

**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
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FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**



**MAIN CAUSES OF GRAMMAR ERRORS IN THE WRITTEN DISCOURSE MADE
BY THE STUDENTS OF FIFTH YEAR OF THE B.A. IN ENGLISH: EMPHASIS IN
TEACHING (YEAR 2008 – 2009)**

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INTRODUCTION

It seems to be part of every language learning process that learners make mistakes, and those who study English also face this situation. Mistakes are defined by different linguists; one of them was Chomsky (1967), who defined them as errors caused by factors such as fatigue and inattention, and he called them “performance factors”; S. P. Corder(1967) said that mistakes are deviations due to performance such as fatigue, excitement, lack of attention and/or carelessness; besides, in another source it is defined as “a wrong action attributable to bad judgement or ignorance or inattention”. They can be of different kinds such as pronunciation, spelling and of course grammar mistakes. However, it is necessary to establish the difference between mistakes and errors. Errors according to Krashen, Burt and Dulay (1982) are “those parts of conversation or composition that deviate from some selected norm of mature language performance”, Corder defined them as systematic deviations due to the learner’s still-developing knowledge of the L2 rule system.

A way to improve or perform better in a foreign language is by studying grammar; it is important because grammar is an inherent part of every language. So, based on the importance of grammar in the learning of languages, in this case of English, this research is focused on the error analysis of the written discourse made by the students of fifth year and the students who have already taken all the courses of the B.A. in English: Emphasis in Teaching. The objective is to determine the different causes of errors made by the students.

Although errors have been investigated in the past by some groups of undergraduate students of the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador, those investigations have been focused on different aspects such as comparison between oral and written errors and phonological error analysis; besides, as their sample they had the four English Intensive courses and English Composition I. Based on the previous studies, it is essential to mention that this is not a new problem; however, it is necessary to study it from a different perspective in order to find out if the problem persists among students who have completed their course of studies and to find ways to correct it to get better results with the future professionals.

This work has been divided in eleven chapters. The first one includes the Statement of the Problem. It describes the problematic situation. In the second chapter, the Justification is developed; in this chapter are explained the reasons why the topic is considered important. In the third chapter the General and Specific Objectives are established. In the fourth chapter, the Theoretical Framework which supports the present work is included. Here you can read the point of view of different authors concerning this issue.

Next, in the fifth chapter the Methodological Framework is presented. In this part the strategy that is followed to carry out the research is described. It is divided into three parts: Type and Design of the Research, Population and Sample, and finally Techniques and Instruments to be used for the data collection. The sixth chapter is referred to the Analysis and Interpretation of Data. In this chapter, the percentages obtained after having analyzed the data are included. Then, in the seventh chapter, the Discussion of the Results is developed. The eighth chapter contains the Conclusions of this research and in the ninth chapter the Recommendations to the readers are included. In the tenth chapter the Difficulties faced during the research are pointed out. It is divided into three parts: Research, Technical and Personal Difficulties.

Finally, in the eleventh chapter is presented the Bibliography which was used. It contains the bibliographical sources that were checked to carry out the research.

I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Whenever someone is learning a foreign or second language, most learners always face difficulties in the mastering of some or all the four macro skills: writing, reading, listening and speaking. This is not different for the students of the Foreign Language Department (FLD) of the University of El Salvador, for instance most of them if not all have problems to understand native speakers of English; also some of them have problems in the reading skill, showing this in their understanding of any text. Besides, when speaking they cannot give an extended speech because they do not express their ideas coherently and fluently. In the writing skill, learners have many problems too because most of the time they do not apply the grammar rules as used in standard English. When the students finish their studies, many of the mentioned problems are still there.

According to Collier, 1995; Krashen & Terrel, (1993), who were cited in the Guide to the K-12 English Standard of learning enhanced scope and sequence made by the Department of Education of the University of Virginia, related to the topic under discussion here, they say that “Acquiring a second language is a difficult and complex process. In the early stages of learning a second language, learners pass through developmental stages similar to those when learning a first language”.

The above statement is true for beginner students at the FDL because they must learn the four macro skills as gradually as in the first language, step by step until the process is finished. For example, when a child starts communicating in his/her native language, in our particular case in Spanish, he/she makes mistakes conjugating some verbs especially irregular ones such as: “diji” instead of “dije.” But as children grow up and besides interacting with other users of the language, they start receiving formal instruction, they learn grammar rules on how the language works concerning verb conjugation and other structures for the appropriate usage. A similar situation could occur when someone is learning a foreign language; in both cases they have to develop the skills.

This happens to learners in The Foreign Language Department, who after going through a five- year- learning process, at the end of this they seem not to master the target language as expected. After they have gone through all that process, they still lack the required competence to perform well enough in the target language. Most of them have serious communication problems. However, they are supposed to have an advanced level of communication proficiency at the end of their studies, most students probably reach a low intermediate level (according to ACTFL Scale)¹. Why does this happen?

In this research we are interested in finding out why learners at the FLD after having finished their studies they still have problems mastering grammar rules in writing. Are factors such as the methodology used by professors, the focus on writing, the way professors evaluate and correct students' written activities, the time the students allot to practice the writing skill, or the little or no attention the students give to the corrections professor make to their written papers the main causes of the grammar errors in the written discourse made by the students of the fifth year and the students who have already taken all the courses from B.A. in English: Emphasis in teaching?

1 ACTFL Scale: American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages. They represent a hierarchy of global characterizations of integrated performance in speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

II. JUSTIFICATION

As it is known, a second language acquisition does not occur in a year or two, rather there is a process in order to do it. At the beginning of the study of any foreign language students make errors; those seem to be part of the learning process. However, it is worrisome to come across that after five years of study of the English major offered by the Foreign Language Department, students do not seem to overcome this situation, for they keep on making errors even when they have completed their course of studies.

Some linguists have realized that the phenomenon of errors in written discourse when learning a language is not isolated. According to Richards 1974; Taylor 1975; Dulay and Burt 1974, cited by Nsakala Lengo in her article What is an error? “Errors have played an important role in the study of the language acquisition in general. Researchers are interested in errors because they are believed to contain valuable information on the strategies that people use to acquire a language”.

The group carrying out this research agrees with the above mentioned authors because it is considered that errors happen easily when learners start learning a second or foreign language, because they still lack grammar rules knowledge. From error identification professors have the opportunity to move onto the next lesson or reinforce the knowledge just acquired.

According to Corder (1967), the investigation of errors has thus a double purpose: it is diagnostic and prognostic. It is diagnostic because it can tell us the learner’s at a given point during the learning process, and prognostic because it can tell course organizers how to reorient language learning materials on the basis of learners’ current problems.

This kind of investigation is important since professors can make decisions on what to do, or how to deal with learners’ error. It can also give clues about the level students have in the target language.

Based on what has been mentioned before, the researchers believe that it is really important to carry out this research oriented to find out the main causes of grammar errors in the written discourse, with the purpose of giving a feedback to the professors about the problem in two ways: the first one is if the results point out to the methodology used by professors to correct students' errors, they could take into account this information to reorient the way they correct errors; and the second one, if the results point out to the responsibility of the students, professors could take it into account to motivate and encourage students to improve their work and proficiency by taking into account the corrections made to their works.

The researchers have become aware of grammatical problems in written discourse made by their peers and by themselves through sharing papers, and attending presentations of their classmates. All of these reasons have motivated us to carry out this investigation which is believed could contribute to deal with the problem by giving new insights of the causes of errors.

III. OBJECTIVES

A. GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To determine the different causes of grammar errors made by the students of fifth year and the students who have already completed their course of study of B.A. in English: Emphasis in teaching.

B. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- To identify the most common grammar errors in the written discourse made by students in their fifth year and the ones who have already completed their course of study at the FLD.
- To determine the methodology used by the professors, and if it is the appropriate one to avoid errors in the written discourse.
- To find out the way professors correct the students' grammar errors in the written discourse.
- To find out if the students take into account the corrections made by professors, and correct their papers.

IV. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

At the beginning of the studies of errors, which are understood as those parts of conversation or composition that deviate from some selected norm of nature language production (Dulay, Burt and Krashen, 1982), there were different theories that attempted to explain their presence; one of them was the Behaviorism, proposed by B. F. Skinner who sustained that knowledge is based on experience and the study of learning should be restricted to observable inputs and outputs. Against this theory, N. Chomsky (1957) claimed that human beings must have a certain kind of innate capacity which can guide them through a vast number of sentence generation possibilities, and have a child acquire a grammar of that language until the age of five or six with almost no exception.

The same year (1957), Robert Lado, in his Contrastive Analysis (CA) approach explained that learning is easy when first language (L1) habits are like second language's (L2); on the contrary, it is hard when habits of L1 are not like L2. This psychological theory, Behaviorism, began to be used for methodological purposes, for example the goal of the Audio-lingual method was to learn new linguistic habits. Besides this one, The Reinforcement method applied Behaviorism by rewarding students for their correct production to develop stimulus-response connections. Nowadays, this theory keeps on being used when students' assessment is testing them by grades.

Later, Stephen Pit Corder's initial arguments for the significance of learners' errors appeared. Error Analysis (EA) was an alternative to Contrastive Analysis (CA). It mentioned that this approach was unable to predict a great majority of errors. Since then, the study of learners' error has been a primary focus of L2 research. Both approaches have differences like these:

CA	EA
1. Pedagogical orientation	Scientific orientation
2. Focus on input, practice, Inductive learning	Focus on linguistic and cognitive processes
3. Errors of transfer	Multiple types of errors

Error analysis distinguishes between errors, which are “systematic deviations due to the learner’s still- developing knowledge of the L2 rule system” and mistakes, which are deviations due to performance factors such as fatigue, excitement, lack of attention and/or carelessness (Corder, 1967). In this case students produce incorrect language although they know the correct form; they can be self-corrected when attention is called; whereas, a learner cannot self-correct an error because it is a product reflective of their current stage of L2 development. To identify an error or a mistake, Ellis (1997) suggests two ways. The first one is to check the consistency of learner performance. If he sometimes uses the correct form and sometimes the wrong one, it is a mistake. However, if he always uses it incorrectly, it is then an error. The second way is to ask the learner to try to correct his own deviant utterance. Where he is unable to, the deviations are errors; where he is successful, they are mistakes.

Through errors, teachers can determine the level that the students have in the language by identifying, analysing and explaining the different errors by asking the following questions: Where is the problem? What is the type of problem? And how can you explain the problem? Then, they could put into practice new techniques in order to help the students to learn it in an easier way and likely avoid these errors. As Corder (1967) said “Errors are believed to be an indicator of learners stages in their target language development. From the errors that learners commit, one can determine their level of mastery of the language system”.

The group believes that errors are also indicators for the students. When they identify their own mistakes from the corrections of the teacher, it is difficult for them to forget the grammar rule or the use of a word.

According to Error Analysis the job of the teacher is to point out when something has gone wrong and see whether the student can correct himself; then the teacher can find out if what the students say or write is just a mistake, or if it is global or local error. These terms were labelled by Burt and Kiparsky (1972). They defined global errors as “errors that affect overall sentence organization significantly, hinder communication; and local errors as “errors that affect single elements (constituents) in a sentence do not usually hinder

communication significantly.” Local errors include errors in nouns and verb inflections, articles, auxiliaries and the formation of quantifiers. These authors considered that students must control global grammar in order to be easily understood while it is possible to communicate successfully without controlling local grammar; although if they want to approximate their level of communication to native fluency they also must learn local grammar.

In a different point of view, Corder (1973) stated that errors fall into four main categories: omission of some required element; addition of unnecessary or incorrect element; misordering of elements, and selection of incorrect element. To understand better the meaning of these errors, the researchers decided to use the definitions offered by Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982). The first one is omission, which are errors characterized by the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance; the second one is addition, the opposite of omission, that are errors characterized by the presence of an item which must not appear in a well-formed utterance. The third one is misordering, which are errors characterized by the incorrect placement of a morpheme or group of morphemes in an utterance. The fourth is selection of incorrect element; even though this kind of error is referred to pronunciation matters, it is included in Corder’s category and he defined it as the substitution of a familiar phoneme from the mother tongue for a target phoneme that is difficult to pronounce.

Even though the Error Analysis explains the taxonomy of errors, it has some weaknesses; for example, the inappropriate use of simplistic classifications to explain learners’ errors, without taking into consideration that language learning is an interaction of internal and external factors and explanation of errors must reflect that interaction (Dulay, Burt and Krashen, 1982). To try to explain the sources of errors, hypotheses have been established such as environmental factors, which include training procedures, communication situation, socio cultural factors; and the other is internal processing, which includes first language “transfer”, “simplification,” generation of “false hypothesis” by the learner. But none of them explains successfully what the sources of errors are.

Error analysis is still in use with the purpose to investigate specific question about second language acquisition, but theorists as Selinker and Corder began to use the term known as Interlanguage, as the most usual source of errors.

Selinker (1972) stated that “Interlanguage refers to the separateness of a second language learners’ system, a system that has structurally intermediate status between the native and the target language.” In the same line of ideas, Corder (1971) applied the term Interlanguage, but he defined it as a Transitional dialect, suggesting that there was structure in learner language and that certain inferences could be made about the learning process by describing successive states of the learner’s language, noting the changes and correlating this with the input. Moreover, Corder argued that the appearance of errors in a learner’s production was evidence that the learner was organizing the knowledge available to them at a particular point in time. In other words, Interlanguage is between learners’ language and target language; in this place it can have some deductions by means of observing the learners’ performance in L2.

A common person does not learn the first language perfectly because of the number of rules and vocabulary that the language has; so, it is even more difficult for a foreign language student to learn the 100% of the second language due to some aspects like: fossilization, teaching method and the time students take to study by themselves. These aspects will be explained below.

The researchers believe that it is really essential to correct the errors of the students early in their learning a second or foreign language so that they will learn how to write in the right way eliminating the errors. In the writing matters, feedback generally refers to the response of the reader, given to the learner’s writing. According to Dulay, Burt and Krashen, one type of feedback is correction. There are three basic types of error correction: 1. Teacher correction: the teacher corrects the students. 2. Self-correction: the teacher indicates the students has made a mistake or error and gives the students an opportunity to self-correct. 3. Peer correction: the teacher asks other students to correct the mistake or error.

Ferris, Dana (2001) explains that error correction is not simple, advocating explicit grammar instruction. She explains that most second language writers make a multitude of errors in their writing, from incorrect verb tense to article misuse to improper word choice.

The instructor must first decide which errors in a students' paper most adversely affect meaning, the global errors as opposed to local errors. Then the instructor must identify which of those occur most frequently. These are called patterns of error; in correction techniques, special attention must be given to global errors, rather than local error, which seem not to break down communication.

Students expect correction from the professor, no matter the kind of error might be. One correction technique is the following:

- How much should you correct: decide priorities, method of correction, device follow-up work for both the class and individuals.
- Explain the marking system: GR = grammar, WO= word order, SP= spelling, L incorrect lexis, ^ = omission, X=addition, E= Expression.
- Distinguish between three main categories of errors: 1. those that lead to miss understanding, 2. lesser but often irritating errors: wrong tense, non- agreement, spelling, and 3. Stylistic errors. Inappropriate style. (correction techniques in ESL classes)

The above procedure is in the group direct feedback where the professor marks the error by (circling, underlining, using codes); another error feedback is the indirect one which is when the professor limits to point out the error, e.g. putting a mark in the margin to indicate an error on a specific line.

Instructors will also have a preference for their feedback, which sentences with errors are partially rewritten or indirect feedback, in which an error is indicated but not corrected. While indirect feedback may be appropriate for students with a low level of language proficiency, it generally does not promote learning. Indirect feedback leaves it to students to identify the type of error and make the necessary correction, applying classroom instruction to their work (Ferris).

If professors do not correct the students, or correct them improperly, they will learn the language making the same errors and they become fossilized. According to Selinker

(1972), “a permanent cessation of progress toward the target language has been referred to as fossilization. This linguistic phenomenon, interlanguage fossilization, occurs when progress in the acquisition of second language is arrested, despite all reasonable attempts at learning.”

As Qian Huang (2009) stated, the fossilization of interlanguage is caused by improper teaching and learning to a great degree; he considers that one way to solve the temporary fossilization in teaching and learning as much as possible is making the interlanguage closer to target language, arguing that this is an inevitable task of each foreign language teacher.

Qian Huang who carried on a research for the College of Foreign Language Teaching, Dezhou University, China, sustains that the fossilization is caused by both external and internal reasons. Compared with some external factors, such as language environment, teaching methods, and textbooks; the author thinks that the internal factors, such as learners’ physiology, psychology, cognitive manner, and cognitive emotions, impact more on the fossilization. Chinese students learn foreign languages in class where it is a non-native language content of situation. Suppose they take same textbooks, what affects the language fossilization more is the learners’ internal mechanism. Therefore, that paper tends to discuss the fossilization phenomenon in perspective of interlanguage internal mechanism and how to avoid the fossilization.

He puts forward suggestions in four aspects:

- ❖ First, improve the quality of learners’ language output.

According to this author input is important, but if the output is not developed; it will not have an adequate internalization of language knowledge.

- ❖ Second, appropriate cognition feedback and emotion feedback.

According to the theory of feedback nature / interaction, in order to avoid the fossilization of language, teachers must master the balance between learners’ confidence in the second language and the linguistic development. During the class, teachers should control the

teaching and teaching feedbacks, giving students encouragements spiritually, making them keep trying in learning the second language, and imposing strict requirements for students in the linguistic form aspect.

❖ Third, pay attention to learning the target language culture.

In teaching, teachers should instruct students correctly and cultivate students with right attitudes toward the native language culture and the target language culture, shortening the distance between them, and paying attention to learning the target language culture.

❖ Finally, cultivate students with positive and correct self-recognition competence.

After all, students are the subjects in learning. Experiments show that the higher the learners evaluate their competences and the higher their expectations are, the higher their achievements will be. In order to break up the fossilization of language and drive the development of second language learners' linguistic competence, learners must improve the standards for themselves and keep in studying hard continuously.

Other aspect that let the students make errors, and it is really important to take into consideration is the classroom management, because it is a part that can make a successful learning. Classroom management is a term used to describe the process of ensuring the classroom during the class and it implies the prevention of disruptive behaviour, so teachers must plan their classes before going to the classroom. They have to think of effective activities and organize them properly by taking into account the type of students they have in the classroom. Teachers must look for the best strategies, methodology and techniques to make the learning easier, and to know exactly what to do in the whole class keeping the good behaviour of the students, not losing the control of the classroom because it is difficult to get it back.

According to Gootman (2008) classroom management is closely linked to issues of motivation, discipline, and respect. For these entire aspects classroom management plays an important role in the learning process because in this way the classroom would have a good environment not only for the students but, also for the teacher. Krashen said "Class management skill is important since they help to ensure the success of the teacher and the

activities which are used. The most effective activities can be made almost useless if the teacher does not organize them properly including the role of the teacher". Even though students always commit errors, the organization of the teacher minimizes this problem.

In addition, the time students take to study is significant to learn a language because when someone takes more time to study, this person learns the language faster than those who do not study. It is shown in four macro-skills and referring the written discourse they make fewer grammar errors.

V. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK.

A. TYPE AND DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH.

The purpose of this research is to find out the main causes of the grammar errors made by those students of the FLD of the UES who have finished their studies of the B.A in English: emphasis in teaching to contribute with the Foreign Language Department to have other insights on how to correct students' writing errors and mistakes.

This research focuses on the main causes of grammar errors in written discourse made by students of Seminar and the students enrolled in the graduation process 2008. It is a descriptive paper which frames grammar error analysis in order to know the main causes of them.

B. POPULATION AND SAMPLE.

The population of this research was the students who were taking Seminar and the students who have already taken all the subjects of the major and are enrolled in the graduation process.

It was decided that the best approach to get the sample was by using the non-probabilistic sampling, which is a direct sample that consists of selecting the sample according to the decision of the researchers. At the beginning it was thought of applying the probabilistic sampling, but there were many difficulties such as the fact that only a few students were willing to participate by providing their papers and writing the essay requested by the researchers.

C. TECHNIQUES AND INSTRUMENTS APPLIED IN DATA COLLECTION.

To collect the data, some techniques and instruments were used in order to obtain the information needed.

The first technique was the interview made to ten professors of Foreign Language Department who were teaching Grammar, Composition and the Intensive English Courses during the semester II 2008. The purpose of the interview was to know the way the professors teach the language. The instrument used to reach this goal was an interview guide, which consisted of the thankfulness, objective of the interview, and twelve open questions oriented to know the subjects they taught, how they corrected grammar mistakes, the techniques they use in order to avoid grammar mistakes, and what they suggest to other professors and students to overcome grammar problems (See appendix 1).

The second technique was the observation. Twelve Professors who were teaching Grammar, Composition and Intensive English Courses were observed in the semester II 2008, in the afternoon and evening hours. To do this, another instrument was elaborated. It was an observation guide. It consisted of an objective and eight questions oriented to observe many aspects like classroom management, the method professors used to teach grammar, the time they gave to the written activities and also the techniques applied to correct grammar errors. This observation was carried out by visiting the classrooms of the professors who were in charge of the mentioned subjects. They allowed the researchers to observe their classes and the researchers filled up the observation guide carefully (See appendix 2).

The third technique was an interview addressed to the students of Seminar and the students who had already taken all the courses because they were the subject/object of study. A self administration questionnaire was designed as an instrument for this purpose. Its objective was to gather information related to the process of grammar learning in the Foreign Language Department. This questionnaire was divided in the following parts: thankfulness, objective, instructions and seven close questions. The questions were related

to how students have been taught, how they have been corrected on written activities, which activities and techniques the professors used in the classroom, and a self evaluation about their level on writing based on ACTFL Scale (See appendix 3)

The fourth technique was a writing activity. For this purpose two instruments were used. The first one was the papers written both in Seminar and in graduation process 2008. The photocopies of the works of the students were obtained and checked. This instrument had as an objective to look up grammar errors. The results gathered with this instrument helped make an error analysis of the types of errors they made. The second instrument was error identification and analysis table where the results gathered from the papers were shown. (See appendix 4).

The fifth technique was a descriptive statistic technique. The instrument made for this one was a frequency table whose objective was to count the frequency of error found in the students' papers (See appendix 5).

All these techniques and instruments helped us to reach the goals of this research.

VI. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA.

As it was mentioned, there were five instruments to carry out this research. The first one was the interview guide. The second was the observation guide; both were applied to the professors. The third one was the questionnaires applied to the students. The fourth instrument was photocopies of the students' papers and the error identification and analysis table where the results of error analysis were shown, and the last one was the frequency table whose objective was to count the frequency with which errors occur.

After analyzing the answers in the interview it was found out that all the professors interviewed have a lot of experience teaching the courses under observation because most of them have been teaching Grammar, Composition and Intensive English Courses along their professions.

The answer to the question "What kinds of writing activities do you carry out with your students?" 66.7% said that they ask their students to write sentences; 55.6% to write paragraphs; 22.2% essays, journals and stories; and 11.1% answer that other activities like descriptions, reactions and opinions.

Regarding question four "When you find mistakes in your students' papers, do you correct them? 77.8% of the professors answered yes to it. 71.4% of them use the method of circling the mistake; the second more frequently used, 57.1%, is identify the mistake with letters. Researchers of Dartmouth College² say that all the methods are effective, depending on the situation. Each of them helps the learners to avoid the errors.

Answers to the question "Which types of mistakes are the most common among students?" 66.7% said that subject verb-agreement is the one they find most in the students' papers, followed by 44.4% who said that verb consistency, and 33.3% who said that the third person singular. These results were proved through the students' papers analysis (see appendix 10 frequency table).

2 <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/materials/tutor/problems/grammar.html>

Another question was “Which techniques do you use to enhance grammar points?” In this sense, professors have different opinions; however, two answers were equally replied: 22.2% use of handouts and design web site for extra practice.

Answers to the question “How do you evaluate grammar in the different subjects you teach?” 44.4% of the interviewed professors said they used exams as a way to evaluate their students; followed by 22.2% who ask them to write sentences.

Concerning the question “What influences students' low proficiency in grammar?” 44.4% said that students do not read, and 33.3% that they have problems in L1 which affect L2; the other 22.2% of the answers included effort students make in the basic area, lack of extra time for practicing and students do not write.

Professors are aware of students' low proficiency in grammar, so by the time they were asked about “What would they suggest to help students overcome this problem”, 44.4% recommend their students to be interested in learning; 33.3% to ask for help, read more and write more as more frequently. On the other hand, when they were asked about the recommendations to other professors to help students overcome grammar, there were a variety of answers according to their different points of view; this fact does not allow having a meaningful percentage among them.

Related to the question if the “Spanish grammar background affects the learning of the English grammar?” 55.6% believed that this is true, and 60.0% think that not having much knowledge of grammar in L1 brings problems in L2. The same 55.6% consider that students have to learn more of Spanish grammar.

Observation guide

The subjects Grammar, Composition and Intensive English Courses were observed, giving the following results. Regarding the kind of activities the professors use in the classroom to cover the grammatical aspect, in the 50% of the classes, professors make a review of a previous class; 41.7%, explained the grammar rules using the board, 33.3% had the students work in pairs to do exercises in their books .

Concerning resources available, professors mostly made use of markers and board with the 83.3% of frequency each one.

It also could be observed that the 83.3% of professors emphasized on grammar rules, while the 16.7% did not. The 80% of professors, who emphasized them, did it by explaining each pattern using examples, and the 40% did it by reviewing the grammatical points.

Based on the observation made, the 42% of professors corrected the written errors orally; however, in 25% of the classes observed, there was not any written activity to correct.

Related to the way students correct their written errors in the classroom, in the 66.7% of the subjects, students rewrite their exercises. The 75% of this sample erase and write the correct answers. In the majority of the cases (83%), a feedback was given, and professors had different ways to do it, being the two most frequently used: explaining the rules and writing and explaining the examples.

The last part of the observation was focused on knowing whether the class was teacher - centered which means, according to ESL Glossary³ that “the methods, activities and techniques where the teacher decides what is to be learned, what is to be tested and how the class is to be run. Often the teacher is the center of the classroom giving instruction with little input from the students. The teacher decides the goals of the class based on some outside criteria”, or if it was student – centered, described by ESL Glossary as “the

3 <http://bogglesworldesl.com/glossary.htm>

activities, techniques and methods where the learners are the focus and the teacher plays only a peripheral role. Students are allowed some control over the activity or some input into the curriculum”.

According to the observation neither the students nor the professors were the center of the class. The professor is the one who assesses the students giving the instructions of what they have to do, give gentle correction, showing students that a mistake has been made. The students follow the instructions of the teacher participating a lot, performing some kind of task in order to develop ability to use the language; here both the teacher and the students are active participants, they worked together, so that the student could be able to produce the language themselves. During the classes were observed, the researchers saw that the 100% of the classes were both, teacher and students centered.

Students' questionnaire

According to the answers of the students in the questionnaire, the activities and techniques used by the professors to teach grammar in the English courses 79.5% answered explanations of grammar points, 71.8% group work; and 56.4% readings.

When students were asked if the professors corrected the assignments, the 76.9% of them said yes, and 64.1% expressed that most of the professors did it by using the technique circle the mistake.

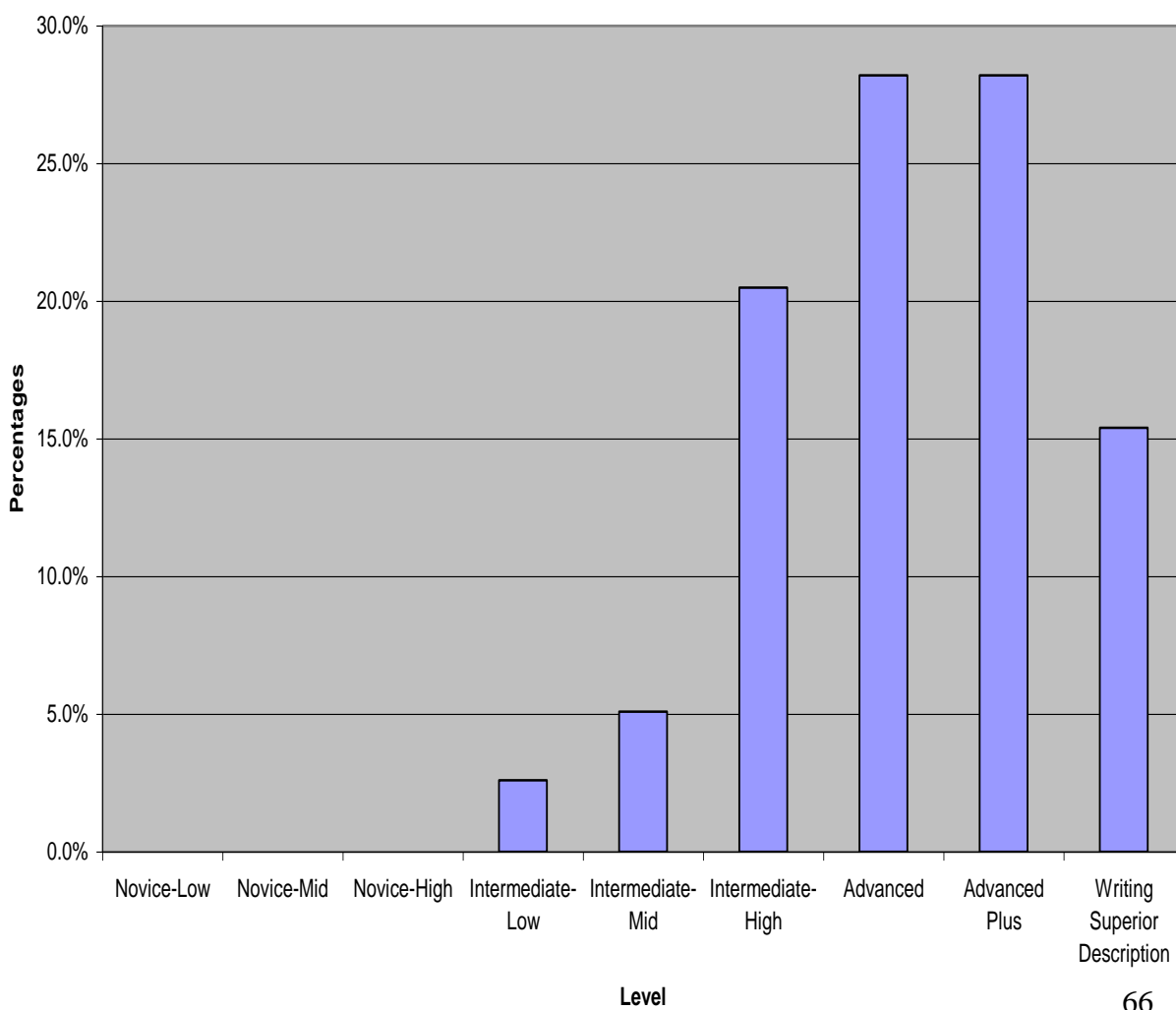
The next question, “Do you take into account the corrections professors make in your papers?” 89.7% of the students include them. 31.4% correct themselves by trying to avoid the mistake because it could be helpful during the development of their major. In contrast, 10.3% of the students said that they do not take into account the corrections because the professors have never corrected their work.

There are two percentages that are alike when professors emphasize on grammar in the English courses that are 76.9 %. The first one is explaining the grammar rules, and the second is giving a lot of grammar exercises.

Related to the question “How did your professors emphasize grammar when you were taking the Composition courses?” 43.6% said that the professors did not emphasize, while the 41.0% said that they explained according to the students' errors.

At the end of the questionnaire, the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) scale was used to ask students about the perception they have about their own knowledge of the written discourse. The results are shown in the graphic below:

Level of students in the written discourse

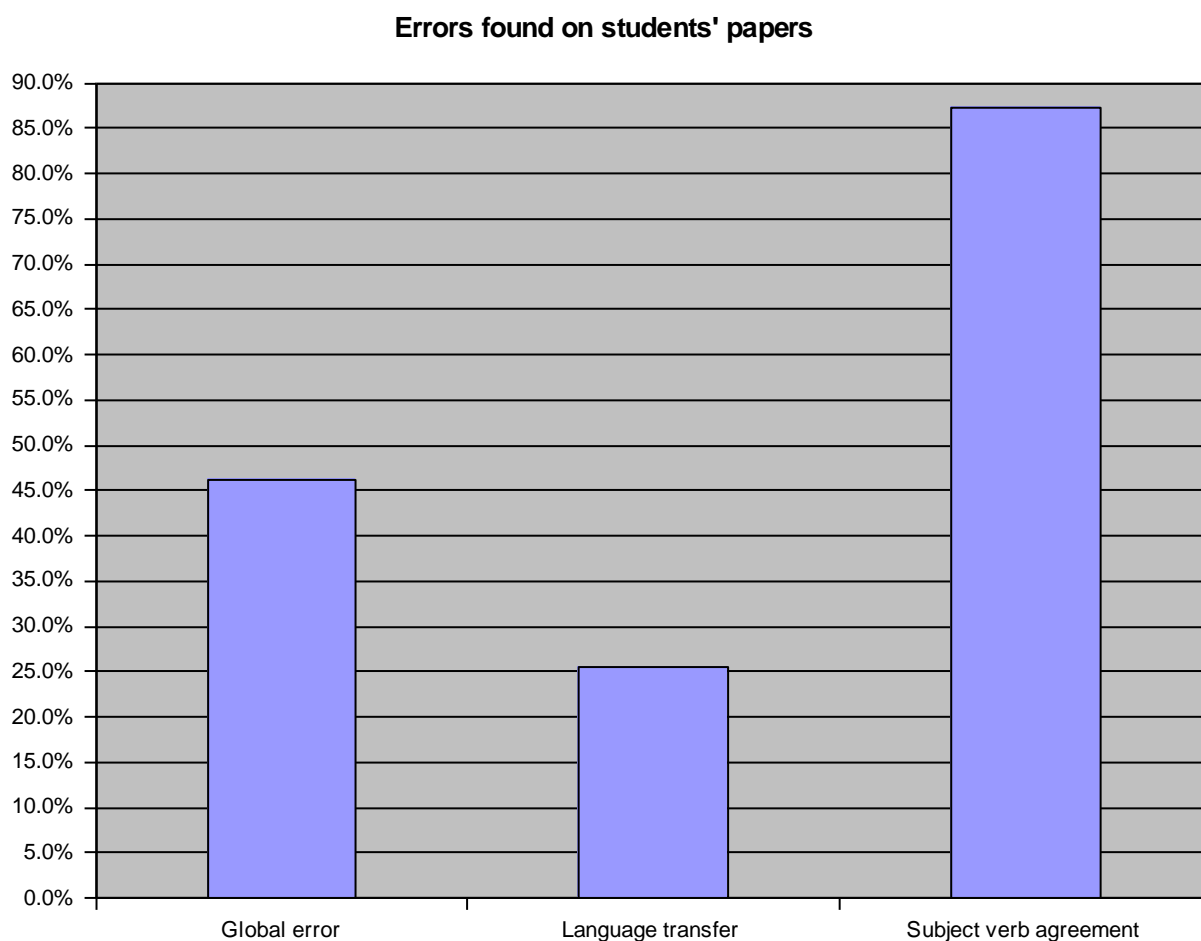


Frequency table

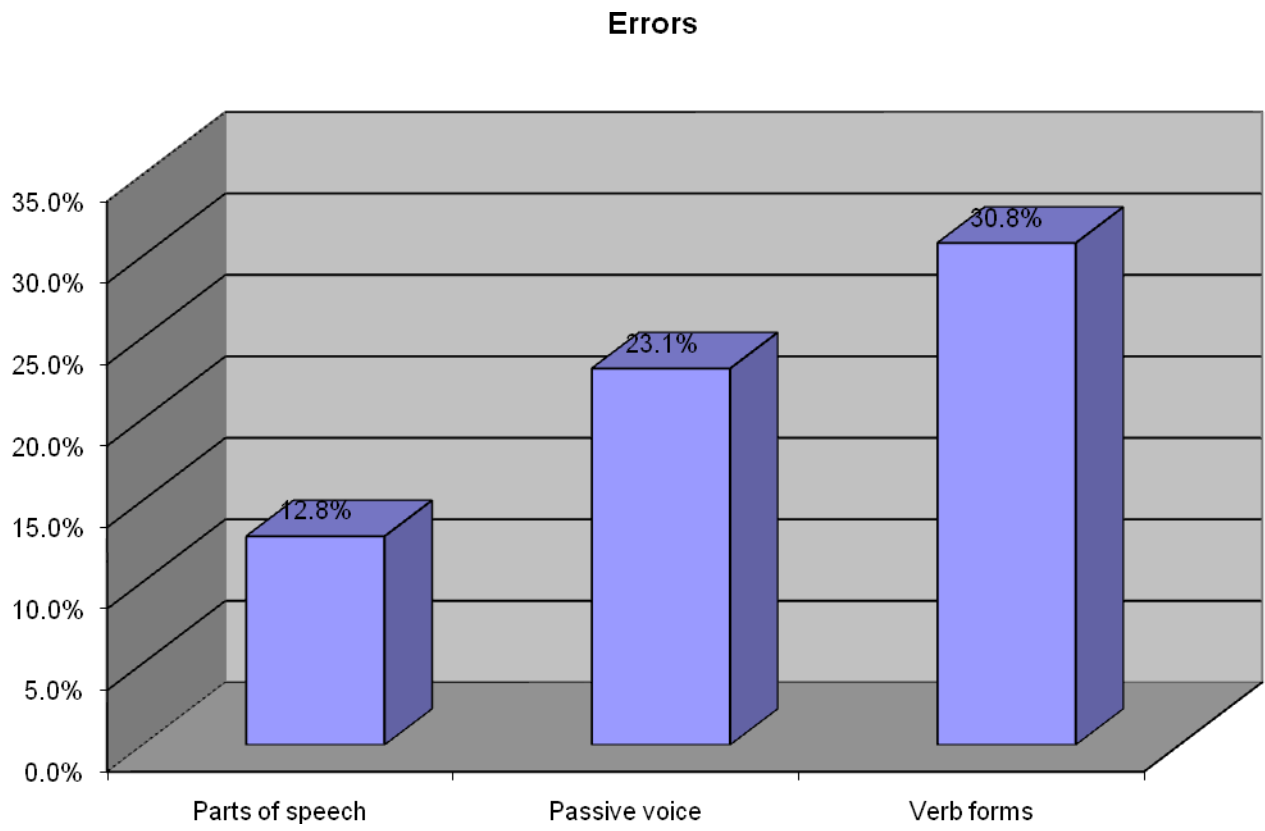
Regarding Corder's ideas "Errors are believed to be an indicator of learners' stages in their target language development. From the errors that learners commit, one can determine their level of mastery of the language system". By checking students' papers different kinds of errors were identified; some of them interfere with communication others do not, but they show the poor knowledge on grammar students' have.

In order to identify and analyze the errors, a table was made to present the results (see appendix 9); moreover, after having identified the errors, another table was made to show the frequency. The types of errors were arranged from the most unclear for meaning to the least significant in writing.

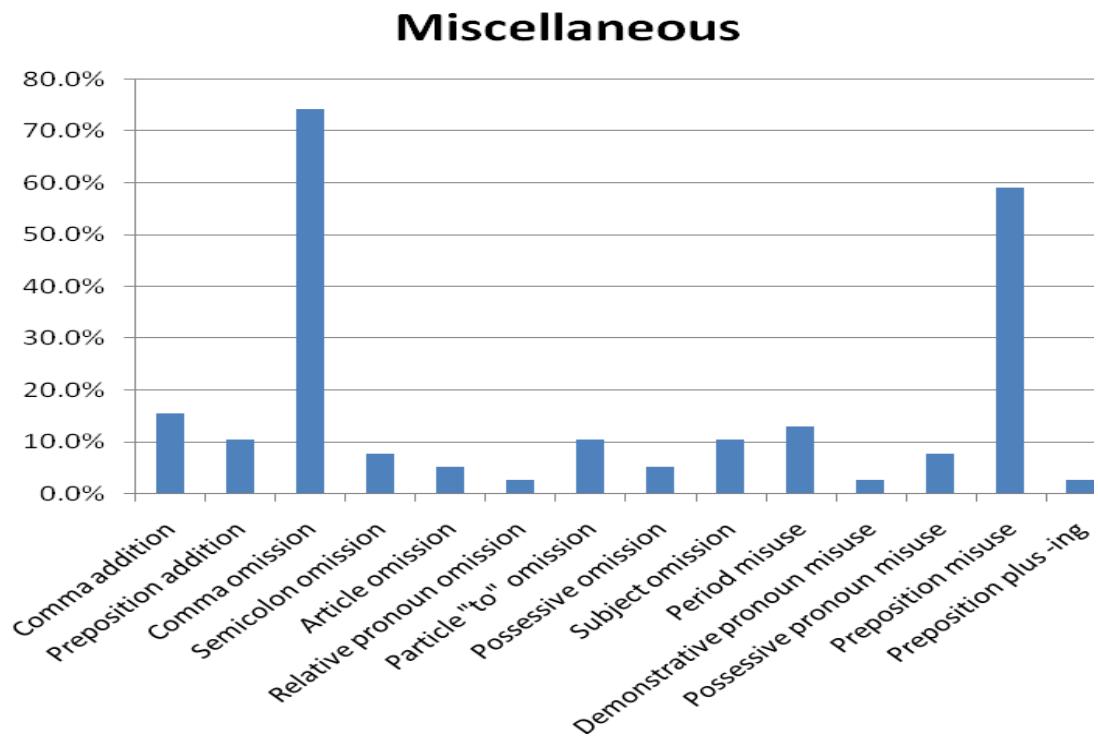
In the first graphic the results of global errors (46.2%), language transfer (25.6%) and subject verb agreement (87.2%) are represented; which indicates that there was a significant frequency of errors that affect the written speech.



In the second graphic, there are represented the errors concerning parts of speech (12.8%), passive voice (23.1%) and verb forms (30.8%) respectively.



Finally, in the third graphic are shown different kinds of errors that may affect the sense of the message in some way, but not the complete content. Here the highest percentage is for the comma omission (74.4%), followed by misuse of prepositions (59.0%).



VII. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

Considering the importance of writing as part of the language's production, the papers of the students, who wrote them in groups, were analyzed using the Error Analysis approach, whose creator was Stephen Pit Corder. He suggested that errors were not bad; on the contrary, he said that errors were just an indicator of the level the students have.

Taking into account this idea and trying to get answers to the questions asked in the Theoretical Framework, an analysis table was built. The first question to identify the errors was: Where is the grammar problem? While reading the papers of the sample, the found errors were highlighted. The second question was: What is the type of problem? This helped us define and state the type of error made by learners; for example, if it was "global", which is defined as the one that affects overall sentence organization; "part of speech" or "verb tense", and then the error was classified for instance: addition, omission, or misuse categories. Finally, the third question was: How can the problem be explained? Once the error was located, an explanation for the grammar rule that had been violated was identified and stated (see appendix 9).

According to the results, the type of errors that were more frequently made by learners was subject-verb agreement pattern. This matches with what the professors interviewed by the researchers observed when they corrected their students' writing activities assigned during the semester. Some examples of errors found by the researchers in the students' papers are:

The researcher enter to the world of the people.

The rule of the third person singular says that, verbs in the present tense for the third person (he, she, and it) take s – endings.

When researcher go into investigate something in a community....

The rule in this case says: “When a verb ends in *o*, the letter *e* is added before the *s* ending.

Another example is:

This projects intents to dig deeper.

There are two problems found in this sentence. Its subject is plural and the verb is singular. Besides, the subject matches neither its pronoun nor its verb. The rule says: a pronoun must agree with its antecedent in number. The verb agrees with the subject. Singular subjects need singular verbs; plural subjects need plural verbs. (See appendix 9, type of error number 3).

To strengthen and expand this analysis, concepts stated by different linguists were used. Burt and Kiparsky (1972) gave the definition of global and local errors, which are very important terms because they hinder communication in the written discourse.

The following are examples of global errors found in the students’ papers:

... After this were listened the interviews and set on the paper for them to be analyzed.

Collected data were subsequently analyzed teachers aware of the importance of curriculum objectives-based instruction. (See appendix 9, type of error number 1)

The definition of Interlanguage, term developed by Corder as transitional dialect, and proposed by Selinker has been taken into consideration to analyze the transfer language error, which refers the speaker or writers applying knowledge from their native language to a second language.

These sentences are examples of how interlanguage affects the target language:

The group in charge of this study begins with the design of the instruments which was an interview; it was made to five teachers

Nevertheless, it is extremely a priority that the evaluation methods and devices are reliable and valid. This means that the instrument measures the skill and level it is supposed to measure, and that the instrument measures there is valid. This is that it was studied during the instruction process. (See appendix 9, type of error number 2)

They could be grammatically correct; however, there is language interference between Spanish and English, because students continue thinking in Spanish.

Language transfer error is one of those that could affect more the language development in context, but in this case the results just show the 25.6 %, so it can be said that transfer is not a big problem in this sample.

A different category related to verbs is verb forms which includes in this study omission of the auxiliaries “do” and “be”; “infinitives” and “past participles.”

In the first sentence there has been an omission of the auxiliary “do”, and the rule says with the exception of the verb “to be”, verbs in modern English use auxiliary “do” for questions and negative statements; besides, use What, Which and Whose plus auxiliary when there is a noun before the auxiliary/modal. In the second, the infinitive was conjugated, while the rule states that infinitives are formed with the particle “to” plus the base form of the verb. The error of the third sentence is related to the use of the past participle, and the rule says, use past participle to describe nouns when something or someone else is causing or doing the thing the adjective describes.

What kind of activities ___ they carry out in their classes?

It can be flexible in as much it allows the researcher to has a good deal of the study design.

It can be define__ as a process which consists of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data got through observations made by the researcher.

It is supposed that this problem occurred at the beginning of the study of the language, but the results 30.8 % show that it still happens at the end of the student's major. (See appendix 9, type of error number 6)

Another kind of error was found; it is related to the voice of a verb, it should not be confused with a tense. Voice pertains to the way a verb functions relative to the subject of the sentence. Verbs have two voices: active and passive. In this case the error is about passive voice, which is used when the writer or speaker wants to place more emphasis on the object/objects or receiver/receivers of an action. It consists of a form of the verb "be" and a "past participle".

Examples of this error are:

...all the subjects are address__ to the goals like prepare students to be professional in the field of English.

However these competence would not__ demonstrated not only inside the school, but also outside at the different occupational fields.

In the first example the verb "address" was written incorrectly, omitting the inflexion "ed" that is important to form the past participle. In the second example, the verb is correct but the auxiliary "be" was omitted. This kind of error has the 23.1% (See appendix 9, type of error number 5).

On the other hand, there is a very important aspect that has to be taken into account when learning a language; it is part of speech which explains how the word is used and how it is classified in a sentence. When a part of speech is used in a wrong way, leads to an error. This kind of errors was found in the different papers that were analyzed.

The examples below show the inappropriate use of a word in a sentence.

I did the sentences again...

The researcher ___ be skillfully. (See appendix 9, type of error number 4)

The last part of the analysis of the students' papers is called miscellaneous because the group tried to put together the categories that do not affect considerably the sense of the written discourse. These are local errors.

Even though the categories addition and omission were established by Corder, in this study the definitions of Dulay, Burt and Krashen, referring to the same terms were used because they gave specific definitions. As mentioned before in the theoretical framework, addition is defined as the presence of an item that must not appear in a well-formed utterance and omission is the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance.

The following sentences are examples of addition:

In addition, qualitative research explores phenomena by using multi-methods in their natural settings, in order to interpret, understand, explain and bring the meaning to them.

The research needs a record of the situation before and after the changes since after the results

In these examples the rules are over used; because they are applied where they are not necessary. The result of the category addition is 15.4% for the punctuation mark comma, and for the preposition is 10.3%

The examples bellow are about omission.

Finally, when doing a research there is no better approach to follow __ but there is a better way to combine the approaches to get better results.

In order to get valid data, the researcher takes part of the investigation __ the physically goes to the people, the setting, site or institution to observe and record human behavior as natural as possible.

So that the findings will be useful not only for the researcher but also for others taking into account the main purpose of action research ___ is to act based on the results.

In the two first examples the punctuation marks have been omitted; in the first one, there is missing a comma before the conjunction “but”; in the second one, a semicolon should be written to join two independent clauses to give them equal emphasis. In the third one, the relative pronoun “which” or “that” has been omitted and it must introduce a subordinated clause called relative clause. (See appendix 9, type of error number 7)

The last kind of error was the misuse of parts of speech and punctuation marks. The misuse of prepositions obtained 59.0 % which could indicate that the use of prepositions is not satisfactory. The period got 12.8 %, when the period is misplaced; the sentences become a fragment, losing the sense of them.

The following examples belong to this category.

It is used interested about saying what happen.

Once the researcher has done the investigation and has followed the cicle ._ He will be able to know what changes he needs to do in the classroom.

The rest of errors are about the misuse of demonstrative pronouns, possessive pronouns, and preposition plus –ing. (See appendix 9, type of error number 7).

VIII CONCLUSIONS

Along this research: “Main causes of grammar errors in the written discourse made by the students of fifth year and the students who have already taken all the courses of Licenciatura en Idioma Ingles Opcion Enseñanza”, different activities have been made in order to prove whether the specific objectives were achieved or not. Regarding errors, many experts have been consulted, but not all of them are in agreement about the effect that errors have in the learning process.

Previous ideas of S.P. Corder considered the error as a “sin” and it had to be avoided; however, since Corder developed his approach, errors are considered an indicator of the level the students are. Errors can tell the teacher how the learners are progressing towards their language goal; besides, they provide the learners with an opportunity to test their L2 and provide the researcher with evidence of strategies or procedures the learners employ in learning language.

During the research the group realized that every single student commit errors in the learning process of a second language; as we said before, errors children make when learning their first language are signs of positive developments and could indicate acquisition of language rule. This can also be related to learners of a second language. For instance, in the sample of study a student wrote: “Although as researcher do not has to expect too much from data.” We can say that it can be an indication of: What and how much the learner has acquired ; in this case the learners know for the third person singular the bare “have” changes into “ has”; moreover, what and how much is still to learn: in a negative sentence the auxiliary shows the third person not the main verb.

The group analyzed the undergraduate students’ papers in order to identify the most common errors, which was the first objective, finding out that the type of error subject verb agreement is the most frequent; results that matched with the professors’ point of view about this topic.

The omission of the comma is the second error more frequently committed and the third one is the misuse of prepositions. As Burt and Kiparsky stated omission errors are found in abundance during the early stages of L2 acquisition, meanwhile misformation, understood as the use of the wrong form of the morpheme structure, term that has been

used in this case as misuse, and misordering or overuse of a grammatical morpheme are more likely to occur in intermediate stages, when learners have been exposed to more of the language. These are related to the answer given by the students to the last part of the questionnaire about the ACTFL scale in which, according to their perception, most of them are in the advanced level, whose description on what learners are able to do in the level says that under time constraints a pressure writing may be inaccurate.

In order to gather information about the methodology used to teach grammar, some professors were observed while they were teaching their classes as well as interviewed, and some questions were included in the questionnaire of students to look for similarities and differences; as a result it can be said that even though professors made different activities when teaching, they emphasize the grammatical rules through write sentences, a review of a previous class and explain grammar points using the board.

The subjects that were observed were the English courses and Grammar courses; among them, the professors who taught the English courses did a variety of meaningful activities such as researches, presentations, dialogues, etc., helping the students to produce the language better, contrasting to the Grammar courses in which students worked fill in the blanks, write single sentences, and to correct them sometimes they pass to the board or read individually, making the class a little bit stressed for the students and not all of them had the opportunity to participate; besides, these activities did not enable the students to apply the rules of grammar in an specific context where they should communicate efficiently.

Different types of methodologies can be used depending on the content, teaching context and professors' creativity; therefore, it is difficult to decide which one is the appropriate to avoid grammar errors, but it is important to plan the classes taking into account the students' characteristics and weaknesses.

Ferris, Dana (2001) says error correction is not simple, she argues that every foreign language student makes mistakes of various kinds and they have to be corrected. As we have studied, professors have various options when addressing grammatical errors in students writing; they decide how to mark or correct them in a particular paper. So we can say that there is not a right or a best way to correct an error. According to this research,

there are some techniques professors use most in order to correct the errors of the students' papers. Comparing students and teachers answers the first one is circle the mistake, followed by give feedback and the next one is write the correct form.

The time students spend studying the language is really important to learn it but also is important to take time for the corrections made by the professors in order to avoid the errors. Most of the students said that they take into account the corrections, and according to what the professors and students expressed and what we observed too, there are some activities in the classroom to teach grammar; nevertheless, the frequency of some types of errors is high, so, it is difficult to find out the main causes of grammar errors because every person is different and it is possible that factors like environment, learner's psychology, and cognitive emotions affect the learning process because the errors have not been avoided. Such factors were not investigated in this research which could be a topic to be investigated in the future.

IX RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the results and the knowledge gained through the process of this research the group make some suggestions:

- ❖ Connect between knowing the rules of grammar and knowing how to do something so that the individual can be able to apply those rules automatically in the four skills: writing, speaking, reading and listening. Generally, the production stage of the lessons is planned for this purpose.
- ❖ Decide on meaningful activities that make grammar learning smooth and effective to get linguistic competence and further get discourse competence. Strong use of situation supported by good illustrations helps to relate form to function in the student's mind. It reinforces learning.
- ❖ As a fact, there are many sources errors come from; it is the learner who determines what the input is. The professor presents a linguistic form, but this is not necessarily the input, it is what it is available to be learned. So, the needs of the students should be considered when professors plan their classes and syllabuses.
- ❖ The professors can anticipate where the errors are likely to occur, as a reference, the error analysis of this research can be seen; knowing this they prevent misconceptions.
- ❖ The materials provide context and lead to discussion. Common materials like board and marker are sometimes desmotivational rather materials and /or activities like audiotapes, creative portfolios, DVD, readings and so on can be taken into account.

- ❖ Learners should understand that learning a language means becoming able to use it, to comprehend it, to communicate, and think as they do in their first language, paying attention to learning the target language culture and making sure there is an adequate context to produce the language, in this case writing.

- ❖ A recommended way to improve writing is by reading. Reading provides examples of other writings and gives an idea how writing should be. When considering texts to read, one must decide on whether it has the appropriate level of the reader or not; if it is according to the needs the course of for future writing.

X. DIFFICULTIES

While the research was carried out, there were some difficulties. Difficulties are divided in three classes: research, technical and personal difficulties.

As explained in the methodology chapter, to start our research we decided to take some actions to gather the required information. Among those actions we decided to ask students write an essay; also, the professor in charge of the group under research was asked to provide us with some papers previously written by the students as part of the course, but we had the difficulties explained below.

A. RESEARCH DIFFICULTIES

1. At the beginning of the research, it was planned to ask the students of Seminar I to write an essay, but the professor in charge of the subject did not give the permission to do it; as a result, this part of the investigation could not be carried out as planned.
2. When we started the research there were some problems with the professor in charge of Seminar II to get the papers of the researches that the students were carrying out, finally he gave us the papers but it represented a delay for the process of the research.
3. Also there was lack of cooperation from some professors; when asked for authorization to observe their classes, they denied the permission.

B. TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES

During the investigation process, there were also technical difficulties; first of all the computer in use had many problems that suddenly it turned off and at the end it got out of work, because of this some information was lost.

Second, it was difficult to get information to support the investigation, there were no books and in internet was hard to find exactly what was needed.

C. PERSONAL DIFFICULTIES

1. When the investigation started there was a lot of motivation, but the difficulties faced at the beginning demoralized the group affecting the handed of the research progresses.

2. The group members got sick at different stages of the process and this did not allow the normal development of the research.

3. The lack of time was a big difficulty because during the time the researchers were able, the students and the professors were not willing to be interviewed since they had some others activities to do; on the other hand, there were problems to analyze the students' papers, the interviews, the observation of the classes and the questionnaire of the students; all these aspects made that the evolution of the research became slower. As a result, the presentation of the graduation project was delayed.

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APPENDIX 1

University of El Salvador
School of Arts and Sciences
Foreign Language Department.

Graduation Project Survey
Research on grammar errors
Date/time _____

Interview guide.

Thankfulness: We are undergraduate students who are developing a research under the name “Main causes of Grammar Errors in the Written Discourse”. We thank you for taking the time to answer the following questions which will be helpful to carry out our research successfully.

Objective: to gather information about the way professors correct grammar problems in the classroom.

1. Which subject are you teaching this semester?
2. Which other courses have you taught? Do you usually teach these courses?
3. What kind of writing activities do you carry out with your students?
4. When you find grammar mistakes in your students' papers, do you correct them? If yes, (how?) If no, (why?)
5. Which ones are the most common?
6. Which techniques do you use to enhance grammar points?
7. How do you evaluate grammar in the different subjects you teach?

8. According to your opinion, what influences students' low proficiency in grammar?

9. What would you suggest to help students overcome this problem?

10. What would you recommend other professors to help students overcome grammar problems?

11. Do you think that Spanish grammar background of the students affects the learning of the English grammar?

12. Do you think the students have to learn more of Spanish grammar?

APPENDIX 2

University of El Salvador
School of Arts and Sciences
Foreign Language Department.

Observation guide
Research on grammar errors
Date: _____
Topic: _____

Professor: _____
Subject: _____

Objective: To gather information to determine if the methodology used in the class is the appropriate one to learn grammar.

1. What kind of activities does the professor use in the classroom to cover the grammatical aspect?
2. How long do the activities last?
3. What kinds of resources are used to teach grammar?
4. Does the professor emphasize on grammar rules? How?
5. How does the professor correct the written errors during the class?
6. Do students rewrite during or after revision? How?
7. Is there any grammatical feedback? How is it given?
8. Is the class student centered?

APPENDIX 3

University of El Salvador
School of Arts and Sciences
Foreign Language Department.

Graduation Project Survey
Research on grammar errors
Date/time _____

Number of courses passed: _____

Gender: F M

Students' questionnaire

Thankfulness: We thank you for taking the time to answer the following questions which will be helpful to carry out our research.

Objective: To gather information related to the process of learning grammar among students in the Foreign Language Department.

Instructions: Read the following questions and choose one or more answers according to your experience.

A. Which of the following activities and techniques were used in your English courses to teach grammar?

- 1) Use of visual aids
- 2) Games
- 3) Songs
- 4) Readings
- 5) Explanation of grammar points
- 6) Group work
- 7) Discussion
- 8) Others Specify: _____

B. Did your professor correct your assignments?

- Yes No

C. If your answer to the previous question is “yes”, how did the professor do it?

- 1) Circled the mistake
- 2) Wrote the correct form
- 3) Used peer correction
- 4) Used group correction
- 5) Gave feedback

D. Do you take into account the corrections professor make in your papers?

- Yes How? _____
- No Why not? _____

E. How did your professors emphasize on grammar when you were taking the English courses?

- 1) Explaining the grammar rules
- 2) Giving a lot of grammar exercises
- 3) Checking grammar in your assignments
- 4) He/She never emphasize in grammar
- 5) Others Specify: _____

F. How did your professors emphasize on grammar when you were taking the composition courses?

- 1) They did not emphasize
- 2) They explained grammar rules
- 3) They explained according to the students errors

G. Based on the following scale, now that you have taken all the subjects of the major which level of English do you think you have in the written discourse?

Level	What do I know to do	Mark the option
Novice-Low	Unable to function in the spoken language.	
Novice-Mid	No practical communicative writing skills.	

Novice-High	Can supply information on simple forms and documents. Can write names, numbers, dates, own nationality.	
Intermediate-Low	Able to meet practical writing needs. Can write short messages, postcards, simple notes.	
Intermediate-Mid	Able to meet a number of practical writing needs. Can write short, simple letters, personal references, daily routine, everyday events, and other topics grounded in personal experience.	
Intermediate-High	Able to meet most practical writing needs and limited social demands. Can take notes in some detail on familiar topics and respond in writing to personal questions, write simple letters, brief synopses and paraphrases, summaries of biographical data.	
Advanced	Able to write routine social correspondence join sentences in simple discourse of at least several paragraphs in length on familiar topics. Can write simple correspondence, take notes, write cohesive summaries and resumes as well as narratives and descriptions of a factual nature. Has sufficient writing vocabulary to express self simply with some circum locution.	
Advanced Plus	Able to write about a variety of topics with significant precision and detail. Can describe and narrate personal experiences fully but has difficulty supporting points of view in written discourse. Can write about the concrete aspects of topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence. Often shows remarkable fluency and ease of expression, but under time constrains an pressure writing may be inaccurate.	
Writing Superior. Description	Able to express self effectively in most formal and informal writing on practical, social and professional topics. Can write most types of correspondence, such as memos, as well as social and business letters, and short research papers and statement of position in areas of special interest on in special fields. Good control of a full range of structures of a full range of structures, spelling or non alphabetic symbol production, and a wide general vocabulary allow the writer to hypothesize and present arguments or point of view accurately and effectively.	

APPENDIX 4

IDENTIFICATION AND ANALYSIS TABLE

TYPE OF ERROR	EXAMPLE	EXPLANATION	RULE	FREQUENCY

APPENDIX 5

FREQUENCY TABLE

TYPE OF ERROR	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE

APPENDIX 6

RESULTS OF INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Which subject are you teaching this semester?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Basic English	0	0.0%
Intermediate English I	1	11.1%
Intermediate English II	0	0.0%
Advanced English I	0	0.0%
Advanced English II	1	11.1%
Composition I	4	44.4%
Composition II	0	0.0%
Grammar I	0	0.0%
Grammar II	2	22.2%
Advanced Grammar	3	33.3%

2. Which other courses have you taught? Do you usually teach these courses?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Basic English	4	44.4%
Intermediate English I	5	55.6%
Intermediate English II	4	44.4%
Advanced English I	5	55.6%
Advanced English II	4	44.4%
Composition I	4	44.4%
Composition II	6	66.7%
Grammar I	3	33.3%
Grammar II	3	33.3%
Advanced Grammar	1	11.1%

3. What kind of writing activities do you carry out with your students?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
WRITE:		
Essay	2	22.2%
Paragraph	5	55.6%
Summaries	1	11.1%
Journals	2	22.2%
Stories	2	22.2%
Sentences	6	66.7%
Compositions	1	11.1%
Narrations	1	11.1%
Descriptions	1	11.1%
Reactions	1	11.1%
Opinions	1	11.1%
Letters	1	11.1%
Book activity	1	11.1%
Writing in pairs, individually, groups	1	11.1%
Write dialogues	1	11.1%
Filling the blanks	1	11.1%

4. When you find mistakes in your students' papers, do you correct them?

If yes (how?), If no (Why not?)

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	7	77.8%
NO	2	22.2%

Yes, How?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Circle the mistake	5	71.4%
Identify the mistake with letters	4	57.1%
Give a feedback	2	28.6%
Teacher and student correction	1	14.3%
Peer correction	2	28.6%
Underline	2	28.6%
Question mark	1	14.3%
Correction through e-mail	1	14.3%
Write notes	1	14.3%

5. Which ones are the most common?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Verb consistency	4	44.4%
Use of prepositions	1	11.1%
Use of conjunctions	1	11.1%
Use of adverbs	1	11.1%
Subject – verb agreement	6	66.7%
Use of adjectives	1	11.1%
Wordiness	1	11.1%
Special plurals	1	11.1%
Spelling of the tenses (verbs)	2	22.1%
Third person singular	3	33.3%
Use of auxiliary verbs	1	11.1%
Parts of speech	1	11.1%
Punctuation	2	22.2%

6. Which techniques do you use to enhance grammar points?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Ask students to write	1	11.1%
Ask students to read	1	11.1%
Handouts	2	22.2%
Design web sites for extra practice	2	22.2%
Games	1	11.1%
More exercises	1	11.1%
Lectures	1	11.1%
Write sentences	1	11.1%

7. How do you evaluate grammar in the different subjects you teach?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Exams	4	44.4%
Listen to the students	1	11.1%
Write journals	1	11.1%
Writing sentences	2	22.2%
Two or more mistakes	1	11.1%
Topic criteria (just what has been taught)	1	11.1%
Dialogues	1	11.1%
Paragraph	1	11.1%

8. According to your opinion, what influences students' low proficiency in grammar?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Students do not know Spanish grammar	1	11.1%
The effort students make in the basic areas	2	22.2%
Lack of extra time for practicing	2	22.2%
Comparison between L1 and L2	1	11.1%
Teachers do not cover grammar	1	11.1%
Teachers do not provide enough practice	1	11.1%
The lack of grammar understanding	1	11.1%
Students think grammar is not important	1	11.1%
Students do not care about practicing	1	11.1%
Having troubles in L1 bring problems in L2	3	33.3%
Students do not read	4	44.4%
Students do not associate L1 and L2	1	11.1%
Students do not write	2	22.2%
Students do not use the laboratory	1	11.1%
They do not like grammar	1	11.1%
The way teachers teach	1	11.1%
They do not come frequently	1	11.1%
Professors pass the students	1	11.1%

9. What would you suggest to help students to overcome this problem?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Use technology	1	11.1%
Pay attention since the beginning of the major	1	11.1%
Become more independent	1	11.1%
Be interested in learning	4	44.4%
Have the attitude and aptitude for learning	1	11.1%
Ask for help	3	33.3%
Read more	3	33.3%
Write more	3	33.3%
Do not depend on internet	1	11.1%
Become conscious that grammar is important	1	11.1%
Study	1	11.1%

10. What would you recommend other professors to help students to overcome grammar?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Help the students become independent	1	11.1%
Look for new resources	1	11.1%
To include expanding activities	1	11.1%
Be creative in the way they teach	1	11.1%
Teach in context	1	11.1%
To study the structure	1	11.1%
Be prepare for any question	1	11.1%
Work as much as possible in class	1	11.1%
Encourage the students to write more	1	11.1%
Encourage the students to read more	2	22.2%
To take advantage of tools like books	1	11.1%
To mark the mistakes	1	11.1%
Professors should write and read just like students	1	11.1%
Become conscious that grammar is important	1	11.1%
To make the teaching method better	1	11.1%
Not to many students in a course	1	11.1%

11. Do you think that Spanish grammar background of the students affect the learning of the English grammar?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	5	55.6%
No	2	22.2%
He/she does not answer	2	22.2%

Yes

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Having problems in L1 bring problems in L2	3	60.0%
Students associate the two languages	1	20.0%
Yes	1	20.0%

No

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
They are different	1	50.0%
Not really	1	50.0%

12. Do you think the students have to learn more of Spanish grammar?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	5	55.6%
No	2	22.2%
He/she does not answer	2	22.2%

APPENDIX 7

RESULTS OF OBSERVATION GUIDE

1. What kind of activities does the professor use in the classroom to cover grammatical aspect?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Explained the grammar rules using Power Point	1	8.3 %
Did some exercises using Power Point	1	8.3 %
Explained the grammar rules using the board	5	41.7 %
Students wrote sentences and then, read them	1	8.3 %
Review of a previous class	6	50.0 %
Introduced the new topic explaining orally	2	16.7 %
Worked in pairs, made exercises on the book	4	33.3 %
Wrote a paragraph	3	25.0 %
Assigned a topic to make a group research, using grammatical aspects	1	8.3 %
Discussion of topic assigned previously	1	8.3 %
Explained parts of speech	2	16.7 %

2. How long do the activities last?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
5 minutes	1	11.1 %
10 minutes	5	55.6 %
15 minutes	2	22.2 %
20 minutes	3	33.3 %
25 minutes	3	33.3 %
30 minutes	2	22.2 %
45 minutes	1	11.1 %
50 minutes	1	11.1 %
60 minutes	1	11.1 %

3. What kinds of resources are used to teach grammar?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Projector or laptop	1	8.3 %
Marker	10	83.3 %
Board	10	83.3 %
Book	3	25.0 %
Photocopies	4	33.3 %
CD players	1	8.3%

4. Does the professor emphasize on grammar rules? How?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	10	83.3%
No	2	16.7%

Yes

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Explained each pattern using examples	8	80.0 %
Asked questions about the grammar points they were studying	2	20.0 %
Asked them to memorize the grammatical points	1	10.0 %
By reviewing the grammatical points	4	40.0 %

5. How does the professor correct the written errors during the class?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
There wasn't any written activity to correct	3	25.0 %
Orally	5	42.0 %
Students wrote sentences on the board, then (as a group) they identify the mistakes; after that, the professor wrote the correct form and explained them	2	16.7 %
The professor didn't correct the written error	2	16.7%
The teachers' assistants or/ and the professor monitored the activities to correct them	1	8.3 %

6. Do students rewrite during or after revision? How?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	8	66.7 %
No	4	33.3 %

Yes

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
They rewrite during revision, but only students who read the sentences have the opportunity to correct the mistakes	1	12.5 %
Some students erase and wrote the answer	6	75.0 %
By underlining the mistake	1	12.5 %

7. Is there any grammatical feedback? How is it given?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	10	83.3 %
No	2	16.7%

Yes

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Explained the rules	5	50.0 %
Gave the exercises	2	20.0 %
Gave examples orally	3	30.0 %
Wrote and explained the examples	5	50.0 %
Answered students' questions	2	20.0 %

8. Is the class student centered?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	0	0.0 %
No	0	0.0 %
Both: teacher and student centered	12	100.0 %

APPENDIX 8

RESULTS OF THE STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

A. Which of the following activities and techniques were used in your English courses to teach grammar?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Use of visual aids	12	30.8%
Games	4	10.3%
Songs	8	20.5%
Readings	22	56.4%
Explanation of grammar points	31	79.5%
Group work	28	71.8%
Discussion	13	33.3%
Others (Presentations)	1	2.6%

B. Did your professor correct your assignments?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	30	76.9 %
No	9	23.1 %

C. If your answer to the previous question is "yes", how did the professor do it?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Circled the mistake	25	64.1%
Wrote the correct form	11	28.2%
Used peer correction	4	10.3%
Used group correction	8	20.5%
Gave feedback	12	30.8%

D. Did you take into account the corrections professor make in your papers?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	35	89.7 %
No	4	10.3 %

Yes, How?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Trying to avoid the mistakes because it would be helpful during the development of my career	11	31.4%
Revising other books to clarify my doubts	4	11.4%
Studying to improve	3	8.6%
It helped me to correct my writing and enrich my vocabulary	3	8.6%
By correcting the mistakes and remembering them	5	14.3%
By rewriting them several times	4	11.4%
Looking for more exercises to apply the corrections	2	5.7%
They helped me to have a better understanding	1	2.9%
I tried to find the correct answer because the teacher did not provided it	1	2.9%

E. How did your professors emphasize on grammar when you were taking the English courses?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Explaining the grammar rules	30	76.9%
Giving a lot of grammar exercises	30	76.9%
Checking grammar in your assignments	10	25.6%
He/she never emphasize in grammar	2	5.1%
Others	0	0.0%

F. How did your professor emphasize on grammar when you were taking the composition courses?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
They did not emphasize	17	43.6 %
They explained grammar rules	8	20.5 %
They explained according to the students' errors	16	41.0 %

G. Based on the following scale, now that you have taken all the subjects of the major which level of English do you think you have in the written discourse?

ANSWER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Novice-Low	0	0.0%
Novice-Mid	0	0.0%
Novice-High	0	0.0%
Intermediate-Low	1	2.6%
Intermediate-Mid	2	5.1%
Intermediate-High	8	20.5%
Advanced	11	28.2%
Advanced Plus	11	28.2%
Writing Superior Description	6	15.4%

APPENDIX 9

IDENTIFICATION AND ANALYSIS TABLE

TYPE OF ERROR	EXAMPLE	EXPLANATION	RULE	FREQUENCY
1. GLOBAL ERROR	<p>* Collected data were subsequently analyzed teachers aware of the importance of curriculum objectives – based instruction.</p> <p>* However, redefine about subjects need to be replaced and add others that are necessary. For example: expression.</p> <p>* Teacher think help them a lot to improve students English.</p> <p>* To get better observations the group considers that sitting down of the back of the classroom to have a good angle at the classroom climates.</p> <p>* The study of this interview is related to the curriculum is based on teachers opinions where is reaffirmed all their opinions for example all the subjects are address to the goals like prepare students to be professional in the field of English.</p>	In these examples all the words together have no meaning.	A global error is one which involves “the overall structure of a sentence”.	18

1. **Global error:** one that affects overall sentence organization.

TYPE OF ERROR	EXAMPLE	EXPLANATION	RULE	FREQUENCY
<p>2. LANGUAGE TRANSFER</p>	<p>* The group in charge of this study begins with the design of the instrument which was an interview; <u>it was made to five teachers.</u></p> <p>* To determine <u>de</u> effectiveness of the evaluation methods used by teachers, at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador in speaking skills...</p> <p>* Nevertheless, it is extremely a priority that the evaluation methods and devices are reliable and valid. This means <u>that</u> the instrument measures the skill and level it is supposed to measure, and <u>that</u> the instrument measures there is valid. This is <u>that</u> it was studied during the instruction process.</p>	<p>Even though these examples could be grammatically correct, there is language interference between Spanish and English.</p>	<p>Language transfer refers to speakers or writers applying knowledge from their native language to a second language.</p> <p>In adults it is more obvious and increases continuously, as a monolingual person gets older and the structures of his first language gets stronger and impose themselves more and more on any other language the adult wishes to learn.</p>	<p>10</p>

2. **Language transfer:** refers to speakers or writers applying knowledge from their native language to a second language.

TYPE OF ERROR	EXAMPLE	EXPLANATION	RULE	FREQUENCY	
3. SUBJECT – VERB AGREEMENT	a) * The researcher <u>enter</u> to the world of the people. * The staff or the principal of the school <u>start</u> to think about what to do. * ... that B.A. <u>prepare</u> students to become good professionals. * And another teacher <u>think</u> that ... * On this phase the researcher <u>implement</u> a strategy to approach the question.	In these examples, the rule of the third person singular was not applied.	a) Verbs in the present tense for third person (he, she, it and anything those words can stand for) have s- endings.	21	
	b) * And finally as a quantitative research <u>study</u> the human behavior...		b) When a verb ends in <u>y</u> immediately preceded by a consonant, the –y is changed to ie before the ending <u>s</u> is added.		1
	c) * The researcher <u>have</u> to adapt... * The majority of the teachers think that the B.A. <u>have</u> ...		c) Use has for the third person singular in the simple present tense		5

3. **Subject – verb agreement:** the subject and verb must agree in number, both must be singular, or both must be plural.

TYPE OF ERROR	EXAMPLE	EXPLANATION	RULE	FREQUENCY
3. SUBJECT – VERB AGREEMENT	d) * Although as a researcher <u>do not has</u> to expect too much from data...	In this sentence the writer applied the third person rule in the verb, not in the auxiliary verb.	d) The bare infinitive is used as the main verb after the dummy auxiliary verb do.	1
	e) * When researcher <u>go</u> into investigate something in a community...	In these examples the rule of the third person singular was not applied.	e) When a verb ends in <u>o</u> , the letter e is added before the s ending.	2
	* To criticize if the curriculum in study <u>reach</u> with the requirement itself has...		When a verb ends in a sibilant sound such as ch, s, sh, x or z, the letter - e - is added before the s ending.	
	f) * This <u>projects intents</u> to dig deeper	This sentence contains a plural subject and a singular verb, but the subject does not match neither with its pronoun nor its verb.	f) A pronoun must agree with its antecedent in number. The verb agrees with the subject. Singular subjects need singular verbs; plural subjects need plural verbs.	4

TYPE OF ERROR	EXAMPLE	EXPLANATION	RULE	FREQUENCY
4. PARTS OF SPEECH.	* I <u>did</u> the sentences again... * Those realities are <u>too</u> important...	In these cases the words have been used in a wrong way because there are rules that explain specifically the use of did and too.	Use too with an adjective to express a problem. The word too has a negative meaning.	3
	* The researcher ____ be <u>skillfully</u> ...	In this example an auxiliary verb was omitted, and it is necessary because the base form of verb to be was used; besides, an adjective must follow a linking verb, not an adverb.		2

4. **Parts of speech:** the use or function of words and how words are joined together to make meaningful communication.

TYPE OF ERROR	EXAMPLE	EXPLANATION	RULE	FREQUENCY
5. PASSIVE VOICE	a) * After this were listened the interviews and set on the paper <u>for them to be analyzed</u> . * Finally <u>were reaffirm</u> the teachers' ideas about the curriculum and the model used in the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.	In this sentence, they tried to use the passive voice; but they did not apply the rule correctly.	In a sentence the general rule of basic word order has to be followed: subject + auxiliary be + past participle of verb + direct object.	1
	b) * ... all the subjects <u>are address</u> to the goals like prepare students to be professional in the field of English. * However these competence <u>would not demonstrated</u> not only inside the school, but also outside at the different occupational fields.	They did not write the past participle.	To recognize passive constructions, first, find any form of the verb "to be", and second, ask if that form of the verb "to be" is followed by a past participle verb.	8

5. Passive voice: the voiced used to indicate that the grammatical subject of the verb is the recipient (not the source) of the action denoted by the verb.

TYPE OF ERROR	EXAMPLE	EXPLANATION	RULE	FREQUENCY
6. VERB FORMS	a) * What kind of activities ____ they carry out in their classes? * How ____ those activities help ____ achieve the objectives of the major in question?	In these sentences the auxiliary do was omitted.	The auxiliary do “helps” the writer to form questions or interrogatives	6
	b) * However these competence would not demonstrated...	The auxiliary to be was omitted.	The auxiliary to be is necessary to construct passive voice.	1
	c) * It can be flexible in as much it allows the researcher <u>to has</u> a good deal of the study design.	In this sentence the infinitive was conjugated.	Infinitives are formed with the particle to + the base form of the verb.	2
	d) Also, students – teacher discussion /interaction <u>is using</u> as a technique according to researcher’s needs.	The passive voice of the present progressive fits better in the context of the sentence, because the person who is performing the actions was not mentioned.	The passive voice is used when we do not know who is performing the action or it is not apparent who is performing the action. Pattern: is / are being + past participle.	1

6. Verb forms: determine the relationship the verb has to contextual time. Each tense can take one of four forms: simple, progressive, perfect and perfect progressive. The auxiliary verb for most forms is that which determines the tense of the whole verb (is/are, was/were, will be; has, have, will have)

TYPE OF ERROR	EXAMPLE	EXPLANATION	RULE	FREQUENCY
6. VERB FORMS	e) * It can be define__ as a process which consists of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data got through observations made by the researcher.		Use the past participle to describe nouns when something or someone else is causing or doing the thing the adjectives describes.	2

TYPE OF ERROR	EXAMPLE	EXPLANATION	RULE	FREQUENCY
<p>7. MISCELLANEOUS</p> <p>Addition:</p> <p>Comma</p> <p>Preposition</p>	<p>* As a final conclusion, there is that the three approaches are important since the aspects they contain_,_ fill in the characteristics that a good research has to have.</p> <p>* In addition, qualitative research explores phenomena by using multi-methods in their natural settings_,_ in order to interpret, understand, explain and bring the meaning to them.</p> <p>* In other words, from 1944 <u>on</u> until today...</p> <p>* The research needs a record of the situation before and after the changes <u>since after</u> the results.</p>	<p>Not only omission of comma has been encountered but also addition. It shows that the rules are over used. These rules are applied where they are not necessary.</p> <p>It is not necessary to write two prepositions.</p>	<p>Use punctuation to pause and emphasize when writing, but in these cases none of these rules have been applied correctly.</p>	<p>6</p> <p>4</p>

Addition: the presence of an item that must not appear in a well-formed utterance.

TYPE OF ERROR	EXAMPLE	EXPLANATION	RULE	FREQUENCY
7. MISCELLANEOUS Omission Comma	a) * In addition to this___ it is because action research is integrated...	The comma has been omitted.	a) After an introductory phrase, prepositional phrase, or dependent clause, a comma is necessary.	8
	* According to Cauley, Linder, and McMillan (1996), for years___ teachers have worked for the improvement...	The comma has been omitted, even though two independent clauses were written.	b) Join two independent clauses with one of the coordinating conjunctions (and, but, for, or, nor, so, yet) and use a comma before the connecting word.	6
	b) * Finally, when doing a research there is nota a better approach to follow__ but there is a better way to combine the approaches to get better results...		c) Use a comma after a transitional element (however, therefore, nonetheless, also, otherwise, finally, instead of, thus, of course, on the other hand...)	8
c) * <u>In</u> the other hand ___ the researcher has to use at least three sources of data to increase the believability...				

Omission: the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance.

TYPE OF ERROR	EXAMPLE	EXPLANATION	RULE	FREQUENCY
<p>7. MISCELLANEOUS</p> <p>Omission Comma</p> <p>Semicolon</p> <p>Article</p>	<p>d) * ...will be designed with specific date to develop observations___ interviews___ and evaluation in the classroom.</p> <p>* It is extremely necessary to take into account the school mission___ objectives___ and goals.</p> <p>*In order to get valid data, the researcher takes part of the investigation___ he physically goes to the people, the setting, site or institution to observe and record human behavior as natural as possible.</p> <p>...the researcher <u>have</u> to adapt his/her necessities to have___ successful result.</p>	<p>In these examples students wrote elements in series, however, they did not apply the correct rule.</p> <p>They did not write the punctuation mark that was necessary to give equal emphasis in both sentences.</p> <p>In this example the article “a” has been omitted, and it is known that it is used before a singular countable noun.</p>	<p>d) Use a comma to separate elements in a series.</p> <p>Use semicolon to join two independent clauses when the two clauses are of equal emphasis.</p> <p>The article a/an is used when the noun that we wish to refer to is unknown to our listener/reader or is not part of the common ground that we share.</p>	<p>7</p> <p>3</p> <p>2</p>

TYPE OF ERROR	EXAMPLE	EXPLANATION	RULE	FREQUENCY
7. MISCELLANEOUS Omission Relative pronoun Particle to Possessive Subject	<p>* So that the findings will be useful not only for the researcher but also for the others taking into account the main purpose of action research___ is to act based on the results.</p> <p>* How ___ those activities help ___ achieve the objectives of the major in question.</p> <p>* The student___ questionnaire will contain items focused on the students__ perspective about the evaluation they are passed out in the subjects...</p> <p>* An action research is not a common solving problem ___ is more than that.</p> <p>* It can be reflective process because__ awake the interest of making changes at the moment.</p> <p>* The qualitative research <u>take</u> small samples, ___ involves analysis of data such as...</p>	<p>This sentence is meaningless to the reader, but when adding the relative pronoun which or that, becomes understandable.</p> <p>In this sentence the particle “to” has been omitted and it is really needed because the verb help had been used.</p> <p>In English there are different ways to show possession with possessive pronouns, the preposition “of” and “’s”; this time “’s” has been omitted.</p> <p>The subject of the sentence it was omitted.</p>	<p>Relative pronouns introduce one type of subordinate clause called a relative clause. These pronouns have various forms which depend on their role within the clause or according to their case.</p> <p>The infinitive form is used after certain verbs: forget, help, learn, teach, and train.</p> <p>Use “s” with possessive noun.</p> <p>Every sentence needs a subject in order to have sense.</p>	<p>1</p> <p>4</p> <p>2</p> <p>4</p>

TYPE OF ERROR	EXAMPLE	EXPLANATION	RULE	FREQUENCY
7. MISCELLANEOUS Misuse Period	* Once the researcher has done the investigation and has followed the cycle. __ He will be able to know what changes he needs to do in the classroom.	There is no need to use a punctuation mark (period) because it is the same sentence, not a different one.	Use a period at the end of a complete sentence. In these cases these are fragments, which are incomplete sentences.	5
Demonstrative pronoun	* Videotapes, individuals files, journals, case studies, report, cards, attendance, performances, etc. each of <u>that</u> techniques <u>is</u> applied...	This sentence is in plural, so the correct demonstrative pronoun is those not that.	The demonstrative refers to an object or person in plural further away.	1
Possessive pronoun	* ... also action research has <u>it</u> own characteristics...	In these examples, a possessive pronoun “ <u>its</u> ” must be written instead of the personal pronoun it.	Possessive determiners are possessive forms of personal pronouns which must have a following noun.	3
Preposition	* The strategy is going to consist <u>in</u> collecting all the information. * It is used interested <u>about</u> saying what happen.	It is very common the misuse of prepositions. The use of one preposition instead of another is an error that does not cause breakdown of communication.		23
Preposition plus ing	* There are two basic purposes <u>for</u> <u>research</u> to learn something or to gather evidence.	In this sentence, the basic form of the verb is used after a preposition.	Use “ing” after a preposition.	1

Misuse: the incorrect use of a part of speech or punctuation mark.

APPENDIX 10

RESULTS OF THE FREQUENCY TABLE

TYPE OF ERROR	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Global error	18	46.2 %
Language transfer	10	25.6 %
Subject-verb agreement	34	87.2 %
Parts of speech	5	12.8 %
Passive voice	9	23.1 %
Verb forms	12	30.8 5
MISCELLANEOUS:		
• Addition		
Comma	6	15.4 %
Preposition	4	10.3 %
• Omission		
Comma	29	74.4 %
Semi colon	3	7.7 %
Article	2	5.1 %
Relative pronoun	1	2.6 %
Particle to	4	10.3 %
Possessive	2	5.1 %
Subject	4	10.3 %
• Misuse		
Period	5	12.8 %
Demonstrative pronoun	1	2.6 %
Possessive pronoun	3	7.7 %
Preposition	23	59.0 %
Preposition plus -ing	1	2.6 5

GLOSSARY

Addition error: errors characterized by the presence of an item which must not appear in a well- formed utterance.

Behaviorism: Psychological theory proposed by B.F. Skinner which sustained that knowledge is based on experience and the study of learning should be restricted to observable inputs and outputs.

Contrastive analysis: the comparison of the linguistic structures of two or more languages, to determine their similarities and differences.

Error: those parts of conversation or composition that deviates from some selected norm of mature language performance.

Error analysis: listing and classification of the errors contained in a sample of learner`s speech or writing.

Feedback: feedback is the process of presenting to individuals observations and understanding of what they have done, how they did it and what they achieved in terms of goals in order to improve their performance.

Fossilization: when an error becomes a habit of speech in a second language learner. This happens specially when the error does not interfere with communication and hence, the speaker does not get corrective feedback.

Global error: errors that affect overall sentence organization significantly hinder communication.

Inflexion: in grammar, inflection or inflexion is the modification of a word to express different grammatical categories such as tense, mood, voice, aspect, person, number, gender and case.

Interlanguage: the separateness of a second language learners` system, a system that has structurally intermediate status between the native and the target language.

Language transfer: (also known as interference, linguistic interference, and crossmeaning) refers to the speakers or writer applying knowledge from their native language to a second language.

Local error: errors that affect single elements (constituents) in a sentence do not usually hinder communication significantly.

Mistake: deviations due to performance factors such as fatigue, excitement, lack of attention and/or carelessness.

Omission error: errors characterized by the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance.

Proficiency: is the ability of an individual to speak or perform in an acquired language.

Student – centered, (learner centered): Language activities, techniques, methods where the student/ learners are the focus and the teacher plays only a peripheral role. Students are allowed some control over the activity or some input into the curriculum. (This activity encourages student's creativity. Group work is kind of student – centered activity. Having students design their own test is another learner –centered activity. Individual styles and need of the learners are taken into account. Learner- centered education is thought to be intrinsically motivating and thus beneficial)

Teacher centered: Methods, activities and techniques where the teacher decides what is to be learned, what is to be tested and how the class is to be run. Often the teacher is the center of the classroom giving instruction with little input from the students. The teacher decides the goals of the class based on some inside criteria.