Ethics Committee
UL	-	University of Limpopo

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

One area of concern in the English pedagogy is the failure of the non-native English language students to write in a grammatically correct form. The students' writing in Higher Education (HE) is increasingly seen as problematic, with growing complaints in the public and pedagogic discourse about students' inability to write in a standard that is acceptable in HE. English Second Language (ESL) professionals hold a view that Second Language Acquisition (SLA) is a system that advances gradually, thus the expectation of the faultless papers, even from more proficient students, is impractical (Ferris & Hedgcock 2005: 261). Similarly, non-native English language students enter the HE system after years of process-oriented instruction in English language from primary to high school. However, these students commit errors when trying to construct sentences in English, with their writings containing grammatical and lexical inaccuracies.

Errors in writing make it difficult for students to socialise with the discourse of subjects and disciplines in the university. Furthermore, they create a hindrance for the teachers to get the meaning of the written language and jeopardise the improvement of students' language ability (Oyinloye, Olusegun, Adeyemi, Uwannah & Olufunke 2019: 169). The non-native English language students often commit errors when learning English, especially when they attempt to construct sentences. As a result, they produce writings with incorrect grammar application. As observed by Eltayeb and Ahamed (2016: 189), Munro (2003) and Gambell (1991), HE institutions across the globe students' writing constitutes problems for ESL teaching and learning situations. These include the University of Limpopo (UL) first entering non-native English language students.

The issue of committing errors is evident in students' assignments and examination scripts. This demonstrates that students in the HE institutions have not mastered the complex process of producing an error-free writing. Hence, an analysis of assignment scripts of UL first entering English language students (see Appendix A). Odeleye and

Adetuyi (2018: 29) stress that a great shortcoming of students in HE, including colleges of education, is the inability to express ideas correctly in English. Cam and Tran (2017: 62) find that the inadequate grammatical knowledge is responsible for students' deficiency in English. This leads to numerous complaints in the pedagogic discourse about students' inability to write in the way the academic system requires them. Odeleye and Adetuyi (2018: 30) opine that some students enter HE institutions with a poor English competency level; this is noticeable in the persistence of errors these students commit in their written compositions.

The limited proficiency in English amongst these students' results in their poor language skills being transferred to their ESL writing, thus their usage of English is affected. For example, non-native English language students tend to commit errors by direct parallel deviations on a phonological, spelling and syntactic level. Nel and Swanepoel (2010: 55) find that other errors that students commit include over-generalisation that is comprised of intra-lingual transfer, through which the grammatical rules of the native language are applied in the second language. The occurrence of the errors can be ascribed to the transfer of the student's native language as well as over-generalisation of the English grammar rules. These students possess inadequacy in English proficiency as it is not their native language. Thus, their incompetency in English can be ascribed to two factors mentioned above.

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

The standard of English among non-native English language students does not seem to improve due to the recurrence of errors, and this has always occupied the attention of many L2 researchers. Although students may possess a better idea of writing than they once were, ESL student papers continue to have grammatical and lexical inaccuracies which are not closer to the standards of English-speaking academics (Ferris & Hedgcock 2005: 261). Errors in English writing among non-native English university students' population have been increasing and have become an area of concern in the process of learning English as an L2. Bacha (2002: 161) finds that students who study in HE institutions where English is adopted as a Medium of Instruction (MoI), and may not be their L1, experience writing problems which make it difficult for their writing to be aligned to the institutions' literacy projections.

Non-native English language students commit errors which can be attributed to other factors such as native language transfer. As observed by Bacha (2002: 161), Sa'Addedin and Akram (1989), (1991) Zughoul and Husain (1985), studies conducted on non-native students' English-writing indicate that their writing lack lexical variety, subordination and resort to redundancy that does not add any essential new information to the text. Richards and Schmidt (2002: 186) maintain that errors exhibited by learners while learning a language are caused by different processes which include borrowing language systems from the native language. Lebowitz (2005: 663) notes that errors emanating from English language learning will continue to affect the writing of the learners due to the transfer from their native language to L2. By borrowing structures of First Language (L1) while using L2, students commit grammatical errors which derail the intended meaning. The researcher chose to research this problem due to the recurrence of the grammatical errors produced by the UL first year non-native English students.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1.3.1 Aim

The aim of this study is to explore written grammar errors committed by UL first entering non-native English language students.

1.3.2 Objectives of the study

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- to identify the types of written grammar errors committed in writing by UL first entering non-native English language students.
- to determine common written grammar errors committed by UL first entering non-native English language students.
- to suggest how UL first entering non-native English language students can avoid committing written grammar errors.

1.4 METHOD OF RESEARCH

- Literature on the significance of grammar in writing and grammatical errors committed by English language non-native students was explored.

- In line with an exploratory research design, semi-structured interviews and content analysis was deployed to explore written grammatical errors committed by English language non-native students.

1.5 PROGRAMME OF THE STUDY

Chapter 2 reviews literature in terms of the significance of grammar in writing and written grammatical errors.

Chapter 3 deals with the research methodology.

Chapter 4 outlines results of the study and analyses the data collected.

Chapter 5 sums up the study and sets up the recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2

GRAMMAR IN WRITING

2.1 INTRODUCTION

A possession of grammar facilitates maximum accuracy in language use among English Non-native Students (ENNS). English Language Lectures (ELLs) need to emphasise grammar in their teaching instructions to assist ENNS in developing and improving their language command to match those of their native speaker (NS) counterparts. Lecturers' assistance should encapsulate Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theories as guidelines to combat any form of written grammatical errors. The literature was organised to review the following: it will firstly discuss the nature of writing, definitions of grammar, the significance of grammar in writing in English, language transfer. Furthermore, it will discuss grammatical errors, difference between mistakes and errors, causes of errors, taxonomy of errors, language transfer as well as the theories that guided this study.

2.2 THE NATURE OF WRITING

Writing is a productive skill that uses graphic language to convey thoughts and feelings (Qin 2017: 25). It involves fluency in sentence structures, suitable selection of vocabulary units, and a cautious attention towards punctuation and spelling (Belkhir & Benyelles 2017: 81). Writing is a carefully executed process of transferring accurate meanings into a written form conforming to the rules of grammar. It is a conscious process that uses sets of symbols to denote oral sounds. As observed by Apsari (2018: 39) and Gebhard (1996), writing comprises of numerous components such as word choice, use of appropriate grammar, syntax, mechanics, and organisation of ideas into coherent and cohesive form.

Further, Moe and Toe (2020: 361) stress that writing is more than arranging words into sentences, it includes a process of selecting different words which are linked grammatically and logically to make sentences. It covers the application of accurate grammatical rules, selection of exact diction, adherence to proper punctuation rules and organising ideas into appropriate sentences and paragraphs. Writing is a planned process that is undertaken with ample time to reflect students' knowledge as mistakes and errors are largely less tolerated.

However, writing remains a challenge for English non-native students. Their writings are characterised by various grammatical errors. As observed by Aspari (2018: 39) and Brown (2001), students need to understand that writing involves producing ideas, organising them coherently, using of discourse markers and rhetorical conventions to arrange writing cohesively as well as proofreading it to ensure that appropriate grammar and clearer meaning are followed. Writing is a dominant skill employed to test students' ability to utilise English language to express ideas coherently and effectively.

2.3 DEFINITION OF GRAMMAR

Greenbaum and Nelson (2002: 1) define grammar as a set of rules that allow language users to combine words into larger units. Sadiah and Royani (2019: 764) attest that grammar refers to a static system of arbitrary rules in the language that connects various words which are used to create meaning. Grammar is a reference mechanism which arranges words in habitual company to form sentences. It is a reservoir for expressing meaning.

2.3.1 Grammar and meaning

Grammar is designated to control the classes of words, their derivation, functions and correspondence in sentences. These include tenses, prepositions, word class, nouns, pronouns and many others. Metaphorically speaking, grammar serves as a barometer. That is to say, it helps to measure the state of accuracy of a piece of writing as the barometer measures the atmospheric pressure. For example, to avoid the frequent use of the same noun, a writer can use a pronoun instead. Therefore, a name such as 'Timothy' can serve as an antecedent to the pronoun 'He' as it matches the gender of the noun it has replaced.

Timothy played the drums.

He played the drums.
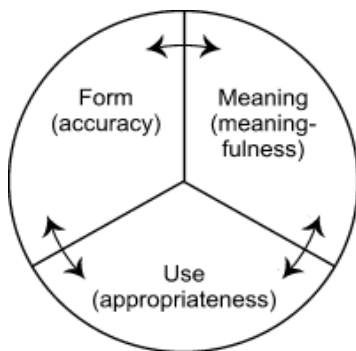
Figure 1: A three-dimensional grammar framework

As cited in Hsu (2013: 513), Larsen-Freeman (1997) reveals that grammar comprises of three dimensions, namely, form (structure), meaning (semantics), and use (pragmatics). Grammar embodies not just a morphosystactic form, but it covers the formulation of meaning in context-appropriate use. Abdullah (2013: 3) postulates that grammatical structure does not only cover a morphosystactic form, but overlaps into the questions of how accuracy is formed and expression of meaning in a context-appropriate use are created.

The three wedges are not hierarchically arranged as many traditional characterisations of linguistic-strata. However, they depict the interconnectedness in structure, meaning and use. These dimensions are interdependent, a change in one will involve a change in another. For example, the passive voice in English language has a distinct form. It is constituted by a form of the '*be'* as a verb and the past participle and the preposition '*by',* placed before the agent in the predicate, for example:

The school was robbed by the same thieves that hijacked a car last night.

The passive occurs when the main verb is transitive and it also forms part of its formal description. The passive voice possesses a grammatical meaning. This is due to a focus construction, which presents a different status on the recipient of an action than it would receive in the active voice. The use of the word 'school' in the above sentence is differently focused than it would be in the active voice sentence. In order for English non-native students to use the passive voice accurately, meaningfully, and appropriately, they need to become proficient in all three dimensions discussed above.

2.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF GRAMMAR IN WRITING

English language is comprised mainly of four skills, namely, speaking, listening, reading and writing (Rao 2019: 197). Writing and speaking are referred to as productive skills because students apply these skills when they produce a language (Fitria 2018: 240). These skills require conscious use of grammar to produce meaningful text or oral responses. Fatria (2018: 241) points out that English language students need to master sentence structure, punctuation, vocabulary, formatting, spelling, and grammar to write clearly. In language learning, grammar is viewed as an important component in the process of writing (Hassan, Nor, Rosly & Zakaria 2019: 32). For any English language student to develop good writing skills, grammar competency is required. Rana, Owaidh and Harbi (2019: 24) point out that grammar should not be treated parallel with the approaches of English language learning. This arises from the fact that the teaching of grammar involves writing as a foremost productive skill for learners and function. This is so because the teaching of grammar embodies expanding of accuracy and fluency. However, it has been observed that non-native English students tend to commit writing errors that are uncommon among native speakers of English (Marina & Snuviškiene 2005: 275). Such learners commit errors when they possess insufficient knowledge of grammar rules befitting vocabulary or sentence organisation (Lin, Chen & Chang 2020: 933).

Modipane (2011: 1602) finds that first entering students at the University of Limpopo (UL) are struggling to participate in the pedagogical discourse during lectures due to lack of confidence with their English proficiency. The lack of confidence is perpetuated by the students' abysmal performance at the secondary school level. Implicitly, this transfers to the students' performance at the first entering university level. The poor English language confidence and proficiency in English, which is a language of instruction at universities such as UL, renders many students' proficiency in speech and writing as 'sadly lacking' (Tanga & Maphosa, 2018: 10).

When first entering non-native English language students are lacking intimate knowledge in English language skills, they are likely to flounder when responding to the learning discourse. Thus, first entering students whose English competency falls below the required language proficiency or lacks appropriate language skills are likely to find it difficult to cope with their studies (Modipane 2011: 1597).

The process of writing in English cannot be isolated from grammar. Li, Ren and Zhao (2016: 20) argue that a challenge in second language learners' writing appears to be in the grammar of English, caused mainly by L1 interference. Grammatical knowledge is an important element in the writing process Rana et al., (2019: 23). Non-native English students need to possess an appropriate level of grammar to avoid committing errors in writing. In order to gain fluency in language learning, grammar cannot be neglected (Dehghani, Bagheri, Sadighi & Tayyebi 2016: 209).

For English non-native students to produce flawless English writing, several aspects of the language namely, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics must be taken into consideration as they are all governed by grammar. The knowledge of grammar in writing is to necessitate accuracy. Sumalinog (2018: 69) stresses that grammar prescribes rules for writers to accomplish coherence, clarity, sense and conciseness in meaning. Thus, productive skills such as speaking and writing require advanced use of grammar to deliver unambiguous meanings. English punctuation takes account of meaning. For example, when writing a text, the use of punctuation marks should be followed to avoid sentences interfering with one another. Fitria (2018: 246) points out that punctuation in writing indicate areas where a stop, pause, question, introduction, omission and other forms of expressions are observed.

The process of writing a formal academic paper is arduous as it requires the students to use correct words or structure to avoid committing errors. Moe and Toe (2020: 361) stress that inadequacy of grammatical knowledge exposes students to challenges ranging from sentence construction or choosing the correct words to express their thoughts correctly. A command of grammar in writing allows the students to realise that some combinations of words are practically possible in English while others are impractical. For example, a fluent writer of English can easily identify that *Old cars are now much cheaper* is a grammatically correct English sentence whereas *Old cars now much are cheaper* is not, due to the position of the word '*much*' in the second example. The deficiency in English writing jeopardies students' chances to produce well-defined sentences due to poor grammar competency. Gayo and Widodo (2018: 59) point out that it is paramount to apply English grammar in order to produce a good writing. A writing skill requires language capabilities such as vocabulary and grammar to retain

fluency. Vazariah and Rozimela (2020: 232) opine that to compose a faultless piece of a writing requires a student to master language and the structure of a text and its grammar. The adherence of a good grammar curtails the preponderance of grammatical errors in writing.

Grammar knowledge enables the students to understand every word that they are exposed to when listening, writing, speaking and reading. Marzulina, Mukminin, Erlina, Astrid, Holandiyah and Habibi (2019: 1848) argue that when grammar is inaccurately applied or misunderstood in listening, writing, speaking and reading, the intended message is either disturbed or distorted. Grammar is the foundation for writing. Zuhriyah (2017: 48) stresses that the benefit of competency in grammar amongst the four English language skills is to facilitate meaning. Grammar draws the students' attention to linguistic forms while constructing the meaning in their text. The incorporation of accurate grammar is a cardinal aspect of any good piece of writing. Wornyo (2016: 24) argues that productive skills such as speaking and writing ought to conform to the word order rules of the language in question. Grammar is a meaning-making resource for writing. It prescribes how language should be used in writing. Abdullah, Yunus and Hashim (2019: 302) point out that when students are impeccable in grammar rules, their language production will advance and so will their language achievement. The relationship between grammar and writing is to secure correctness in written expression. Meaning in writing is governed by accurate grammar usage. Effendi, Rokhyati, Rachman, Rakhmawati, and Pertiwi (2017: 42) opine that developing grammar fluency of a language affects the mastery of writing. A possession of a satisfactory grammar knowledge enhances the outcomes of the writing skills.

The sufficient competence in producing correct sentences is determined by grammar accuracy. In a given example below, the verb 'kicks' agree with the subject 'John'. Subject and verb must agree in number to deliver a complete thought. The relationship between a subject of a sentence and verb is governed by the grammatically correct English writing. When a student adheres to grammar rules by unifying the subject and a verb in writing makes it easier to be understood.

```
                        Sentence
                       /        \
                      /          \
                  Subject      Predicate
                     |          /      \
                     |         /        \
                     |        /          \
                   John    kicks  the    ball
```
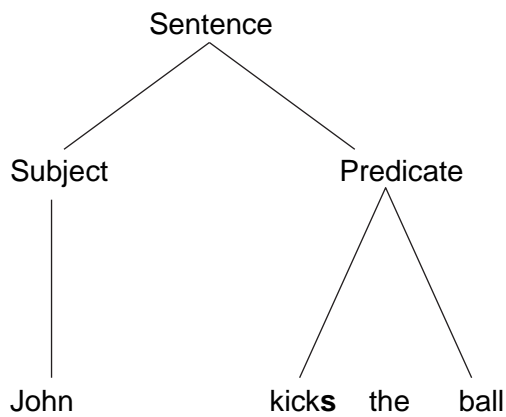
Figure 2: Sentence structure

The idea of good writing is defined by the adherence of a good grammar. Shigini (2020: 102) finds that paucity of grammar competency propels students to commit errors and writing in the target language becomes difficult for a majority of students irrespective of their levels of education. Improper application of grammar in writing minimises the students' ability to deliver a cohesive and contextual content. Poor grammar knowledge propels the students to commit errors in writing and inhibits them to make progress in their studies. Wornyo (2016: 23) points out that inadequate English grammar command or poor language proficiency poses negative effects on the performance of the students in their various disciplines and for that matter their academic progress. The insufficient grammar knowledge affects the students' papers overall evaluation. Fitria (2018: 241) remarks that for students to write clearly, it is vital for them to demonstrate a comprehension of the basic system of a language such as knowledge of punctuation, sentence structure, vocabulary and grammar. Grammatical accuracy in writing is a remediation tool in eradicating errors.

2.5 GRAMMATICAL ERRORS

Onwuegbuzie (2017: 111) defines grammatical errors as instances of improper, unconventional, or controversial usage, such as a subject-verb disagreement or an inapplicability of a verb tense. As observed by Özkayran and Yılmaz (2020: 50) and Garner (2012), grammatical error is a term used in prescriptive grammar to describe instances of imprecise forms, unconventional, or controversial usage, such as a misplaced modifier or an inappropriate verb tense. In short, grammatical error describes an event in language use whereby flawed forms in semantics meanings and use are witnessed.

The most common error that is committed by the non-native English writers is lack of agreement between the subject and the verb. In order to avoid grammatical errors, a verb needs to 'match' its subject. Grammatical error is a term dominant in a prescriptive grammar to depict instances of erroneous, uncommon, or controversial usage, such as a misplaced modifier or an inappropriate verb tense. This concept refers to non-target-like production or the incorrectness use of the grammatical forms in a sentence. Krishnasamy (2015: 51) remarks that grammatical errors in writing are caused by several factors such as language transfer, inadequate grammar knowledge and ignorance of learners of the grammar rules. For instance, Ferris and Hedgcock (2005: 265) point out that ESL writers habitually face various challenges ranging from of issues related to verbs, for example, errors in verb tense, errors in form including formation of target-like tenses, passive constructions, modal constructions, and subject-verb agreement. Kolln and Gray (2013: 58) point out instances of subject-verb disagreement by providing these examples below:

*We **was** at the movies last night.*

*He **don't** work here anymore.*

Kolln and Gray (2013: 58) stress that the subject-verb pairings in these sentences sound acceptable in some dialects of English that are different from the standard English. These sentences were supposed to start thus:

We were;
He doesn't

Onwuegbuzie (2017: 111) points out that grammatical errors have the potential to obstruct effective written or spoken communication. The inappropriate use (or avoidance) of grammatical items in writing obscure meaning. Ferris and Hedgcock (2005: 265) stress that L2 writers struggle with drawing distinctions between the various subclasses of nouns (count/non-count, abstract, collective, and so on) or their implications for plural or possessive endings, use of articles and other determiners, or subject-verb agreement.

As observed by Hsu (2013: 513), Burt and Kiparsky (1972), grammatical errors belong to local errors which are linguistically morphological, lexical, syntactic, and

orthographic errors, while global errors explain communicative errors which demonstrate that L2 learners misinterpret conversational messages.

2.6 MISTAKES AND ERRORS

Mistakes and errors are frequently observed in English non-native students' writings. Nevertheless, mistakes and errors are outwardly identical, therefore, it is important to put a distinction between them in order to analyse them from a proper position. Gayo and Widodo (2018: 61) stress that mistakes are intentional or unintentional language deviants and can be self-corrected by their writers. Mistakes occur when a language learner feels stressed, nervous, tired, anxious and due to a learner's slips of tongue or a pen (Sobhi 2019: 53). A mistake occurs when a language learner fails to utilise a known grammatical system correctly or due to fatigue, mispronunciation and slip of a pen while writing. Eng, Luyue and Lim (2020: 934) stress that while both native and second language students can commit mistakes, however, native speakers are easy to recognise and are usually self-corrigible.

Richards (1971) as cited in Khatter (2019: 366) categorise errors as errors of competence and errors of performance, the former occurs when a non-native language student of L2 applies rules which do not correspond to the norm of the L2, the latter are the result of a mistake in language use and manifest themselves as repetition, false starts, corrections or slips of the tongue.

In contrast, Nhut (2020: 25) view errors are systematic deviations demonstrating students' level of competency. Errors are language forms that deviate from the rules of the target language that violate or stand against the expectations of literate adult native speakers. Students' errors develop due to lack of linguistic knowledge and awareness rather than performance (Sobhi 2019: 52). Errors demonstrate insufficient language competence and it reflects a student's current stage of L2 development. Goldsmith and Sujaritjan (2020: 77) define errors as local and global errors, the former do not inhibit writing or communication and include nouns, verbs, articles, prepositions and auxiliary verb errors. While with local errors the meaning is not lost, global errors are severe as they interfere with communication or writing process by tempering with the meaning. These errors include inappropriate word order errors or wrong words, these result in the loss of meaning.

Errors indicate the progressive advancement of the students towards their language goals, and highlights what the learners have yet to learn (Goldsmith & Sujaritjan 2020: 77). Richards (1974), in Houssos (2020: 63) concurs that the students' errors demonstrate the state of the learner's language knowledge and the approaches in which a second language is learnt. Errors are essential devices that demonstrate the extent of competency of a student. However, it is worth noting that errors in writing affect the readability and quality of a piece of work (Shigini 2020:101). Non-native users of English often create errors and mistakes when they construct meanings in the TL. Goldsmith and Sujaritjan (2020: 77) point out that a student who commits a mistake capable to notice and to rectify such a mistake while an error is unknown to the student committing it, as such, the student is incapable of self-correction without the intervention of the guidance.

2.7 CAUSES OF ERRORS

Moe and Toe (2020: 362) point out that inadequate materials and underqualified English language teachers are both the causes of students' errors. Nel and Swanepoel (2010: 54) finds that teachers who are not adequately competent in English often do not know which tenses to apply in different contexts and consequently teach the form of the tense (e.g., *watch – are watching)* instead of the function. This suggests that their teaching focuses squarely on *how* to form a particular function instead of *when* to use a grammatical construction. Other causes of errors are listed below:

2.7.1 Simplification

Moe and Toe (2020: 362) point out that simplification occurs when students reduce a complex aspect of grammar to a much simpler set of rules and reflects a process that is used when messages need to be conveyed with limited language resources. They do not have enough knowledge about language rules so that they try to use simple structures instead of complex structures.

2.7.2 Language Transfer

Moe and Toe (2020: 362) stress that interference or language transfer of first language of a student interferes and obstructs them from acquiring the second language. These errors called 'inter-lingual errors' influence greatly the language proficiency of students

(Corder, 1987). Negative transfer or interference refers to using a native language rule or pattern inappropriately in the target language.

2.7.3 Fossilisation

Saville-Troike (2012: 198) views fossilisation as a stable state in SLA where students cease their interlanguage development before they reach target norms despite continuing L2 input and passage of time. Fossilised errors are not likely to affect comprehension although they might be stigmatised due to the fact that they often reflect errors that are typical of very basic-level students.
E.g. She never play games but she like watching TV
Last night she watch TV till 2 am.

2.7.4 Lack of the knowledge of the rules

Moe and Toe (2020: 362) stress that lack of the knowledge of rules contribute towards the students' errors. When students of L2 do not have sufficient knowledge about the rules of English language, this results into the errors and mistakes in English use and hinders the language learning. For example, in English grammar a noun is a word that comes after an article (a, the) and can take inflections for possessive (-'s) and plural (-s). English non-native students who accumulated minimal knowledge about a possessive -'s and plural –s might struggle to use words such as *learners*, *learner's* and *learners'* in writing.

2.8 TAXONOMY OF ERRORS IN WRITING

Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982) cited in Hikmah (2020: 2) highlights that errors are categories such as omission, addition, mis-formation, and mis-ordering. These categories of errors explain the position where errors occur in writing. The occurrence of these errors reveals how written materials differ and somehow deviate from the target-language form. Hayati (2019: 84) points out that errors in this area are mostly due to incomplete application of the rule in target language.

2.8.1 Omission

Ellis (1997: 18) defines omission as an act of leaving out an item that is required for an utterance or sentence to be graded grammatically correct. Similarly, Gayo and Widodo (2018: 65) view omission as an error in the deletion or obliteration of the

English language items from a sentence. It is an error that is presented by the lacuna of the other mandatory grammatical item that qualifies a sentence to be considered grammatical accurate. This type of an error occurs when some necessary components such as, verb, articles or punctuation are omitted in the student's writing. Dulay *et al.* (1982) cited by Setyaningrum and Fatmawaty (2020: 45) find that grammatical morphemes, such as verbs, articles, nouns, prepositions, inflections, are omitted more often than the content morphemes which carry the meaning. The omission of these items in a sentence causes confusion in writing. Yule (2010: 162) argues that the acts of regular omission of functional morphemes such as articles, prepositions or inflections (e.g. plural -s, past tense -ed) has led to the characterisation of this type of aphasic speech as agrammatic; in agrammatic speech, the grammatical markers are missing.

Ellis (1997: 18) points out that students commit errors of omission by leaving out the article 'a' and 'the' and leave the –*s* off plural nouns. The disregard of the functional morphemes (e.g. articles, prepositions) and inflections (e.g. plural -s, past tense -ed) gives rise to the omission error. Hayati (2020: 82) finds that students commit omission error in the category of auxiliary usage. See the sentences below:

He so sad   *(He was so sad)*

You from rich family.   *(You are from rich family)*

I also a vegetarian.   *(I am also a vegetarian)*

Gayo and Widodo (2018: 66) find that students commit the errors in morphological level which includes omitting the inflection –*es* and -*'s,* derivation omission of inflection –*ing* and –*er,* omission of preposition *to* and *in,* omission of article*,* copula *be*; omission of *be* is and *am*, personal pronoun; omission of personal pronoun *it,* and omission of auxiliary *has.*

2.8.2 Addition

Hikmah **(**2020: 2) defines addition as a type of error that happen when the students add an unnecessary word or phrase. Dulay, Burt *et al.* (1982) cited by Setyaningrum, and Fatmawaty (2020: 45) view addition as one of the preposition's errors that is characterised by the presence of an item that must not appear in a well-formed utterance. It is a type of an error that surfaces when more unnecessary or redundant parts of words occur, for instance, inclusion of the modal and verb *be* or adding –*s* to

nouns which are similar in forms for both singular and plural forms, or uncountable nouns items that carry the same meaning are attached to a sentence. For example, Tibbetts 1969: 69) points out that the phrase *life experience* is redundant in most context because an individual always attains experience by living. Gayo and Widodo (2018: 66) finds that addition errors occur at the morphological level:

*Some of them can jump to 30 **feets** in the air.*

*Cockroach is **a insects.***

Hikmah **(**2020: 3) finds that students commit addition errors by writing sentences appearing below:

Because health is <u>the</u> expensive (Addition of article)

Firstly, the students can find their skill <u>in</u> here (Addition of preposition)

2.8.3 Mis-formation

Dulay *et al* (1982), in Setyaningrum, and Fatmawaty (2020: 47) view mis-formation error as an incorrect presence of an item in an utterance. Hikmah **(**2020: 3) define mis-formation error as the wrong form of the structure. Mis-formation is the inappropriate use of a particular form in writing. According to Setyaningrum, and Fatmawaty (2020: 47) mis-formation appears in the sentence below:

In the sixth grade, I have to go to a study tour ***At** the sixth grade, I have to go to a study tour)*

My first job is difficult to me *My first job is difficult **for** me*

2.8.4 Mis-ordering

Ellis (1997: 18) defines mis-ordering as sequencing words or utterances in the wrong order. Hikmah (2020: 3) stresses that mis-ordering errors occur when the writer puts an item in the incorrect place in a construction. Mis-ordering is the inaccurate word order in a sentence. Mis-ordering can happen when a head noun *car* in the following noun phrase *big car* is placed before the modifier resulting in erred writing such as *car big*. Setyaningrum, and Fatmawaty (2020: 49) demonstrate that mis-ordering error can be identified in the sentence below:

*We leave the house **about at** 7 o' clock* *We leave the house **at about** 7 o'clock*

2.9 LANGUAGE TRANSFER

Slabakova (2016: 422) views L1 transfer as grammatical knowledge which can be traced back to the influence of the native language. Transfer refers to an impact that arises from the established native language explicitly exerted directly into the process of acquiring a second language. Amin (2017: 32) states that transfer happens when students strive to communicate in the TL. It occurs as a result of linguistic factors including inadequate linguistic knowledge, which comprises of different levels of language utilisation. Amiri and Puteh (2017: 143) assert that in order to understand a text, learners tend to translate the TL into their native language at the sentence and paragraph levels.

As observed by Zhou (2020: 28), Odlin (1989), language transfer is caused by the similarities and dissimilarity between languages impact, which can affect different levels of language such as phonology, vocabulary, grammar, discourse and others. Brogan and Son (2015: 47) stress that during the first phase of L2 learning, language students whose L1 is typologically related to the TL tend to rely on the structural entities of their L1 when writing and speaking in the L2. Malaki (2020: 333) attest that language transfer manifests when the students frequently revert to the structural patterns and parameters of their L1 during L2 production.

2.9.1 Levels of language transfer

Transfer can be beneficial or negative towards learning the L2, depending on the distance between the L1 and L2 (VanPatten & Williams 2015: 20). The occurrence of transfer can result in facilitation or hindrance of the L2 learning. Khosroshahi (2019: 40) points out that language transfer is classified into two opposing roles, a facilitating role of L1 that enables a student to utilise L1 features in L2 production resulting in positive transfer and negative transfer resulting from the absence of such an equivalent correspondence.

2.9.1.1 Positive transfer

Bai and Qin (2018: 306) view positive transfer as the type of transfer that enables or facilitates language learning in another situation. Zhou (2020: 28) defines positive transfer as transfer of facilitation to the successor. In the process of second language learning, students will have an influence on second language learning due to the

grammar rules of their L1. The typological proximity between L1 and L2 is the determining factor that facilitates L2 learning. Yule (2010: 191) stresses that if L1 and L2 share similar features, for example, placing of the letters 's', or 'es', at the end of a word then the L2 student may benefit from the positive transfer of L1 grammatical knowledge to the L2. When there is a grammatical alignment between the L1 and the TL, this gives rise to positive transfer and accelerates the progress of learning the target language resulting in a TL like second language form. Houssos (2020: 67) argues that similarities between the L1 and TL in vocabulary, phonetics, syntax, grammar helps students to learn the second language easier.

The identical features that exist between L1 and L2 are beneficial for an L2 learner to learn the L2. As observed by Hummel (2014: 139) and Master (1987), students whose native language comprises of the articles used similarly to the articles *a*, *an*, and *the* in English tend to acquire the English articles faster than those whose native language does not carry similar articles. Saville-Troike (2012: 37) highlights that positive transfer (facilitation) occurs when the identical structure is applicable in both languages, as in the transfer of a Spanish plural morpheme -*s* on nouns to English (e.g. *lenguajes* to *languages*).

2.9.1.2 Negative transfer

Qin (2017: 28) refers to negative transfer as the interfering resulting from the native language in second language acquisition. Zhao (2019: 940) points out that negative transfer is referred to as interference of the previously acquired items of L1 when they are incorrectly transferred or associated with subsequent learning of the L2. Negative transfer is the improper transfer of the native language rules which impede or result in a harmful influence on the command of the rules of the L2. Yule (2010: 191) argues that negative transfer occurs when L2 students transfer L1 aspects that contradict with the L2, for example, inserting an adjective after the noun, resulting in negative transfer and it may render the L2 written expression difficult to comprehend. For example, Sepedi sentence construction usually varies with that of English. Thus, a sentence such as, *koloi e ntsho* (the black car) sounds grammatically acceptable but if a student translates this verbatim into English it will be 'the car black'.

Hamdi (2016: 644) finds that the inappropriate lexical choices blur communication by making the message misunderstood. Negative transfer results in error occurrences as

well as incorrect forms and structures, which are just the results coming from the interference of the L1. Bhela (1999: 22) stresses that if the structures of the two languages are distinctly different, then one could expect a relatively high frequency of errors to occur in L2. Negative transfer occurs through the application of L1 elements in the context of L2 acquisition that impede production of meanings and enable errors to happen. Negative transfer jeopardises accurate meaning production. Nel and Swanepoel (2010: 54) find that non-native English language students confuse pronouns *he* and *she* due to non-existence of the corresponding words in isiZulu and most South African indigenous language to demonstrate gender identification. The failure by non-native English students to use corresponding grammatical gender system in writing might confuse the reader. The absence of an equivalent pronoun in L1 to compliment the English pronoun may result in gender confusion. English is a gender marked language. Grammatical gender system *he (masculine)* denotes a male while *she (feminine)* refers to female. On the contrary, native languages such as Sepedi do not make this distinction in the way that English does. The 'o' which is gender neutral refers to either a male or female. For example:

He/she writes a letter.

O ngwala lengwalo.

Yule (2010: 191) points out that negative transfer (interference) is more dominant in the early stages of L2 learning and often diminishes as the learner develops fluency in the L2.

Ling-nan (2018: 133) points out that negative transfer manifest when the native language habits are featured into the second language learning which cause misunderstanding and errors in production. Yule (2010: 19) stress that negative transfer of L1 features can often be inferred from forms in the second language which are unlike any that are likely to be produced by a non-native speaker of the L2, or are an integration of elements which would not occur in monolingual speech. The difference in linguistic structures between L1 and the L2 results in impediment to L2 learning. Khosroshahi (2019: 40) stress that one such a difference between L1 and L2 can be established in the subsystem of morphemes, which represent the smallest grammatical units in a language. Various languages carry distinct patterns of morphemes due to their structural differences.

Amin (2017: 34) stresses that the negative transfer ramification includes misunderstandings and the carryover of culture-specific knowledge from a situation of intra-cultural communication to a context of intercultural communication. For example, a word such as *lobola* which refers to the payment of money or cattle that a groom's family pays to the bride before a wedding commences originates from African culture. Thus, the word *'lobola'* cannot be used synonymously with 'dowry'. These two terms originate from different cultural backgrounds. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines the word dowry as money and/or property that, in some societies, a wife or her family must pay to her husband when they get married. Chisanga and Kamwangamalu (1997: 92) opines that in South African context linking the word *lobola* to *dowry* is extremely misleading.

Zhou (2020: 29) argues that negative transfer on students' English learning process is influenced by vocabulary, syntax, grammar, thinking mode, and cultural differences. In the acquisition of second language, the negative transfer is a big problem, which brings difficulties and mistakes in learning (Lin & Wen 2013: 732). In addition, Ahamed and Othman (2019: 1) find that the students commit lexical errors in their essay writing due to some factors such as negative transfer and insufficient vocabulary knowledge. When students are writing essays, they tend to use forms and meaning of their native language in L2 writings.

2.10 LANGUAGE TRANSFER IN WRITING

Karim and Nassaji (2013: 120) point out that students who learned how to plan, develop ideas, revise, and edit their writing in their L1 may use the same strategies when they are composing in their L2. However, lower-level proficiency students may not be able to successfully transfer such L1-based strategies because they have not yet reached a level of linguistic knowledge where they can linguistically compose a text in the L2. Failure to merge the L1 and L2 may result in negative transfer in writing. Qin (2017: 28) stresses that negative transfer results in errors as well as incorrect forms and structures emanating from the interference of the first L1. The application of the L1 in L2 requires students to have an adequate level of proficiency in the L2. Qin (2017: 32) finds that when non-English students use language transfer in writing they commit errors ranging from syntactic, lexical and discourse errors.

2.11 EVIDENCE OF LANGUAGE TRANSFER

Bhela (1999: 22) points out that second language students demonstrate ability to accumulate structural entities of the target language but appear to find difficulties in organising this knowledge into appropriate, coherent structures. In addition, Karim and Nassaji (2013: 118) attest that L2 students' productive and receptive skills are influenced by their L1 patterns and that similarities and differences between L1 and L2 are important predictors of ease and difficulty of L2 learning. The differences and similarities between L1 and L2 grammatical structures are considered to be important factors causing L1 transfer in the process of learning the target language. Odlin (1989: 27) points out that the students' ability to consciously or unconsciously judge that the L1 and the L2 are similar is a determining factor in causing such influences. Ling-nan (2018: 133) points out that language transfer is classified into phonological -, lexical - syntactical and discourse transfer.

2.12 CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS

Saville-Troike (2012: 197) define Contrastive Analysis (hereafter CA1), as an approach established to compare and contrast the linguistic systems or subsystems of L1 and L2 languages so as to formulate their similarities and differences. Shousha, Farrag, and Althaqafi (2020: 48) define CA1 is a theory that provides explanation for ESL students' errors based on the comparison of L1 and L2 to determine similarities and differences. CA1 is a rigorous comparison between the NL and the TL to identify, predict and explain the errors made by students.

Hummel (2014: 64) asserts that the main objective of CA1 is to carry out a structural analysis of the L1 and the L2, in order to determine areas of linguistic contrast. Moreover, Alobo (2015: 634) points out that CA1 goal is to provide insights into the similarities and differences between languages, predict and explain problems in L2 learning and suggest teaching approaches to create training programmes or materials that helps in language teaching. CA1 serves as a linguistic mechanism to examine the disparities that lies between two languages in an effort to identify problem areas for language students.

CA1 assumes that native language structural components that are similar to those of the target native language make it simpler for students to learn the L2 while those that

are in contrast hinder the learning process (Shigini 2020: 18). The CA1 concurs with the Behaviourism theory which proposes that existing L2 habits acquired while learning L2 can be transferred into the acquisition of the L2. This is based on the assumption that the similarities facilitate learning of L2, while differences cause hindrances. This suggests that if two languages share identical linguistic features then it will be easier for a student to learn the L2. However, if the linguistic features vary then it will be difficult for the learner to learn the L2 due to the L1 interference in L2 learning. Hummel (2014: 64) points out that areas of contrast were found to be exactly where it would be possible to predict difficulties to occur while areas of similarity were those a student was predicted to learn easily. Amara (2015: 70) points out that the inception of the CA1 is based on the assumption that all errors occur due to native language transfer and are pernicious towards the student's L2 development. According to CA1 the difficulties in learning the L2 emanate from the language structures of L1 and L2. Khoshhal (2017: 91) stress that when structures of the native language and second language vary this to lead to the interference to occur.

Al-khresheh (2016: 332) points out that there are two positions or versions of the CA1, namely the strong and weak version. Thyab (2016: 1) argues that the strong version suggests that the number of errors an L2 student commits could be equated to the degree of difference between the students of L1 and L2. Errors can be studied by establishing which elements of L1 and L2 are similar and contrasting enough to be transferred from L1 to L2. The main cause for difficulty and error in language learning is found in L1–L2 differences (VanPatten & Benatti 2015: 107). L1 interference constitutes the main obstacle to L2 learning. In other words, the difficulties in learning the L2 is language transfer. Thyab (2016: 2) stresses that the weak version suggests that errors that an L2 student faces depends on the degree of interference. Furthermore, Gass and Selinker (2008: 97) stress that weak version starts with an analysis of students' recurring errors. In other words, it begins with what students do and then attempts to account for those errors on the basis of NL–TL differences. The weak version, which came to be part of error analysis, gained credence largely due to the failure of predictive contrastive analysis.

Hummel (2014: 65) points out that CA1 did not take into account that as students' progress in their mastery of the target language, the type and frequency of errors

change. Errors committed in the later stage of learning are not necessarily the same ones that occurred in the initial stages. CA1 looks only into the contrastive features of the two languages, that is L1 and the TL, while Error Analysis is concerned with the student's language and the process of language learning (Hamdi 2016: 644).

2.13 RATIONALE FOR THEORY IN THE STUDY

Theoretical frameworks provide assumptions, concepts, and forms of explanation about the study. Leavy (2017: 129) argues that theoretical frameworks investigate how researchers engage in the processes of establishing and re-establishing meanings through daily interactions. This study is premised on the Error Analysis (EA) theory.

VanPattern and Benati (2015: 3) define EA as a procedure of carefully examining the L2 learner output with particular attention to errors. Khansir (2012: 1029) stresses that EA is a linguistic analysis that compares the errors made in the TL and its form. Hummel (2014: 66) adds that EA procedure includes a collection of learner language identification, descriptions, explanation and evaluation of errors. It also serves as an instrument that draws attention to the creative processes that guide the learner's L2 development. Khansir (2012: 1029) corroborates this by stating that analysis of errors helps in identifying the learner's linguistic problems and needs at a certain level of language learning. EA contributes to the view that errors provide a window into the learner's L2 development system (Hummel 2014: 66). Therefore, EA can provide insights into the process of language learning.

Khoshhal (2017: 91) points out that EA substituted Contrastive Analysis (CA1) in the 1970's, which was a trial to effectively predict errors that learners make by identifying the structural disparities that exist between their native language and the target language. It can then be concluded that EA came to existence due to the shortfall associated with CA1. Saville-Troike (2006: 34) views CA1 as an approach in SLA which foretells and defines the learner's difficulties based on contrasting L1 and L2 to ascertain similarities and disparities. Solati (2020: 893) defines CA1 a set of procedures used to compare and contrast the linguistic systems or subsystems of languages so as to formulate their similarities and differences as well as a theoretical method of drawing comparison and analysis of the two distinct language structures.

Alobo (2015: 632) argues that EA was introduced by Corder in 1974 with the view that the greatest depth of knowledge in second language learning derives from the scrupulous analysis of students' errors. This is achieved by identifying the built-in syllabus of the language student. EA intends to investigate students' errors in the process of second language learning. This analysis serves as a theory in SLA which covers internal focus on students' creative skills to formulate language (Saville-Troike 2006: 187). Hummel (2014: 65) defines EA as an approach to L2 acquisition involving the description and classification of errors to gain insight into the student's current underlying knowledge of the L2 system. EA is an approach in language learning which categorises errors committed by the L2 student in order to understand the level of proficiency the L2 student possesses. It asserts that students' errors are inherent within the language system and are not necessarily NL induced (Alobo 2015: 633). EA holds a view that not all errors are attributed to L1 interference and explains that there are other sources of error in the process of L2 learning other than interference of the student's NL. Thus, errors that students commit while learning English language occur due to numerous linguistic factors other than the native language transfer.

Al-Khresheh (2016: 50) argues that EA serves to provide data from which interferences about the nature of the language learning process can be made. The EA exposes the process of learning a language. EA covers wide range of issues, it identifies and detect errors and also explains the reasons for occurrence of errors (Amiri & Puteh 2017: 141). In addition, Amoakohene (2017: 56) stresses that the results of error based analysis of students serves as an effective means of improving the language of students as it gives them an insight into some errors that they usually create in their writing. EA provides evidence for a much more complex view of the learning process- one in which the student is seen as an active participant in the formation of and revision of hypotheses regarding the rules of the target language (Khansir 2012: 1029).

EA is applied by teachers to identify and remedy errors that occur in the process to learning a new language. Amara (2015: 70) argues that EA is based on the assumption that errors are natural and healthy part of the language learning process- a natural 'by –product' of the student's step by step discovery of the second language's rules through a process of trial and error. Once the causes or sources of errors are established, it is probable to decide on the remedy. Sermsook, Liamnimitr and

Pochakorn (2017: 102) states that EA possesses two objectives, namely: the theoretical objective which concerns itself with what and how learners learn a language and the practical one which is concerned with how to assist students learn a language by employing the knowledge they already acquired.

Richards and Schmidt (2010: 201) point out that EA can be carried out in order to:

- identify strategies which learners use in language learning
- try to identify the causes of learner errors
- obtain information on common difficulties in language learning as an aid to teaching or in the preparation of teaching materials.

2.13.1 Intra-lingual and Inter-lingual errors

Gass and Silinker (2008: 103) point out that there are two types of errors within EA framework, namely, intra-lingual and inter-lingual errors. Phuket and Othman (2015: 99) view intra-lingual errors as the kinds of errors that occur due to inadequate learning of a language such as incorrect application of grammatical rules and unawareness of the restrictions of rules. These are the kind of errors that occur when ESL students depend on their native language while using English.

Raissah and Aziz (2020: 258) highlight that these errors occur during the first phase of learning a new language thus, students who are not accustomed to the target language system rely on their native language system. Yule (2010: 198) stresses that intra-lingual errors (also known as developmental errors) are inaccurate utterances that represent incomplete learning of L2 rules or over-generalisations. Hummel (2014: 65) finds that students of English tend to over-generalise the rule of the past tense formation by erroneously adding an affix *'–ed'* at the end of a verb: *'I called'* is correct, but *'I goed'* or '*She hurted me'* are not. Intra-lingual errors are inappropriate language forms that are produced by a student of L2.

2.13.2 Classification of intra-lingual errors

Richard (1974) cited in Angguni (2020: 79) classifies the intra-lingual errors into four categories, this include: over-generalisation, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of the rules, and false concept hypothesised. Similary, Shousha *et al.*, (2020: 48) points out that intra-lingual errors are caused by the target language itself due to various sources: incomplete rule application (simplification of complicated

rules), overlooking the exceptions to rules, over-using the rules or over-generalisation in a way where teachers explain the language but do not give correct models of the target language.

2.13.3 Over-generalisation

Angguni (2020: 79) avers that over-generalisation occurs when an L2 student commits a deviant structure on the basis of the experience of other structure in the target language. Over-generalisation simply refers to errors caused by extension of target language rules to inappropriate contexts. For example, forming plural by adding -*s* to even irregular plurals. Further, non-native students of English tend to commit errors such as *I am having a pain* instead of *I have a pain*. This error emanates from the overuse of the present progressive tense in language. Hummel (2014: 24) points out that over-generalisation is the utilisation of a deviant rule or structure in contexts in which is indecorous; for example, a student might write '*mouses'* instead of '*mice*,' thereby incorporating the regular plural suffix '–*s'* on a noun constituting an exception to the rule.

2.13.4 Ignorance of rule restrictions

Rana *et al.,* (2019: 27) argues that ignorance of rule restrictions occurs when the students flout the rules of the existing structure by applying rules to the contexts where they are not applicable. James (1998) cited in Angguni (2020: 79) concurs that this happens when the L2 student does not adhere to the structure of the target language. These errors result from the avoidance or failure to use certain TL structures. They happen when the L2 student fails to observe the restrictions of existing structures. For instance, when an English language student fails to observe a subject-verb agreement when the subject is singular and the verb prefixed with an 's' but due to their ignorance, they do not add the 's'.

2.13.5 Incomplete application of the rules

Ramli (2020: 3) views incomplete application of the rules as an error that happens a student does not apply the rules completely. For example, *'You student'* instead of *'You are student'*. Rana *et al.,* (2019: 27) stress that incomplete application of the rules is a type of error that occurs when the students fail to utilise a fully developed structure.

They tend to use a statement form instead of a question, or a question word for a statement.

2.13.6 False concept hypothesised

Angguni (2020: 79) points out that learners' faulty understanding of distinctions of target language items leads to false conceptualisation. Ramli (2020: 3) stresses that false concept hypothesised refers errors produced when the learners make mistake in formulating own hypotheses about the grammatical rules learned: such as *'She is not go to school yesterday'* instead of '*She did not go to school yesterday'*. The word 'is' and 'did' might have the same use but actually apply in different contexts of a sentence. Students' faulty understanding of distinctions of TL items leads to false concept hypothesised.

EA approach was influential in drawing attention to the creative processes that guide the student's L2 development. It also contributed the view that errors can provide evidence into language development of the learner's interlanguage, strategies or procedures the student is using in the discovery of the new language. Hummel (2014: 66) points out that the shortcomings in the EA is that focusing on students' errors takes attention away from what students are able to do correctly in acquiring a new language and students also find alternative ways to avoid certain structures or patterns that cause them difficulties.

2.14. CONCLUSION

This chapter reviewed research literature on the impact of the native language as a hindrance on English non-native students from learning the target language. It focused on language transfer in the light of first entering students in the university. It is clearly observed that non-native student's native language and English grammar accuracy level impacts on their writing skills**.**

The next chapter discusses the research methodology.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Leedy and Ormrod (2015: 26) view research methodology as a common procedure a researcher may apply when undertaking a research project which, to some extent, prescribes the specific instruments the researcher prefers. This chapter deals with the research methodology that guided this study.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Terrell (2016: 97) defines research design, as a plan for a study that gives an account of the groups the researcher will collect data from, how the data is collected, and at what stage the data will be analysed. In short, research design is a structure used to identify subjects, research sites, and data collection procedures to answer the research questions

The research design of this study was exploratory and the approach qualitative. Qualitative research is a situated activity that is concerned with understanding how individuals interpret their experiences, how they manufacture their worlds, and what meaning they relate to their experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016: 16). Further, Leavy (2017: 5) points out that exploratory design assists in filling in a void in knowledge about a contemporary or under-researched topic. It can tackle the topic from a different standpoint to produce new and emerging percipience. Leedy and Ormrod (2015: 386) view exploratory design as a two-phase mixed-methods design which allows the collection of the qualitative data in an effort to guide the planning and implementation of subsequent quantitative data collection.

Written grammar errors committed by non-native English students were explored; 3 English lecturers were interviewed on issues pertaining grammatical errors and content analysis (CA2) was used to identify various errors.

3.3 SAMPLING

Leedy and Ormrod (2015: 389) defines sampling as a process of identifying a subset of a population of people, another biological species, or inanimate objects; data collected from this subset used to draw conclusions about the population from which

it has come. Similarly, Leavy (2017: 76) view sampling as a selection of a number of individual cases from a larger population. From a population of about 600 students, the sample of the study was made up of 30 assignment scripts of English language first entering HENA011 and HENA012 students. Further, 4 English lecturers out of a total of 8 were selected.

The study employed purposeful sampling as typically used in qualitative research. Patton (2015: 264) views purposeful sampling as an approach through which 'information-rich cases' are obtained to address the research purpose and questions. The sampling strategy that was chosen produced rich information and was consistent with the methodological approach used.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION

Creswell (2009: 178) defines data collection as a procedural act undertaken to collect information through unstructured or semi-structured observations and interviews, documents, and visual materials, as well as establishing the protocol for recording information. In this study, semi structured interviews and Content Analysis (CA2) were used to obtain data relevant to the study's objectives and research questions.

3.4.1 Semi-structured interviews

Leedy and Ormrod (2015: 389) refer to semi-structured interviews as types of interviews whereby a researcher directly asks invariable questions but also asks individually modified follow-up questions in order to accumulate clarity regarding specific responses. Initially, the researcher was intended to interview 4 University of Limpopo (UL) HENA 011 and HENA012 lecturers. However, 1 lecturer withdrew from the study. Thus, the interviews were conducted with 3 lecturers to better understand issues related to errors committed by the students (see Appendix B).

Furthermore, Moser and Korstjens (2018: 14) stress that a semi-structured interview is more flexible in terms of changing the order of questions and for a more extensive follow-up participants' responses. This enabled the researcher to ask follow up questions during the interview session based on the answers given by the participants.

3.4.2 Students' assignments scripts

From a population of about 600 students, the sample of the study was made up of 30 assignment scripts of English language first entering HENA011 and HENA012 students. The researcher used random sampling to identify a sample that represents, as closely as possible, the population of the students. The checklist was used to note down various errors identified (see Appendix A). These errors were identified from the HENA011 and HENA012 30 assignment scripts.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

Marshall and Rossman (1999: 150) view data analysis as the procedure followed to establish order, structure and meaning to the volume of collected data. In this study, Content Analysis (CA2) was employed for the data collected through the checklist. Leavy (2017: 147) states that CA2 includes initial immersion into the content to secure a sense of the 'big picture', determining the components of coding, analysis and interpretation. Data collected through interviews from the English language lecturers was analysed through Thematic Analysis (TA). Maguire and Delahunt (2017: 3353) view TA as a procedure to identify themes or patterns within qualitative data.

Braun & Clarke (2006) as cited in Maguire and Delahunt (2017: 3354) presents linear six-phased method of thematic analysis process, these include, becoming familiar with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining themes, and writing-up. Thus, the data collected through semi structured interviews and CA2 were presented narratively in line with the TA phases outlined above.

Vaismoradi and Snelgrove (2019: 11) points out that TA facilitates evaluating the results of data analysis, improves rigour, and leads to deeper understandings of complex human phenomena for designing interventions for education, research and practice.

CA2 was employed to analyse data collected through the assignment's scripts. Leedy and Ormrod (2015: 102) view CA2 as a comprehensive and systematic investigation of the contents of a certain body of material such as, magazine advertisements, television shows, works of art and Internet websites with the intention of identifying patterns, themes, or biases within that material. In addition, Leavy (2017: 147) states that CA2 includes initial immersion into the content to secure a sense of the 'big

picture', determining the components of coding, analysis and interpretation. Thus, the researcher scrutinised the students' scripts in order to establish the characteristics or qualities of these scripts.

3.6 QUALITY CRITERIA

This study employed credibility, confirmability, dependability and transferability, in line with qualitative research. Korstjens and Moser (2018: 120) concurs that quality criteria for all qualitative research are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Each of these stances are discussed below.

3.6.1 Credibility

Credibility refers to the amount of confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings (Moser & Korstjens 2018: 121). To ascertain credibility, firstly, the researcher recorded and analysed all of the data gathered and presented it in a fair and unbiased manner as well as asked for feedback from participants on the data or its interpretation. Secondly, the researcher collected data in different contexts to make certain that the picture provided in the research is as full and complete as it can be. Lastly, the researcher collected data over a long period of time to ensure that the participants become used to the researcher and thus behave naturally.

3.6.2 Transferability

Transferability explains the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to other contexts or settings with other respondents (Moser & Korstjens 2018: 121). In line with transferability, the researcher disclosed the context of the study and a complete description of the study to the participants so that readers can determine to what extent the findings might be applicable to other contexts.

3.6.3 Dependability

Dependability involves participants' evaluation of the findings, interpretation and recommendations of the study such that all are supported by the data as received from participants of the study (Moser & Korstjens 2018: 121). Dependability is similar to consistency and reliability in quantitative research. To attain dependability, firstly, the researcher asked the participants to review the patterns in the data. Secondly, the study used triangulation, this method involves using multiple research techniques and

multiple sources of data in order to explore the issues from all feasible perspectives. Using the technique of triangulation aided dependability.

3.6.4 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the objectivity of research during data collection and data analysis (Mandal 2018: 592). To ensure confirmability, the researcher disclosed the details of the data on which claims or interpretations are based. The researcher will make the findings available to critics to examine the data and to confirm, modify or reject the researcher's interpretations.

3.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Creswell (2009: 107) argues that significance of the study carries the significance of the problem for various groups that may profit from reading and using the study. The study firstly seeks to determine the grammar errors non-native students commit while writing English at first year level. In addition, the study intends to contribute positively to assisting English lecturers identify errors non-native students often commit in English.

Moreover, the study aims to make an essential contribution to the developing area of research in written grammatical errors by exploring various errors the students commit. The findings may also contribute to the body of English knowledge, especially at the students' first year level when they would still be adjusting to the HE environment. The research may contribute positively to the existing studies on the errors committed in writing by the students. The results of this study may assist English language lecturers to identify the grammatical needs of the students and other linguistic knowledge that could be lacking from the students.

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Prior to data collection process commencement, the researcher observed the critical issues pertaining to the ethics and protection of the rights of participants. To ensure ethical conduct was maintained, the ethical implications were considered and adhered to.

Ethical protocols were maintained by applying for ethical clearance certificate as well as issuing letters of permission and consent forms to all the participants of the study.

Furthermore, privacy and confidentiality, respect and dignity, benefits and risks or harm of the participants were considered.

3.8.1 Turfloop Research Ethics Committee

The ethical integrity of the study was maintained by seeking permission from the Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) as the appropriate committee in the institution for any research involving human beings. After getting permission from TREC, permission to conduct research in the Department of languages was also sought from the UL Registrar. Further, a letter requesting for permission from the Department of Languages' HoD was written and sent to the HoD.

3.8.2 Interview Consent Letters

Interview consent letters were issued to all selected English language lecturers and all were requested to sign consent forms indicating that they agreed to participate in the interview (see Appendix D). The concept of informed consent has become a fundamental ethical practice in research involving human subjects (Mackey & Gass 2005: 26).

3.8.3 Privacy and confidentiality

All participants in the study were assured that their privacy and confidentiality would be protected and maintained throughout the study. The participants' right to privacy and confidentiality regarding anything that might be revealed about them was protected and kept confidential at all times. To ensure anonymity, the participants' identities were withheld; their names were not required in the interview instrument and all the interviews recordings were kept secret.

3.8.4 Benefits and risks or harm

The participants were informed that there would be no material gain in return for their participation. In addition, they were informed about their rights to terminate their participation at any time without being penalised and that they would not be forced to answer any questions that they would feel uncomfortable with.

The participants were assured that no physical harm or psychological discomfort would result from the nature of some of the questions. Further, the researcher informed the participants that their participation was voluntary and refusing to

participate or withdrawing from the study while it was in progress would not affect their profession or unwittingly put them in any undesirable position. Phakiti (2014: 49) concurs that participants need to be free to withdraw their participation and data for research use at any time.

3.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter outlined the methodology employed to solve the research problem; a plan that combined all the major parts of the research to work together. It also presented the population, sampling, data collection and analysis procedures that were followed in the study. Further, measures that were followed in order to enhance the quality of the research results were also outlined.

The following chapter will present the analysis and interpretation of the data collected through the procedures described in this chapter.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents and analyses the students' essays using a checklist (cf Appendix A) and the data collected from the semi-structured interviews (Appendix B) conducted with English Language Lecturers (ELLs). The aim of this study was to explore written grammar errors committed by UL first entering non-native English language students.

4.2 DATA COLLECTED ON ESSAY WRITING ERRORS

The process of learning English as a second language is guided by EA. This theory is characterised by set of approaches used to identify, describe and explain second language students' errors (VanPattern and Benati 2015: 113). Identification of errors included drawing a determination of units in the student's writing which deviated from English grammar. Describing of errors involved categorisation of errors according to the features of language (word class, sentence, tense, punctuation and paragraphing). Explanation involved accounting why errors were committed, whether errors occurred due to inter-lingual or intra-lingual factors (Saville-Troike 2006:42). Thus, the researcher was able to explore written grammar errors committed by UL first entering non-native English language students. These errors were analysed according to the three stages mentioned above.

Content Analysis (CA2) was employed to analyse the qualitative data obtained from the assignment scripts. The process of coding was used to organise data into a manageable, easily understandable, and analysable information. Coding is the process executed with the sole intention of assembling the material into pieces or segments of text in order to construct a general meaning of each chunk (Creswell 2009: 227). Coding data is the main approach of text analysis, therefore, the data that was collected through the students' assignment scripts were coded and analysed according to themes. The researcher ensured that information from the scripts is coded to prevent disclosure of their identities and find themes in order to identify categories. Thus, in order to obtain a sense of what the collected data might have indicated, the researcher identified themes and arranged each piece of data

accordingly. Such an exercise was important for analysing data qualitatively. The data was presented in the following themes: word classes, sentences, tense, punctuation and paragraphing.

Errors were organised into major categories of parts of speech, such as verb, noun, pronoun, adjective, adverb, preposition, determiner, and conjunction. Further, there were errors in sentences, tense, punctuation as well as Some Application of Grammar Structures. Each error was discussed under the following headings: potential error, actual error, frequency and comment.

Assignment checklist data complemented the semi-structured interviews data for the researcher to obtain in-depth information about the written grammar errors committed by UL first entering non-native English language students. The researcher obtained these scripts from one HENA011/HENA012 lecturer. 30 students' assignment scripts were numbered from 1-30, reviewed and marked. The evaluation checklist was organised to check 5 categories of errors in writing. These include parts of speech, sentence structure, tense, punctuation and paragraphing (Appendix A).

The assignment was about 'the importance of the correct use of parts of speech in English writing'.

4.2.1 Word classes

As observed by Aspse and Farneste (2018: 28) and Corder (1967: 161), analyses of the students' errors furnish the researcher with significant information about the language acquisition process such as the progress made by the students towards the attainment goal and the students can also learn from them. Hence, identified patterns of errors deriving from the checklist are presented below:

4.2.1.1. Noun

Findings of the study revealed that the students had a tendency of using a pluralised noun but used 'it' anaphorically to refer to an already pluralised noun, or, conversely, used 'they' anaphorically to refer to a singular noun. This error occurred 14 times, the highest number of them all.

These students accumulated insufficient knowledge in matching a singular noun with a singular pronoun. For example:

*A verb is a doing word that shows an activity, an occasion or a state. **They** are action words that describes an action or event.*

The students paired a singular demonstrative 'this' with a pluralised noun. This error occurred 4 times. For instance:

This verbs are notice only when you see a person.

Furthermore, the students confused a noun with a verb. The researcher discovered this error twice. The word 'extent' and 'extend' are pronounced similarly, however, they differ in their grammatical purpose as the word 'extent' serves as a noun to explain the degree or length of an object. Contrary, the word 'extend' is used as a verb to explain expansion of something.

*Specifically, adverbs provide a description of how, where, when, in what manner and to what **extent** something is done or happens.*

Thus, it was found that an error in using a matching a pluralised noun but used 'it' anaphorically to refer to an already pluralised noun of dominated the errors in this category.

4.2.1.2 Pronoun

Errors in the simultaneous use of a noun and pronoun usage accounted for 12 errors, the highest number compared to all errors in this category. A noun was preceded with a pronoun. Similarly, Wahyuni and Antoni (2019: 73) finds that students use dual objects (fish it…) in one sentence. These students did not understand that a pronoun is used to substitute a noun. This error could be result of L1 transfer.

A finite verb together with the subject, it makes a complete sentence i.e. she plays.

Verbs they are a doing word, it expresses action and it tells us what someone is doing.

Furthermore, 4 students committed errors in pronoun usage by using conflicting pronouns. Sumalinog (2018: 72) finds that students demonstrate problems in writing when using pronoun referents by shifting from a singular pronoun referent to plural pronoun referent even. A pronoun used in the previous sentence appeared in singular form but in the following sentence the anaphoric reference was done in plural form 'They'. These students seemed not to understand how pronouns and nouns work. The

students were either negligent, did not understand the relationship between nouns and pronouns or did not edit their assignments. For instance, if the anaphoric pronoun 'these' is referring the noun verb in line 17 then this confuses the reader since the verb is singular while the pronoun is plural.

It describes an action. An example would be play and said as. "let us play the last round of the match". These are useful because you cannot complete a sentence without using a verb in it.

A noun is a naming word. It names a person, thing (s) or places. They are often used in the writing of articles. They are often given to ordinary thing. It is used to show a courting between the noun and pronoun in a sentence.

Moreover, an error of confusing the pronoun 'it' with a possessive pronoun 'its' occurred 4 times. Khatter (2019: 374) finds that English pronouns are problematic due to the absence of exact equivalent counterparts in the students' native languages. The above-mentioned error reveals that these students seemed not to understand the grammatical circumstances that warrant the use of a pronoun 'it'. This error occurred when students used a possessive pronoun (its) instead of a pronoun (it) to represent the subject of the joined sentences.

Understanding the different parts of speech is important, its helps with how to join words together to make sentences.

4.2.1.3 Determiner

Field (2009: 10) states that indefinite article is placed before a vowel. Students placed an indefinite article (an) before a singular noun that begins with a consonant sound, or, conversely, an indefinite article (a) before a word that starts with a vowel sound. A confusion of an indefinite article prohibited these students from constructing correct sentences. The use of indefinite article '*an'* or '*a'* in a wrong context occurred 4 times.

Those are example of an pronoun.
A understanding of part of speech is also important for knowing how to correctly punctuate sentences.

Furthermore, a confusion of a contraction 'it's' with a possessive pronoun 'its' occurred 5 times. This error could have emanated from the fact that English and South African native languages do not share a similar possessive pronoun. The students misused the possessive determiner 'its' in a context where it was requiring 'it is' or it's. However, the contraction 'it's' is not recommended in academic writing.

The purpose of parts of speech is to indicate the functions of a word in a sentence regarding it's meaning and grammar.

Its important for students to know the parts of speech so that they can form sentences with more understanding and knowledge.

These students failed to insert an obligatory determiner before a singular noun. This error occurred 16 times, the highest number of them all in this category. Fitria (2018: 245) also finds that students omit a determiner before noun phrase.

The analysis reveal that this cohort of students struggled with the English determiner system. This can be attributed to the fact that native languages do not have a determiner system similar to English language.

Transitive verb has a noun that receives the action of the verb, it has both direct and indirect object.

Some verbs put subject into motion while other verbs clarify the subject in a meaningful way

4.2.1.4 Verb

The students omitted a modal verb that should have been placed after the word 'noun' to demonstrate an obligation. This error occurred 2 times.

A noun be placed before a verb

A part of speech is a traditional term for the major classes of words that grammatically distinguished in a language (parts of speech system.

The student was syntactically wrong in using a verb 'extend instead of noun 'extent'. This error was committed by 1 student.

Adverbs answers questions such as, how, when, in what way, where and to what extend.

4.2.1.5 Adjective

The students committed this error by placing an adverb (dangerously) before an object of a sentence. Hayati (2019: 85) finds that students place the adjective modifier after the noun, as this is the case in their native language languages. This error could have been a result of the direct translation of an L1 rule into English language or lack of proofreading to check the appropriate use of the word 'dangerously'.

COVID-19 is a dangerously disease.

This student used a noun word 'importance' instead of an adjective (important) to demonstrate the significance of the word 'capacities'. This constituted a problem in word class.

The grammatical feature demonstrates how the word capacities in importance just as linguistically inside the sentence.

The students confused an adjective word 'quite' with 'quiet'. The student erroneously inserted an adverb 'quite' while trying to indicate that 'Mariam' is silent.
Mariam is very quite.

4.2.1.6 Adverb

These students adopted a wrong word sequence. Thus, the position of the adverb failed to modify the verb. An adverb word 'happily' is morphologically derived from the adjective word 'happy'. This error could have been avoided by placing the adverb after the verb.

They all happily lived ever after.

4.2.1.7 Preposition

The vast majority of the students used wrong prepositions. Sumalinog (2018: 72) finds that students use prepositions *in, on* and *at* interchangeably when referring to a place, surface, or location in a place. This error demonstrated inadequate knowledge of preposition usage. These students failed to indicate the relationship of the noun with other words in the sentence.

The majority of verbs they end <u>in</u> 'ly'.e.g friendly, lovely and kindly.

The grammatical feature demonstrates how the word capacities in importance just as linguistically inside the sentence.

The student omitted a preposition 'in' before the noun to create harmony in words.

Parts of speech refer to classes which words are allocated to according to the similar properties or characteristics that they entail in grammar.

The student erroneously used an adverb 'too' instead of a preposition 'to'. Similarly, Amara (2015: 66) finds that students confuse the right usage of prepositions when writing sentences.

Too understand the correct use of verbs because they give every sentence an action.

4.2.1.8 Conjunction

A majority of the students failed to precede the last item with a conjunction 'and' to signal the end of the list. Geraldine (2018: 101) finds that the dominant error is the omission of a conjunction 'and' to join the phrases.

Examples of prepositions are, to, at, after, on, but.

Two students used the preposition 'of' instead of a conjunction 'or'.

*these are words or phrase that are used to join, link **of** combine to or more sentences in order to make them one sentence*

A minority of the sampled students started their sentences with a conjunction. Apse and Farneste (2018: 35) argue that beginning a sentence with a coordinating conjunction results in a grammatical or a punctuation error. The conjunction should have been omitted since it serves no grammatical purpose.

And verbs can be in active or passive (verb passive) form.

4.2.1.9 Interjection

Data revealed that students did not commit any errors in the use of interjection.

4.2.2. SENTENCES

4.2.2.1 Sentence structure

Due to inadequate knowledge about grammatical concepts such as punctuation and joining two independent clauses, 37 run-on sentences errors were found. These sentences carry two independent clauses with no required punctuation or conjunction to join them. Rana *et al.,* (2019: 31) finds that inadequate knowledge about grammatical concepts results in a construction of run-on sentences.

The vast majority of the students failed to end the sentence by putting a full stop after the word action or joining the two sentences with a semi-colon.

Verbs are parts of speech that are used to describe the subject in action examples of verbs includes learn, walk, read, run read etc.

4.2.2.2 Incomplete sentences

The construction of sentences is one of the most concerning grammatical errors committed by the students. Rana *et al.,* (2019: 31) finds that the students commit sentence fragments due to the omission of a subject or the verb in a sentence. This error occurred due to the omission of the mandatory items in the sentence. Some identified sentences subject or verb were omitted.

Thanks to conjunctions.

Namely, noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, verb, preposition, conjunction, and lastly interjection.

From the word 'namely' up to the last word 'interjection', the whole string of words is not a sentence. It is a fragment. This sentence should have been joined to the main sentence.

4.2.2.3 Word order

The students committed errors in word order adherence. Their sentences were characterised by problems in syntactic arrangement of words. Rana *et al.,* (2019: 31) finds that students have problems with organisation of words in sentences. The students failed to adhere to the correct order of words in English, subject verb and object (SVO) to write comprehensible sentences.

*Adverbs **can be also** used to add a degree of intensity to an adjective…*

… morning early.

4.2.2.4 Collocation

This error occurred commonly in word combinations level. The students failed to use a company that a word habitually keeps. Although the word 'flied' carries a closer meaning, the most appropriate words would have been 'took off'. These words co-occur frequently with the word 'plane'.

*John started to cry when the **plane flied***

Furthermore, this amounts to verb error. The student should have used 'flew'.

4.2.3 TENSE

4.2.3.1 Present tense

Under the category of tenses, the data reveals that only present tense and past tense errors were recorded.

The students failed to suffix a verb with –t to allow the word to follow with the tense of the entire sentence. The word 'bent' was used inappropriately.

He bend down to retrieve his phone.

The students confuse 'have' and 'had'. They tend to insert had after a noun although the verb ends with the –ed

I had finished all my assignment.

She can ran a marathon.

The student used a past tense word 'ran' in a context where grammar dictates the use of present tense.

4.2.3.2 Past tense

The student used a wrong tense formation by omitting an inflectional morpheme *–ed* at the end of the verb. Abdullah, Yunus and Hashim (2019: 306) finds that majority of the students use the participle form instead of attaching 'ed' when they write in past

tense. The word obtained needed to be inflected with –*ed* at the end to agree with the words 'last year'.

Last year he obtain bachelor.

The student used a past tense verb 'came' used instead of present tense, 'come'.

… "done" is an auxiliary verb and "work" is a verb, "done" **came** before the verb and it has also added help to the verb to express its tense or mood.

4.2.4 PUNCTUATION

4.2.4.1 Capital mark

The students deviated from the established rules of capitalisation in English language conventions by haphazardly capitalising words that fall outside of the proper noun family. There was incorrect use in the capitalisation in the middle of a sentences.

For example, The cake fall.

Another cohort of students failed to capitalise proper nouns: *cate baked a cake*

According to Oxford mini school dictionary a verb is a word that shows what a person or a thing is doing.

The oxford dictionary of English grammar.

…these fundamental elements of the english language are usually placed right before or after the verb in the sentence…

Students capitalised a first letter of a word situated in the middle of a sentence.

*A correlative conjuction , as its name **Implies** is a pair of…*
The student failed to start a sentence with a capital letter.
"it's either you leave or you keep quiet".

we live at a complex near the mall'.

4.2.4.2 Full-stop

One student failed to place a period at the end of the 'etc' to mark the end of the sentence. However, Van Geyte (2013: 150) argues that the use of 'etc' is inapplicable in an academic essay; it demonstrates lack of precision in writing.

…there are used to give out two choices between two alternative, or, nor, either, etc

A cohort of students failed to use a full stop correctly to avoid the syntactic failure where the first sentence runs on into the next. These sentences could have been corrected by placing a full stop at the end of the sentences.

An interjection is an independent word added to a sentence to express emotion It expresses emotion…

One student used both a question mark and a full stop to mark the end of the sentence. The use of a full stop was unnecessary as the question mark already indicated that the sentence has reached its end.

Is she serious about selling the house?.

The student failed to capitalise the first character at the beginning of the sentence. See the sentences below:

we live at a complex near the mall'.

Secondly, this student failed to capitalise the word 'English'. This word was supposed to have been capitalised as it is a proper noun.

Many students tended to confuse of a full stop with a comma when introducing an example. Khatter (2019: 372) finds that students demonstrate erroneous errors in writing by confusing the full stop with the comma.

For example. he sings loudly.

4.2.4.3 Comma

These students used an incorrect punctuation mark to separate an introductory clause with the main clause. Amoakohene (2017: 61) finds that students demonstrate inadequate grammatical knowledge by failing to use the right punctuation mark in the form of the comma to highlight pauses in their writing. The data revealed that the students failed to identify areas in their writing where a comma was mandatory. The students' inaccurate use of a comma affected cohesion in writing. Furthermore, the students used a colon or semicolon after the introductory clause. The required punctuation mark was a comma.

For example: she laughed

For example; she accepted the job.

Further, *a* vast majority *of* students omitted a comma to separate an introductory phrase from the main clause. Thus, the students failed to avoid the syntactic error where the introductory phrase runs on into the main sentence. Fitria (2018: 246) finds that students fail to add a comma after prefixing their sentences with 'hopefully' as an introductory phrase.

For example Mahlatse rises slowly from her seat.

A comma error was also committed by failing to add a comma after a sequence marker to understand the order of the sentences.

Firstly an adjective describes a noun or pronoun, for example, beautiful, red or old.

Secondly an adjective is a word used to modify or describe a noun or a pronoun, it usually answers the question usually classified as adjectives.

In fact without a verb full thoughts can not be proparly conveyed that is why even the simplest sentence have

However it can also be confusing since not all verbs are identified under action

One student used a comma before a conjunction (and) in an ordinary sequence. The use of a comma was not necessary.

There are a total of eight parts of speech, namely: nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections.

4.2.4.4 Colon

Most of the students failed to make a distinction between the use of semi-colon and colon in sentences. A semi-colon was inserted in a place that requires a colon to cue or draw the reader's attention to a list that follows.

There different types of prepositions; preposition of time, preposition of place and the preposition of movement examples of different types of preposition used in a sentence

Other examples of adverbs of manner include; slowly, quickly, well, etc.

One student omitted a colon after the word follows to introduce list of examples that amplifies the sentence preceded by a colon.

Examples of adverbs of frequency are as follows

always, usually, frequently, sometimes, etc.

4.2.4.5 Semi-colon

A cohort of students joined two independent clauses with a comma instead of a semi-colon. The students could have coordinated the two sentences into one so that two complimentary ideas are represented in one sentence.

It can be one or a single word, they are often followed by exclamation marks examples include…

A verb is a doing word, it expresses action and it tells us what someone is doing

Further, students omitted a semi-colon as orthographic punctuation mark to separate two independent clauses. The students failed to add a semi-colon to avoid the syntactic error where the first clause runs on into the next.

My acting lecturer wrote few stage plays he also acted on the stage.

4.2.4.6 Question mark

One student failed to end an interrogative statement with a question mark. An omission of a question mark resulted in this sentence failing to retain a status of a direct question.

What gives sentences meaning

4.2.4.7 Exclamation mark

One student omitted an exclamation mark at the end of the words that expresses emotions. The word 'ouch' and 'oops' should have been succeeded by an exclamation as they both express emotions.

Some examples of interjections:

Ouch I cut my finger!

Whoops forgotten to write to you

Ouch That must have hurt. Oops I thought you are Mr Jackson.

4.2.4.8 Quotation marks

A vast majority of the students inserted open quotations without closing quotation marks to enclose the quoted sentences or used upside down quotation marks. As a result, these students failed to indicate that a sentence was taken verbatim from another source.

Oxford dictionary best define parts of speech as "a category to which a word is assigned in accordance with its syntactic functions.

According to Newsletter article (Wilson B,2019),"..It is useful to know parts of speech because knowing what each word has in a sentence structure clearly helps to understand sentences and also to construct them properly

"she sat on the chair"

4.2.4.9 Hyphen

Two students committed an error in hyphen usage. This error was committed due to a failure to join prefixes with the principal word or unnecessarily attaching a hyphen where it is not necessary. Firstly, 1 student omitted a hyphen between two words that belong together. The word 'subject' was supposed to be succeeded by a hyphen to join with the word 'verb'.

…subject verb disagreement

Secondly, 1 student committed an error in hyphen usage by producing unhyphenated forms (minimarket). The prefix word 'mini' should have followed by a hyphen to join with the main word 'market' to form compound word. Thirdly, 1 student misused a hyphen to connect two words that do not belong together:

Verb-bake, subject-cate and object-cake

4.2.4.10 Apostrophe

A cohort of students failed to place an apostrophe before –s to convert nouns into possessive nouns.

They provide a picture of action in readers mind.

A mans hat

Possessive words in English indicate ownership. In the above phrase '*reader's mind'*, reader's is a possessive noun exhibiting that the reader is the owner of the mind. English grammar is different from other languages grammatical arrangement. English language demonstrates ownership with nouns in two different ways. This can be achieved by adding an apostrophe +s *('s)* to the noun. If the noun appears in plural form, and ends with an inflection -s, only an apostrophe needs to be attached after the *–s.*

4.2.5 PARAGRAPHING

4.2.5.1 Use of topic sentence

One student started a topic sentence with a coordinating conjunction which is not preceded by an independent clause. There was no syntactic congruency in the phrase that start the sentence. In the same line there was a diction inappropriateness resulting from using the phrase "reader or listener". The use of 'read' with the one that corresponded with the second noun "listener" is indicative of meagre vocabulary. Instead of using reader or listener, these receptive skills could have bundled up into the word 'addressees'. The word 'read' becomes inappropriate as it corresponds only with the reader and leaves out the word 'listener'.

So, verbs it is important to use verbs correctly so that the reader or the listener of what is being read receive the correct idea about the action being done by subjects in a writing thus creating a desired imagery to the audience.

Moreover, students used a pronoun to begin their topic sentences. A noun should have been used in a place of a pronoun to specify the subject of the sentences. The use of a pronoun in the topic sentence makes the sentence to be ambiguous and does not deposit an explicit meaning.

It is a helping verb as the word auxiliary means to provide, supplement or additional help and support.

The topic sentences failed-to-introduce the main ideas that paragraphs discussed.

A sentence had two main ideas and a supporting one at the same time.

While prepositions have a limited number, they are important because they act as a vital maker to the structure of the sentence, they mark special relationships between persons, objects and locations.

4.2.5.2 Use of Supporting Sentences

In a text where a noun such a word has been used, grammar dictates that word cannot take a definite article 'the' but an infinite one, 'a'. This error has led to an inappropriate use of definite article where none should have been used.

An adverb is the word that describe or modifies a verb, adjective and or the whole sentence.

The students attached supporting sentences that contradicted the topic sentences in terms of the plurality. A noun used in the topic sentence appeared in plural form. However, the anaphoric noun in the attached in the supporting sentence was in singular form.

A word governing and usually preceding a noun or pronoun and expressing a relation to another word or element in the clause as in "the man on the platform" . Prepositions are important in English language they are used to show the relationship betwee the noun and pronoun in a sentence.

Adjective is a word that tells you more about something or someone. Adjectives are used to describe nouns. For an example Lethabo is very kind, the word kind tells us about Lethabo's character or personality .My boos has a very big house (the word big tells how huge the house is).

4.2.5.3 Use of concluding sentence

Four errors in concluding sentences were identified. These sentences were not well written as they failed to conclude the paragraphs by summarising the main points discussed.

how something or someone looks like by the subject of the subject of sentence

4.2.5.4 Sequence markers

A cohort of students omitted sequence markers to link sentences within paragraphs to form a logical relationship in writing. The presence of sequence markers allows the students to reinforce what has already been mentioned. The students omitted the

sequence markers to join the previous sentences by adding another sentence slightly different but which focused on a similar topic.

Verbs can also be used to portray a specific tense, mood and or voice. COVID-19 is a dangerously disease. Verbs in a sentence must have a specific tense the meaning of each tense is subtly different. Finite verbs. A finite verb can stand on its own without a helping auxiliary (helping) verb. A finite verb must a subject, number (plural or singular)

4.2.5.5 Logical connectors

The students tended to omit linking expressions to demonstrate a relationship between two paragraphs that are discussing one idea. Additives such as 'moreover, furthermore or in addition' are used to add new information. Bacha (2002: 162) finds that students demonstrate difficulties in the use of cohesive devices such as substitution, lexical cohesion, transition, deixis and so forth to create meaningful connections between sentences over a large discourse unit. As observed by Apse and Farneste (2018: 29) and Swales and Feak (1994), linking words assist students to maintain accurate flow and establish relationships between sentences.

Adverbs are modifiers or describe a verb, an adjective or another verb or even the whole sentence e.g. Fortunately I had brought an umbrella. Adverbs often end in-LY but some such as fast look the same as their adjective counterparts. A great way to pick out an adverb from a sentence is to look for a word ending in-LY, although that is not universally true, but it is a great place to start. Given their functions these fundamental elements of the English language are usually placed right before and after the verb in a sentence.

Adverbs are intensifiers and they can come in a form of a phrase, that just mean you are looking at two or more words that act as an adverb. An example of an adverb modifying a verb: The donkey ran quickly, they can provide more information about the descriptive word e.g. The donkey ran very quickly. There are types of adverbs such as adverb of manner which describes how an action happened for example the lion crawled stealthily, an adverb of time which tells more about when an action happened for example I talk to him daily, adverb of place which tells where an action

took place e.g. I did not put it there and lastly adverb of degree which illustrates comparison e.g. he works smarter. (Founder of grammar monster).

4.2.5.6 Other errors

One student failed to follow the English grammar rules to construct a correct sentence because of the incorrect usage of a subject-verb agreement.
There are <u>eight</u> <u>part</u> of speech in English.

It was observed that majority of the students were unable to construct correct sentences due to incorrect usage of the subject-verb agreement. They either omitted an inflection *–s* at the end of the verb or produced verbs that do not agree with the singular subject.

4.2.5.6.1 Redundancy

Four errors in redundancy were identified. These errors were committed on two levels. Firstly, by the repetition of one word in one sentence or by using two different words that carry similar meanings. The word 'lastly' is redundant it runs against the principle of brevity and conciseness in formal and academic writing.

Namely, noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, verb, preposition, conjunction, and lastly interjection.

The students committed errors of *redundancy (tautology)* by using *or a single* after the word one… as both words carry the same meaning.

*Knowing your parts of speech is vital to **improve** your writing skills, **improve** grammar and have a well written English essay.*

It can be one or a single word, they are often followed…

This sounds like saying: would you please reverse back.

4.2.5.6.2 Contractions

These students deviated from retaining a scholarly tone by using a contraction, "don't" instead of do not, which is more appropriate in informal writing. This constituted a common formal grammatical error.

Well, I don't recognise

4.2.5.6.3 Spelling errors

The majority of the students committed errors by misspelling some words. Other students committed typographical errors by adding, subtracting or substituting certain characters in a word. This action led to other sentences failing to deliver accurate meanings.

Sentences with spelling errors included the following:

What a stanning dress and this can be refered to emotion of surprise.

Verbs are words that desdribes an action or talk about something which is happening.

Along with nouns, verbs are the main part of a sentece or phrase telling a story about what is taking place

In fact without a verb full thoughts can not be proparly conveyed that is why even the simplest sentence have

In English grammar we are having different tpyes of adverbs which are adverbs of manner,

Prepositions are important in English language they are used to show the relationship betwee the noun and pronoun in a sentence

A conjuction is a part of speech that is used to connect words phrases, clauses and sentences.

4.2.5.6.4 Gobbledygook

One student produced a meaningless sentence by repeating technical terms.

…how something or someone looks like by the subject of the subject of sentence thus creating the image wanted by the writer in the minds of the audience or the reader

4.2.5.6.5 Over-generalisation in the use of articles

One student over-generalised an indefinite article (an). Rana *et al.,* (2019: 31) finds that students tend to misuse the article rule by confusing an article 'a' and 'an' due to over-generalisation and native language transfer. This is indicated by the use of article 'A' preceding the noun "verbs" where there should have been no article.

A verbs are parts of speech that are used to describe…

4.2.5.6.6 Malapropism

One student used the preposition 'to' instead of the word 'two. The respondent confused the two words, to and two. These two words have the same pronunciation but different meanings, origins and spelling.

…these are words or phrase that are used to join, link of combine to or more sentences in order to make them one sentence.

Further, 1 student confused the homophone words 'hole' and 'whole'. The student should have used the word 'whole'.

As a part of speech, conjunctions are important in conveying the hole thought of spoken or written language.

One student used the word 'two' instead of a preposition (to). This error was committed due similarities in pronunciation between the two words.

Basically, the functions of interjections are two express emotion or sudden bests of feelings.

4.3. DATA COLLECTED FROM INTERVIEWS

This section focuses on the information provided by the three (3) ELLs in response to semi-structured interview questions. The interviews entailed biographical sketch, training, teaching materials and students' grammar (see Appendix B). The semi-structured interviews data was integrated in accordance with the generated themes below:

4.3.1 ELLs personal information

Gass and Selinker (2008: 351) stress that biodata include basic information about the participants such as, age, type of prior L2 study, gender, first language of participant, and proficiency in L2s. It was appropriate to embrace the lecturers' personal information. This decision assisted the researcher to contextualise the findings and to table appropriate recommendations for future researchers about issues related to errors committed by the English non-native students. The biodata consisted of the native language of the ELLs, highest qualification, section that they taught in English

language, years of teaching experience, levels that ELLs teaches as well as the number of students in their classes. Below are their responses:

The 3 sampled lecturers are identified as lecturer A, B and C throughout the analysis. Gass and Selinker (2008: 125) argues that when reporting about participants' information privacy and anonymity must be considered.

What is your native language?

Lecturer A, B and C indicated that their native language is Sepedi.

The above findings demonstrate the ELLs' share an identical native language. Out of 3 sampled ELLs, the Sepedi language constitute the dominant native language. In other words, the Sepedi speaking lecturers were dominant among all the native languages found in Limpopo province, respectively.

What is your highest qualification?

The highest qualifications of lecturers A, B and C was Master of Arts in English Studies.

Master of Arts in English Studies is rated level 9 by South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) under the National Qualification Framework.

Do you teach language or literature?

Lecturer A, B and C mentioned that they taught language section.

What is your teaching experience, in years?
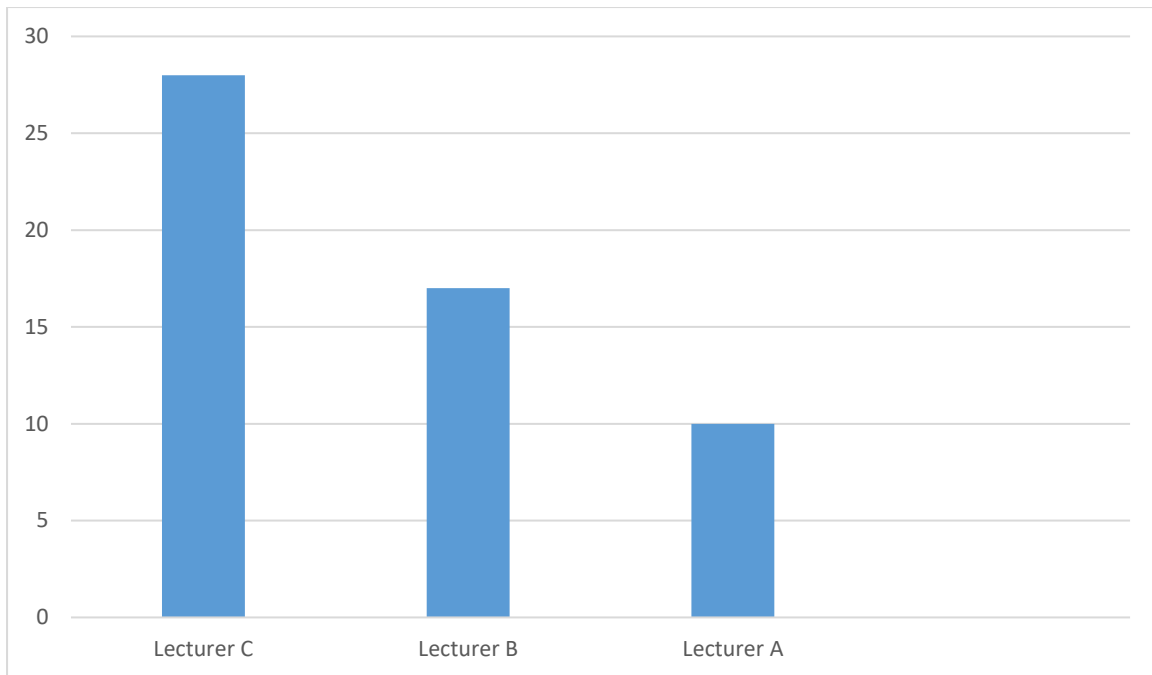
Figure 3: Years of teaching experience

Figure 3 above presents the lecturers' years of teaching experience. The language teaching experience of the lecturer C, B and A is presented in the following ascending order, 28-, 17-, and 10 years, respectively.

What levels do you teach?

Lecturer A mentioned that she taught first, second and honours levels, Lecturer B taught first, third, honours and masters levels and Lecturer C teach first, second, honours and masters levels, the latter in the form of supervision.

How many students do you have in your English language class/classes?

Of the three (3) ELLs, Lecturers A and C stated that they taught large classes which were made up of not less than six-hundred students. The number of students are presented in the following ascending order, 520, 600 and 70 students. Lecturer B had-657. Lecturer C had, 320, 167, 1 honours and 2 master's students.

Furthermore, in line with the semi-structured interviews (see Appendix B), findings will be presented in terms of training, teaching materials and students' grammar.

4.3.2 Training

Did you receive any training on how to choose appropriate English teaching materials?

Lecturer A and C mentioned that they received training on how to choose appropriate English teaching materials. However, Lecturer B did not receive any of this training.

If your response in 2.1 is yes, please expand on this.

Lecturer A stated that the Department of Languages provided them with an A to F form which demonstrate areas that need to be covered. This form helps ELLs to select the teaching materials. It is more of a syllabus. It can also outline the outcomes.

Lecturer C mentioned that sometimes ELLs were invited to a training to receive advice on how to choose suitable English teaching materials for the students.

Did you attend workshops on how to choose appropriate English teaching materials?

Lecturer, A, B and C stated that they attended workshops on how to choose appropriate English teaching materials.

If your response in 2.3 is yes, please explain your response.

Lecturer A mentioned that they attended a workshop organised by the Department of Languages for 5 days. This workshop was organised to help ELLs on how to identify appropriate teaching materials and how to set various assessment questions, be it a test, assignment or examination.

Lecturer B was trained as a coordinator of language by the previous employer. This workshop was organised by the previous employer. This lecturer was a trainer of teachers and a coordinator of a project. The previous employer organised for its employee's different material development workshops.

Lecturer C reckoned that ELLS sometimes attended workshops. The Department of Languages advised ELLs on how to compile teaching materials that are in line with the curriculum prescribed by the university. Again, ELLs were advised on what to look for when preparing the study materials.

4.3.3 Teaching materials

Are you satisfied with the standard of English books prescribed for students?

Lecturer A was satisfied with the standard of English books prescribed for students because they selected prescribed books looking at what other institutions prescribed for their students. This approach is followed as a guide so that UL have an alignment with other universities. However, Lecturer B and C were not satisfied with the standard of English books prescribed for students. Lecturer B felt like there was no single book that has everything an ELLs is looking for. It is always a matter of having to find extra materials to supplement what other information that is found in the prescribed book. Lecturer C mentioned that some prescribed books had limited information and were not in line with the demand for online teaching. Most of the books that were available still contained information about a traditional way of teaching while the current environment required ELLs to adopt technology to teach the students.

Do you sometimes use additional teaching materials?

Lecturer A, B and C used additional teaching materials to supplement prescribed books.

Are students encouraged to look for additional materials?

Lecturer A, B and C encouraged their students look for additional materials.

Is the library well equipped with grammar structure materials?

Lecturer A, B and C argued that the UL library was well equipped with grammar structure materials. The library had different books of grammar. Lecturer C mentioned that most of the books that she used were also available in the library.

4.3.4 Students' grammar

What is the grammatical knowledge level of the students?

Lecturer A and C rated the grammatical knowledge level of the students as 'average'. However, Lecturer B viewed the grammatical knowledge level of the students as 'weak'.

Lecturer A indicated that majority of the students are struggling with English grammar. This could be witnessed when these students were writing assignments, tests and examinations. Their grammatical knowledge was far behind to the level it should be, considering the fact that these students are now at the university level.

Lecturer B indicated that most of the students are okay with reading and writing but when coming to actual grammar knowledge rules and structures they were very weak.

Does your teaching focus on form? State your reason(s).

Lecturer A, B and C's teaching approach focused on form.

Lecturer A reckoned that her teaching exposed the students to sentence structure and word classes. In addition, Lecturer A taught the students on how to combine words in order to convey a complete thought, how to punctuate sentences as well as the rules of grammar, concord. For example, Lecturer A mentioned that she always reminded the students that a sentence must have subject that agrees with the verb.

Lecturer B mentioned that students could not achieve the high level of English competence if form was treated in parallel to daily teaching. For one to be excellent in writing, grammar usage is always talking the centre stage. Mitchell, Myles and Marsden (2013: 42) assert that learning is typically the result of classroom experience in which the learner is made to focus on form and to learn about the linguistic rules of the target language.

Lecturer C stated that the teaching of English amongst non-native students could be achieved through the drilling of the students on grammatical forms of language components that are used orally. This approach assisted in augmenting students' grammatical accuracy in both writing and speaking.

Does your teaching focus on meaning? State your reason(s).

Lecturer A, B and C used focus on meaning. Lecturer A mentioned that this approach aimed to provide the English Second Language students with an exposure to rich input and meaningful use of English language. Focus on meaning leads to incidental acquisition English. Lecturer B stated that students are encouraged to read extensively in order for them to derive meaning from those readings. Similarly, Khatter (2019: 377) recommends that teachers should assist students to argument their reservoir of

vocabulary by providing them with extensive reading activities on different topics to improve their writing skills in English. Further, Lecturer B used dictionary lessons to help students derive meaning of words from the study. Lecturer C mentioned that students were encouraged to respond in class and create group discussions. This allowed them to build their productive skills. Lecturer C responses concurs with Long (2015: 21), that focus on meaning lessons are centred around the message, subject matter, and communication.

In line with the English language curriculum, what are students expected to write on?

Lecturer A stated that in line with the English language curriculum, students were expected to write on grammatical and academic writing skills. Lecturer B stated that students were expected to write on reading comprehension, study skills and integrated grammar whereas Lecturer C stated that students were expected to write on various aspects of grammar including, the use of punctuation, tenses, rules of capitalisation, spelling, prepositions, all lexical and semantics aspects of language.

What are the sources of written grammar errors committed by the English language students?

Lecturer A stated that the sources of the student's written grammar errors were due to the inadequate education they received from high school. In high school the teachers did not teach these students grammar extensively but only touched the surface level of grammar.

Lecturer B stated that the rampant use of the SMS language negatively affected the students' writing. When these students wrote academic papers they made use of this shortened form of writing without realising that when they were writing assignment they should not use that type or form of writing. Again, the students themselves did not have the required grammatical knowledge, therefore, their writings were likely to be flawed.

Lecturer C argued that the students do not practice writing and reading extensively. These two go well together as they afford the students a chance to realise how language is used.

What are the types of English language errors your students commit in writing?

Lecturer A explained that the types of English language errors the students committed in writing ranged from errors in punctuation, concord (subject-verb agreement), pronoun parallelism (use of she or he), capitalising pronoun (e.g. I) as well as failure to start a sentence with a capital letter. Most students still struggled to write a complete sentence and, to that day, these students still wrote fragments.

Lecturer B reckoned that the most common error was the use of concord. The students do not know how to punctuate their writing, the use of capital letters and the comma. The students are also not really good in using conjunctions. Again, they wrote too many independent sentences without linking devices and failed to link their sentences.

Lecturer C stated that students committed many errors. These ranged from errors in punctuation, capitalisation, use of capital letters, verb tenses, auxiliary verbs, word order and use of the spoken language in formal writing. For example, students had the tendency of omitting punctuation marks. The misuse or omission of a punctuation marks changes the meaning of a sentence.

Which errors frequently appear in the students' writings?

Lecturer A indicated that the errors that frequently appeared in the students' writings were punctuation errors, subject-verb agreement. Lecturer B responded that the errors that frequently appeared in the students' writings were concord error and subject-verb agreement while Lecturer C cited the incorrect use of punctuation, capitalisation and auxiliary verbs. For example, students frequently showed some challenges in using *have* and *has*. Again, students frequently demonstrated difficulties in using modal verbs and spelling.

Do you give regular feedback on written grammar errors?

Lecturer A, B and C stated that they gave regular feedback on written grammar errors. Özkayran and Yılmaz (2020: 56) finds that it is important to analyse students' errors and provide them with corrective feedback; this initiative provides the teacher with an insight into the challenges the students face and assist them to practise self-assessment regarding their language learning process.

What type of feedback do you give to your students when they commit errors?

Lecturer A used oral feedback. Lecturer B used both oral and written feedback. As these days the teaching is conducted on Blackboard, this allowed her to frequently give written feedback to address some of the errors the students committed. Lecturer C used oral feedback to address errors the students commit in their writings.

In which grammar structures do your students demonstrate some challenges?

Lecturer A stated that students demonstrated some challenges in sentence construction, structure and concord. Lecturer B lecturer mentioned the use of concord and tense, especially, the use of perfect tense while Lecturer C indicated that students demonstrate some challenges in word order caused by their rampant use of spoken language style when writing.

What sort of intervention do you apply to help students experiencing grammar challenges?

Lecturer A stated they developed teaching materials that addressed errors the students committed. This intervention helped to better prepare materials for the next first year group of English non-native students and to understand the type of grammatical errors students committed.

Lecturer B mentioned that they intervened by giving the students lessons that has grammar activities and by providing oral and some remedial activities where they would correct the errors that they might have committed previously.

Lecturer C stated that after identifying errors the students committed she wrote comments on their scripts on how best to use English language. This, however, was difficult then that they had migrated to online teaching. It became a challenge to do proper follow-up on those errors.

How do you assist students when they repeatedly commit grammar errors in English language?

Lecturer A stated that normally gave the students feedback, extra class activities and referred them to online sources with a link to write online quizzes. This intervention helped the students as they received instant feedback after submitting their responses. Lecturer B mentioned it was not easy to pick up a repetitive pattern of grammar errors. Unfortunately, due to time constraints, as a lecturer they could only assess once and

give a feedback once. Lecturer C stated the intervention that they used included drawing a list of student whose performance was not satisfactory and inviting them to a one-on-one consultation.

Lecturer A reckoned that the university should work together with the basic education teachers to develop materials that would develop the student's language proficiency and prepare them for what they needed to expect when they made it to the university. Lecturer B mentioned that students needed to read more to improve their writing. Language is learnt best by listening and reading about it. Students needed to read to improve their grammar and vocabulary. Lecturer C stated that students need to practise writing during their spare times to improve their writing. Lecturers should also give these students enough writing assessment as this would enable them to read and write more.

4.4 CONCLUSION

The findings of this study revealed that English non-native students committed high frequency errors in punctuation. The students confused semi-colon with a comma or excluded a comma after an introductory phrase. This was followed closely by a reasonable number of sentence structure –, noun -, pronoun - subject-verb agreement– determiner– spelling-, logical connectors-, contraction-, preposition-, incomplete sentence and wrong topic sentences errors. The identification of these errors can assist ELLs to decide on the use of appropriate remedial materials and methodology to help the students with English grammar. ELLs need to take considerable efforts in teaching English grammar to improve English non-native students' language needs. These efforts will be more fruitful if they are centred on sentence structure and use of punctuation in writing.

The following chapter concludes the study and makes recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to conclude the study and set up recommendations for future research. Conclusion drawn and recommendation made will emerge from the findings of this study.

5.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to explore written grammar errors committed by UL first entering non-native English language students.

The objectives below were used to guide the study:

- to identify the types of written grammar errors committed in writing by UL first entering non-native English language students.
- to determine common written grammar errors committed by UL first entering non-native English language students.
- to suggest how UL first entering non-native English language students can avoid committing written grammar errors.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

The conclusions of the study stem from a checklist and semi-structured interviews with English Language Lecturers (ELLs). This section provides a summary of the major errors derived from the checklist (cf Appendix A).

5.3.1 Errors observed from the assignments

The number of the grammatical errors found is 460. The findings drawn from the 30 essays written by English non-native first entering students revealed that the highest common errors comprised of the use of a comma, sentence structure, full-stop, determiner, semi-colon, apostrophe, noun, conjunction, capital mark, spelling error, pronoun, logical connectors, contraction, preposition, quotation mark, sequence markers, quotation mark and the use of the topic sentence.

Errors in English usage have different sources. Non-native students of English language commit errors of grammar. Elllis (1997: 18) points out that once errors are identified by the researcher, they can be discussed into types. Hence, errors from the students' essays were presented in the following subheadings:

5.3.1.1 Word Classes

The findings show that the students committed noun errors by using a pluralised noun but used 'it' anaphorically to refer to an already pluralised noun, used both noun pronoun and simultaneously, paired a singular demonstrative 'this' with a pluralised noun and confused a noun with a verb. These findings revealed that the students tended to over-generalise the formation of plural rule. The use of both the noun and the pronoun emanates from native language transfer. These students directly translated their native language sentence arrangement into English language when writing. With regard to the pronoun, the students used a singular pronoun in the preceding sentence but the anaphoric reference was done in plural form in the succeeding sentence. The findings further revealed that the students confused 'it' with a possessive pronoun 'its'.

Furthermore, with regard to the use of a determiner, the students omitted a determiner such as the, a, some, this and each at the beginning of a noun to demonstrate which object the students are referring to, confused of an indefinite article and with a definite article and paired a plural noun with an indefinite article. Concerning the adjective usage, students placed adjectives after nouns and used an adverb or noun instead of an adjective in their sentences. The data revealed that students are struggling with the use of preposition. This error was witnessed when the students omitted a mandatory preposition or failed to apply an appropriate preposition in sentences. Moreover, students committed multiple errors in preposition usage by either omitting a conjunction 'and' before listing the last item as well as incorrectly used a conjunction.

5.3.1.2 Sentences

Concerning the use of a sentence structure, firstly, a majority of the students produced run-on sentences by failing to join two independent clauses with a semi-colon or a conjunction. Secondly, with regard to the concord, the findings revealed that the students demonstrated challenges with the use of subject-verb agreement. Thirdly,

the students produced incomplete sentences by either omitting a noun or a verb in the sentences.

Furthermore, students committed errors with the word order. They failed to adhere to the common word sequence in English language, the subject, verb and object (SVO) to write comprehensible sentences. It can be surmised that this error does not come from the student's grammatical deficiency but that they could have not edited their work.

5.3.1.3 Tense

Although the students demonstrated mastery of the future, continuous and perfect tense, the findings revealed that the students had not mastered the present tense. The students omitted the inflectional morpheme –*ed* at the end of the verb to convert it to past tense form. This confirmed that the rule of past tense formation had been overlooked.

5.3.1.4 Punctuation

Concerning the capital mark, the findings revealed that students failed to capitalise proper nouns, began sentence with a capital letters and haphazardly applied the capital letter mid-sentences. The data revealed that the students failed to apply a full stop rule. They failed to insert a full stop to prohibit sentences from interfering with the next, haphazardly placing a full stop at the end of an introductory phrase or after a question mark.

With regard to the use of a comma, a majority of the students had the tendency of either inserting a semi-colon or colon to separate an introductory phrase with the main clause. Furthermore, these students omitted a comma after starting a sentence with an introductory phrase and unnecessarily followed a comma with a conjunction 'and' in an ordinary sequence. The findings further revealed that the students failed to add a comma after sequence markers.

The students committed an error in the use of a semi-colon by either omitting a semi-colon to join two independent sentences or joined two independent clauses with a comma instead of a semi-colon. The findings further revealed that students used a semi-colon to introduce sub-clauses. The students inserted open quotations

without closing quotation marks or used upside down quotation marks. These students failed to indicate that a sentence was taken verbatim from another source by using closed quotation marks.

With regard to the use of an apostrophe, students tended to omit an apostrophe before –s to convert nouns and pronouns word to possessive words or use contractions without placing an apostrophe where one word had been dropped.

5.3.1.5 Paragraphing

The findings revealed that students failed to write topic sentences without grammatical errors. Although they attempted to begin their paragraphs with topic sentences, few students prefixed their topic sentences with a conjunction and others used a pronoun instead of a noun. Again, the findings revealed that the students writing lacked supporting sentences that provided more details about the main idea mentioned in the topic sentence. Further, the findings revealed that concluding sentences were not well written as these sentences failed to summarise the main points mentioned in the paragraph.

The findings revealed that students omitted sequence markers to link sentences within paragraphs to form a logical relationship in writing. The use of sequence markers helps to organise ideas in chronological order. The findings revealed that the students used a conjunction (and) as a sequence marker to join the previous sentence with the next. With regard to the use of logical connectors, the findings revealed that the students failed to insert enumeration to connect paragraphs or show the existing relationship between the listed sentences. The findings revealed that the students omitted summation phrases such as 'in conclusion' to sum up or to cue the reader that the paragraph summed up the discussion.

The findings show that the students committed spelling errors by failing to spell words correctly by omitting one or more character in certain words. Orthographic errors revealed that a majority of the students were competent in writing many English words and that they misspelled a few words in their essays. Lastly, the findings revealed that the students used contractions. The use of contractions diminished the scholarly tune in writing as the genre of formal writing does not allow the use of contractions.

5.3.2 INTERVIEWS WITH ELLS

5.3.2.1 ELLs native language

All the three ELLs native language is Sepedi.

5.3.2.2 ELLs Qualifications

ELLs' highest academic qualifications were Master of Arts in English Studies.

5.3.2.3 Teaching of literature or language

All the three ELLs taught language.

5.3.2.4 Teaching Experience

Only 2 ELLs taught at the secondary school level whereas 1 started from the university level. The ELLs experiences ranged from 28-, 17-, and 10 years, respectively.

Regarding the levels ELLs taught, the following data was discovered: Of the 3 ELLs taught levels ranging from first until masters' level. One ELL taught masters through supervision.

Lecturers A and C taught classes that comprised of not less than six-hundred students. The number of students are presented as follows; Lecturer A taught 520, 600 and 70 students, Lecturer B 657 and Lecturer C 680, 320, 167, 1 honours and 2 master's students.

5.3.2.5 Training

ELLs A and C received training on how to choose appropriate English teaching materials while Lecturer B did not receive any training. Lecturer A stated that the Department of Languages provided them with an A to F form which demonstrated areas that need to be covered. This form helped ELLs to select the teaching materials. It was some of a syllabus that also outlined the outcomes. Lecturer C mentioned that ELLs were invited to a training to receive advice on how to choose suitable English teaching materials for the students.

Regarding the attending of workshops, Lecturer A and C attended workshops organised by the Department of Languages for 5 days, meant to help ELLs with ways of selecting appropriate teaching materials and setting of various assessment tasks.

Further, ELLs were advised on which area(s) of English language they were supposed to focus on when preparing the study materials. Lecturer B was trained as a coordinator of language by the previous employer. This lecturer was a trainer of teachers and a coordinator of a project and the previous employer organised for the company's employees' different material development workshops.

5.3.2.6 Teaching Materials

Lecturer A was content with the standard of English books prescribed for students as these books were prescribed in accordance with other institutions. This approach was adopted as a guideline so that UL curriculum is aligned with other universities. However, Lecturer B and C were not satisfied with the standard of English books prescribed for students. Lecturer B alluded that there was no one book that had everything an ELLs would be looking for. It would always be a matter of having to find extra materials to supplement what other information was found in the prescribed books. Lecturer C mentioned that some prescribed books had limited information and were not in line with the demands for online teaching. Most of the books that were available still contained information about the traditional way of teaching while the current environment required ELLs to adopt technology to teach the students.

5.3.2.7 Use Additional Teaching Materials

All ELLs used additional teaching materials to supplement prescribed books and encouraged their students to look for additional materials. The 3 ELLs argued that the UL library was well equipped with grammar structure materials and had different books of grammar. Lecturer C mentioned that most of the books that she used were also available in the library.

5.3.2.8 Students' Grammar

Lecturer A and C rated the grammatical knowledge level of the students as 'average'. However, Lecturer B rated the grammatical knowledge level of the students as 'weak'.

Lecturer A indicated that a majority of the students faced challenges with English grammar. Their grammar challenges could be witnessed when students were writing assignments, tests and examinations. The students' grammatical knowledge is inadequate. Looking at the fact that these students are now at the university level.

Lecturer B indicated that majority of the students mastered reading and writing however, were still lacking grammar knowledge.

5.3.2.9 Teaching Focus on Form

All 3 ELLs' teaching focused on form (FoF). Lecturer A reckoned that her teaching exposed the students to linguistic structures and parts of speech. In addition, Lecturer A taught the students how to construct accurate sentence and apply punctuation marks, rules of grammar and concord. Lecturer B mentioned that students could not attain the high level of English competence if form was treated in isolation from daily teaching as for one to be an excellent writer depended on grammar usage always taking centre stage. Lecturer C mentioned that the teaching of English amongst non-native students required drilling the students on grammatical forms of language that are used orally. This approach would augment students' grammatical accuracy in both writing and speaking.

5.3.2.10 Teaching Focus on Meaning

All 3 ELLs' teaching approach Focused on Meaning (FoM). Lecturer A mentioned that this approach intended to equip the students with maximum input on meaningful use of English language. FoM led to incidental acquisition English. Lecturer B stated that students were encouraged to read extensively in order for them to derive meaning from those readings. Further, Lecturer B used dictionary lessons to derive meaning of words from the study. Lecturer C mentioned that students were encouraged to engage in a turn-talking activities to boost their speaking skills.

In line with the English language curriculum, Lecturer A mentioned that students were expected to write on grammatical and academic writing skills. Lecturer B stated that students were expected to write on reading comprehension, study skills and integrated grammar while Lecturer C indicated that students were expected to write on various aspects of grammar which included, the use of punctuation, tenses, rules of capitalisation, spelling, prepositions as well as all lexical and semantic aspects of language.

5.3.2.11 Sources of written grammar errors

Lecturer A mentioned that the sources of the student's written grammar errors resulted from the inadequate education they acquired from high school. Lecturer B stated that

the rampant use of the SMS language negatively affected the student's writing as they sometimes wrote academic papers using of this shortened form of writing without realising that formal writing advises against that form of writing. Again, the students themselves did not have the required grammatical knowledge because their writing was often to flawed. Lecturer C argued that the students did not practise extensive writing and reading whereas the two activities went well together as they afforded the students a chance to realise how language is used.

5.3.2.12 Common errors

Common errors by English non-native students ranged from punctuation, concord, pronoun parallelism, capitalisation, sentence structure, failure to join independent sentences, verb tenses, auxiliary verbs, word order, use of the spoken language in formal writing, inaccurate conjunction use as well as omission of linking devices.

Moreover, errors that frequently appeared in the students' writings were punctuation errors, subject-verb agreement, capitalisation, use of auxiliary verbs and spelling.

5.3.2.13 Feedback

All the 3 ELLs provided regular feedback on written grammar errors. Lecturer A and C provided oral feedback to the students. On the contrary, Lecturer B gave both oral and written feedback.

5.3.2.14 Grammar structures' challenges

Students demonstrated challenges in sentence structure, concord, tense and word order. The interventions used by the ELLs to help students experiencing grammar challenges were done in different ways: Lecturer A developed teaching materials that addressed errors the students committed whereas Lecturer B intervened by giving the students lessons that had grammar activities and by providing oral and remedial activities with which students could correct the errors that they could have committed previously. Lecturer C intervened by identifying errors students committed, thereafter wrote comments on their scripts on how best to use English language. All the 3 ELLs assisted students when they repeatedly committed grammar errors by adopting various approaches: Lecturer A used feedback, extra class activities as well as referred the students to online sources to read, and to write online quizzes. This helped the students as they received instant feedback after submitting their responses.

Lecturer B provided the students with oral feedback due to time constraints. Lecturer C stated that the intervention that they used included drawing a list of students whose performance was not satisfactory and invited them to a one-on-one consultation.

5.3.2.15 Improvement of written grammatical errors

Lecturer A reckoned that the university should partner with basic education teachers to develop materials that would develop the students' language proficiency and prepare them for what to expect when they exited secondary education. Lecturer B mentioned that students needed to read extensively to improve their grammar and vocabulary as language is learnt best by listening and reading about it. Lecturer C mentioned that students needed to practise writing during their spare time to improve their writing and ELLs should give these students sufficient writing assessment tasks to enable them students to increase and improve their reading and writing abilities.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The following recommendations are made pertaining written grammatical errors committed by English non-native first entering students:

The Department of Languages should introduce an annual English language competency testing at the beginning of the year to access students' English competency level. This will allow the ELLs to revise and develop teaching materials according to the needs of the language students in the university.

The Department of Languages should establish intra-departmental capacity empowerment workshops for lecturers to acquire more knowledge about the grammatical needs of English non-native students.

Training workshops on how to select appropriate teaching English materials must be reinforced to build a productive pedagogical language environment for English non-native students.

ELLs should pay more attention to the lexical and morpho-syntactic knowledge of the students. Errors committed by the students need to be addressed, made salient and explicit to them to circumvent fossilisation.

ELLs should pay more attention to developing English non-native student's writing skills to develop the knowledge required in producing larger unit discourse using the English language.

Research exploring the methodological preferences used by ELLs when teaching grammar in the University of Limpopo needs to be conducted.

After the students' writing, lecturers should identify and record the errors, as well as suggest remedial action to address the identified errors.

English non-native students should extensively read English books to learn how words are arranged in sentences as well as engage in debates conducted in English to develop their target language competence.

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7. APPENDICES

7.1 APPENDIX A: Checklist for Errors Committed

7.2 APPENDIX B: Interviews with English Language Lecturers

7.3 APPENDIX C: Letter to the Head of the Department

7.4 APPENDIX D: Consent Letter to Participants

7.5 APPENDIX E: Approval from the Department of Languages

7.6 APPENDIX F: Approval from the Faculty of Humanities

7.7 APPENDIX G: Ethical clearance Certificate (TREC)

7.1 Appendix A: Checklist for Errors Committed

Potential Error	Actual Error	Frequency	Comment
A. Grammar Structures			
1. Word Classes			
1.1 Noun			
1.2 Pronoun			
1.3 Determiner			
1.4 Verb			
1.5 Adjective			
1.6 Adverb			
1.7 Preposition			
1.8 Conjunction			
1.9 Interjection			
2. Sentences			
2.1 Sentence structure			
2.2 Incomplete sentence			
2.3 Word order			
2.4 Collocation			
3. Tense			
3.1 Present			
3.2 Past			
3.3 Future			
3.4 Continuous			
3.5 Perfect tense			
3.6 Other			
4. Punctuation			

4.1 Capital mark			
4.2 Full stop			
4.3 Comma			
4.4 Colon			
4.5 Semi-colon			
4.6 Question mark			
4.7 Exclamation mark			
4.8 Quotation marks			
4.9 Hyphen			
4.10 Apostrophe			
4.11 Other			
B. Some Application of Grammar Structures			
5. Paragraphing			
5.1 Use of topic sentence			
5.2 Use of supporting sentence			
5.3 Use of concluding sentence			
5.4 Sequence markers			
5.5 Single idea in paragraph			
5.6 Logical connectors/ linking expressions			
5.7 Other errors			

7.2 Appendix B: Interviews with English Language Lecturers

Section A

1. Personal information

1.1 What is your native language?

1.2 What is your highest qualification?

1.3 Do you teach language or literature?

1.4 What is your teaching experience, in years?

1.5 What levels do you teach?

1.6 How many students do you have in your English language class/classes?

2. Training

2.1 Did you receive any training on how to choose appropriate

English teaching materials?

2.2 If your response in 2.1 is yes, please expand on this.

2.3 Did you attend workshops on how to choose appropriate English teaching materials?

2.4 If your response in 2.3 is yes, please explain your response.

Section B

3. Teaching materials

3.1 Are you satisfied with the standard of English books prescribed for students?

3.2 Do you sometimes use additional teaching materials?

3.3 Are students encouraged to look for additional materials?

3.4 Is the library well equipped with grammar structure materials?

4. Students' grammar

4.1 What is the grammatical knowledge level of the students? Choose the appropriate option from the following:

Excellent	Good	Average	Weak

4.2 Are you satisfied with the level of the grammatical knowledge of your students? Please explain your answer.

4.3 Does your teaching focus on form? State your reason(s).

4.4 Does your teaching focus on meaning? State your reason(s).

4.5 In line with the English language curriculum, what are students expected to write on?

4.6 What are the sources of written grammar errors committed by the English language students?

4.7 What are the types of English language errors your students commit in writing?

4.8 Which errors frequently appear in the students' writings?

4.9 Do you give regular feedback on written grammar errors?

4.10 What type of feedback do you give to your students when they commit errors?

4.11 In which grammar structures do your students demonstrate some challenges?

4.12 What sort of intervention do you apply to help students experiencing grammar challenges?

4.13 How do you assist students when they repeatedly commit grammar errors in English language?

4.14 How can the students' written grammar errors be improved?

Thank you participating.

7.3 Appendix C: Letter to the Head of the Department

P. O. Box 920
BOLEU
0474
23 November 2020

The Head of Department
School of Languages and Communication Studies
Private Bag X1106
Sovenga
0727

Dear Dr M.J. Mogoboya

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I hereby wish to apply for permission to conduct research among first entering HENA 011 and HENA012 students and their language lecturers in your department.

I am a registered Master's student in the Department of Languages, English Studies, University of Limpopo. My study is titled: 'Written grammatical errors committed by English language, non-native first entering students at the University of Limpopo: An exploration'. My supervisor is Ms M.V. Mashiane and she can be contacted by e-mail at the following address: valery.mashiane@ul.ac.za.

The study aims to make an essential contribution to the developing area of research in written grammatical errors by exploring various errors the students commit. The findings will also contribute to the body of English knowledge, especially at the students' first year level when they would still be adjusting to the Higher Education (HE) environment.

I trust that this will be given your kind consideration and time.

Kind regards

_____
Mr G.M Nkgadima

godfrey.map@gmail.com (█████████)

7.4 Appendix D: Sample Consent Letter to Participants

<div align="right">

P. O. Box 920
BOLEU
0474
23 November 2020

</div>

Dear Participant

I am Godfrey Nkgadima a Master of Arts in English Studies student (student number ████████), at the University of Limpopo. I am undertaking a study titled: 'Written grammatical errors committed by English language, non-native first entering students at the University of Limpopo: An exploration'. This study will assist in finding solutions to curb various errors emanating from first entering non-native English language students.

My supervisor is Ms M.V. Mashiane and she can be contacted by e-mail at the following address: valery.mashiane@ul.ac.za. You are requested to take part in the research study that investigate errors that are committed by English non-native first entering students. You were identified as a potential participant because my study requires intermediate English language lecturers' perspectives.

Purpose of Study

The main purpose of the study is to explore written grammar errors committed by UL first entering non-native English language students. Moreover, to suggest how UL first entering non-native English language students can avoid committing written grammar errors.

Description of the Study Procedures

If you agree to form part of this study, I will introduce myself and explained fully the aim of my research to you and request to be interviewed by me. The interview questions will be about your English second language teaching experience. The duration of the interview will be 25 minutes.

What are the possible risks or discomforts to you?

Your willingness to participate in this study does not involve any physical or emotional risk to you beyond that of everyday life. Your reputation in the study will certainly not be compromised.

Confidentiality

This interview will be done anonymously; I will not disclose or publish any information about your identity. Also, I will ensure that the interview recordings are kept strictly confidential. This interview material will also be destroyed after the data analysis process is completed.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw

Your participation should be voluntary; there is no remuneration for any participant for assisting the researcher to conduct this research. You may refuse to take part in the study at any time. Moreover, you have the right not to answer any question you may be uncomfortable with or to withdraw completely from the interview at any point during the process.

Right to Ask Questions and Report Concerns

Please note that you have the right to ask follow-up questions about this research and to have those questions answered by me before, during or after the research. If you have any further questions about the study, at any time feel free to contact me, Godfrey Nkgadima, at godfrey.map@gmail.com or by mobile phone at ███████.

Declaration section

Having read through the content of the consent letter and understood its implications, I _____ (participant) hereby consent to participate in this study and willingly support the above mentioned researcher in his research title: 'Written grammatical errors committed by English language, non-native first entering students at the University of Limpopo: An exploration'.

Participant's signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's signature: _____ Date: _____

7.5 Appendix E: Approval from the Department of Languages

University of Limpopo
Faculty of Humanities
Office of the Director
School of Languages and Communication Studies
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 2684, Fax: (015) 268 2868, Email: Johannes.rammala@ul.ac.za

13 November 2020

NAME OF STUDENT: Nkgadima G.M
STUDENT NUMBER: 200904013
DEPARTMENT: Languages
SCHOOL: Languages and Communications Studies
QUALIFICATION – MA Coursework

Dear Student

DEPARTMENTAL APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL (Mini Dissertation)
I have pleasure in informing you that your MA proposal served at the Departmental Senior Degrees meeting held 06 October 2020 and your title was approved as follows:

TITLE: Written grammatical errors committed by English language, non-native first entering students at the University of Limpopo: An exploration.

Note the following:

Ethical Clearance	Tick One
In principle the study requires no ethical clearance, but will need a TREC permission letter before proceeding with the study	
Requires ethical clearance (Human) (TREC) (apply online) Proceed with the study only after receipt of ethical clearance certificate	✓
Requires ethical clearance (Animal) (AREC) Proceed with the study only after receipt of ethical clearance certificate	

Yours faithfully

Director: School of Languages and Communication Studies
Supervisor: Mrs MV Mashiane
Co-supervisor: Dr LJ Ngoepe

7.6 Appendix F: Approval from the Faculty of Humanities

University of Limpopo
University of Limpopo
Faculty of Humanities
Office of the Research Professor
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
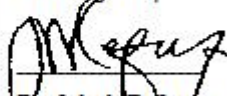Tel: (015) 268 4809, Fax: (015) 268 3425, Email: lesibana.rafapa@ul.ac.za

To	:	Research Development and Administration Director, Dr T. Mabila
Via	:	Executive Dean, Professor R.S. Maoto
From	:	Research Professor
Date	:	19 November 2020
Subject :		Faculty endorsement of a mini-dissertation proposal with the title "Written grammatical errors committed by English language, non-native first entering students at the University of Limpopo: An exploration" – Nkgadima GM (student number: 200904013)

Dear Dr Mabila

This is to confirm that the proposal of the specified student should serve at TREC. It was approved by the School of Languages and Communication Studies (LANGCOM), authorised to do so by and on behalf of the Faculty Executive Committee (FEC). The name of the student is Nkgadima GM (student number: 200904013).

I thank you in advance for your support.

Kind regards,

Prof. L.J. Rafapa

Prof. R.S. Maoto

Executive Dean

7.7 Appendix G: Ethical Clearance Certificate (TREC)

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:
makoetja.ramusi@ul.ac.za

TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

MEETING: 17 February 2021

PROJECT NUMBER: TREC/06/2021: PG

PROJECT:

Title:	Written grammatical errors committed by English language, non-native first entering students at the University of Limpopo: An exploration
Researcher:	GM Nkgadima
Supervisor:	Ms MV Mashiane
Co-Supervisor/s:	Dr LJ Ngoepe
School:	School of Languages and Communication
Degree:	Masters 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.

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