Analysis of Morphological Errors in English Written Texts by ESL Learners

Mahnoor Ahmad	M.phil scholars, Department of English, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan, KP Pakistan.
Sayeda Faryal	M.phil Scholars, Department of English, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan, Pakistan
Sumaira Rauf	M.phil Scholars, Department of English, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan, Pakistan

Abstract: *Pakistan has long studied English, thus it's critical to identify some typical mistakes made by ESL students so that they can develop more effective English language learning techniques. This study examines the morphological and syntactic mistakes made by ESL students when writing in English. The study aims to identify the different kinds of morphological errors that students make in their writing and to shed light on the causes of these errors. The current study determines morphological defects using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The children from Iqra Hoti School Mardan were chosen by the researcher. Dulay, Burt, and Krashen's (1983) theory was used to analyze the errors. The study's findings demonstrated that omission, addition, misformation, and misordering errors are common among students learning English as a second language.*

Corresponding Author: Mahnoor Ahmad (M.phil scholars, Department of English, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan, KP, Pakistan. Email: mahnoorahmad815@gmai.com)

Introduction

Pakistan was once, the part of Indian sub-continent which had been ruled by the British government. They ruled over the sub-continent for more than two hundred years, due to which English became the official language of this territory (Tariq & Hayat, 2013). It was mostly used by the elite class and in schools and higher education. After independence, the English language maintained its status as the official language of Pakistan. Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah also gave importance to the English language in his first conference, regarding education, although the Urdu language was declared the national language of Pakistan he never ignored the importance of English.

The English language has been the lingua franca for decades by now. This is a language that is used in every aspect of our lives nowadays be it in office, courts, military, or even in administration. In Pakistan, learning ESL is considered a problem for students because they are not given enough exposure to the English language. Even in English language classrooms, teachers communicate with

students in their first language. There are many factors that deviate the students from using the English language in the classrooms. Pakistan is one of those countries, where the English language is spreading very rapidly. Although many languages are spoken in Pakistan, the English language is the language of power. It is used in offices, schools, and by the elite class of the society.

Morphology is the study of word structure that contributes to a person's speech competency. Put another way, language learners need to be creative with language and possess an understanding of morphology in order to construct sentences that others will perceive as conveying the intended meaning. Morphological knowledge is defined as "knowledge of the internal structure of words and, of the rules by which words are formed," according to Kin, Rodman & Hymans (2003) as quoted in Chiang & Lu (2010). Free morphemes are morphemes that are self-sufficient. Nouns, adjectives, verbs, prepositions, and adverbs are examples of free morphemes. The following are some instances of free morphemes: man, book, tea, sweet, cook, wager, ingenious, walk, etc. Morphemes that are tied to another word-building element are morphemes that are unable to stand alone. They could be grammatical (e.g., plu), as in boys, girls, and cats, or they could be lexical (e.g., clude), as in exclude, include, and preclude.

Error analysis is the act of identifying the prevalence, kind, causes, and effects of unsuccessful language use. Furthermore, error analysis is a subset of linguistic analysis that concentrates on the mistakes that students make. It involves contrasting mistakes made in the target language with the target language itself. It can be inferred that mistakes made when learning the target language are not solely caused by learners' interference in their mother tongue.

1. Which kinds of morphological faults are present in the written texts produced by the students?
2. Why are these mistakes occurring?

Literature Review

Krashen (1982) put forward a view that the learning of L1 is the unconscious process of learners and thus the process is called language learning. According to him acquisition system creates stimulus in making new sentences whereas the learning system has the role of watching to ensure the correctness of the use of linguistic conventions. He further explains that through the natural order method, learners learn language. For example, rules of language are learned by learners more easily. Krashen states that through interactivity with native speakers learners learn their language. Learners code language from native speakers, and following polishing and processing, they interpret language as L2. He asserted that motivation, self-assurance, and enthusiasm influence the Second Language acquisition process.

The concept of interlanguage was first proposed by Selinker (1972). He claims that while learning a second language, ESL students develop their language skills. He claims that although interlanguage has different norms from learners' L1 and L2, it nevertheless contains aspects of both L1 and L2. Because they are combining the rules of both languages, learners in the interlanguage stage of L1 and L2 are more likely to make mistakes. He goes on to say that when students commit addition errors, it indicates that they are over-generalizing L2 rules in an attempt to achieve their language learning objective by applying unnecessary rules. According to him, students who erase their mistakes demonstrate that they are attempting to

Morphology, according to Todd (1987), is the study of morphemes. The smallest

meaningful unit in language with certain grammatical functions is called a morpheme. Ramadan (2015) showed that morphological mistakes are grammatical mistakes that lead to incapacity when defining standard word classes. Put simply, when learners produce words, they make mistakes. Different dialects have different word production processes that differ in how they transfer from the learner's mother tongue to another. By combining distinct morphemes, learners create a variety of words.

Learners apply the prior knowledge of L1 in order to learn L2. The application of L1 makes their task easier while learning L1. Intra-lingual mistakes are those errors that are made by ESK students. These mistakes are made due to insufficient knowledge of L2 or certain rules that are over-generalized. Errors of performance are those mistakes that can be seen due to the wrong start of a sentence or it can be caused by a slip of tongue. These mistakes are viewed when students are exhausted, stressed, or in conflict. Corder talks of unconscious phenomena. Richard (1971) applies the term Language Transfer. He states that native languages have the same linguistic characteristics. The transfer is called positive transfer. It results in the least mistakes whereas negative transfer or intervention tends to maximum errors.

(Corder, 1975) has defined the error of competence, which can be broadening in nature or because of the intervention of L1 in the learning of L2. Errors of competence can be seen because of incorrect implementation of L2 rules when learners of English do not have enough awareness of L2. Corded describes the two types of errors of competence, inter-lingual errors and intra-lingual errors. Inter-lingual errors are made by learners on a morphological basis. It is because of the intervention of the native language in a second language. (Brown, 2000) adds more to this concept. He states

that the native language plays an essential role in the learning of a second language. Rules of a second language are learned under the framework of native language.

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Research Methodology

The information gathered is of a qualitative kind. The information was gathered through qualitative research. The term "qualitative research" describes the kinds of research questions, designs, and data analysis that are used in relation to a particular subject.

The essays that the pupils wrote were used to gather data. Pupils from Iqra Hoti School Mardan's seventh and eighth grades participated in this study; there were 35 pupils in the seventh class. There were 29 pupils in the eighth class.

The theory of Dulay, Burt, and Krashen was used in the analysis of the gathered data. Based on the idea of Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1983), there are four different categories of errors. The first step is to identify the morphological faults, after which the errors are categorized into four classes and their respective frequencies. Errors can be of four types: addition, misordering, misformation, and omission. Categorizing the mistakes made in texts

authored by ESL students. Following the foregoing, the researcher will determine how many errors there are overall. The conclusion drawn from the data will wrap up the analysis.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Dulay, Burt, and Krashen's (1983) surface approach taxonomy was used to categorize the errors into three categories: omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. Below is an analysis of the data that was gathered.

Exclusion

"Omission errors are those that occur when second language learners fail to include certain essential components. Even though it occurs in the early phases of learning a second language, students at the tertiary level also make mistakes of this kind since their prior information is incomplete. There are 150 morphological omissions in all.

Omission of content morphemes

The content morphemes that give sentences their meaning are nouns, verbs, and adverbs. It was discovered that the study participants omitted various types of verbs as well as the verb "be."

Omission of auxiliary "Be"

When the words "am, is, are, was, and were" are left out of sentences, the verb "b" is removed. The pupils in this instance are unable to distinguish between verbal and nonverbal statements. In English, a verbal sentence takes the form S+V, while a non-verbal sentence takes the form S+ to be + Adjective, Noun, Preposition, Adverb. The reason the students make these mistakes is that they adopt Pakistani grammar when creating English phrases. It was discovered that the study participants left off the verbs "be," "is," "am," and "are" from their papers and exams.

Example 1

1. I very excited.
2. I enjoying cool breeze
3. His shoes clean

In the above examples, the researcher found five errors made by the participants. "I am very excited", "I am enjoying the cool breeze" and "his shoes were clean".

Table 1

Types of errors	Number of errors	percentage of errors
verbs "be"	10	12.74%
Nouns	0	0%
adjectives	0	0%
Adverbs	0	0%

Grammatical Morphemes Omission

Similar to the absence of grammatical morphemes, which are covered below, numerous study participants also made mistakes regarding content morphemes. Grammatical morpheme omissions are errors that happen when research participants forget to use morphemes such as verbs, prepositions, articles, and noun inflection.

Noun Inflection Omission/ Noun Morphology Errors

Three categories can be used to categorize noun inflection omission: omission of apostrophe "-s" possessive "s", omission of

"–ing", omission of plural markers "-s", and "-es."

Omission of apostrophe "S"

These types of mistakes include the deletion of the noun inflection "-S," which indicates ownership or affiliation. For instance, "John's house."

Omission of Noun Inflection "-ing" (Gerund)

Example 1

The players in this instance are unaware of the "gerund" rules. A gerund is a noun that is created from a verb and ends in -ing.

"Overdrinking alcohol may increase the risk of get kidney disease."

In the example above, "overdrinking alcohol may increase the risk of getting kidney disease" is the right wording. Since the -ing must be appended to a verb when it is used as a noun, "getting" is the right form of the word "get."

Omission of Noun Plural Marker "-s" or "-es"

A final "-s" or "-es" is added to a noun to make a plural noun. In this case, the students cannot make a distinction rule between singular and plural. The students sometimes omit the plural marker "s" or "es" that is attached to the singular noun. In this category, the researcher found six errors made by the participants.

Example 1

1. "I have three cousins in my family."
2. "So many type."
3. 'To visit some house."

The correct form of the sentence in the example above is "I have three cousins in my family." In the above examples, the correct form for the first sentence is "So many types."

Omission of "have"

In this category, the researcher found one error made by the participants. There are two participants who make this error.

Example

1. "I never saw it before."

The participants make this error. In this category, the correct form of the sentence in the example above is "I have never seen it before."

Verb Morphology Errors

Verb Inflection „-s" Omission to Denote Singularity

In this category, the researcher found three errors for the omission of third-person singular "-s" made by participants in this study which are below.

Example

1. 'Ali hate dog. He also hates horse."

There are two mistakes in the aforementioned example when it comes to the verb inflection "-s," which indicates the singularity of the verb's subject in concord. Since "Ali" is the only example, the rule demands that the verb "hate" be modified to "hates." Additionally, "hates" should be substituted for the word "hate" in the second phrase.

Past tense "-ed" Omission

The study's participants made 25 mistakes in omitting the verb inflection "ed" to indicate tense, according to the researcher. The researcher will insert one table, will put all the errors in one table, and then will separately explain each error.

Example

2. "Pakistan has developed a lot"

In this sentence, the participant makes the error. The verb "develop" in the above example is employed without its "-ed" inflection and should be expressed in its participle form "developed".

Absence of prepositions

Many of the study participants also made mistakes by forgetting to include prepositions in addition to the verb inflection "ed." The researcher has also discovered prepositional mistakes. A few of the instances are listed below.

Example 1

1. "Ami hates play hockey."
   1. "We need get enough res."

The phrase does not contain the word "to." "Ami hates to play hockey" as same is the case with the second example the preposition has also been left out from "We need to get enough rest".

Articles (a, an, and the) Omitted Example

1. 'I see most of student's are swimming."

Most of the participants are inappropriately using the definite article "the". The researcher analyzed the overuse of this article in the students' worksheets. The indefinite article "the" must be used in this statement according to the English article rule, as demonstrated in the example above. "It appears that the majority of students are swimming," is a false statement. "I can see that most of the students are swimming" is the proper way to phrase this.

Table 2

Omission of Grammatical Morphemes

Kinds of Errors	Number	Percentage
Omission of apostrophe "S"	4	3.92%
Omission of Noun inflection "-ing"	2	1.96%
Omission of Noun Plural marker "-s", "-es".	6	5.88%
Omission of "Have"	1	0.98%
Verb inflection "-s" omission to denote singularity	2	1.96%
Past tense "-ed" Omission	2	1.96%
Omission of prepositions	3	2.94%
Omission of Articles (a, an, the)		1.96%

Addition

The slight opposite of omission is addition. The term "addition" describes the use of something superfluous. These things don't belong in a sentence. In their paperwork, the study participants made addition or double-marking mistakes. There are sixty morphological additions in all. Here are a few instances from document analysis that have been discovered.

Addition of auxiliary "Be" Example

He's is so intelligent.
"He's" and the word "is" is added, or twice marked, in the example above. There is no need to add the word "is" after the former

since it already implies "He is."

Addition of Apostrophe "s" Example

My brother's has a dog.
The correct form of this sentence is 'My brother has a dog'. There is no need for morpheme "-s" in the example given above.

Addition of Past Participle Maker "ed"

Example

1. Every day I danced for thirty minutes.

In the example given above the word "danced" there is no need to add the past participle marker "ed". The sentence is "Every day I danced for thirty minutes".

Addition of Personal Pronoun

Example

1. My elder sister she is studying.

In the example given above, there is no need to add the personal pronoun "she". The correct form of this sentence is 'my elder sister is studying'.

Addition of Prepositions

Example

1. She lives in front of near hotel.
2. The correct sentence is "She lives near hotel".

Addition of "To" Example

1. I can to talk.

This is the infinitive weakness of the students. The use of "to infinitive" is confusing for the pupil. The researcher discovered that two participant mistakes were made in this area. In the example above, the "to infinitive" is not necessary.

"I can talk" is the proper version of the example.

Addition of Articles Example

1. I live in the Pakistan.

The researcher found 2 errors made by the participants. Some of the participants overused the word "the" in the sentence. The aforementioned example does not require the addition of the word "the." This statement should read, "I live in Pakistan."

Table 3

Errors types	Number	Percentage
Addition of auxiliary 'Be'	2	1.96%
Addition of Apostrophe 's'	1	0.98%
Addition of past participle "ed"	3	2.94%
Addition of personal pronoun	1	0.98%
Addition of prepositions	3	2.94%
Addition of To	1	0.98%
Addition of Articles	2	1.96%

Misformation

There are various kinds of misformation errors. The employment of a morpheme or structure in the incorrect form is referred to as misformation. For instance, the verb "understood" in the statement "I understood the course" is irregular and the past tense is incorrect. "I understood the course" is the proper way to phrase this. Numerous misformation errors have been discovered. There are already twenty recognized morphological misformation faults. Misformation errors account for 170 morphological faults. Some samples from written tests and document analysis are provided below.

Misformation of auxiliary "be"

Example 1

1. How is your class fellows?

Example 2

1. Where are my book?

The verb 'is' means singular but in example 1, it is used with the plural noun, fellows. This is incorrect. The correct version of this sentence in example 1 is "How are your class fellows?

The word "are" is intended to be plural, but in this instance, it is being used incorrectly to refer to a singular noun book (example 2). In the second case, the statement should be said "Where is my book?"

Misformation of past participle "ed" or "en"

The participant's numerous mispronunciations of the past participle markers "ed" or "-en" were discovered by the researcher. Only a few words in English can have the suffix "-ed" added to them to make them into their past tense versions. By adding the morpheme "-ed" to every verb, the participants regularize the norm that all verbs change from their base form to their past tense forms. Some verbs in the English language have completely different forms when they are in the past tense. Below are a few of the instances:

Example

1.   I have touch khana kaba.

The correct form of this sentence is "I have touched Khana Kaba". The participant made this error by omitting the morpheme "ed" in the word „touch".

Misformation of verb Example

1.   She did not delivered the application.

Did is the word that implies past tense. A simple rule for framing sentences is that a single tense should not be used twice in a sentence. Therefore we use the first form of the verb with did. The correct form of this sentence in the example given above is "She did not deliver the application".

Table 4

Kinds of errors	Number	Percentage
Misformation of auxiliary "Be"	2	1.96%
Misformation of past participle "ed" or "en"	3	2.94%
Misformation of Apostrophe "s"	1	0.98%
Misformation of plural marker "s" or "-es"	2	1.96%
Misformation of verb	3	2.94%

Misordering or Disordering

A misplaced morpheme or cluster of morphemes, within a sentence is referred to as misordering. Compared to other sorts of errors like omission, addition, and misformation errors, the frequency of misordering errors is lower. The researcher found a total of 20 morphological mistakes in this category. Some of the examples listed below are as follows.

Example

1.   I get up at 8 o'clock always.

The sentence given in the example above is incorrect because as in English adverbs of frequency are positioned immediately before the verb. The correct form of this sentence is "I always get up at 8 o'clock".

Table 5

Types of Errors	Number of Errors	Percentage of Errors
Misordering errors	2	1.96%

Findings

Due to a lack of English language proficiency, learners in Pakistan frequently misuse the target language, English. The consistency, aspect, and frequency of the mistakes demonstrate the learners' proficiency with the language. Following an investigation, it was discovered that learners create a high amount of omission-type errors—40 out of 98 errors. With a percentage of 39.2%, this mistake kind is the highest. Predominantly, inflectional suffix mistakes occur. The third-person singular markers "s" and "es," the plural markers "s" and "es," and auxiliary verbs are omitted by the learners. Their sentences are incorrect because they leave out copula and auxiliary verbs (40 mistakes). As we can see, misformation type (30 mistakes) accounts for 29.4% of morphological errors.

Thus, it is easy to assume that students will frequently employ incorrect word forms or word fragments. This demonstrates further that 29.4% of students are not proficient in the proper use of morphemes. It has been discovered that learners most frequently make mistakes linked to misinformation when utilizing the inflectional suffixes "s," "es," and "ed." They struggle to determine whether to utilize a morpheme in its solitary or plural form. They also use morphemes' past and past participle forms quite poorly, which suggests that they struggle with English tenses as well.

Errors connected to disinformation and omissions can be corrected, which will automatically greatly minimize errors of the other two types. Because they are careless with exclusions and false information, and because they are unsure of when to add the plural or third-person singular marker "s," learners add distinct aspects incorrectly. As a result, they are misled by oversimplification and come to understand English morphemes incorrectly.

They consequently increase morphemes needlessly. It is also evident from the results that there are not many addition-type errors (19.6%). The results of the study also demonstrate that learners hardly ever commit morphological errors of the disordering type. There is just 7.84% of this kind of inaccuracy overall. The researchers are confident that if other kinds of errors are corrected, this number will drop to around zero percent. The origins and reasons for mistakes also have important ramifications for how learners behave while using language. It is clear from the errors generated by interlingual factors that learners' mother tongues greatly impede them, leading to errors in the use of distinct morphemes. They are more conversant in Urdu grammar than in English. Therefore, teaching morphemes using a comparative method will help learners become less confused. The learners have made several intralingual errors due to overgeneralization since they lack sufficient knowledge of the morphological characteristics of the English language; one such example is "Cindy went to school."

The statement "Cindy went to school" is accurate. When learning interrogative sentences, examples of this blunder are "Where you come? " and "Ignorance of rules restrictions and incomplete applications of rules." Rather than "Where do you come from?" use "You like to sing?" Rather than "Do you enjoy singing?" False concept hypothesis: An illustration of this mistake is when someone says, "He is goes to school," as opposed to, "He goes to school." When learners apply the rules of the target language to inappropriate contexts, they become ignorant of limiting restrictions. The phrase "He made me go to" rest is an example of how to extend the pattern "He asked/wanted me to go. It is clear from the aforementioned assertions that there are two different types of faults. These two types of faults are intralingual and interlingual.

While intralingual errors are another source of errors that show the learners' poor knowledge or skill in the target language, interlingual errors are produced by interference from the mother tongue. It is evident that students make more morphological mistakes while using auxiliary verbs, third-person singular markers "s" and "es," and plural markers "s" and "es." It follows that the students need to be well-versed in English morphemes. By explaining the origins and reasons of errors to their students, teachers can significantly contribute to the decrease of morphological errors.

Conclusion

Following data analysis and the use of Dulay, Burt, and Krashen's (1983) theory to classify errors into four categories, the researcher delivers a summary of results that includes an answer to the research questions. The study's conclusions demonstrated that the pupils' written texts contained 98 mistakes. There are three categories of morphological errors: omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. We can conclude that there are two distinct sources of inaccuracy. It is evident that students make more morphological mistakes while using auxiliary verbs, third-person singular markers "s" and "es" and plural markers "s" and "es." It follows that the students need to be well-versed in English morphemes. A good illustration of this is "Cindy goes to school." The statement "Cindy went to school" is accurate. When learning interrogative sentences, instances of this

inaccuracy include ignorance of rule constraints and insufficient application of rules. You like to sing rather than ask, "Where do you come from?" Rather than "Do you enjoy singing? False concept hypothesis: An illustration of this mistake is when someone says, "He is goes to school," as opposed to, "He goes to school." When learners apply the rules of the target language to inappropriate contexts, they become ignorant of limiting restrictions. The phrase "He made me go to" rest is an example of how to extend the pattern. "He requested that I leave." Students need to practice the usage of morphemes. The written and verbal practice of morphemes needs to be regularly examined and rectified by the teacher. Parts of speech must be learned by the student at the primary education level with the help of a tutor. The instructions of the primary level must be carried to an advanced stage in the secondary level. The mistakes of the students must be highlighted by the tutor for the reason that the students are aware of their mistakes.

Recommendations

The researchers recommend using a quantitative data collection methodology for more precise and better results. The researchers also suggest carrying out the same study at different educational levels, that is, Primary, Secondary, Intermediate, or Higher Education. The researchers hope that other researchers who want to conduct a similar topic to add other aspects to be analyzed because other aspects of writing are also important.

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