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Written Errors among E.F.L Learners

The Case of Abide Mohamed Secondary School

(Third Year Classes)

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirments of a

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to my beloved family for their endless love and support.

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List of Accronyms

1- E.F.L: English as a Foreign Language.

2- E.A: Error Analysis.

3-E.S.L: English as Second Language.

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Abstract

Teachers of English either as a Second Language or as Foreign Language work hard to see their students able to produce well-formed, organized and neat pieces of writing, which contain no errors. In fact, the purpose of this study is to describe and analyze different types of errors committed by third year learners of Abide Mohamed Secondary School. Moreover, our study tries to find the reasons behind these errors including spelling, grammatical, punctuation, fragments, word missing Arabic structures, capitalization and misuse of quantifiers. Through error analysis, we have come to the conclusion that the most important reasons behind making these errors are lack of reading, lack of practicing writing outside the classroom, lack of proof-reading and negative interference of the mother tongue when writing in English. Furthermore, the findings and the results of this study clearly show that the English writing skill needs more reinforcement and development. Based on findings of this study we try to give some recommendations and implications for both teachers and syllabus designers. We hope that the results of this study could generate for developing the English writing skill among learners of Abide Mohamed Secondary School.

General Introduction

1 -Background of the Study

Throughout history, the field of foreign language teaching and learning has attracted attention of linguists and researchers. English is the first language in the world. It is widely used either as a second language or as foreign language due to several reasons and factors: political, social, economic and cultural. Learning English as a foreign language refers to the situation where learners are learning English in order to use it with any other English speakers in the world. Students learn English as a foreign language in their country or sometimes they take courses in countries where English is considered as their mother tongue like United States of America and Great Britain. In fact, learning English as a foreign language with its four skills -listening and reading as receptive skills and speaking and writing as productive skills-is not an easy task, especially the writing skill. Because it needs hard work, steps or stages (planning, drafting, revising and editing), enough time and more practice. Therefore, writing is a difficult skill to be acquired and mastered by nonnative speakers of English. Richards and Renandya (2003) argued that "there is no doubt that writing is the most difficult skill for second language learner to master."[1]

Many students of English as a foreign Language face many problems when they try to write a correct sentence, a paragraph and an essay in English. This may be due to the lack of extensive reading or may be due to the lack of practicing writing outside the classroom. Many teachers try to identify and analyze these hardships for the sake of finding solutions to help students overcoming their weaknesses in writing. Many sources tackle EFL poor writing and the reasons behind that problem. Like the book of H.Douglas Brown entitled *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* and the Jeremy Harmer's book entitled *The Practice of Language teaching* .In addition to Rob Ellis' book entitled *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*. In fact, analyzing different errors committed by learners is not a new subject. Consequently, there were many theories concerning the issue of second language or foreign language acquisition like the behaviouristic theory which sees errors almost like sins which should be avoided. Moreover, errors according to behaviorists are signs of learner to acquire

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[1] Willy Renandya and Jack C.Richards ,*Methodology in Language Teaching: An Anthology of Current Practice* (Cambridge: University Press ,2003),303.

a certain system. With the coming of Pit Steven Corder errors become very important elements for both teachers and syllabus designers. They contain important information about the learner's current situation in language learning.

2 -Statement of the Problem

The actual problem is seen among students of secondary school, particularly third year classes. After more than five years of studying English as a foreign language, these students are normally expected to have knowledge about the grammatical rules and writing techniques. Most of the time, it is not often the case. This is the starting point of our research which seeks to locate the reasons behind the ill-formed structures produced by EFL learners in written expression after seven years of taking part in writing courses. Most students of secondary school do not write outside the classroom and the same thing happens with the other skills; speaking, listening and reading. Therefore, what is learned inside the classroom has a little chance to be practiced outside the classroom. Lack of practicing writing outside the class has a negative impact on the learning of English as a Foreign Language and the Learners' writing ability. That is why the majority of students will face difficulties when they want to write a simple paragraph or an essay in English. Our research is going to highlight the different factors and reasons behind ill-formed structures and how can these students overcome problems of writing in English or at least how can they minimize these unwanted structures in their writing production.

2 -Aims of the Study

The present study deals with EFL learners' poor writing performance and it aims at:

✓ Identifying and describing factors which hinder learners' ability to write correct paragraphs in terms of grammar, spelling, and punctuation since they have the level of third year.
✓ As we put some suggestions and solutions to improve poor writing among third year learners of Abide Mohamed secondary school.

3 -Research Questions

Our study seeks answers to the following questions:

➢ What kinds of errors do EFL learners commit in their writing English essays?
➢ What are the possible reasons behind EFL learners' errors in written expressions classes?

➢ How can such problems be minimized among EFL learners?

➢ What are the strategies which should be followed by any given teacher in order to improve students' level in writing?

➢ What should students do in order to improve their level in writing?

4-Research Hypothesis

In order to answer the research questions, we hypothesize the following:

❖ Students commit a considerable number of grammatical and spelling errors.

❖ Negative interference of the mother tongue may be the most important reasons for making errors.

❖ Committing errors by students may be minimized through doing extra activities in their free times and doing extensive reading.

❖ The teacher should encourage his/her learners to work either in pairs or in groups for improving their writing skill and by correcting each others' mistakes and errors.

5- Data Collection Procedure

. In order to collect reliable data for our research, we have to describe and analyze different written productions of 74 copies belonging to third year learners of secondary school for assessing teaching and learning process.

6- Limitations of the Study

We strongly believe that there are many reasons behind E.F.L learners' poor achievement in written expression. These reasons could be related to the program, the methods, the teacher, the learners themselves and other reasons like the lack of motivation. We deliberately limited our study to what we think are the main factors that are related to both teachers and learners. In addition to that, our study is aware that a limited number of respondents (third year students of Abide Mohamed Secondary School) cannot fairly reflect what is going on in the field & that other element could have escaped our attention. Therefore, results gained from this study cannot be generalized to all secondary schools in Adrar.

7-Organization of the Theoretical Part

In our theoretical part, we are going to start with a short introduction in which we are going to tackle the subject matter briefly. Then, we move to define the term "error" and "mistake" and the difference between the two terms. The next step will be a discussion for the significance of errors. After that, we highlight the technique that can be deployed in order to describe and explain errors made by EFL learners which is "error analysis". In addition to that, we will tackle the different classifications of errors by different linguists and researchers. Through this step, we reach to the core of our study which is the reasons behind committing errors by EFL learners in written expression. Then, the study moves to what the teacher should do in order to improve his/her students' level in writing without mistakes and errors or at least how they will be able to write with a limited number of errors and mistakes. We should not forget what learners should do themselves in order to ultimately produce relatively mistake-free essays.

Chapter One:

Error's Definition and How Error

can be Corrected

Chapter One: Error's Definition and How Errors can be Corrected

Introduction

Writing is considered as a productive skill which needs practice, enough time and considerable efforts for better acquisition, and therefore becoming a skillful writer. It is more difficult for non-native speakers of English to become talented writers which means expressing their ideas, emotions, thoughts and feelings in a clear and healthy English through the use of writing strategies such as planning, evaluating and revising the text to achieve goals such as writing essays, reports and expressing opinions. Moreover, writing in English needs other sub-skills like handwriting, spelling, richness in terms of vocabulary, mastery of writing conventions (punctuations and capitalization), mastering grammar rules and putting the right word in the right place. All these steps have to be followed by learners of English as Foreign Language (EFL) in order to write coherent, well-organized and meaningful essays. What is underlined, however, is that EFL learners fail to appreciate writing as a skill; and how to be successful writers or how to write correct paragraphs and essays in terms of grammar, punctuation, spelling,   and capitalization. Therefore, their teachers will not be happy with their student's ill-formed paragraphs and essays that contain an endless number of mistakes and errors. Before giving more details about the subject, we need first of all to define the term «error» and« mistake» and the difference between the two terms. Then, we will move to the other elements of our research.

Chapter One: Error's Definition and How Errors can be Corrected

1-Definition of an Error

By describing and analyzing errors, a teacher aims to find out what is missing within the teaching and learning process. Furthermore, errors help the teacher to develop his /her idea about the appropriate strategies needed for learning another language[2] . The term "*error*" has received many definitions by different linguists. Mainly, these definitions are nearly the same in their content but the way they are formulated is different. In fact, errors are systematic, thus they are repeated many times by the same learner in the same text without the learner's consciousness. That is why errors cannot be self-corrected. According to Richards Jack and Richard Schmidt (2002) **"**errors" are those made by a learner while speaking or writing caused by incomplete learning."[3] In other words, errors happen due to a lack in the learning process. However, different kinds of errors committed by learners often help teachers to observe the learning outcomes as well as evaluating their own strategies and techniques. Thus, teachers of English as a foreign language must be skillful in analyzing learners' errors in order to identify students' weaknesses and strengths in writing. Indeed, analyzing errors committed by learners has a great advantage for both teachers and learners because it will lead to better teaching and learning process. The term "error" is different from the term "mistake" *as* it can be self-corrected. More than that, mistakes are those made by learners while speaking or writing are due to the lack of attention, fatigue and carelessness. As a result, the learner corrects his/her mistake by himself/herself when he/she revises well what has been written or when attention is called. Unlike mistakes, errors cannot be self-corrected.

2-Significance of Errors

Many educators and theorists in the field of errors analysis have focused on the importance of foreign language learners' errors. Steven Pit Corder (1967) indicates that:

> Errors are significant in three different ways. First, to the teachers in that they tell them how far towards the goal the learners have advanced and consequently, what remains for them to learn. Second, they provide to the researches with evidence of how language is learnt

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[2] Iuliana Lungn , *A linguistic Approach To Errors Analysis in Teaching English As a Second Language* (UK: Ovidius University Annals Of Philosophy, 2003), 328.

[3] *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics,* s.v. "learning."

or acquired, what strategies or procedures the learners are employing in their discovery of the language. Thirdly, they are indispensable to the learners themselves, because we regard making errors as device the learners use in order to learn.[4]

From the quotation above, it becomes clear that errors are a very important source of feedback to teachers. Therefore, they use them for the sake of assessing and evaluating the teaching and the learning process. Furthermore, errors help teachers to edit their methods and techniques of teaching writing. Through the use of what we call error analysis a teacher will be able to know which points in the teaching and learning process need reinforcement and extra remedial activities.

3-What is Error Analysis?

Many linguists and academics consider "Steven Pit Corder"as the father of "error analysis" (E.A).This latter is a tool used for describing and explaining errors made by speakers of other languages. In another words, error analysis is a useful tool in second or foreign language learning because it reveals to teachers, syllabus designers and textbook writers problematic areas which need an urgent remedy. Consequently, teachers can design remedial exercises and give more attention to those problematic areas in the teaching and learning process. Corder (1967) states that"errors are visible proof that learning is taking place[5]." Pit Corder disagrees with the views of both structuralists and behaviorists who consider errors as an obstacle to language learning. Consequently, they viewed errors as symptoms of an effective teaching or as evidence of failure.[6] Thus, they believe that when errors occur they must be remedied by the correct forms. By contrast, Pit Corder considered errors as very important devices that the learner used to learn.[7]By Corder's concept errors are very important and essential. Since they contain very useful feedback about assessing and evaluating teaching and learning process and determine priorities for future efforts. More than that, Corder believes that analyzing errors made by language learners helps the teacher to

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[4] Panayota Maicusi and Triana Maicusi , "The Error in The Second Language Acquisition." *Encuentro.*

Revista deinvestigación e innovación en la clase de idiomas 11, no.5 (1999):173.

[5] Pit Corder Steven,*The Significance of a Learner's Errors* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), 161.

[6] Triana Maicusi and Panayota Maicusi ."ibid,18"

[7] Assi Lecturer and Nada Salih A.Ridha, "The Effects of EFL learners' Mother Tongue on Their Writing in English :An Error Analysis Study,*" Journal of the College of Arts University of Basrah* 2,no .60 (2012):26.

determine areas which can be reinforced in teaching and learning process. Furthermore, Pit Corder(1974) puts five steps that must be used for any typical error analysis (E.A) research.[8]

✓ Collecting samples of learners' language.

✓ Identifying errors.

✓ Describing errors.

✓ Explaining errors.

✓ Evaluating and correcting errors.

According to Corder, error analysis can be done in two ways: diagnostic as well as prognostic[9]. The former will help the teacher to have an idea about the learner's state of the language at a given point during the learning process. The latter can help course designers in modifying language learning materials according to the learners' current problems. Furthermore, S.P.Corder's article "The Significance of Learners' Errors" tries to introduce major concepts among which one encounters the following:

✓ Learner's needs should be taken into consideration by teachers and linguists when designing syllabus. Before Corder's work, syllabuses were based on theories and not so much on the learners' needs.

✓ When the learner makes an error, the most efficient way is to let him /her to discover it him /herself and find the correct form by searching for it.

✓ Many errors happen due to the learner's use of structures form his /her native language as a facilitative strategy for learning. Errors in this case are inhibitory.[10]

According to Weireech Steven(1991) learners' errors have a particular importance because making errors is a device the learner use to learn. In addition, Weireech considered error analysis as a valuable aid to identify and explain difficulties faced by learners[11]. In the same context error analysis for both Kroll and Schafer can be used for improving the writing skill. They analyze possible sources of error in non-native English writers in an attempt to

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[8] Rob Ellis, *The Study of Second Language Acquisition* (New York:Oxford University Press, 2008), 46.

[9]Murad Hassan and Mohmmed Sawalmeh , "Error Analysis of Written English Essays," *English for Specific Purposes World* 14, no.40 (2013) :3.

[10] Maria Karra , "Second Language Acquisition: Learners Errors and Error Correction in Language Teaching," 3,no.5 (2006):3.

[11] Weireech Steven,"How to Analyse Intralanguage,"*Journal of Psychology and Education* 9,no.12 (2005): 113.

find an approach to writing where error analysis can help in achieving better writing skills. Thanks to Corder's work researchers recognized the importance of errors in second language learning and started to examine them for the sake of better understanding second language process i.e. how learners acquire either second or foreign language.

4- The Classification of Errors

Errors have been classified in two different ways. According to Brown H.Douglas (2000) errors are considered as being either «global» or «local». Global errors prevent the message from being comprehended due to the absence of an essential part of the sentence like the subject or the verb[12]. We have an example of the global error "I like bus but my mother said so not that we must be late for the school". While, local errors do not prevent the message from being understood because there is mainly a minor violation of only one segment in the sentence. Consequently, the hearer or reader can guess the intended meaning like in the example: "If I heard from her, I would let you know". Errors may be seen as two categories; « overt» and« covert errors». Overtly erroneous utterances are incorrect in terms of grammar at the level of the sentence. While, covertly erroneous utterances are grammatically well-formed but they are not accepted within the context of communication. For instance, someone asks "who are you?" Someone replies "Iam fine." This answer is grammatically correct but as answer to the question: who are you, it is an overt error. For Pit Corder(1974) classifies errors in terms of the difference between the learners' utterance and reconstructed version. Error will be classified into four categories; omission of some required elements, addition of unnecessary or incorrect elements, select of incorrect elements and misordering of the elements. However, Corder himself adds that this classification is not enough to report on errors. That is why he includes the linguistic level of the errors under sub-areas like morphology, syntax, and lexicon.[13]

4-1 Omission:

Certain linguistic forms may be omitted because of their complexity. Omission can happen at the morphological level in which the learner leaves out the third person singular

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[12] Brown H.Douglas, *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* (New York: While Plains, 2000) , 206.

[13] Pit Seven Corder*, Introducing Applied Linguistics*(London: Middlesex Penguin ,1973), 100.

morpheme "s" the plural marker "s "and the past inflection"ed."[14] The clear example of morphological omission is: "A strange thing happen to me yesterday". In addition to that, we have another kind of omission which is called "syntactical omission". The learner may omit some important elements which are obligatory like in the example "there are many people dream….","it divided in to three parts…"

4-2 Addition:

Addition refers to the learner's addition of unnecessary and incorrect elements. In morphology, for instance, the learner overuses the morpheme "s". Like the example"the childrens are here". At the syntactic level the learner may use the definite article in the wrong place like in the example of "the Algeria."

4-3 Selection:

Students commit errors in morphology and syntax due to the selection of wrong morpheme, structure, or vocabulary item. At the phonological level students substitute familiar phoneme from their mother tongue, like Arabic students who substitute the morpheme "p" with " b" like "broblem" instead of "problem". An error in morphology happens when the learner selects "est" instead of "er". As in the example "My friend is oldest than me." In syntax, the learner selects a wrong structure: "I want that he comes here".

4-4 Misordering:

Misordering happens at different levels; pronunciation, morphology, syntax and lexis. For the pronunciation level the learner shifts the position of some phonemes. A speaker may say "fignsicant" instead of "significant". While at the syntactic level, misordering is much common as in the sentence "He's a dear to me friend", where some elements in the sentence are inversed. Similarly, misordering at the lexical level happens when the learner reverses the elements of compound noun, e.g. "a car key" may become "a key car". For more explanation, we will draw a simple table.

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[14]Vacide Erdogan , " Contribution of Error Analysis to Foreign Language Teaching ," *Journal of the Faculty of Education* 1,no. 2 (2005):264.

Omission	In morphology	-A strange thing happen to me yesterday.
	In syntax	Must say also the names?
Addition	In morphology	-Childrens is here.
	In Syntax	-The London.
	In lexicon	-I stayed here during five years ago.
Selection	In morphology	-My friend is oldest than me.
	In syntax	-I want that he comes here.
Misordering	In pronunciation	-" fignicicant" for "significanct".
	In syntax	- "Get upping" for " getting up".
	In lexicon	"-Key car" for "Car key".

Table 1: Description of Errors (Vaside Erdogan 2005) 264.

5- Possible Reasons Behind Making Errors

Errors have become the biggest headaches for both teachers and learners.[15] Learners hate making errors, teachers are not happy with ill-formed structures made by their learners, especially after many courses of written expression. Teachers still want to know why their students have made such problems and how they can help them improve their level in writing in English .Just like symptoms which are often used by doctors to diagnose a disease ,errors can be used by teachers and researchers to examine where the problem is located .In fact, there are many factors which hinder learners from writing correctly and effectively including lack of motivation, lack of extensive reading, the negative influence of the first language on writing and other reasons like the teaching and learning processes and the teacher himself/herself who can be source of making errors. Therefore, one of the main roles of the teachers is to be models of the standard target language in the class. In some cases teachers may not be good models of the target language with regard to the way they speak, write or generally teach language. As a result, some errors committed by students are traceable to teachers. For example, if the teacher writes an example like this: "The students must work more harder" it is very likely that such error in language teaching will be adopted and reproduced by learners[16]. In fact, another reason may hinder students from doing well at their written productions can be in the lack of motivation to write.

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[15] Geofry Richards ," " Theory and Practice in Language Studies",*Departement of Foreign Language Faculty of Education Erciyes University of Turke* 1, no.3 (2011):20.
[16] Rob Ellis,"Typology of Written Corrective Feedback Types," *ELT journal* 63,no.10 (2008) : 97.

5.1 Lack of Motivation to Write

There are several boosters needed for better and successful learning; the real practice of that language in every day communication, extensive reading and motivation in which the teacher plays a great role in giving his/her learners the opportunity to express their ideas, emotions and thoughts without problems whether in oral or written form could be among such boosters. Therefore, their achievement in both skills will be enhanced and developed. This can be seen clearly with Harmer (2006) as he claimed that:

> People involved in language teaching often say that students who really want to learn will succeed whatever circumstances in which they study. They succeed despite using methods which experts consider unsatisfactory. In the phase of such phenomenon, it seems reasonable to suggest that the motivation that students bring to class is the biggest simple factor affecting their success.[17]

From this quotation, it becomes fairly clear that motivated learners either by the teacher or by themselves will find the writing process easy and enjoyable. According to Jeremy Harmer there are many factors and reasons which demotivate learners to write properly and effectively. Fear of failure among learners from not achieving certain writing goals will affect them negatively. Consequently, they will not make any attempt to overcome their fear of failure. Therefore, they will be characterized by their poor writing levels. The main role of the teacher is to encourage his/her students to subscribe to a writing process that is both stimulating and enjoyable. In other words, the teacher has to be smart in choosing topics which stimulate students′ attentions and he/she should explain the reasons behind choosing such topic. Therefore, learners will feel relaxed when they express their ideas and thoughts in writing. In addition to lack of motivation there is another factor which prevents learners to write well. We will discuss it in the next point.

5-2 Lack of Extensive Reading

Although, writing and reading are two different skills; writing is productive and reading is receptive but there is an interconnection between the two skills since both of

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[17] Jeremy Harmer, *The Practice of English Language Teaching* (China: Longman, 2006), 3.

them lead to the same objective which is learning. Therefore, those students who read too much tend to be better writers unlike those whose reading is limited or they do not read at all. The same idea is held by Stotsky Sandra (1983) who suggests that:

> Better writers tend to be better readers…. better writers tend to read more than poorer writers…., and better readers tend to produce more syntactically natural writing than poorer readers.[18]

In other words, reading has a great importance in improving the learners' style in writing. Because due to extensive reading, learners are going to find a model to imitate at their initial writing attempts. In this respect, through reading English as Foreign Language Learners (E.F.L) will have the chance to engage actively with the new language and culture. This idea can be seen clearly with Andrew Raimes(1994) when he claims that:

> The more our students read, the more they become familiar with the vocabulary, idiom, sentence patterns, organizational flow, and cultural assumptions of native speakers of the language.[19]

In other words, reading is an important skill for enhancing writing skill because we often read in order to get information and knowledge which we need to include in our writing. Thus, the role of the teacher is to encourage his /her students to read as much as possible in order to be better writers. Lack of reading among learners will have a negative impact in their language development in all aspects. The same idea is expressed by Colin Davis (1995) when he claims that:

> Any classroom will be the poorer for the lack of an extensive reading program, and will be unable to promote its pupils' language development in all aspects.[20]

Not only lack of extensive reading has a negative impact on E.F.L learners' writing but also the negative interference of their mother tongue in their writing.

5-3 Negative Interference of One's Mother Tongue on Writing in English

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[18] Sandra Stotsky, *Research on Reading /Writing Relationships☐ Language Arts*(New York:Teachers College Press ,1983), 88.

[19]Andrew Raimes, *Techniques in Teaching Writing* (O.U.P: Oxford University Press , 1994) ,66.

[20] Jeremy Harmer, *The Practice of English Language Teaching* (Uk: Longman, 1995) , 204.

Many students of English as a Foreign Language face the problem of their mother tongue's negative interference when they want to write an essay or a paragraph. In the Algerian case, they think in Arabic, and then, translate their thoughts into English. The clear examples of learners' translation from Arabic into English are: "clear without any dust" for indicating that something is very clear. This is word-to-word translation. We may give another example of literal translation which is "time is like a sword, if you do not cut it, will cut you" for indicating the importance of time. It is better to say "time and tide wait for no man." In addition to that, many students overgeneralize rules which they know in another language which surely is different in matter of grammar, syntax, phonology, morphology…etc. That is why we may be faced with errors like: " he goed", "does John can sing?" "He musted do it yesterday." " He throwed the ball." In short, the learner himself brings with him his source of making errors which is his mother tongue. Sometimes English as foreign language learners (E.F.L) will be faced with what we call "false friends[21]." They can be defined as words which seem the same in matter of pronunciation but have different meanings." Libreria" in Spanish means bookshop not" library", "embarrassed" means" pregnant "not "embarrassed". Consequently, such false friends will lead learners to commit errors. False friends are common between Roman Languages" Furthermore, the context of learning and teaching process which refers to the class- room with its materials, textbook, and the teacher may contribute in making errors.[22] Students often make errors because of misleading explanation from the teacher, faulty presentation of a structure or a word in the textbook. In sum, reasons behind students' poor performances are endless. What should the teachers do in order to minimize errors committed by his/her learners in written expression? Therefore, many techniques and procedures can be used by a given teacher for the task.

6- Techniques of Error Correction

The term "correction" is commonly understood to refer to the replacement of an error or mistake by the corrected form in order not to be repeated again. In fact, there has been a hot debate about the effectiveness of error correction .Allright (1975) suggests that:

> Learner's errors should be corrected if learners cannot correct
> themselves and the teachers need coherent policies for correction

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[21] Jeremy Harmer, *The Practice of English Language Teaching* (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 90.

[22] Geoffrey Broughton and others, *Teaching English as a Foreign Language* (New York: Roultedge Education Book, 2003), 146.

and clear classroom strategies in order to avoid confusion in their learners.[23]

Mainly, Hendrickson concentrates on the importance of error's correction when he claims that:

> Error correction does improve the proficiency of EFL-ESL learners.[24]

As highlighted by both Allright and Hendrickson, it becomes clear that error correction is a very important process in teaching the writing of the target language since it improves the learner's language accuracy. Unlike, Long (1977) who has a different viewpoint concerning error correction. He strongly believes that error treatment or correction is not so important, since those errors made by learners are part of the natural process of language learning and are simply indicative of a certain stage of their language learning. Therefore, these errors will develop naturally into more accurate and appropriate forms. In general, the role of the teacher is to point out when something has gone wrong and see whether the learner can correct him/herself. However, the technique of correction is not simply presenting the data repeatedly and going through the same set of drills and exercises to produce the state of overlearning. Nevertheless, it requires the teacher understanding to the source of errors. As a result, he/she can provide an appropriate remedy and a suitable treatment.[25] Mainly, there are two ways of error correction; direct and indirect error correction or error feedback. The term "error feedback" can   simply refer to the feedback teachers give on students' errors. Direct feedback refers to the over correction of students' errors. Therefore, the teacher locates and corrects errors for learners. While, indirect correction or feedback refers to teacher indication of errors without correcting them. For more details, it is better to draw a table.

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[23] Yoshi Taka Makino ," Learner Self Correction in E.F.L Written Composition," *Hokkaido University of Education* 47, no.4 (1993): 337.

[24] Ibid., 337.

[25] Vaside Erdogan, "Contribution of Error Analysis to Foreign Language Teaching," *Journal of the Faculty of Education* 1,no. 2 (2005):268.

Type of error correction	Explanation	Example
Direct feedback Indirect feedback Direct location of errors. Indirect feedback Indirect location of error	-Locate and correct errors. -Locate errors. Locate errors and identify their types. Indirect locate of errors. Indirectly locate errors and identify their types.	-Has <u>went gone.</u> -Has <u>went.</u> -Has <u>went.verb form.</u> -Putting a mark in the margin to indicate an error on specific line. -By writing verb form or (v) in the margin to indicate a verb form error on specific line.

Table 2 : Types of Error Feedback (Icy Lee 2013) p15

6 - Error Correction

Many techniques can be used by teachers for error correction. The techniques are used for encouraging learners to correct their errors by themselves or simply ask them to correct their errors by exchanging their written works with those of their peers (peer- correction). Furthermore, the teacher can use also the whole class correction technique. Let us start with self- correction technique.

6-1   Self -Correction Technique

As the Chinese proverb says: "give a man fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a life time." This proverb can function as well as in the field of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (T.E.F.L). Students remember their correction of errors and mistakes better than the ones the teacher tells them explicitly. Although, this technique is not an easy task for pupils to follow at the beginning of their learning but with the teacher's continuous support and encouragement it will work well. Self-correction is believed to instill in the learner feelings of self sufficiency and success and provide him/her

with the opportunity to be more active in his /her learning.[26] In other words, the learner's self-correction helps the learner to have self confidence and makes the learner an active participant in the learning process. In fact, self correction and rewriting helps weak students to be independent from their teachers for the correction task though the teacher is available for helping his/her learners. The most frequently suggested method to motivate students to correct their errors is to use corrective symbols or error codes. For example (T) for tense,(SP) for spelling errors, (GR) for grammar mistakes ,(WW) for written word errors, (P) for punctuation errors….etc. More details can be found in the table below.

Codes	Indication	Examples
Λ	Something is missed	Ill formdΛ.
G R	Grammar errors.	He explain.(G.R)
SP	Spelling error.	Foreign Languege.(S.P)
S.P	Punctuation error.	What can I do.(p)
W.T	Wrong tense.	He speaks(W.T) to me yesterday.
W.W	Wrong Word.	
W.O	Wrong order.	..patient, funny andkindly(W.W).
Ø	Not necessary.	-You have not seen yet(W.O)him.
W.P	Wrong punctuation.	
?	Unclear meaning.	-Johan came in and he(Ø) sat down.
~	This not quite right. It needs clearer expression.	-Can I ask you question.(W.P).

Finally,then that comes should buy authentic and genuine objects.
-Usually the teacher provides an alternative. |

Table 3: Correction Symbols (Keith Johnson 2008) p34.

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[26]Abdel Majid khan and RanaUzma Perveen , "Motivation Students Through Self Correction," *University of Punjab Lahore Pakistan* 2,no.8 (2013):194.

It is obvious that the learner in the self-correction technique needs guidance in order to identify the types of mistakes he/she made. Understandably, the teacher's task in this technique is to indicate the mistakes and not to correct them. Thus, the teacher will have enough feedback about his learner's ability. Therefore, when a given error appears in the learner's written work, the teacher will be able to find remedial action. In addition, self-correction of errors has positive influence on the learners' motivation to improve their writing through rewriting since correction codes provide them with the location of errors and their types. Furthermore, using correction codes for the learners' self-correction makes the writing a challenging task since learners are asked to solve the problems for themselves.[27]In this connection, self-correction can be a good way for developing an awareness of one's own errors and the faculty for self-criticism. Many linguists and researchers suggest that indirect error feedback-refers to providing feedback on students' errors without giving them the correct form or structure[28].In fact, indirect error feedback brings benefits to students than direct one. Ferris (2003) argues that:"indirect error feedback" increased student's engagement and attention to forms and problems.[29]" However Ferris (2002) argues that: identifying errors can be time consuming for teachers and confusing for learners. Nearly the same idea is held by Roberts (2001) who found no significance between students who receive error code feedback and those who receive encoded error feedback.[30] Another problem can be raised with code error feedback is that learners will have problems with certain errors although the teacher gives them codes for correction. The teacher will be needed in order to teach them how to correct these errors. We will move to the second error correction technique which is peer correction one.

2-Peer-Correction Technique

Peer correction technique is a truly sharing process, not only giving feedback to class mates but also getting it. Therefore, it is a two way street. For Jeremy Harmer (2007)

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[27]Abdel Majid khan and RanaUzma Perveen , "Motivation Students Through Self Correction," *University of Punjab Lahore Pakistan* 2, no.8 (2013):195.

[28]Icy Lee, "Error Correction in Second Language Writing," *Department of Education Studies Hon Kong* 13, no. 10 (2004): 286.

[29] Ibide., 286.

[30] Ibide., 286.

Chapter One: Error's Definition and How Errors can be Corrected

> Peer correction is implemented in classrooms to enhance the
> learner's autonomy, cooperation, interaction and involvement.[31]

According to Paul Rollinson (2005) the principle behind applying this technique are[32]:

- ❖ Peer correction is less threatening than the teachers' feedback. Because students feel more comfortable with their class mates' correction. Consequently, getting correction from their class mate has more benefits.

- ❖ It reduces the pressure on the students who made the mistakes especially if the teacher's attempts to promote self-correction are unsuccessful.

- ❖ The other students are involved in what is happening in the class rather than being just observers.

- ❖ When correction comes from the teacher, it reinforces the teacher's authority like in traditional language class where the teacher plays an authoritative role as well as he /she is the source of knowledge. Consequently, learners remain passive. But through the practice of peer feedback, the class room becomes less dominated by the teacher.

- ❖ The participant of peers in the correction process makes the classroom atmosphere more supportive and friendlier.

Remarkably, although peer- feedback is highly valued by both teachers and learners, some problems will appear. First of all, some students might feel reluctant to correct their friends' errors. Because in doing so, they may harm their friendship.[33] For Jeremy Harmer (2004) the problem with peer-correction is that;

> The students after getting corrected by peers might feel he /she is
> inferior to his peers. In such cases, students prefer to be corrected
> by the teacher gently.[34]

Moreover, some learners -in peer correction strategy- will not accept the idea to give their written work to their peers. Because, they do not want their classmates see their errors. Furthermore, others do not value their peer's knowledge. Therefore, they will not accept their correction. But the same comments when coming from their teachers would be taken into consideration.

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[31] Jeremy Harmer, *The Practice of English Language Teaching* (London: Pearson Longman, 2007), 90.

[32] Rollinson Paul, "Using Peer Feedback in The E.S.L Writing Class," *E.L.T journal 2, no.7* (2005): 23.

[33]Asifa Soultan, "Peer Correction in E.S.L Classrooms," *BRAC University Journal* 1, no.5 (2009):12.

[34] Jeremy Harmer, *How To teach English* (London: Longman, 2004), 34.

6-3 Overall Correction Technique.

For overall correction the teacher needs to correct all errors made by learners including grammar, punctuation, spelling, capitalization….etc. By correcting all errors the teacher aims to put an end for these errors in order not to be repeated in the future. By contrast, it is not always good to correct all mistakes and errors made by learners in their written compositions. In doing so, a student who sees that almost every word he /she has written it has been marked with the red pen, will draw a conclusion that he will never write correctly. Such conclusion usually ends with despair and losing the motive for learning or progress.[35] In addition to that, overall correction can destroy the relationship between the teacher and the learner as Pehrsson and Robinson(1985) point out:

> Overcorrection can destroy a student–teacher relationship and result in children's and anyone else's developing a dislike for reading and /or writing.[36]

Furthermore, overall correction may hinder the learning of writing because it encourages students to write less for the sake of not making a lot of mistakes and errors. Thus, the teacher needs to give some ideas about certain elements of language which are worth dealing with and those which are not. For example he informs his/ her students that he/ she is going to insist on grammar errors and for the next time he will focus on spelling ones. This method saves the teacher's time and efforts and may motivate students better. Despite the disadvantages of overall correction which were mentioned above, it remains continually used by E.F.L teachers. Some studies have shown that E.S.L and E.F.L students want their teachers to correct every single mistake and error in their written composition.

6-4 Whole Class Correction Technique

For the whole class correction, the teacher needs to select common errors made by learners and write them on the board for a whole class discussion. Then, he asks them to correct their errors either individually or in pairs or in small groups .The good side of this technique is that all students can participate in correcting errors. Therefore, the correcting process will be enjoyable and effective. That is why, it is very important for the teacher to

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[35] Mohammed Ali Alkhilmi, *Teaching English as a Foreign Language*(Jordan : Dar Alfath , 2006), 98.

[36] Abed salaam Elkoumy,"Effects of Overall, Selective and no Error Correction on the Quality and Quantity of E.F.L Students' Writing," *Faculty Member Studies* 3, no.12 (2000): 3.

schedule time for correction in his lesson plan. During the lesson the teacher can highlight areas where students got things wrong and teach them briefly or by promoting self and peer correction. Feedback involves the whole class offering suggestions or listening. Whole class feedback can be done at various times; when students finish an activity; the teacher will have the opportunity to correct errors and mistakes before he starts the next activity. As, he /she may correct errors made by learners at the end of the lesson, these errors may not be related to the topic of the day they are focusing on. Therefore, the teacher should correct them at the end of the lesson in order not to be repeated again. However, the teacher's correction of errors will be worthless especially when learners put their corrected piece of writings inside their bags and will never look at them again .As Harmer (2006) claims:

> Correcting is important, but it can be time consuming and frustrating…… correction is worthless if students just put their corrected writing away and never look at it again.[37]

That is why the teacher should be aware about his learners' understanding of their errors and he should encourage them to rewrite their pieces of writing correctly again in order to benefit from the teacher's correction. Therefore, these errors will have little chance to be repeated in their future's written productions. Another problem may rise with big classes in which the teacher finds difficulties to contact students who sit in the back. It is very difficult for those who sit in the back to ask and to receive feedback from their teacher. As a result, the teacher may use pair and group work for entire class benefits. This can be in agreement with Harmer when he claims that:

> In big classes, it is very difficult for the teacher to make contact with the students in the back and it is difficult for the students to ask and receive immediate attention….. but despite this there are things which teacher can do such as the use of worksheets and the use of pair work and group work.[38]

Jeremy Harmer's quotation demonstrates the difficulties which may face teachers when they apply whole class correction technique within big classes. They cannot make any contact with students in the back. Moreover, it is very difficult for those students in the back to receive feedback from their teacher.

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[37] Jeremy Harmer, *How to teach English* (Addison Wesley :Longman Limited ,2006) ,84
[38] Ibid.,84.

Conclusion

Errors cannot be seen as only a failure of some students to recognize certain systems like the traditional view of the behaviorists. However, errors contain very important feedback for both teachers and syllabus designers. From different errors committed by learners, teacher will have an idea about different areas in the teaching and learning process that need reinforcement. Syllabus designers will similarly get suitable feedback from learners' errors in order to edit the syllabus according to the learners' needs. In fact, error correction either by the teacher or by the learner (as individuals or in groups) is a very important step toward language accuracy. Therefore, correction helps students to clarify their understanding of the meaning and constructions of language. It is a vital part of the teacher's role. Because correction involves pointing out learner's errors and mistakes, the teacher should be careful when correcting ill-formed structures. If he /she does this in an intensive way, he will upset his/her students and dishearten their confidence.

Chapter **Two:**

Analyzing Errors Found in the Collected Data

Introduction

The present chapter exclusively deals with the major errors made by E.F.L learners in written productions, the case of Abide Mohammed Secondary School third year classes. The aim is to describe and analyze these errors and the reasons behind falling into them. Then, we will suggest some solutions which may help learners to improve their level in writing. In this chapter, we are going to shed light on the method used to tackle the subject; we define the population, the sample and tools used for collecting data. Then, we give our own commentary on the data analysis process. In the end, we will offer extensive discussion of the results.

1-Research Design and Methodology

1-1The Choice of a Research Design

In order to fulfill the designed goals for our research, we need to follow a specific research design. This latter can be defined as a set of techniques and procedures used for collecting data. Since our objective is to describe and analyze different written errors committed by E.F.L learners, we have chosen the descriptive method for that sake. Both Burns and Grove (2001) stated that "descriptive design helps to identify problem in current practice with the view to improve outcomes. [1]" In our case, the current situation is third year students of secondary school written expression errors. In deploying the descriptive method, we can give some suggestions for improving the writing skill.

1-2 Population and the Sample

Burns and Grove define population as "all elements (individuals, objects and events) that meet the sample criteria for inclusion in the study". The population of the present study is secondary school students of "Abidi Mohamed." We chose about 74 written expression copies belonging to students of third year level as sample. The word "sample" can be defined as a given selection from the whole population aiming to find out something about the total population. To select the participants of our study, we chose a random sampling method because it seems reliable method to obtain a representative sample.

1-3 Data Collection Instrument

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[1] James Burns and Grove Nathanial, *Understanding research* (U K: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 44.

In order to be able to find answers for our research questions, a corpus based study has to be followed. Therefore, about 74 written expression papers have to be collected. Learners were asked to write about two topics:

1- A complaint letter against counterfeiting products.

2 -Food safety in the world.

Bear in mind that- for both topics- learners received some starting points in order to help them start and develop their written assignments. Therefore, in ideal circumstances their written productions should be well-done. Nevertheless, the results show the reverse of what has been expected.

1-4 Data Collection Procedure

All the participants were asked to write about a certain topic. Learners in the scientific branch were asked to write about counterfeiting subject. Whereas, learners of the literary stream were asked to write about food safety as mentioned above. They were asked to use clues and to write a coherent written production in the form of an essay at home. Therefore, they had enough time (one week) to check for errors and mistakes. After that, learners returned back their papers to their teachers. Learners did not know that their written expressions are going to be subject of research.

1 -5 Data Analysis

In reviewing the errors in the collected assignments, we will follow Corder's (1967) method. His method has three steps. At first, we collect a sample of the learner's language. The second step involves identifying errors in the sample. Corder distinguishes errors in competence from mistakes in performance and argued that Error Analysis (E.A) should investigate only errors.[1] Corder proposes a procedure for identifying errors by referencing to normal, authoritative and plausible interpretations. The third step will be a description of errors. Therefore, he uses two ways or strategies for error description; linguistic and surface strategy. The linguistic strategy gives us an idea about the number of errors at different levels of language like (lexis, morphology, and syntax) or in specific grammatical points like: articles, prepositions, or word order. In the surface strategy, errors are classified in terms of omission, addition and misordering. Moreover, Rob Ellis (1997) gives more details about how

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[1] Ellis Rob, *The Study of Second Language Acquisition* (UK: Oxford University Press, 2008), 62.

to identify and analyze errors of learners. The initial step requires the selection of a corpus followed by the identification of error. Then, errors will be classified. After that, explanation of different types of errors will be included. Furthermore, Grass Susan and Lary Selinker 1994 proposes six steps for dealing with error analysis: collecting data, identifying errors, classifying errors, quantifying errors, analyzing source of errors and remediating errors.

2-Presenting Errors Found in the Sample:

At this initial step, we are going to present and discuss the errors found in our sample. Then, the next step is to classify them. We move to identify common errors between learners as illustrated by examples followed by the correction forms. Table One shows the types, frequency number and percentage of errors committed by the participants in their written assignments. The form includes spelling, grammar, punctuation, fragments, Arabic structures and missing words. In fact, we have corrected many copies myself using error correction codes for counting types of errors. Eventually, we have located some problems especially with some copies of learners with bad hand-writing. Thus, it was challenging to correct such papers fairly. This table presents types of errors committed by learners followed by the frequency and the percentage. First of all, we have counted errors then, I have put each kind alone with its frequency and percentage. We followed the equation: each type of error divided with the total number of errors multiplied by one hundred. Therefore, the equation will be like this: $type\ of\ error/total number\ of\ errors \times 100 = result\%$.

Type of Error	Frequency	Percentage%
Spelling	175	28.5%
Capitalization	28	4.5%
Punctuation	86	14.5%
Fragments	209	34.15%
Arabic Structures	22	3.5%
Misuse of Quantifiers	6	0.9%
Grammar	70	11.43%
Missing Words	16	2.6%
The Total Number	612	100%

Table: 1 Represents Errors produced by Abide Secondary School Third Year Levels

*Graphic Presenting results of the table .
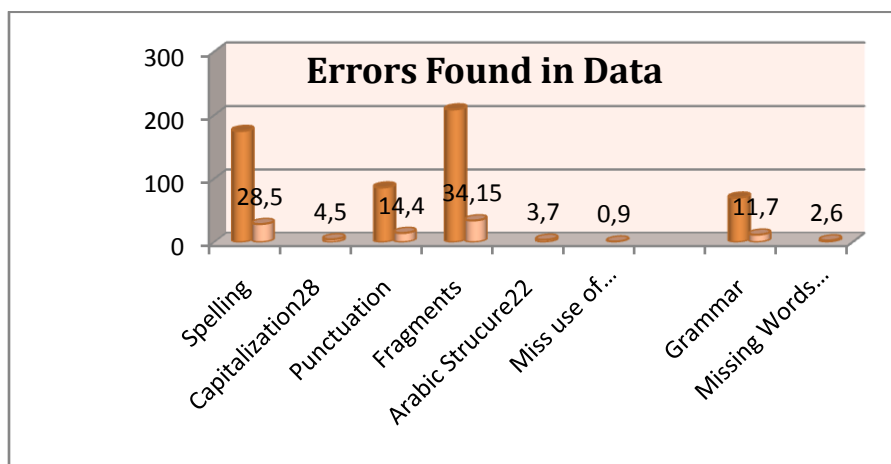
From the graphic above, it is clear that learners make a lot of fragments (%31.8) in their written composition. This is may be due to lack of concentration or lack of proof-reading their works. Similarly spelling errors come second. Therefore, the majority of learners find difficulties in writing correctly some basic terms. This illustrates that they may not read their works after finishing it. Another possibility for this state of affairs can be the lack of writing activities in the program itself. Meanwhile this issue may be indicative to the learners'

approach to write in itself. The weakness can be traced to their middle school background. In fact, errors in punctuations have little percentage (14.4%) in our table. Some learners do not use punctuation marks. This suggests that they are ignorant of their role in writing or they pay little attention to such marks. After that, grammar errors have a share in our study (11.7%). Some examples derived from the learners' written samples reveal that grammar elements still need reinforcement and reteaching. Meanwhile capitalization problems (4.5%) need extra explanation by the teacher as some students give no importance to capitalization. Furthermore, examples of students confirm that some students suffer from negative interference of their mother tongue during the writing process (3.7%). Thus, the role of the teacher is to make students aware of this phenomenon and encourage them to think and write in English through extensive reading. Likewise, the misuse of quantifiers occurs as a result to the lack of courses in the syllabus concerning this point. In the end, the misuse of quantifiers can be attributed to the lack of practice.

3-Reporting Errors Found in Data.

The main objective of our study is to describe and analyze different types of errors which were committed by third years of secondary school and the reasons behind their occurrences. Our aim also is to find out remedies for the sake of minimizing falling into such kinds of errors in their future written assignment. Let us start our discussion with the spelling problems.

3-1 Spelling Errors:

Spelling means the act or the process of writing words in their correct written forms. Therefore, some learners still have problem with very basic terms like the verb "to buy","to write","phone" and alike. That reveals clearly that the spelling element still needs teaching and extra activities. Moreover, the teacher should always correct his /her learners' errors during the lesson or near its end. Furthermore, he has to be certain that his learners have received the right form of the items. That can be done by asking them for example to rewrite those problematic words many times until they can write them without any spelling problems. Similarly, he may use any another procedure for spelling errors that can be encouraging to his/her learners in order to correct their spelling errors by themselves either by error correction codes or by peer correction technique. Therefore, they will find the writing process enjoyable and beneficial. The table below represents some spelling errors taken from different copies belonging to learners.

Error Classification	Error Description	Error Correction
Spelling Errors	I am rting a letter of complaining. The counterfeit product is dangereuse. *These products are cheep. *People can not by them. *Thy are cheap. *Mobel phon, medicine prodact. *We mest bay genine prodact. *Some people ag argne that… *Fake medicines my cill people.	I am writing a letter of complaining. The counterfeit product is dangerous. *These products are cheap. *People cannot buy them. *They are cheap. *Mobile phone, medicine products. *We must buy genuine products. *Some people argue that … *Fake medicines may kill people.

	*Day are shep .	*They are cheap.
	*People by couterfiet products.	*people buy counterfeit products.
	*Some people ar argne.	*Some people are angry.
	*Fake medicines my kill people.	*Fake medicines may kill people.
	*People will understand kowk iy.	*People will understand quickly.
	*They are sheps.	*They are cheap.
	*Counterfeuts producs are bad prochtion.	*Counterfeit products are bad production.
	* Pople by couterfuts prodacts.	*People buy counterfeits products.
	*Becausc they are cheep.	*Because they cheap.
	*Poeple can not by expennive things.	*People cannot buy expensive things.
	* I do not find a camira.	*I do not find a camera.
	*It should be vry intesting.	*It should be very interesting.
	*Counterfeiting gives bad reparation to the country.	*Counterfeiting gives bad reputation to the country.

Table: 1 Represents Some of Spelling Errors Found in the Sample.

Examples from the table above clearly testify that students ever poorly read, Or they give no importance to the writing task. Likewise, students do not read their papers when they finish writing. Or they are not accustomed to writing because the teacher gives them one or

two written assignments during the whole year. Consequently, they will commit endless types of mistakes and errors.

3-2 Grammatical Errors:

Grammar errors refer to the errors which occur when the learner uses the wrong tense in a given sentence. The results from this study reveal that the informants are not aware of applying the right tense of the verb in the sentence. That is why they produce sentences like these in the table below.

Error Classification	Error Description	Error Correction
Grammar errors	-Fake product do not last for long period of time. -They says. -It is said that the prices of your product is logical. -Children becoming very fat. -Imitation are very bad action. -That was my opinion. -It have good camera. -It do not have what I want. -It is touch by hand. -The government make laws. -Counterfeit will stop. -It is do not last long time. -Vegetables containing…..	-Fake product does not last for long period of time -They say. -It was said that the prices of your product are logical. -Children become very fat. Imitation is very bad action. -That is my opinion. -It has good camera. -It does not have what I want. -It is touched by hand. -The government makes laws. -Counterfeit will be stopped. -It does not last for long time. -Vegetables contains…………

Table: 2 Represents Some Grammatical Errors Found in Data.

The results reveal that the majority of learners still cannot apply different grammar rules correctly. In addition, these lessons need to be sequenced in the right form. Thus, syllabus designers should take into consideration the learners' deficiency in grammar. Third year students should know at least how to apply simple grammar rules like "simple present", "simple past". By contrast, the results reveal the reverse.

3-3 Fragments:

Fragment can be defined as group of words or items which are not connected or completed. If we take a look at the table below, we will find that the overall majority of the participants produced fragments.These are characterized by their length, no punctuation marks and full of spelling and grammatical mistakes. These fragments lead to either confusion or misunderstanding of structures produced by informants. The table below provides more details about fragments.

Error Classification	Error Description	Error Correction
Fragments	*Fruits and vegetables containing insecticideand chemicals destruction of aquatic life and too many additives preservatives using too much suger. *This is a consine to all people has eating a lot of fast foods because they have a lot of chirmicals and oils. Do not eat this fast foods, if you want to be healthier person. *Counterfeit reflects on many people for example when they eat counterfeit medicine they dead.	***Fruits** and vegetables contain insecticide and other toxic chemicals which may destroy life of living creatures. *This is a good opportunity for people to stop eating fast foods because they contain a lot of fat and oil. It is better for you health to stop eating it. *Counterfeit has a negative impact on humans' health. For example when people eat fake medicines they may die.

| Fragments | *Finally, too many people eating fast food restaurants this fast food contain too much fat,consequently puting on weight and developing diseases.

*Therefore, I enjoy not by my holiday and I become trustn't by the adervertisting moreover to the a lot of many wich expending on your stupid pfone.

*Next, the counterfeit consumer product have a reputation for being lower quality after that, this hasreasalted in the death of hundreds of thousands of people. | *Many people prefer eating fast foods in restaurants. Although, they lead to fat and other diseases.

*I have not enjoyed my holiday because of your misleading advertisement which states that your production is genuine. But the reality shows the reverse.

*Counterfeit gives low reputation to the country .Furthermore, fake medicines may lead to death of billions of people. |

Table: 3 Represents Some Examples of Fragments Found in the Sample.

The data shows that learners have little capacity to form error-free sentences. They simply put words together or just fill in the empty space in the paper without really caring for meaning. Under such circumstances, teachers should plan extra courses for teaching their learners how to write well- structured sentences in terms of subject, verb and object.

3-4 Capitalization:

Capitalization means writing the first letter of the word in the capital form. The remaining letters will be written in a small case. Here are some examples taken from the learner's written assignment. These examples demonstrate clearly that learners give no attention to capitalization. Thus, after a complete sentence they begin with no capital letter. This is an error. The table below will show some examples of capitalization error taken from the corpus.

Error Classification	Error Description	Error Correction
Capitalization	*counterfeiting products are characterized by cheap prices. *unfortunately, the company does not give us guarantees. *finally, fake products do not last for long time. *after that, people may have allergy and may suffer from poisoning. *food safety has become one of the major worries for mankind. *in general, this mobile was really bad. *people buy counterfeit products because they are cheap. *such poor quality does not last for long time.	*Counterfeiting products are characterized by cheap prices. *Unfortunately, the company does not give us guarantees. *Finally, fake products do not last for long period of time. *After that, people may have allergy and may suffer from poisoning. *Food safety has become one of the major worries for mankind. In general, this mobile was really bad. People buy counterfeit products because they are cheap. *Such poor quality does not last for long time.

Table: 4 Represents some Examples of Capitalization Error Found in Data.

From the table above, it becomes clear that learners give no attention to the capitalization at the beginning of each new sentence and new paragraph. That is why their writings are characterized by weakness. It is very difficult to recognize one sentence from the other one. Therefore, some papers contain just the first capital letter in the introductory sentence. Consequently, the other sentences contain neither punctuations nor capitalizations. Furthermore, some pupils are still struggling with their mother tongue negative interference. Thus, they produced Arabic expressions written in English language. This is our next point for discussion.

3-5 Arabic Structures Written in English:

Arabic structures are the result of thinking in Arabic and translating these ideas into English. That is why we are faced with examples like the following:

Error Classification	Error Description	Error Correction
Arabic structures Written in English.	-At last, what I am saying is that I am not satisfied about your claims. -In my see I think that we cannot fight counterfeiting. -In the conclusion, we must not buy imitated things because they are just like stolen properties. *In general, this mobile was bad as a result of all these non kept promise I feel angry because of that therefore I want my money back. *In the conclude, must not buy imitated because they are just like stolen property. *I do not have what I want or something like that you can only calling phone.	-At the end, I am not satisfied about your claims. -In my view point I think that we cannot stop counterfeiting. -As a conclusion, we must not buy imitated things because they are not genuine. *To sum up, the phone was totally so bad because of your misleading advertisement. Thus, I feel angry and I want my money back. *As a conclusion people must not buy fake products because they are not genuine products. *I have not got the mobile which I want. Therefore, I have got a fake one.

Table: 5 Shows some Examples of Mother Tongue's Negative Interference.

Results demonstrate that learners still suffer from the problem of translation. Therefore, they use structures from Arabic which are based on verb, subject and object, whereas the English structure uses subject, verb and object. Consequently, their productions are neither Arabic nor English in structures. Another problem will be raised within the same context which is misuse of quantifier due to the negative interference of L1 in writing in English.

3-6 Misuse of Quantifiers :

Quantifiers refer to pronouns or nouns which express quantity like: all,   much, many, few little…etc.[1] Results found in data reveal that learners do not have the capacity to use quantifiers correctly. Thus, they produced examples like these.

Error Classification	Error Description	Error Correction
Misuse of quantifiers	*Too many oil. *Too many insecticide. *Too much products. *Tow few people prepare their meals in their homes. *Too many people eat fast foods. *Too few people are they who cook their daily meal at home. *Too many presidents.	*A lot of oil. *Too much insecticide. *Many products. *Few people prepare their meals in their homes. *Many people eat fast food. *Very few number of people cooks their meals inside their houses. *Many presidents.

Table: 6 Displays Examples of Misusing Quantifiers Found in Data.

Examples from the table above reveal that some learners have no idea about countable and uncountable nouns. That is why they produce expressions like those in the table above. Furthermore, learners have another problem which is the lack of punctuation marks in their written productions.

3-7 Punctuations:

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[1] *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, s.v. "Punctuate."

Punctuations refer to different conventions and marks used in writing for the sake of dividing sentences and phrases. What can be seen from a brief observation to learners' written productions is that some of them did not use punctuations at all. Thus, their written productions are somehow confusing and sometimes senseless. Here are some examples.

Error Classification	Error Description	Error Correction
Punctuation	-Some people argue that counterfeiting benefits by giving them access to lower price goods this is totally mistaken claim first product is not original because corruption after that because the type are fraud

*In general our holiday was bad as result of all these non kept promises I feel angry and disappointed because I lost my money.

*Finally, too few people cook their daily meal at homes they become bringing their meal from fast food restaurant consequently some of them put on weight and develop diseases. | -Some people argue that they are going to benefit from buying counterfeiting products Infact, they are totally wrong.

*In general, my holiday was really so bad. As a result, of your misleading announce. Therefore, I feel angry and disappointed about my lost money.

*Finally few people cook their daily meals at their homes. Others bring their food from fast food restaurant. Consequently, they may end up with fat and diseases. |

Table: 7 Shows some Examples with Missed Punctuations Taken from Corpus.

Examples from the table above clearly represent that learners are ignorant with the importance of punctuations marks in writing. In fact, punctuations are like traffic codes. And each language has its own codes which very likely could be different from the other language codes. In our case, English and Arabic are two different languages. Therefore, learners cannot apply their mother tongue's punctuations on English. Teachers should be able to make their learners aware of the difference between the two languages in matter of structures, punctuations, grammar, spelling….etc. Within the same context, we find some examples missing some basic components like subject, verb or object. The table below illustrates what has been said

Error Classification	Error Description	Error Correction
Missing Words	*I am writing to complain. *Some people that counterfeiting. *Counterfeiting is an evil. * Must not buy imitated things. * I am writing to you for complaining *I never buy your production. *Counterfeiting is an immoral must be fought by people.	*I am writing letter of complaining. *Some people argue that …….. *Counterfeiting is an evil action. * You must not buy imitated things. *I am writing a letter for complaining. *I will never buy your production. *Counterfeiting is an immoral action .It must be fought by people.

Table: 8 Shows Examples of Missing Words Found in Data.

The results illustrate that some students do not proof-read their writings or do not pay attention to the full meaning of the sentence as well as to the text as a whole. Thus, the teacher's role is to help his/her students to get accustomed to proof-reading. This latter has a great importance in editing their written work either by adding some elements or omitting unnecessary ones. In fact, many reasons lead third year students of Abide Mohamed Secondary School to commit different types of errors including grammar errors, spelling errors, punctuation errors, capitalization errors, Arabic structures, misuse of quantifiers, and fragments. Therefore, what are the major reasons which prevent learners from writing neat and coherent written expressions?

4- Possible Reasons behind Making Errors

After the above descriptions of different errors committed by third year the students of Abide Secondary School, it would be better to hypothesize the main reasons behind falling into these errors. This task serves better at understanding what kinds of procedure and technique can be deployed by teachers for enhancing their learners writing ability. Mainly, many reasons and factors hinder third year students of Abide Mohamed Secondary to write correctly, including the lack of reading, lack of practising writing outside the class room,

negative interference of mother tongue, insufficient written expression books in the library and the lack of proof -reading.

4-1 Lack of Reading

Reading and writing are two distinct skills. The former is receptive while the latter is productive. But they are closely related to each other. Therefore, the more one reads the more one will develop a capacity which will be used for developing a coherent paragraph. In this connection, reading helps students to find a style to imitate at their initial experience and soon after that they will develop their own style. Furthermore, reading gives learners the opportunity to enrich their vocabulary with new and different terms instead of relying on very limited vocabulary. Consequently, reading is a condition for successful writing. According to Eisterhold (2007)

> Reading in the classroom is understood as the appropriate input for acquisition of the writing skill, because it is generally assumed that reading progress will somehow function as primary models from which writing skill can be learned or at least be inferred.[1]

As detailed by Eisterhold, it is clear that reading is an essential skill to acquire the writing skill. If we want to link this view with third year secondary students, we will find that the overall majority of participants care little about reading. Their written productions are full of endless mistakes and errors in different categories; grammar (11.43%), spelling (28.5%), punctuation (14.5%)…..etc. Likewise, some learners are still struggling with some basic terms like "buy", "write", "they" this can be attributed to the lack of reading. That is why it would be better for the teacher to encourage his / her learners to read as much as possible inside and outside the classroom by giving them for example prizes and presents. Because the more they read the more they will become familiar with new vocabularies, new expressions, idioms and styles. This will ensure a positive impact on their writings which will be characterized by less interference of their mother tongue. In fact, there is another reason which hampers third year students to produce free error assignments which is the lack of practising writing outside the classroom.

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[1]Eisterhold Jack Chrstain , *Reading- Writing Connection : Toward a Description for Second Language Learners* (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007) ,200.

4-2 Lack of Practising Writing

For better learning of the writing skill, it is better for non-native speakers of English language to practise writing inside and outside the classroom. By doing extra writing activities outside the classroom, learners will have the chance to write neat and well-organized written assignments. Most of the time, it is not the case with some scientific classes. Their teacher prefers not to waste his/her time with those learners who are not able to produce even one error –free sentence. Therefore, it is better for him/her to replace the written expression lesson with another one like listening or reading lessons. Of course written productions of learners will be full of mistakes and errors since they have not practiced writing for an extensive period of time. Under such circumstances, it will not be a surprise that they will find difficulties in writing basic terms like "they", "because"…..etc. Within the same context, learners' written productions will be full of grammatical, spelling, punctuation errors due to lack of practising writing during the whole year and their written assignments are the clear examples of their deficit to write error-free written productions.

4-3 Lack of Written Expression Books in Secondary School's Library

All over the world libraries are very important places. Libraries provide the chance for all people to have access for free and useful information. Within the same context, the school library has essential sources of lots of information and beneficial books for both teachers and learners. Therefore, learners will have the access to read many beneficial books. Consequently, their linguistic as well as their cultural background will be enhanced through reading. Moreover, their writing skill will be characterized by a less number of mistakes and errors because through reading different books, the learner will have the chance to handle a lot of vocabularies, different writing styles, and new idiomatic expressions. Usually, pupils of Abide Mohamed secondary school do not have access to English books, more precisely written expression books, which would enable them to have an idea about the writing techniques and the way they build their written compositions correctly and coherently. This is why their written assignments are full of endless mistakes and errors including grammar, spelling, punctuation, fragments…etc.

4-4 Negative Interference of the Learner's Mother Tongue

It is about (22) and 3.7%errors committed by learners are the results of negative interference of their mother tongue. Therefore, they think in their mother tongue and after that

they translate their ideas and knowledge into English structures. They tend to forget that English and Arabic are two distinct languages. Consequently, English is S.V.O language where as Arabic language is V.S.O. Students must bear in mind that the two languages have two different conventions. This idea is supported by Blanchard and Root (2004) who argue that:

> It is like driving a car, if you have ever driven in another country, you know that some of the rules of the road may be different. Just as the rules of driving differ from country to another, the conventions of writing may change from one language to another.[1]

As expressed by this expert, it becomes clear that the writing conventions differ from one language to another. Mainly, not any one can be naturally skillful and talented writer without enough practice, more extensive reading and getting rid of negative interference of the mother tongue when writing in English. In fact, results of error analysis show that our informants are still struggling with their mother tongue's negative interference. Thus, they produce expressions like; "in my see" instead of "in my view point" "in the conclude" must not buy it" instead of "as a conclusion, you must not buy fake mobile phones". "I do not have what I want or something can only calling phone." Instead of "I have not got the appropriate phone". That is why it is better for the teacher to encourage his/her learners to read different books written in English which really will help them to think in English which means putting limits for mother tongue's negative interference. Another reason attributes in committing errors by learners which is the lack of proof-reading to their final written products.

4-5 Lack of Proof-Reading

The results gained from our study clearly illustrate that almost all the students submit their written works with a huge rate of errors. This is mainly because they do not read their final written productions to check for errors. Proof-reading can be defined as slow and careful reading to a given piece of writing for the sake of searching into any kind of mistakes and errors in order to correct them. Consequently, proof-reading becomes a very important and essential step in the writing process. Because through proof-reading learners will have the chance to learn from their mistakes by using different sources of information like dictionaries-

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[1] Karen Blanchard and Christine Root, *Ready to Write More: from Paragraph to Essay* (USA: Pearson Education , 2004) , 110 .

for spelling errors-and grammar books for checking for sentence structures. Therefore, they will produce a clear piece of writing with correct spelling forms and appropriate grammar structures. But clearly, proof reading is neglected by the majority of students for many reasons. May be, they are ignorant about its benefits or they pay no attention to such important element. That is why their written assignments contain an endless number of errors including grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization….etc. However proof- reading is not an easy task which can be done by all students. It requires a lot of practice and different exercises to be mastered. Thus, the teacher should give his/her learners exercises which help them to master such important element.

5-Implications and Recommendations

As Pit Corder(1967) pointes out:

> We cannot teach language, we can only create conditions in which it will develop spontaneously in the mind in its own way.

According to the findings of this study, learners do face different kinds of problems in their writing assignments in English, including negative interference of their mother tongue while writing their written productions and incomplete learning of essay rules and conventions. First of all, teachers should increase the number of home work for the sake of giving learners the chance to benefit from their free times by doing extra research and reading in English. This will have positive impact on their writing. In addition to that, teacher should encourage his/her students to work their projects in groups and encourage them to present in English instead of using Arabic. This will reduce the mother tongue's interference in their speech as well as in their writing. Besides, they will have the chance to correct each other mistakes and errors. As to writing rules and conventions, teachers should find appropriate texts and exercises which help students to be more accurate. Furthermore, teachers need to encourage their students to write in class, at home, on the school's journal. Their writings need to be distributed among them for errors' correction. Therefore, they will learn from their mistakes. In fact, errors committed by learners are very important elements for teachers and syllabus designers.

5-1 Implications for Teachers.

Different errors committed by learners are very helpful elements for teachers to evaluate their teaching and learning process i.e to see to what extent their ways and their learning materials are effective and fulfilling for his/her learners' needs. Moreover,

contrastive errors analysis will help the teacher to see what exact areas in teaching and learning process need more attention and reinforcement. The same idea is embraced by Fallahi (1991) when he announced that:

> Error analysis is a clue for teachers to pinpoint the learning problems which can hardly be predicted by contrastive analysis.[1]

Furthermore, error analysis helps teachers to have an idea about their students' weaknesses and strengths.

5-2 Implications for Syllabus Designers.

Errors are significant for syllabus designers in order to see what items are important in order to be included in the syllabus and which items and elements are of less importance and can be excluded. Therefore, the syllabus will keep only tasks and exercises that help learners to enhance their written productions.

6-Conclusion

To sum up, learners of Abide Secondary school fall into different types of errors due to several reasons. Mainly, lack of extensive reading and lack of practicing writing outside the classroom are the most important reasons behind making endless number of errors, especially spelling errors. The results from this study reveal that some students are unable to write some basic terms like "they", "buy", "write" and unlike. Thus, the role of the teacher is to encourage his learners to read outside the classroom and to do extra writing activities for enhancing their level in the writing skill. In addition to that, he may encourage his learners to do their project in group either in pairs or in groups. These projects will help them to read more for the sake of including adequate information and style for their project. Furthermore, assigning projects can enable learners to have a critical mind and being responsible for their research while gathering information and presenting it orally. Therefore, their speech will be enhanced through peer discussion as well as their writing skill will be improved too.

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[1] Fallahi Mohamed, "Contrastive Linguistics and Analysis of Errors," *Oxford University Press*1,no.6 (1991): 25.

General Conclusion

Our study has aimed at identifying, describing, and categorizing and diagnosing different types of errors committed by Abide Secondary School learners in their written compositions. What has been noticed is that a number of different types of errors have been found in their written expressions. These errors include grammar, spelling, punctuations, capitalization, Arabic structures, missing words, fragments and misuse of some quantifiers. After analyzing these errors we have found that students made these errors due to several factors and reasons including lack of extensive reading, lack of practicing writing outside the classroom, negative interference of the mother tongue and the lack of writing books in library. The way learners composed their written compositions clearly shows that students face difficulty in grasping grammar, spelling and punctuation rules. It is the responsibility of both teachers and syllabus designers to provide pupils with materials which help them in enhancing their writing skill. School textbook should include subjects which have a close tie with their real life. Consequently, these subjects will motivate them to express their ideas and opinions without any problems. We think that errors can be minimized if new ways and modern technologies are adopted or at least changing or modifying ways of teaching writing according to the learners' current level. Teachers should be more aware of these kinds of error and provide necessary remedial activities for the sake of enhancing their students' level in writing. However, teachers and researchers cannot ignore the importance of error analysis as a tool for evaluating teaching and learning process.

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Appendix

Appendix

Samples of Students' Essays:

Sample1

Acountefeit is some thing that is forged like copied many.mobile phone ,a car,fichier. some people orgue that counterfeiting benifits consumers by giving where is the result of this counterfeit them where is solutions?

This is some mist .first,the counterfeit product is bad quality and cheap.then,it is do not last long because there is not original,I add this information the counterfeit product is dangerous product because it causedof phinomens the coruption.

I think that the govermment make latts for stoped this people,I see if the citizen must by the counterfeit product ,the counterfeit will stoped.

Sample 2

Iam reating to letter for object on Modeal whoy buying doas from your companise.Firstly the advert states that it ther is wile but in fact I do not found this. Secondly the advert promises state the weat her unfortunately I do not found this.

.Fimlly I advise you to amilorate your services and not bie this because that will reduce your reputation in the markt.

Sample 3

What is the conterfeit to contererfeit is to copy prodact like food, mobel phon,Medicine prodact.

Peoples buy bad quality of prodact because thy are cheap and satisfy the need, the situation of theperson poor make him bay these prodact.

We mest bay genine prodact.

Sample 4

A counterfeit is some thing that is something that is imitated.

Many products, such as poor quality that has bad benifeit ,for instance facke mashines may break quikly after ashort period of use.counterferting gives a bad reputation to the country. As a result, consumers have to by best and avoid badones.

Sample 5

Foods safety has become one of the major norries for mankid ,this worry has worry hasthree major source, the chemical contannination of agrieultural produects the use of too many produects, the use of too many additives like flavouring coloeing,colouring and pves crwatves in large number of food products and the consumption of readymade fooder.

The first cause industries polluting the sueil with chemicals insecticide and fertrilez ere inag culture farmrs in industtrlized countries like the U.S.A usually.

Sample 6

I am writing to claim about a mobile that I bought according to your advertisement on the channel.

My mobile's category is x which costs 6.8 million dinar. Unlike what the advertisement stats, the screen is large it is only three inches .Also, the advert says that the quality degree of image is 15 megapiscels but, in fact it is not because the photos are not clear enough .In addition, you advertised that the battery charging takes only one hour, but actually it takes three hours to be completely charged.

In brief, I am disappointed and I want a solution from your majesty.

Sample 7

A counterfeit is something .that is forged .Counterfit proudacts are fake replic as the real product. Whow is fight counterfeit?

First, this is total mist bad quality and last short time. Next, the counterfeit consumer product have a reputation for being lawer quality. After that, this has reaslated in the death of hundreds of thousands of people. Finelly, in the case a person takes non working medicin.

Mustn't be imitation because they are just like stolen property. Counterfeit are of such bad quality that it is wast of mony to by them.

Sample 8

Food safety has become one of the major worries for mankind. This worry has three major sources .First, industries polluting the soil with chemicals because fruits and vegetables containing insecticide and chemicals residues destruction of aquatic life. Second, too many additives preservatives flaoouring, colouring using too much solt ,suger to sweeten the food due to ,children becoming hyperactive, lacking concentration at school, people developing allergies and suffering from food poisoning. Putting on weight and developing diseases owing to too few people preparing their own meals, too many people eating in fast food restaurants.

This is a consine to all people has eating a lot fast foods because they have a lot of chirmicals, and oils. Don't eat this fast foodsif you want to be healthier person.

Sample 9

I' am writing to you this letter to complain about my mob advertisement claims.

First the advert stats that the mobile has camira ,but infact do not find camira. Second, the advert promises it has wifi unfortunately,do not find. Finaly, it is thouch.

In general, this mobile was bad as a result of all these non kept promise I feel angry that because of that.

Therefore, I want may moneyble.

Sample 9

Food safety becam one of the mayor worries mankind. This worry has three mayor sources the use of the chemical in the agriculture, too many additives, fast food containing too much food.

First, industries polluting the soil with chemicals and using of many insecticide sprays by farmers as a result fruits and vegetables containing insecticide and chemicals residues destruction of aquatic life. After that, the people developping of allergies ouring to the addition for exampler colouring, flavouring which use too much of sugar or salt

Finally, too many people eating fast food. Restaurants this fast food contain too much fat , consequently putting on weight and developping diseases.

Sample 10

I am writing to informed you about what I buy from your company.

My mobile which I getting from your company did not programmed and prepared to what the advertisement claims. The Firstly, the advert stats that there are many services like obvious camera, fast internet, memory of memorizing is sbacious but in fact, the camera did not find, slow internet and small memory. Secondly, the advert promiss that company reform product if the buyer find a trouble. Unfortunately, all this it is falsehood. Thirdly, it says that they sell mobile with a reduction about 25% .Actually, the reduction around 5% .Though all this decrease, but it is a profit.

In general, my mobile it's ok not good not bad. As a result of all these non kept promises, I feel that your company correct all the problems of these product because most people like and hope to have an excellent product.

Sample 11

Food safety has becauses of the major worries for mankind. This worry has three major sourses. First, of all too much toxic waters thrown in rives which feed to poisoning of water source. Secondly, farmers used too much insecticide sprys therefore fruit and vegetables containing inseciticide a chemical residues destruction of a aqu .In addition that too many additives preservatives, colouring too much salt , sugar too sweeten the food which result in suffering from laking concentration at school , children because hypecative and people develop allergies. Finally, fusther sure , too few people prepare their own meals and many people eat is fast food restaurant consequently, many people will suffer from diseases.

In order to put an end to for theproblem of food safety it is better toforbid the usage of chimicals products, building factoures for from building.

Sample 12

 Food safety has become one of the major worries for mankind. This worry has three major sources.

First , possing of waters sources for thrown too much toxic into rivers too little water to drink because too many oil spills .also fruits and vegetables containing insecticicide and chemicals residues destruction of aquatic life, due to farmers using too many insecticide sprays, since the use the chemicals in agriculture products has become the mankind a lot of malds and they worry for acouses the sourses. Awing too many additives because of becoming hyperactive.and the use to sweetn the food and sugger as a result, suffering from food poisoning.

Finally, developin diseases because it her too few people preparing their own meals and too many people eating in fast food restaurants, also the fast food containing too much fat putting people on weight.

in conclusion ,the consunction of contaminating agricultural products, processed food and poor eating habits is in need a good creason to wrooy about food safety and to take carractive measures to change or impose our attitude to eating.

Sample 13

Food safety has become one of the major worried for mankind .This worry has three major sources: the pollution, the ingredients of food and the fast food restaurants.

Firstly, now a days the industries pollut the soil with chemicals then we see that too much toxic waste thrown into rivers by them when they spill the oil on the water and all of that causes the poisoning of water resources and we will not be able to find water at least to drink.In addition to that, our fruits and vegetables are containing insecteside sprays to protect their plant. Secondly, the restaurant use a lot of additives preservatives and too much suga, oil , salt in preparing their food as a result the children who consum these food have becoming hyperactive they also lose their concentration in the school but the real damage is that they some time suffer from food poisoning.

Finally, too few people are they who cook their daily meal at home. They become brinining their fast food from restaurants quensequently some of them put on weight and develop diseases.

In conclusion, industries must put an end to their dirts to protect the life of fish and other animals and plants in rivers and the human must be carefull in eating daily food to make his energy balance right.