

An Analysis of the Errors in English Writing Among Saudi Undergraduate Students

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Abstract—This study investigates writing errors among Saudi undergraduate students at an empirical level of analysis. The main aim of the research is to comprehend the theme of writing errors exhibited by undergraduate students in a country where the dominance of the native language, i.e., Arabic, is quite high. The English language is now widely used as the primary mode of communication worldwide, both personally and professionally. The prevalence of English across networking areas has been further amplified by internet usage. This study seeks to understand the fluency of students from a country where proficiency in their native language is typically sufficient for success. The study employs a quantitative approach, utilizing convenience sampling to gather data from 271 undergraduate students through a structured questionnaire. The study identified three types of writing errors: grammatical errors, sentence formation errors, and conceptualization errors. A strong correlation was observed among these errors, with sentence formation errors being the most frequent. Demographic analysis revealed that reading English books and engaging in English-language audio and video activities can reduce sentence formation errors. Incorporating such co-curricular activities into the English curriculum may mitigate writing errors. Additionally, supplementary classes, especially those offered by private tutors, were found to reduce conceptualization errors. These classes should be tailored to help students conceptualize ideas in English. The three identified factors contribute to the theoretical framework and provide valuable insights for future research in similar areas.

Index Terms—writing errors, Arabic dominance, grammatical errors, sentence formation errors, conceptualization errors

I. INTRODUCTION

The English language is one of the most widely used media of communication globally. It is extensively employed for educational and business purposes, particularly in interactions with international entities. According to the Statista Research Department (2023), approximately 1.5 billion individuals worldwide spoke English as their native or second language in 2022. Richter (2022) further noted that out of these 1.5 billion individuals, 1.2 billion are active internet users, making English the predominant language of the internet. The widespread use of English in cross-border communication, bolstered by technology and internet proliferation, highlights the language's ongoing evolution and underscores the importance of comprehensive English language training, particularly for students (Kacel & Klímová, 2019).

This study focuses on the writing aspect of language acquisition, as it is fundamental to achieving a clear understanding of the language. Numerous researchers have identified challenges faced by students from various countries, especially those with linguistically dominant native languages, in mastering the basics of English (Al-Jarf, 2022; Kukatlappalli et al., 2020; M Hashmi et al., 2019; Ranjan et al., 2021). In countries such as India, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and Nepal, local languages are widely used for personal and professional communication. However, to pursue further studies or a career abroad, mastering proficient English writing is essential. Therefore, this study aims to explore the writing errors made by students in Saudi Arabia, where the dominance of Arabic presents unique challenges for learning English. The research seeks to identify specific areas of difficulty and propose strategies to overcome these challenges.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Abdel-Reheem Amin (2020) conducted a study on the use of Google Apps as a tool for teaching and learning English. A review of approximately 200 articles revealed that certain Google-based applications enhanced the language learning process, impacting oral, writing, and speaking skills through machine translations. Kifi (2023) performed an error analysis on the writing of 23 management students. The study identified 302 errors across 2018 sentences, including misordering, addition, omission, and misinformation. Leba et al. (2021) evaluated syntactic errors in English writing of 25 university students, finding common errors in differentiating between noun and adjective phrases. The students struggled with analyzing tree diagrams. Toba et al. (2019) explored the writing skills of Indonesian EFL students, noting that the majority demonstrated good writing skills with a mean score around 75. Challenges included a lack of practice, writing anxiety, insufficient time, and inadequate teaching processes. Gebireegziabher (2021) analyzed writing errors among EFL students in the Sidama region, identifying errors such as misspelling, punctuation, verb/noun/preposition identification,

and grammatical errors. Alghazo and Alshraideh (2020) investigated grammatical errors among English learners at an Arab university. The study revealed frequent errors in verb tense identification, article placement, and sentence structure. Eng et al. (2020) conducted a comparative study of grammatical errors in English language essays by undergraduates from China and Malaysia. Chinese international students exhibited more errors in vocabulary, misuse, misinformation, repetition, expression, structure, and omission compared to Malaysian international students. While these studies provide insights into language errors, this research aims to quantify common errors using a detailed questionnaire with a larger sample of students. The next section details the research design used in this study.

III. METHODOLOGY

Research questions

The study analyzed the following research questions:

- 1: What are the most common writing errors made by Saudi students in English?
- 2: How do these errors affect the overall English language usage experience of the students?

The study employs a comprehensive research methodology, specifically designed for gathering and analyzing responses from a larger sample, utilizing a quantitative approach. The chosen research instrument is a structured questionnaire, utilizing a 5-point Likert scale to assess the writing skills of undergraduate students. Conveniently sampled, a total of 271 responses were collected from various educational institutes in Saudi Arabia. Convenience sampling involves selecting subjects who are readily available and accessible to the researcher. In this case, the researcher chose to gather data from 271 undergraduate students using a structured questionnaire. This sample size was likely determined based on practical considerations such as time, resources, and the feasibility of obtaining responses within the study's constraints.

The structured questionnaire utilized in this study was meticulously designed to assess various dimensions of writing skills among undergraduate students in Saudi Arabia. It consists of a series of items, each crafted to evaluate specific aspects such as grammar, organization, vocabulary usage, and overall proficiency in English language writing. Each item on the questionnaire is formulated to capture nuanced variations in skill levels across these dimensions. This categorization aligns with existing literature, emphasizing the importance of tailored interventions and practical application to improve writing skills in English for non-native speakers.

Prior to implementation, the questionnaire underwent a rigorous validation process to ensure reliability and validity. This process included initial item generation based on established writing skill frameworks, expert review to assess content validity, pilot testing to refine item wording and ensure clarity, and statistical analyses such as factor analysis to confirm the internal consistency of the questionnaire.

To derive meaningful results, the study employs principal component analysis (PCA) alongside correlation analysis, t-tests, and ANOVA. This methodological approach aims to explore demographic associations with writing skills and highlight major errors in English writing among the surveyed students. By focusing on both quantitative data and statistical analyses, the research seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of the factors influencing writing proficiency and identify prevalent challenges faced by students in Saudi Arabian educational contexts.

To derive comprehensive results, the study employs PCA along with correlation analysis, t-tests, and ANOVA. This multifaceted approach aims not only to uncover demographic associations with writing skills but also to highlight significant errors in English writing. By focusing on both quantitative data and statistical analyses, the research seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of the factors influencing writing proficiency and identify prevalent challenges faced by students in the Saudi Arabian educational context.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

An analysis of the 271 collected responses was done using SPSS. In the initial stage of the data analysis process, a concise overview of the frequencies related to the demographics of the students is presented below in Table 1.

TABLE 1
FREQUENCIES OF STUDENTS STUDYING IN DIFFERENT YEARS OF THE BACHELOR'S DEGREE PROGRAM

In which year of the bachelor's degree program are you studying?	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Year I	9	3.3 %	3.3 %
Year II	27	10.0 %	13.3 %
Year III	124	45.8 %	59.0 %
Year IV	111	41.0 %	100.0 %

As previously indicated, the surveyed students are at the undergraduate level of their studies. The provided Table 1 delineates the distribution across various academic years. A predominant 45.8% of respondents belong to the 3rd year, followed by 41% from the 4th year. The 1st year comprises a minor 3.3%, while the 2nd year encompasses 10% of the participants.

TABLE 2
FREQUENCIES OF STUDENTS ATTENDING ADDITIONAL CLASSES TO IMPROVE ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS

Did you attend additional classes to improve your English Language	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
No	111	41.0 %	41.0 %
Yes	160	59.0 %	100.0 %

To gauge the level of support students received in learning English, respondents were asked about their attendance in additional classes for language improvement. Table 2 reveals that 59% of respondents participated in extra English improvement classes, while 41% did not engage in any alternative sources for learning the language.

TABLE 3
FREQUENCIES OF INSTRUCTORS WHO TEACH THE PARTICIPANTS BASED ON THEIR FIRST LANGUAGE

Most of your instructors who teach you in the university are	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Arabic Speakers	145	53.5 %	53.5 %
Arabic Speakers, English Native Speakers	15	5.5 %	59.0 %
Arabic Speakers, Non Arabic Speakers	24	8.9 %	67.9 %
Arabic Speakers, Non Arabic Speakers, English Native Speakers	6	2.2 %	70.1 %
English Native Speakers	42	15.5 %	85.6 %
Non Arabic Speakers	33	12.2 %	97.8 %
Non Arabic Speakers, English Native Speakers	6	2.2 %	100.0 %

The study delved further into the English instructors with whom students interacted. Results in Table 3 indicate that 53.5% of the students learned English from Arabic speakers, while only 15.5% learned strictly from English-speaking teachers.

TABLE 4
FREQUENCIES OF THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN THEIR SCHOOL

The medium of instruction in your school was	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Arabic	190	70.1 %	70.1 %
Both	3	1.1 %	71.2 %
English	75	27.7 %	98.9 %
all of which	3	1.1 %	100.0 %

As per Table 4 the medium of instruction in school for the majority of students, accounting for 70.1%, has been Arabic, while a smaller percentage, 27.7%, attended schools with English as the medium of instruction.

TABLE 5
FREQUENCIES OF THE PARTICIPANTS WHO READ ANY BOOKS IN ENGLISH OTHER THAN THEIR COURSE BOOKS

Do you read any books in English other than your books?	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
No	121	44.6 %	44.6 %
Yes	150	55.4 %	100.0 %

TABLE 6
FREQUENCIES OF THE PARTICIPANTS WHO WATCH ENGLISH MOVIES OR LISTEN TO THE ENGLISH SONGS

Do you watch English movies or listen to the English songs?	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
No	15	5.5 %	5.5 %
Yes	256	94.5 %	100.0 %

To gauge the engagement of Arabic-speaking students with the English language beyond their formal curriculum, they were surveyed about activities such as reading English books, listening to songs, or watching movies. Results as per Table 5 and 6 showed that 55.4% of the students read English books outside the prescribed curriculum, while a significant 94.5% watched English movies or listened to English songs. This indicates their involvement in various English-related activities beyond their academic learning.

These demographic characteristics offer insights into the students' attributes. It would be intriguing to explore how these attributes correlate with other aspects of mastering the English language.

In the second section of the questionnaire, students were presented with 18 items to assess their challenges in writing English. The descriptive statistics of the responses are presented below in Table 7.

TABLE 7
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

	N	Mean	Median	SD	Minimum	Maximum
I am not able to use pronouns (e.g. he, she it) correctly in English.	271	2.15	2	1.208	1	5
I cannot connect ideas and sentences together (e.g. using and, but or)	271	2.21	2	1.121	1	5
I face problems in choosing the right prepositions (e.g. in, on, at)	271	2.85	3	1.439	1	5
I face difficulties in using auxiliaries (e.g. is, was, are etc) in English sentences	271	2.54	2	1.267	1	5
I make mistakes while using tenses (past/present)	271	2.92	3	1.268	1	5
I face a difficulty in using articles (e.g. a, the)	271	2.79	3	1.083	1	5
It is difficult for me to write down my ideas, I don't have enough vocabulary to find the right word.	271	3.03	3	1.426	1	5
I face a lot of problems in forming a correct sentence in English	271	2.89	3	1.279	1	5
I make many spelling mistakes while writing in English	271	3.51	3	1.235	1	5
I have problems in using the punctuation marks.	271	2.61	2	1.218	1	5
I make mistakes in using plural forms in English	271	2.62	2	1.358	1	5
I form my sentences in Arabic first and then I translate them from Arabic to English while writing.	271	3.52	4	1.319	1	5
Lack of conversation in English Language	271	3.35	3	1.166	1	5
I don't get immediate corrective written feedback from my instructor	271	2.61	3	1.052	1	5
I don't know the rules of English Grammar	271	2.39	2	0.951	1	5
I don't know the rules of punctuation	271	2.46	2	1.081	1	5
The method of teaching the writing course doesn't suit me.	271	2.58	2	1.155	1	5
I cannot remember spellings	271	3.10	3	1.310	1	5

1. Classification and Pattern Recognition

The categories of tasks in Table 7 can be classified into three major groups namely: Errors Related to Grammar, Sentence structure and concepts, and External factors influencing writing.

Errors Related to Grammar:

- Pronouns (Mean = 2.15, SD = 1.208), Prepositions (Mean = 2.85, SD = 1.439), Auxiliaries (Mean = 2.54, SD = 1.267), Tenses (Mean = 2.92, SD = 1.268), Articles (Mean = 2.79, SD = 1.083), and Plural Forms (Mean = 2.62, SD = 1.358)

These results imply that several grammatical aspects pose challenges, particularly prepositions, tenses, and articles. The means for prepositions (2.85) and tenses (2.92) are notably high, suggesting these areas are more problematic than expected. The standard deviations (SD) for these items are relatively moderate, indicating some variability in how participants perceive their difficulties. For instance, this study noted that the highest SD for the variables was observed for prepositions (1.439), illustrating that this issue might present varied levels among participants.

Errors Related to Sentence Structure and Concepts:

- Sentence Formation (M= 2.89; SD= 1.279), Words Problems (M= 3.03; SD= 1.426), Arabic Language Translation (M= 3.52; SD= 1.319)

These aspects highlight difficulties that most participants encountered in terms of coming up with sentences in English and even ideas in English language. The higher mean for Vocabulary issues (3.03) and Translation from Arabic (3.52) indicates these challenges are moderately to highly prevalent. SD for vocabulary (1.426) is higher as compared to

that for sentence formation (1.279), therefore there is a broader variation on how individuals deal with vocabulary difficulty, especially in the choosing of the word.

External Factors:

- Spelling Mistakes (Mean = 3.51, SD = 1.235), Punctuation (Mean = 2.61, SD = 1.218), Lack of Conversation in English (Mean = 3.35, SD = 1.166), Feedback and Grammar Knowledge (Means around 2.39 to 2.61).

Spelling mistakes appear to be a notable challenge, as indicated by the highest mean score (3.51). The moderate SD (1.235) suggests that while spelling difficulties are common, their severity varies among participants. The relatively lower means for feedback (2.61) and grammar knowledge (2.39) indicate that, while these are perceived as less significant challenges, they still impact writing proficiency.

2. Implication and Standard Deviation (SD)

The standard deviations (SDs) in the items demonstrate variability in responses, with certain areas showing greater inconsistency in how participants experience difficulties. For instance, vocabulary issues and prepositions have higher SDs, suggesting that some participants struggle significantly more than others in these areas. This variability highlights the need for personalized support, particularly in grammar-related challenges and language conceptualization.

3. Comparison of items and Trends

When comparing items within each category, sentence formation and vocabulary issues appear more prevalent than grammar-related errors, as indicated by the higher mean scores for vocabulary issues (3.03) and translation from Arabic (3.52). Additionally, spelling mistakes (3.51) represent a significant concern, suggesting that errors in form (such as spelling) may be linked to broader language acquisition challenges, including vocabulary and sentence formation difficulties.

4. Error Categories and Student Experience

Errors are widely understood to be both cognitive (including sentence formation, translation, and vocabulary) and syntactic (involving prepositions, tenses, and auxiliaries), with less emphasis placed on peripheral causes, such as the absence of feedback mechanisms. The high frequency of sentence formation errors and the need for translation from Arabic to English suggest that these challenges are central to students' writing difficulties. These findings indicate that issues with translation and cognitively appropriate sentence formation have a significant negative impact on students' overall language proficiency. Addressing these challenges is likely to result in broad improvements in writing skills.

5. Influence of the experience with the language on students' performance

The inability to achieve fluency in English is evident, particularly in challenges related to translation from Arabic (Mean = 3.52) and limited vocabulary (Mean = 3.03), which create significant barriers to fluency. The lower mean scores for grammar-related issues suggest that while these problems exist, they may not be as critical for English users as difficulties in sentence construction and developing complex ideas. Additionally, the lack of conversation practice (Mean = 3.35) indicates that insufficient exposure to spoken English may hinder students' ability to overcome these challenges.

In summary, Table 7 highlights students' challenges with grammar, sentence formation, and external factors. However, a deeper exploration of how these difficulties interconnect would strengthen the analysis. The variability in responses underscores the need for tailored support, particularly in sentence formation, vocabulary, and reliance on Arabic-to-English translation. Future studies could investigate statistical correlations among these variables to identify the most critical errors affecting students' language proficiency and academic performance.

Encouragingly, the data indicate that students do not face significant challenges with basic grammar or punctuation rules. This suggests that efforts should focus on reducing the influence of Arabic on English learning, particularly in pronoun usage and spelling proficiency, to further enhance students' writing skills.

To explore the underlying factors among the set of 18 items, a Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was conducted. The overall Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value stands at 0.743, and Bartlett's test results reveal a p-value of less than 0.05, indicating sampling adequacy. Varimax rotation was applied during the PCA process.

TABLE 8
COMPONENT LOADINGS

	Component			Uniqueness
	1	2	3	
I am not able to use pronouns (e.g. he, she it) correctly in English.		0.674		0.404
I cannot connect ideas and sentences together (e.g. using and, but or)		0.742		0.376
I face problems in choosing the right prepositions (e.g. in, on, at)		0.842		0.278
I face difficulties in using auxiliaries (e.g. is, was, are etc) in English sentences		0.590		0.454
I make mistakes while using tenses (past/present)		0.481		0.541
I face a difficulty in using articles (e.g. a, the)		0.682		0.534
It is difficult for me to write down my ideas, I don't have enough vocabulary to find the right word.	0.713			0.395
I face a lot of problems in forming a correct sentence in English	0.533			0.480
I make many spelling mistakes while writing in English	0.471			0.731
I have problems in using the punctuation marks.	0.731			0.434
I make mistakes in using plural forms in English	0.605			0.381
I form my sentences in Arabic first and then I translate them from Arabic to English while writing.			0.599	0.536
Lack of conversation in English Language			0.722	0.478
I don't get immediate corrective written feedback from my instructor			0.460	0.866
I don't know the rules of English Grammar			0.487	0.575
I don't know the rules of punctuation			0.622	0.487
The method of teaching the writing course doesn't suit me.			0.556	0.678
I cannot remember spellings			0.440	0.882

Note. 'varimax' rotation was used

There are three factors extracted which have eigen value of more than 1. According to Hair et al. (2006), the factor loadings of more than 0.4 are considered significant for the factor extraction method.

According to Table 8, the first factor comprises 6 items related to grammatical usage patterns in the English language, including pronouns, articles, and prepositions. This factor is labelled as "Grammatical Errors." The second factor encompasses 5 items addressing challenges in generating and assembling sentences, termed as "Sentence Formation Errors." Lastly, the third factor consists of 7 items representing issues related to the final formulation of English writing skills, designated as "Conceptualizing Errors".

TABLE 9
DESCRIPTIVES STATISTICS

	N	Mean	Median	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Grammatical Errors	271	2.58	2.50	0.796	1.00	4.67
Sentence Formation Errors	271	3.11	3.00	0.951	1.40	5.00
Conceptualising Errors	271	2.78	2.80	0.669	1.00	4.60

The mean scores for these factors, as indicated in Table 9, reveal that Sentence Formation Errors have the highest score of 3.11. It is followed by Conceptualizing Errors with a score of 2.78, and the least problematic factor among these students is Grammatical Errors, with a score of 2.58. One of the primary issues identified is the difficulty in sentence formation among the respondents. The demographic results highlight certain areas that can be addressed to improve this. The medium of instruction, reading books, and watching movies or listening to English songs show significant differences in sentence formation levels. It is suggested that the hindrance caused by Arabic usage in sentence formation can be reduced by using English-speaking tutors. Additionally, focusing on reading books, watching movies, and listening to songs in English, without relying on Arabic for understanding, can help exclude the use of the local language and promote proficiency in English.

In the subsequent sections, statistical analysis of the three extracted factors is shown. Initially, demographics are analysed in relation to these factors to ascertain differences in mean scores among them.

TABLE 10
ONE-WAY ANOVA – YEAR OF STUDY

	F	df1	df2	p
Grammatical Errors	9.63	3	34.5	<.001
Sentence Formation Errors	8.28	3	37.2	<.001
Conceptualising Errors	3.06	3	33.0	0.042

TABLE 11
T-TESTS-ADDITIONAL CLASSES ON ENGLISH

	F	df1	df2	p
Grammatical Errors	0.871	1	243	0.352
Sentence Formation Errors	3.081	1	244	0.080
Conceptualising Errors	3.886	1	250	0.050

TABLE 12
ONE-WAY ANOVA – MEDIUM OF THE INSTRUCTOR

	F	df1	df2	p
Grammatical Errors	15.46	6	44.8	<.001
Sentence Formation Errors	3.95	6	36.8	0.004
Conceptualising Errors	12.94	6	40.4	<.001

TABLE 13
T-TEST-READING BOOKS IN ENGLISH

	F	df1	df2	p
Grammatical Errors	3.53262	1	267	0.061
Sentence Formation Errors	13.22445	1	259	<.001
Conceptualising Errors	0.00478	1	267	0.945

TABLE 14
T-TESTS-WATCHING MOVIES OR LISTENING SONGS IN ENGLISH

	F	df1	df2	p
Grammatical Errors	11.33	1	15.0	0.004
Sentence Formation Errors	6.39	1	15.1	0.023
Conceptualising Errors	1.09	1	16.9	0.310

As shown in tables from 10 to 14, among the considered demographic factors, significant differences in mean scores of the three factors are observed for the year of study, medium of instruction, English usage for reading, watching movies, listening to songs, and attendance of additional classes. For the factor of additional classes, a significant mean score difference is seen for conceptualizing errors, while the other two factors do not show any relationship. Regarding the other two demographics, the three factors are found to be associated. Reading English books, aside from the curriculum ones, affects sentence formation errors. Conversely, watching movies or listening to songs in English exhibits significant mean score differences for both Grammatical Errors and Sentence Formation Errors.

In order to determine the existence of relationship among these three factors, correlation analysis is used as shown in Table 15.

TABLE 15
CORRELATION MATRIX

		Grammatical Errors	Sentence Formation Errors	Conceptualising Errors
Grammatical Errors	Pearson's r	—		
	p-value	—		
Sentence Formation Errors	Pearson's r	0.497	—	
	p-value	<.001	—	
Conceptualising Errors	Pearson's r	0.394	0.558	—
	p-value	<.001	<.001	—

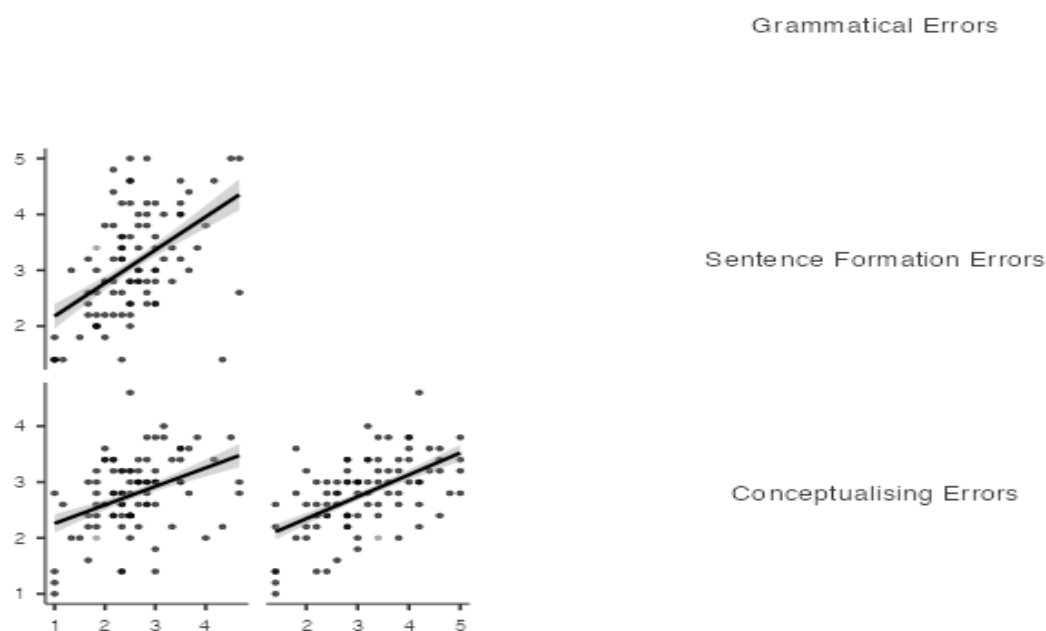


Figure 1.

As shown in Table 15 and Figure 1 the p-value for all correlations among the three variables is less than 0.05, indicating a statistically significant association between them. Pearson's r shows that all correlations are positive, meaning that as one variable increases, the other two also increase. To understand the strength of these relationships, effect sizes were measured using the correlation coefficients. For grammatical errors and sentence formation errors, the value is 0.497, which represents a large effect, being close to 0.5. Similarly, the correlation between sentence formation errors and conceptualizing errors, with a value of 0.558, shows an even larger effect. This suggests that while addressing grammatical errors may help reduce sentence formation issues, better results can be achieved by focusing first on conceptualizing errors. The relationship between grammatical errors and conceptualizing errors has a medium effect, with a value of 0.394.

The challenges identified through the descriptive analysis, along with their associations, indicate that sentence formation errors can be reduced by focusing on conceptualizing thoughts directly in English. This can be further supported by instruction in English, as well as reading English books, watching English movies, and listening to English songs. The statistical analysis conducted in this section shows a number of distinguishing characteristics of the Saudi students with respect to the errors seen their English writing skills. A detailed discussion on the same is provided in the next section.

Findings

The study reveals several key findings related to the challenges in English language proficiency among Saudi undergraduate students. While these findings provide valuable insights, the analysis could be enhanced by further exploring the influence of demographic factors on language learning and the reasoning behind categorizing errors into grammatical, sentence formation, and conceptualizing errors.

1. Demographic Factors and Language Learning:

- **Academic Year:** The data suggests that students at different academic stages face varying challenges in English language learning. For instance, early-year students struggle more with basic grammatical errors, whereas advanced-year students find conceptualizing and expressing complex ideas more difficult. This progression aligns with the notion that as students move through their studies, the language skills required become increasingly complex.
- **Medium of Instruction and Instructors:** The choice of instructor and whether English is used as the primary language of instruction significantly impacts language proficiency. Instructors with greater proficiency and teaching experience provide better guidance, and English-medium instruction enhances language immersion and practical use.
- **Additional Classes:** The study finds that additional classes help reduce conceptualizing errors but do not significantly affect grammatical or sentence formation errors. This suggests that extra classes focused on advanced language skills help students better structure and articulate their ideas.

2. Categorization of Errors:

- The study identifies three main categories of errors: grammatical errors, sentence formation errors, and conceptualizing errors. This categorization likely comes from both practical observations and language

learning theories. Grammatical errors involve the application of basic rules, sentence formation errors pertain to constructing coherent sentences, and conceptualizing errors relate to organizing and expressing ideas.

- The strong positive correlation between these categories suggests that improvement in one area can lead to improvements in others. For instance, mastering grammar may reduce sentence formation errors, while better sentence structure may facilitate clearer expression of ideas.

Discussion

The necessity of achieving English language proficiency is critical in today's globalized world, providing a universal platform for communication. Given the growing reliance on online communication, proficiency in English writing is especially important. This study aims to identify key challenges in English writing among Saudi undergraduate students, offering insights that could guide educational institutions in improving their programs.

From the 271 student responses, it is clear that many already take additional classes to improve their English skills. However, despite these efforts, persistent challenges remain, as shown by the findings. These challenges align with those identified by Kifi (2023), underscoring the need for targeted interventions. The identified challenges fall into three main categories: grammatical errors, sentence formation errors, and conceptualizing errors. Among these, sentence formation errors stand out as the most significant issue, followed by conceptualizing errors, with grammatical errors being the least problematic.

The study highlights that improving sentence formation is key to enhancing writing skills, a conclusion consistent with Abdel-Reheem Amin's (2020) study. The demographic analysis suggests that reading English books and engaging in English-language audio and video content positively impacts sentence formation error reduction. This supports Toba et al.'s (2019) findings on the importance of writing practice, emphasizing the role of co-curricular activities in reducing writing errors.

Additionally, the study finds that extra classes help reduce conceptualizing errors, pointing to the need for private tutors to design classes that focus on helping students conceptualize ideas in English. This finding aligns with research by Gebireegziabher (2021) and Alghazo and Alshraideh (2020), which also emphasize the value of targeted interventions.

Moreover, the analysis shows that the academic year affects all three types of errors: grammatical, sentence formation, and conceptualizing errors. This underscores the importance of tailoring English language programs to students' academic levels, as highlighted by Eng et al. (2020), who advocate for differentiated language learning programs based on students' academic progress.

In conclusion, this study offers important insights for improving English language teaching strategies and curricula, ultimately contributing to better writing skills among Saudi undergraduate students. By aligning its findings with broader research on language learning and writing errors, it provides a framework for addressing the specific challenges faced by these students.

V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study embarked on the exploration of writing errors among Saudi undergraduate students, recognizing the profound impact of the undergraduate level on their future careers. Proficiency in English is essential for global communication, emphasizing the importance of honing these skills at this critical stage. The research has pinpointed three conceptual areas—grammatical proficiency, sentence formation, and conceptualization—as key challenges. Notably, grammatical errors rank lower, necessitating urgent attention to the issues in sentence formation and conceptualization.

While grammatical proficiency has traditionally received considerable attention, this study underscores the need to prioritize conceptualization and sentence formation challenges. The findings advocate the development and implementation of programs that address these aspects with equal importance.

Future research endeavors could expand on these findings through comparative analyses across different student levels and nations with varying educational approaches. A qualitative approach could offer deeper insights into the identified challenges. The demographic characteristics offer insights into the students' attributes. It would be intriguing to explore more how these attributes correlate with other aspects of mastering the English language. Moreover, investigating the roles of teachers and parents in mitigating writing errors could contribute to a more inclusive and comprehensive solution.

In essence, this study serves as a foundational step in understanding and addressing the writing challenges faced by Saudi undergraduate students, opening avenues for further exploration and enhancement of English language education.

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