

A Study of Written Grammatical Errors of the Indian Subcontinent Learners: A Systematic Review

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Abstract

This paper investigates A Study of Written Grammatical Errors of the Indian Subcontinent Learners in English settings from 2008 to 2018. Grammar is one of the most important subjects in English language that has been discussed among great scholars, teachers, syllabus designers in the history of English language teaching. Grammar plays vital role in increasing and decreasing the knowledge of English language learners is not only in non- English –speaking countries settings but also in English –speaking countries. Therefore, English grammar is still a big problem for English native students in their classrooms. Error analysis is used as one of the language learning strategies in which focuses on language competence of language learners in the target language. Thus, the error analysis approach was coined by Corder in 1967. In this study, researchers have tried to study the written grammatical errors committed by Indian Subcontinent students in English language from 2008 to 2018 and suggested remedial measures to improve the written grammatical errors from the research works. In addition, for various historical reasons, English has, for more than two hundred years, been growing in the Indian socio-cultural setting. We hope that this paper examines a systematic study of learners' errors in this area. Finally, the researcher of this paper examined the previous research works on grammatical errors in the English language, which were published from 2008 to 2018 in the Indian Subcontinent. In addition, of 150 research papers were examined in the paper, 36 of the research papers were relevant.

Keywords: Error and Contrastive Analyses, English Grammar, English As Second and Foreign Language, English Language of Indian

Introduction

Before, this paper discusses error analysis hypothesis in English language. We investigate the picture of the historical place of the English language in India. Kachru (1983) mentioned that English language arrived in India with the East India Company. The Company was formed after granting the Charter of December 31, 1600, by Queen Elizabeth 1. After the establishment of this company, the subcontinent fell under British contact and domination. Another important even in the history of English in India is the arrival of Christian Missionaries which was initiated around 1614. They started to build schools in India in 1813. They started to build high schools in which the language of instruction was English. One of the most important reasons for the firm establishment of English as the medium of instruction and administration was the government policy which began in 1765. Government supported the cultivation of western learning and science (Khansir, 2010). Khansir (2010) argued that English language is used as the lingua franca and the medium of communication among Indian people. Thus at the University stage, English is also used as a medium of instruction. In many schools and even kindergartens, the medium of instruction is English. There are many English TV channels in India. Almost all educated people can communicate in English. English is used as medium of communication in education, administration and mass media. Thus, place of English language in Pakistan is that it is used as medium of instruction along with Urdu, the national language in educational system. English is used mainly as the developmental language for both the individual and national levels. The fact that two types of school systems such as public and private systems are described in terms of the quality of medium of instruction in Pakistan country . In private system English is more used as the medium of instruction and thus the learners of English have more ability to use both of oral and written communication in English language. . English in Bangladesh is used as second language and an academic subject and Bangladesh takes it seriously. English is used as compulsory subject and thus, there are two types of medium schools: English medium school and Bangla medium school. In English medium school, the students have more opportunity to use English in class but in

Bangla medium school students have less opportunity to use English in class and they use more Bangla in their class. However, according to (Powell, 2001) , In post-colonial countries of South Asia, such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka, English continues to be used in higher education as a medium of instruction and compulsory subject .

The meaning of grammar is 'letter' which derived from Greek word of 'gramma'. Grammar is viewed as the art of writer when he/she writes a language. Richards and Reppen (2014, p. 5) argued that "grammar can be viewed both as knowledge and as ability. When viewed as knowledge, the focus is on rules for sentence formation. When viewed as ability, the focus is on how grammar is used as a resource in the creation of spoken and written texts." Khansir and Pakdel (2016) added that grammar shows the language learners' linguistic competence.

Development of applied linguistics over the past several decades has focused on the solved of aspects of language and studied of second and foreign language learning and teaching over the world. Errors under the applied linguistics point of view are to be decided as being errors if these prevent communication, which is used as the main function of the human language. In addition, errors can be viewed as one of the most important of subjects of applied linguistics in English language. Despite errors hamper communication in the second and foreign language, the study of the errors in English is an issue that language teachers, researchers and syllabus designers believe that it is necessary in learning English as a second or foreign language. However, the study of errors can be used in order to attract the attention of scholars of English language to help them interest to know the process involved in the learning English as second language and also push them toward more the teaching effective in English as target language. On the basis of the above mentioned, Nanjaiah (1994) argued that the three types have important role in the study of errors: a) the psychologist tries to understand the process of foreign language learning; b) the foreign language teacher engaged in actual classroom situation teaching tries to improve the rate of learning English as a second language; and c) the contrastive analyst is interested in predicting the learner's mistakes on the basis of the process of interference of the mother tongue. In addition to what has been mentioned in this paragraph, Khansir (2013a) said that applied linguistics has vital role in teaching English language and it is also used as the bridge between applied linguistics and English language teaching is not only interesting but decisive. According to the above mentioned, Khansir (2014) concluded that the approaches have made a great revolution in reforming the language teaching. However, error approach is one of the most important approaches of language teaching in general and English language in particular.

Viewing errors from the point of the statement of problem, to an error analyst interested in researching aspects of English language learning, errors are things of very important, because they are systematic and they provide important information regarding to the strategy's students use when learning English language as second language. On the basis of this definition, Khansir (2012a, p.1029) argued that "error analysis emphasizes the significance of learners' errors in second language". In this scientific work, the written grammatical errors of the Indian Subcontinent learners in English from 2008 to 2018 are examined. Thus, this paper tries to give the important suggestions in order to resolve the written errors committed by the learners. The researchers of this scientific work consider two questions for this systematic paper:

- 1) What works have been done on the written grammatical errors of ESL learners from 2008 to 2018?
- 1) What are the kinds of suggestions are needed to be taken into consideration for remedial measures to overcome the committing of the written grammatical errors in ESL setting?

Method

Materials

The present study made use of the results of thirty-six research papers was relevant. The articles were researched by many great researchers from 2008 to 2018. This study would help teachers and students who are the actual parties to the Indian Subcontinent classroom practices in relation to the written grammatical errors and correction of the errors. However, this study examines the written grammatical errors of English. This paper does not consider English spoken errors.



Inclusion and Exclusion of This Systematic Study

The paper examined the systematic papers which were included as follows:

1. The articles of this study were conducted in the Indian Subcontinent area.
2. The articles of this study examined the written grammatical errors of English language.
3. The articles of this study were published between 2008 and 2018.
4. The articles of this study were published based on peer-reviewed journal publications.

Therefore, the papers of this study were excluded as follows:

1. The articles of this study were not conducted in the Indian Subcontinent area.
2. The articles of this study did not investigate the written grammatical errors of English language.
3. The articles of this study were published before 2008 or after 2018.
4. The articles of this study were not peer-reviewed journal publications.

Results and Discussion

This study was done on the basis of available researches on the written grammatical errors of English by many great language researchers and it takes the direction and indirection of the present needs of the ESL and EFL teachers and students in the Indian Subcontinent as guide will come to help them understand the problems and ESL and EFL condition in order to learn and correction of English. However, the present study dealt with the following the researchers' works on the errors in English of the Indian Subcontinent learners.

Khansir (2008) analyzed Mysore University students' errors who were studying in India. Outcome of his study indicated that the main causes of errors in this university were the process of teaching English, and learning strategies. Narayanan et al (2008) investigated the grammatical errors of 408 engineering and technology students around Chennai in India. In this study, Indian students made 1363 errors in their papers; the errors of the students were divided based on the categories: 496 Substance errors, 350 grammatical errors, 145 lexical errors, and 121 semantic errors and 251 syntactic errors. However, first language transfer and application of second language caused the errors of this paper. They suggested that the teachers should try to teach more effectively the rules and conventions of writing for their pupils.

Azhar and Kamal Khan (2010) studied syntactic errors of students from the University of Sargodha. In this research work, the students committed maximum number of errors in verb (tense) and article. This study showed that either the evaluation is invalid or methodology and contents are inappropriate. They indicated that teachers should work particularly on the verb. They believed that the students had no good knowledge on the verb. Pervaiz (2010) investigated the errors of learners in science subject from the University of Sargodha in Pakistan. He focused on this subject why the learners are unable to get their purpose in acquiring L2. His study showed that the most of the students' errors were found in the area of the verb. The study indicated that the main reasons of the errors due the lack of knowledge, teaching strategy and misunderstanding of rules of usage and interference of first language. He added that teaching practice and teaching methodology are needed to improve by teachers. The learners are needed different drills and exercises in their classes.

Ahmad et al (2011a) examined the difficulties of the secondary school learners of Pakistan. The 654 school students were randomly selected for this study. Thus, the outcome of this paper indicated that the students of the Pakistan had problem in learning of verb forms, conjunctions, narration, articles, prepositions, reading

comprehension, and sentence arrangements. In addition, the sample of this study also had difficulty in learning voices. They argued that the students' problems are systematic and they should be taught systematically and the learners are needed to improve their English by teaching techniques will be prepared by their teachers. They added that one of the best works is that English grammar such as direct and indirect narrations, active and passive voices, conjunctions, articles, prepositions, sentence arrangement and reading comprehension to the learners were more taught by teachers. Thus, they requested the ministry of education to provide the teacher training and refresh courses regularly for English teachers. Sarfraz (2011) investigated errors of writing of fifty undergraduate students in Pakistan. The outcome of this project showed that the learners' errors were grammatical errors resulting from Inter-language process and then they had lack of linguistic competence. The second type of the errors was resulted from the mother tongue interference. He believed that the English language teachers can identify the problematic areas of language learning by error analysis. He added that the teachers can prepare their instructional material in order to predict the errors of their learners. Ahmad et al (2011b) studied the articles and prepositions errors made by one hundred students in Pakistani school. This article indicated that the Pakistani school students made errors in the use of preposition and articles frequencies in their writing. The findings of their research paper indicated that secondary school learners had problems in learning articles because their mother tongue lacks the system of articles. They suggested several recommendations: the articles should also be taught systematically; the teacher should improve their teaching technique by preparing systematic material; the learning of prepositions and articles should be sufficiently re-inforced. Afsar Kayum (2011) considered the errors of Bangladesh undergraduate learners' writing at Manarat International University, Dhaka. He selected 100 students and asked them to write compositions. He suggested that the learners' errors in this project might lead to huge frustrations among teachers and the student population. He added that pragmatic approach to error correction should be an essential part of language pedagogy. Summaira (2011) reported the written errors of fifty undergraduate students in Pakistan. The outcome of this study showed that the students made two kinds of errors which results from Language Transfer and Inter-language errors. Thus, this study reported that the learners were not aware of the language learning and the errors of this research work can help the teachers focus on strategy of the target language and syllabus designs.

Iqbal Butt and Rasul (2012) investigated the ability of the ten teachers regarding the error analysis in English writing in Pakistan. They used two kinds of interview in their study. They tried to provide the interviews based on the issues of errors made by the Pakistani learners and thus, the need for error analysis at degree level in Pakistan country. This study showed that learners' errors were more due to first language interference, lack of motivation, and large classes. They suggested that the basic knowledge of the Pakistani learners from school level should be improved and eclectic approach should be adopted for the correction of errors. Teachers are need more teachers' training courses in English writing. In addition, this study revealed that the students had not good knowledge with parts of speech and they made errors in verb, preposition and pronoun and punctuation, because they were weak in the mentioned areas. Khansir (2012b) examined Indian learners' errors according to seven categories: passive voice, auxiliary verbs, indirect form, tag question, preposition, and relative pronouns, and WH- question. Therefore, the total number of errors made by the Indian students was 3736 in this research paper. The findings of this paper showed that the Indian students should more practice in English syntactic area. The researcher suggested that the syntactic errors were committed by the students can be used as a common practice in their English classroom and he argued that teaching programs and learning strategies should be used as the scientific perception of the grammatical rules of English to correct the errors. Jayasrinivasa Rao (2012) studied the grammatical errors made by Telugu speakers of English in India. In this study, He categorized errors based on selection omission, addition, and also ordering errors in the area of phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics. He believed that the errors can help us in order to present strategies students use in learning English language; show sources of errors of learners, and think of appropriate ways and activities to aid learning. In this research work, the author paid attention that interlingual and Intralingual errors caused errors of the learners.

Khansir (2013b) investigated Indian learners' errors in English paragraph, punctuation, articles, spelling, and conjunction. The Indian students made 3274 errors in their writing. His work indicated that the sources of the

errors of Indian learner errors could be interference of first language of the students, complexity of the English rules, lack of knowledge of English writing and students' incomplete knowledge. He added that learning strategies and teaching English could be good reason for the increase or decrease in the number of the written errors in the Indian learners in this study. In addition, the learners are needed more practice in English writing and sufficient exercises should be made to increase the Indian learners' knowledge of English writing rules and reduce their errors.

Hussain et al (2013) studied the errors of intermediate level in the government and private colleges in the region of Multan in Pakistan. The findings of this research article present that the Pakistani students made errors in English writing. The causes of the learners' errors were due mother tongue interference, faulty teaching methods and testing systems. They suggested that the educational system should changes in the current teaching, testing, and methods.

Muhammad Tayyib Ijaz et al (2014) examined the writing errors of learners of English in Pakistan. According to their results, the learners had more problems in tenses area and spelling errors was one of the others errors in this study. They added that the learners had not good knowledge about spelling and they are needed to improve their English spelling and the teacher should more focus on spelling as compared to other areas of language learning. In addition, they learners committed types of errors such as punctuation, capitalization, articles, preposition, subject verb agreement and double negation and they believed that lack of practice in grammar exercises and ignorance of the rules restriction were the main cause of the errors in this research paper. The authors suggested that the students are needed more grammar exercises and special language courses for them. Khanom (2014) studied the written errors of one hundred higher secondary level learners in Bangladesh. The result of this study showed that the students had many kinds of interlingual and intralingual errors in their writing tasks. This study suggested that the learners are needed to teach the rules and conventions of writing in context by their teachers. He added that the teacher should consider the interlingual errors first, like error of subject-verb agreement, before they get fossilized. Haider (2014) investigated the problems that Pakistani student writers in the organization of EFL essay writing. Therefore, the results of this article indicated that the Pakistani learners had some problems in the organization of EFL essay writing.

Sanaul Karim et al (2015) analyzed the grammatical errors of students in Bangladesh. They focused on the errors of agreement between subject and verb. In this study, 36 students were selected. The results of their article showed that the Bangladesh students made more errors in agreement between verb and plural subject followed by the error of agreement between verb and singular subject. They suggested that the learners should be made aware of the importance of this item of grammar.

They are more needed to engage in discussing the grammatical items of the texts while are reading. What is important is that mother tongue interference caused errors of subject verb agreement. Rahnuma (2015) investigated the grammatical errors committed by a first year undergraduate non- English major Bangladeshi student. He used the two samples of essays written in this paper. He concluded that the learners had the main problems with verb forms, sentence formation, articles and prepositions as well as spelling. In addition, interference of mother tongue may be caused errors of this paper.

He added that the necessity of emphasizing on teaching writing should be developed and enhanced through extensive reading. Sajid and Siddiqui (2015) investigated the lexico-grammatical errors of EFL novice writers of Pakistan based on diction and expression in the interdisciplinary texts of various genres. They selected forty introductions of published research articles from various research journals of Pakistan. According to the results of this paper, in Pakistan there is lack of academic writing skills. They added that there are number of semantic, lexico-grammatical, formal, informal error categories classifying, identifying and explaining different kinds of errors for analyzing many texts of the published research journals. They believed that by the use of rewrites may help to improve diction and expression in the academic writing skills in Pakistan. Hossain and Tareque Uddin (2015) analyzed the errors of Bangladesh students in the area of grammatical, lexical and phonological in English language. The results of this paper showed that the learners made errors frequently in prepositions, articles,

auxiliary verbs and pronunciations. They said that the errors made by the learners were due transferring rules from L1 to English language (target language). Jabeen et al (2015) studied the grammatical errors of Pakistani and Iranian students. The results of their paper indicated that both of the groups had problems in their writing English and made grammatical errors. The causes of the errors committed by the learners were due to first language interference and lack grammatical accuracy in their writing. Saeed et al (2015) considered the prepositional errors of twenty-six male and female students in Pakistan.

The findings of this study showed that the learners made the types of prepositional errors in their writing and thus the female students made more errors than the male students. However, L1 interference, overgeneralization, incomplete application of rules and false concept hypothesis were generally caused errors by the learners in this study. Al Harun and Sufian (2015) reported the grammatical errors of fifty learners in Bangladesh. The findings of this study showed that the students more made errors in the area of Subject- Verb Agreement while writing a paragraph. They suggested that the students should do self-correction while making their grammatical errors.

Zafar (2016) examined errors of 37 learners in English language course in the Bachelors of Business Administration Program in Pakistan. His study showed that the most frequent errors of the Pakistani students was due to language interference and the lack of knowledge in the English verb tense and then the Transfer of Structure errors, and the Overextension of Analogy errors followed respectively. He suggested that teachers should more practice on the errors were mentioned in this study. Ahmed et al (2016) reported the grammatical errors of 522 master degree students in Pakistan. The results from this research work showed that the learners made the highest frequency of the errors in the areas of sentence structure, spelling errors, and word choice. They believed that their first language interference was the primary cause for the errors in this study. Thus, they added that the learners had not good knowledge about the English grammatical rules.

Thangaraj (2017) analyzed the errors of 96 samples (written answer scripts) of the mid-semester exam of fifth semester students in Tamil Nadu, India. The results of this project indicated that the learners' errors were concerned with the following items:

The non-inclusion of prime focus on these areas in school days. 2. Absence of face to face interaction in the class room. 3. Inadequate attention of the target students to the remedial exercises. 4. The overshadow caused by their subjects on language. Remedial suggestion of this project indicated that the university should follow the technical writing components, such as usage of tense and voice in scientific writing; usage of pronouns and numbers in scientific writing; and usage of punctuation and concord in scientific writing. Safdar Bhatti et al (2017) studied the errors of forty learners of high school in Pakistan. In this study, inter-lingual and intra-lingual were dominant in committing the errors among Bahawalpur high school learners in Pakistan. Mother tongue interference was more caused errors among the learners. However, they suggested that the teachers should minimize the learners' errors through implicit and explicit remedial feedback during teaching a foreign language. Hamza et al (2017) investigated errors of Pakistani students of English in writing. They used quantitative method for their research paper. In this paper, twenty students of the department of Computer Science of Sindh Madressatul Islam University Karachi and Orasoft Training Institute, Karachi were participated. In this study, the students made errors in eleven different categories in their writing; but, they committed more errors in punctuation and usage of verb.

They concluded that the cause of the errors was to neglect of importance of writing skills and lack of self-learning capabilities among the learners. They suggested that teachers should encourage their learners to work through mutual help as well and the learners should improve the writing skills through books, internet, and their teachers. They should be activated in their class, when they do practices in writing. Jahan (2017) examined errors of Bangladesh students were at undergraduate of first year level. The findings of his research work indicated that the students had many grammatical errors, such as: verb tenses, word order, pronoun, preposition, article, suffix, prefix, subject-verb agreement, inherent difficulty, omission, misinformation and disordering. He added that one of the main causes of the learners' errors in this study were due to L1 transfer. He suggested that the teacher should focus on more the students' problems and he/she should apply a certain teaching strategy to

improve the students' ability in English language. Talpur and Ali Shah (2017) analyzed the errors of engineering students of English in Pakistan. They selected 120 undergraduate engineering students for the collected data. The analysis of the data in this study showed that the undergraduate engineering students committed numbers of errors in verb tense, singular/plural form, subject-verb agreement, , prepositions, pronouns, articles and spelling. Thus, they suggested that the teachers should use modern approaches in the classrooms while teaching writing skills. Unar (2017) considered the grammatical errors of 25 male students from different government schools in Pakistan. The outcome of the research article showed that the male students made eleven types of grammatical errors in the area of present, past and future tenses, spelling, article, preposition, adjectives helping verbs, singular/ plural, SVA, possessives, conditional sentences, and capitalization. The findings of the study indicated that both of the interlingual and intralingual factors caused the grammatical errors of the students in their writing.

Rama and Renuka (2018) investigated the grammatical errors of 300 high school students in English in India. The researchers used 120 multiple choice questions in this study. The results of this study showed that there is a significant difference in the subgroups of the learners regarding commitment of grammatical errors in English language. This study indicated that the Indian high school students had not good knowledge of English grammar. The investigators suggested that the English teachers should teach more English grammar to their students and the learners are needed more drilling and exercise in English grammar. The teachers should focuses on articles, prepositions, verbs, adverbs and conjunctions in grammar of English language and they help the learners to develop aware of rules of grammar.

Abdul Karim et al (2018) examined the EFL learners' errors in writing in Bangladesh. This article examined that Bangladeshi EFL learners made grammatical errors in their writing. The most grammatical errors in this paper are associated with verb and tense errors. The authors of this research paper believed that this research work would help academics, ELT experts and educational policymakers in order to get more focus on the nature of EFL learners' errors along with learners' perception—which is innovative in the area of error analysis in Bangladesh. Finally, they said that errors of the learners were derived from overgeneralization, misordering, misinformation and grammar such as preposition, article pronoun, verb and tense. One of main causes of the errors due to the first language interference and others reasons of the errors due to inadequate knowledge about grammatical rules, and thus, these errors debilitate the quality of students 'writing. Uddin Khan (2018) examined fifty essays written by fifty learners in Bangladesh.

The students were studying in the first semester of B.A in the department of English at Prime University. The study showed that committed several types of error, such as, capitalization, subject verb agreement, simple/complex/compound sentence, narration, mix of American and British English words, short form of words, collocation, article, preposition, voice, run-Ons, spelling, word Order, omission, pronoun, commission, redundancy, tense, determiner, parts of speech, punctuation marks, double negatives. He suggested that by the use of this research can make a better curriculum in the context of Bangladesh in order to guide ELT practitioners.

Conclusion

In this study, the role of error analysis in English language could be vital for both teacher and student in the Indian Subcontinent educational system. Based on the outcome of this paper, the Indian Subcontinent has several problems in English grammar in their classes. A major source of errors in this systematic review could be interference of mother tongue lack of knowledge in grammar, and lack of sufficient practice in grammar, particularly in English tense. Khansir and Pakdel (2018a) supported the results of this paper, they indicated that the results of their paper showed that the interference of first language as one of the main reasons for increasing errors among the students in their English language and they added that students' incomplete knowledge ,complexity of the English language, or lack of knowledge of systematic grammar and necessary vocabulary in target language (English language) can thus be suggested as other sources errors among these research studies in this systematic review . The authors of this paper indicated that teaching of English language was not good in grammar in the Indian Subcontinent English classes. Khansir (2010) supported this idea and he informed that

the English teachers of India have difficulty in teaching English language because, they are competent in English literature; their knowledge of English language teaching seems limited. Verghese (2006) is one of the great researchers in India supported the claim in India and added that the main problem is that a large number of the present teachers of English have not good competent and professional skill in teaching English methods and techniques of language teaching in ELT settings. In the study of error analysis by Khansir et al in 2013, lack of knowledge of the language learners was one of the most reasons for their errors in English language.

According to the above mentioned, teachers should employ effective methodology for teaching English grammar in their classrooms and they pay attention more and a special focus on known areas of trouble, including the most common type of errors: English grammar errors such as verb and tense , , punctuation, sentence structure, article use, and word choice.

In the last decades error analysis approach is paying increasing attention to the error correction factors as a learning strategy in second or foreign language. The error correction factors aimed at identifying and considering the errors of the students in the target language (English). According to this subject, Khansir and Pakdel (2018b) argued that the role of errors are divided into two parts; one part is supported by behavioristic theory mention that errors are a symptom of ineffective teaching or as evidence of failure. According to this theory, errors become like sin; in two parts, there is a theory claims that errors are recognized as an integral part of learning target language. They added that correction is viewed as feedback on errors. Hendrickson (1978) argued that error correction should use as a teaching aid. Khansir and Hozhabri (2014) reported that error correction can be used as one of the treatment ways in ELT settings in order to improve English language of the learners in general and English writing skill in particular.

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