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**An Investigation of EFL Students' Misuse of the Perfect Aspect in
Written Production**

**Case Study: Third Year LMD Students of English at the University of
Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia-Jijel**

**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of a Master
Degree in Didactics**

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DEDICATION

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, Most the Compassionate

I dedicate this work to

My dear mother who has always supported me and my beloved father, without whom I would not be who I am,

My precious sisters Feriel and Leila to whom I wish the best,

My dear brothers Lamine, Khaled, Nacer, and Fares,

My nephews Zakaria and AbdElrahman,

My best Friends Asma, Sara, Ahlem, and Zinab

Dr. Boughadda Sabrina, and Dr. Bouferroum Leila to whom I wish the best of luck to finish their studies,

My whole family and all my friends without exception.

Sara

DEDICATION

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, Most the Compassionate

This work is dedicated to:

My beloved parents

All brothers and sisters

All my instructors

All my friends and colleagues

All my relatives

All those who care about me

All those who make me happy

AMINA

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the test.

Abstract

The present study aims at investigating the misuse of the perfect aspect in third year EFL students' written production, at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University, through highlighting and finding out the most problematic aspect and perfect tenses for students, the types of errors committed, and the main reasons that lead to misuse them. Therefore, two hypotheses were formulated. The first one stipulates that more imperfection will be found in the use of the past perfect and future perfect than in the present perfect tense. The second hypothesis maintains that more imperfection will be found in the use of the perfect progressive aspect than in the perfect aspect. In order to test these hypotheses, two means of research were used to gather data; a grammar test and an analysis of students' essays. The test was administered to fifty participants in order to highlight the most problematic English perfect tenses by identifying their types of errors. The second instrument was an analysis of students' essays of the same participants, in order to determine the students' failure in using perfect tenses. A comparison between the participants' performances in the grammar test and their own writing essays was done. The results obtained showed that the most problematic perfect tenses in the test are the present perfect, past perfect, and future perfect, whereas in the essays, the most problematic tenses are the present perfect and past perfect. Whereas, the most problematic aspect is the simple aspect (present perfect, past perfect, and future perfect) in both test and essay. It was found that the main types of errors are substitution errors, misformation errors, omission errors, and errors of avoidance. The possible reasons of these errors are attributed mainly to the incomplete application of rules and ignorance of some others. On the basis of the results obtained, some pedagogical implications are provided.

Key words: Perfect Aspect, Errors, Error Analysis, Grammar Test.

List of Abbreviations

CA: Contrastive Analysis.

CA: Correct Answer.

EA: Error Analysis.

EFL: English as a Foreign Language.

ESL: English as a Second Language.

L1: First Language.

L2: Second Language.

LMD: License Master Doctorat.

NA: No Answer.

SLA: Second Language Acquisition.

T: Total.

TL: Target Language.

WA: Wrong Answer.

%: Percentage.

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General Introduction

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2. Statement of the Problem.
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5. Hypotheses.
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7. Structure of the Dissertation

1. Background of the Study

In recent years, studies of second language acquisition tended to focus on learners' errors since they allow for prediction of the difficulties involved in acquiring a second language. Error analysis is a type of linguistic analysis that focuses on the errors that learners make. It consists of a comparison between the errors made in the target language because of the influence of the mother tongue and that target language itself. According to Corder (1981, as cited in Garrido, & Rosado, 2012), learners' errors are significant in three ways: first, they provide information about the language a learner is using. Second, they give information about how a language is learnt. Finally, they provide information to the learner himself or herself since errors are helpful in the learning process. Error analysis also has pedagogical benefits because it gives useful information for designing and carrying out the teaching/learning process. It is important to note here that interference from the learner's mother tongue is not the only reason for committing errors in the target language. According to Richard (1974), there are other reasons like the ignorance of rule restriction, incomplete application of the rules, and overproduction which are considered intralingual errors.

The errors and mistakes committed by foreign language learners in the course of study are the main concern of linguists and teachers of foreign languages. Tense is among the difficult points to master for students of English. More specifically, the perfect tenses are perhaps the most ambiguous of all English tenses. This is partly because many other languages do not have an equivalent, so speakers of those languages find it difficult to understand the concept. In English grammar, the perfect aspect is a verb construction that describes events occurring in the past but linked to a later time, usually the present. In English, the perfect aspect is formed with *has, had + the past participle of the verb*.

There are many studies about the misuse of English tenses by second language learners. A study of verb tense problems in the writings of Malay speakers is conducted by **Noor Mohd** (1985). Malay speakers can be considered ESL students with intermediate to upper level of proficiency. The findings showed that students commit two types of errors. First, there were errors of choice which result from choosing the inappropriate tense for narration in their writing, and failure to maintain tense continuity. Second, there were also errors in forms made in the subject-verb agreement, forms of tenses and aspect, omission of required verbs, and insertion of verbs which are not required in sentences.

Another study was carried out by Rizka (2017) to find out and analyze the types of problems encountered by first grade students of Banda Aceh University in using the present perfect tense. It aimed at describing the types of students' problems in using present perfect tense and identifying the causes of these problems. The findings showed that there are eight types of problems consisting of the use of incorrect formula in forming affirmative, negative and interrogative form of the present perfect tense, the use of auxiliary that is frequently switched, the use of "no" instead of "not" in negative sentences, spelling, selection of the regular and irregular verb, and the difficulties in distinguishing the usage

of past tense and present perfect tense. The data also showed that there are many factors of students' problems in using the present perfect tense, such as: multitude of English tenses, interference of L1, and differences between English structure and Indonesian structure.

The main focus of the present study is the errors made by EFL students at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia, Jijel, with regard to the use of the perfect aspect. This research focuses on the types of errors learners commit and their sources. It also attempts to highlight the most problematic perfect tenses for EFL learners.

2. Statement of the Problem

During their License course of study within the LMD system, students receive instructions about English grammar for two years. Therefore, as third year students of English at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia, Jijel, they are supposed to have enough knowledge that allows them to use the English tenses, in general, and the perfect and the perfect progressive aspects, in particular, correctly and appropriately. These two aspects are explicitly incorporated and taught in the English grammar course of second year. However, they seem to face several difficulties in their attempt to master and use them. To state a few of these problems, students sometimes make mistakes in the proper use of the verb form as they seek to express the time of an event in English. They generally tend to use the past simple instead of the present or past perfect tense. They seem, also, unable to distinguish between the various functions of each tense.

3. Aim of the Study

The main objective of the present study is to highlight the most problematic perfect tenses for EFL learners. It seeks to identify the frequent types of errors EFL learners commit in the use of perfect tenses. It also attempts to shed light on the main reasons that lead students to misuse the perfect aspect in their written production.

4. Research Questions

Based on the stated problem, this study attempts to answer the following questions:

- What are the most problematic English perfect tenses for EFL learners?
- Which aspect is more problematic to use for students?
- What types of errors do third EFL students commit in the use of the perfect aspect?
- What are the reasons that make students misuse perfect tenses?

5. Hypotheses

Under the light of the previously mentioned questions, two hypotheses are put forward:

It is hypothesized that more imperfection will be found in the use of the past perfect and future perfect than in the present perfect tense.

It is also hypothesized that more imperfection will be found in the use of the perfect progressive aspect than in the perfect aspect.

6. Means of Research

This research is carried out with third year LMD students of English at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University, Jijel. It relies on quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. First, a grammar test is administered to 50 students. This test is selected to collect the students' errors in order to classify and analyze them. Second, the analysis of students' writings obtained from the analysis and correction of their essays. They are selected in order to compare between students' errors in grammar test and their essays in the use of English perfect aspect and to investigate which aspect and tenses pose problems in their use.

7. Structure of the Study

This study is divided into three chapters; two chapters are devoted to the theoretical background of the study, and the last chapter is devoted to the practical part. Chapter one which is entitled ‘The Perfect Aspect’ covers three main points. First, it supplies a comprehensive definition of English tense. It also supplies a definition of English aspect and then provides deep explanation of all English aspect and their functions. Second, it highlights students’ problems in using tense and aspect. Last, a brief description of the relation between grammar and good writing is provided.

Chapter two is entitled ‘Error Analysis’ focuses mainly on theories of Errors Analysis. It includes the types, sources of errors and their significance in the process of teaching and learning. It also deals with the steps and branches of error analysis as well as its problems. The practical part of this study is entitled “Data Analysis and Data Discussion”. It deals, mainly, with the administration and description of the means of research; the test and students’ essays, in addition to the analysis and interpretation of the results obtained.

Chapter One: Perfect Aspect

Introduction

Learning English language requires mastering its grammar rules. The perfect aspect is among the difficulties learners may face in developing their grammatical competence. This chapter presents an overview of English aspects and tenses, with specific reference to the perfect aspect. It starts by explaining the distinction between two related concepts: tense and aspect. It also, attempts to spot light on the different English aspects including the perfect aspect as its main concern. As a third element of this chapter, problems that students, generally, face in using tense and aspect are discussed. Finally, a brief description of the relation between grammar and good writing are provided.

1.1. Tense vs. Aspect

Learning English grammar can be a challenging experience. It requires, as basics, a mastery of tenses and their use. Tense of all verbs tells you when an event happens, or has happened or will happen, and when someone did something. In English, verbs come in three main tenses: the present, the past, and the future. Each of these tenses could be in simple, continuous, perfect, and perfect continuous aspect.

There are various definitions of the term “tense”. According to Lyons (1995, p. 312) the word “tense” is a Latin word “tempus” that have the meaning of “time” (as cited in Rizka, 2017, p. 10). When defining tense, the focus is on both the time of the situation that is being described and the form of the verb. The term “tense” is defined by Richards and Schmidt (2002) as “the relationship between the form of the verb and the time of the action or state it describes” (p. 545). In addition, Swan (1980, p.604) stated that “the verb-forms which show differences in time are called tense. Tenses are formed either by changing the verb (e.g. know, knew; work, worked) or by adding auxiliary verbs (e.g. will know; have worked).” (as cited in Rizka, 2017, p. 11). The term “tense” can only be defined with the

help of the term “time” which have different forms to indicate when an event takes place; and that they have at least some relationship between the two.

In simple words, tense is the form of an action, activity, or an event with respect to time (at a present, past, or future time). Murcia and Freeman (1999) illustrated that English tense-aspect system helps EFL/ESL students understand how the system functions and to know the different patterns of tense-aspect combination.

Aspect, on the other hand, refers to the duration of an event within a particular tense. In other words, the aspect of a tense allows to describe or understand how an event unfolds over time. It is defined by Richards and Schmidt (2002) as follows, “a term used to denote the activity, event, or state described by a verb, for example whether the activity is ongoing or completed” (p.34). English has four aspects: simple, progressive, perfect, and perfect progressive. Comrie (1976) defines aspects as follows: “Aspect is not concerned with relating the time of the situation to any other Time-point, but rather with the internal temporal consistency of the one situation; One could state the difference as one between-situation-internal time (aspect) and situation-external time (tense)” (P. 5). This means that aspect refers to the internal structure of the action or event occurring at any time, i.e., it refers to what is beyond the form of the verb.

In English, aspect presents the inner time structure of a certain event. Aspect differs from tense: tense is used to describe the relationship between the time of an existed event or a state existed and the time of speaking, whereas aspect does not refer to the time of an event, but rather it uses specific verb forms to show situations of an action and process in a situation within a certain time. For example, it can be used to indicate whether the action is going on or has been completed.

1.2. English Aspects

1.2.1. Simple Aspect

The simple aspect covers all the different simple tense verb forms in English which is mainly used to express facts. Hirtle 1967 states that “Simple aspect refers to events that are conceptualized as complete whole. The events are not presented as allowing for further development.” (as cited in, Muricia & Freeman, 1999, p. 112). They stated the following example: *Susan and Carl live in Newark*. This sentence presents the fact that Susan and Carl live in Newark as a whole event without knowing further development and no suggestion for any change is expressed.

1.2.1.1. Present Simple

The simple present tense is used to refer to events, actions, and conditions that are happening all the time, or exist now. Muricia and Freeman (1999) stated that “The present tense conveys immediate factuality” (p. 112). It expresses things that are generally or always true. According to Muricia and Freeman (1999, p. 113) that the present simple is used in the following situations:

- 1- Express habitual actions in the present, as in ‘*He walks to school every day*’.
- 2- Express general truths: *Water freezes at 0 degrees centigrade*.
- 3- Express future (scheduled event): *I have a meeting next Wednesday at that time*.
- 4- In the subordinate clauses of time or condition when the main clause contains a future time verb: *After he finishes work, he will do the errands*.
- 5- With “be” and other stative verbs to indicate states:
 - There is a large house on the corner*.
 - I know Mr. Jackson*.

Eastwood (2002) stated that present simple is used in the following cases: for permanent states, with temporary states, states which go on only for a short time. sometimes the present continuous can be used. For example: *the weather looks/is looking better today*. The simple present is considered the most commonly used tense especially in spoken English.

1.2.1.2. Past Simple

The past simple tense expresses an action that happened in the past. Murcia and Freeman (1999) explained that the past tense also states facts but the essential meaning is that it has a sense of remoteness. "The event can be remote in time" (Murcia & Freeman, *ibid*, p.113). This means that the action or event is finished and done.

For Example:

- I practiced sport yesterday.

According to Murcia and Freeman (1999, p. 114), the past simple is used when the writer wants to express the following:

1-A definite single completed event/ action in the past:*I attended a meeting of that committee last night.*

2- Habitual or repeated action/ event in the past: *It snowed almost every weekend last winter.*

3-An event with duration that applied in the past with the implication that it no longer applies in the present: *Professor Nelson taught at Yale for 30 years.*

4- With states in the past:*He appeared to be a creative.*

He owed me a lot of money.

5- Imaginative conditional in the subordinate clause:*If he took better care of himself, he wouldn't be absent so often.*

Based on the definition above, the simple past tense is used to express a definite or completed event in the past. The form of a verb used to describe an action that happened before the present time and is no longer happening. It shows the situations or activities that began and ended in the past.

1.2.1.3. Future Simple

Simple future is a form of the verb that refers to an action or event that has not yet begun. Muricia and Freeman (1999) defined it as follows, “Simple future is used when the event is conceptualized as a whole. One difference in its core meaning is that event in the future time cannot be factually knowable in the same way as those in the past or present can.”(p. 114). The future tense, or “*will*” is used for strong prediction and not for factual report, for example:

-We will cover the first half of the book this term.

-We will never know what cures tropical plants possess if we do not become serious about preserving the forests in which they grow.

Muricia and Freeman (1999, p. 115) clarified how the core meaning of strong predictability applies:

1-An action to take place at some definite future time: *Joel will take the bar exam next month.*

2- A future habitual action or state: *After October, Judy will take the 7:30 train to Chicago every day.*

And even for present habits, about which strong predictions can be made: *Erik is so funny, he will wake up, and before coming downstairs, he will start playing with his trains.*

3- A situation that may obtain in the present and will obtain in the future but with some future termination in sight (here it is not “*will*” that suggests the limitation on the event, but the subordinate clause): *Nora will live in Caracas until she improves her Spanish.*

4- In the main (result) clause of future conditionals:*if you go, you will be sorry.*

1.2.2. Progressive or Continuous Aspect

The progressive aspect is the collective term for verbs (past, present, or future) in a progressive tense; these verbs are recognizable by the present participle 'ing'. Muricia and Freeman (1999) claimed that "the core meaning of progressive aspect as being imperfective, meaning that it portrays an event in a way that allows for it to be incomplete or somehow limited" (p. 116). It allows for predicting any change and thinking for further development.

1.2.2.1. Present Continuous

The present continuous expresses an action that is happening now or an action that is unfinished. Eastwood (2002) defined the term continuous as follows: "The continuous means 'for a period of time'. We are in the middle of decorating;the search for the flat went on for a period of time." (p. 79). Present continuous is used to describe a continued or an ongoing action of the present, these actions are occurring at the time of speaking.

According to Muricia and Freeman (1999, p. 117), present continuous (progressive) is used in the following cases:

1-Activity in progress:*He is attending a meeting now.*

2-Extended present (action will end and therefore lacks the permanence of the simple present tense):*I am studying geology at University of Colorado.*

3- A temporary situation:*Phyllis is living with her parent.*

4- Repetition or iteration in a series of similar ongoing actions: *Henry is kicking the soccer ball around the backyard.*

5-Expresses future (when event is planned; usually with a future-time adverbial):*She is coming tomorrow.*

6- Emotional comment on present habits (usually co-occurring with frequency adverbs *always* or *forever*): *-He is always delivering in a clutch situation. (approving).*

-He is forever acting up at these affaires. (disapproving).

7-A change in progress: *She is becoming more and more like her mother.*

1.2.2.2. Past Continuous

The past continuous tense is used to mention an ongoing action of the past. According to Swan (2006), “We often use the past progressive together with a simple past tense. The past progressive refers to a longer 'background 'action or situation.’” (p. 422). He gave the following examples:

1 -As I was walking down the road, I saw Bill.

2 -The phone rang while I was having dinner.

Murcia and Freeman (1999) explained the uses of past continuous. It is used to express an action in progress at a specific point of time in the past. It is also used when past action is simultaneous with some other event that is usually stated in the simple past. In addition, it is used to demonstrate the social distancing (which occurs in the past tense and the tentativeness of the progressive aspect). Past continuous is characterized by the use of the auxiliary verb ‘to be’.

Murcia and Freeman (1999) proposed that the structure of past progressive is be (past tense) + base form of verb + present participle (-ing). The verb be + the present participle (ing) refers to the ongoing activity. It shows the unfinished activity. ‘Be’ is operated as an auxiliary verb (is, am, are) and two dissimilar past tense forms (was, were).

1.2.2.3. Future Continuous

The future continuous is used when an action will be in progress at a certain time in the future. This action has begun before the certain time. Swan (2006) explained the most common way of talking about the future. He (2006) stated that, ”When we are simply

giving information about the future, or talking about possible future events which are not already decided or obviously on the way, we usually use *will* (or *I/we shall*) + infinitive”

(p.186). He gave the following examples:

- 1-Nobody will ever know what happen to her.
- 2-I shall probably be home late tonight.

Muricia and Freeman (1999, p. 118) demonstrated the cases in which the future continuous/ progressive tense is used with examples:

- 1-An action that will be in progress at a specific time in the future: He will be taking a test at 8 A.M. tomorrow.
- 2- Duration of some specific future action: *Mavis will be working on her thesis for the next three years.*

“*Will* and *shall* are also used to express our intentions and attitudes towards other people. They are common in offers, requests, threats, promises and announcements of decisions.” (Swan, 2005, p. 186). “Will and “shall” can be used interchangeably, however, shall” is better used to ask question with I” and “we”.

- Shall I carry your bag?
- I will hit you if you do that again.
- I will phone you tonight.
- You can have it for half price.
- OK I'll buy it.

1.2.3. Perfect Aspect

The perfect aspect focuses on the completion of an event. It is expressed with the auxiliary *have* and the past participle form of the verb. According to Murcia and Freeman (1999) “The core meaning of perfect is prior. And it is used in relation to some other point in time.”(p. 115) Perfect aspect stands in contrast to simple aspect. It is considered

incomplete or imperfective where the event is viewed as a portion of a whole and where there is a possible change or development.

1.2.3.1. Present Perfect

There are many definitions of the present perfect tense. Eastwood (2002), as such, stated that “The present perfect tells us about the past and about the present. We use it for an action in the period leading up to the present.” (p. 86). According to Swan (2006), the present perfect expresses the idea that a finished action or event is related to the present in some way. If we say that something has happened, we are thinking about the past and the present at the same time. According to Thomson and Martinet (1986, p.119), “the present perfect tense is formed with the present tense of have + the past participle: I have worked etc.” Also the past participles have the same form as the simple past. Whereas, the irregular verbs have different forms.

Thomson and Martinet (1986) revealed “This tense may be said to be a sort of mixture of present and past. It always implies a strong connection with the present and is chiefly used in conversations, letters, newspapers and television and radio reports.” (p. 120). This means that this tense is used to describe event which occurred in the past but still have connection to the present. Murcia and Freeman (1999, p. 116) stated the usage of present perfect as follows:

1-A situation that began at a prior in time and continues into the present: *I have already been a teacher since 1967.*

2- An action occurring or not occurring at an unspecified prior time that has current relevance: *I have already seen that movie.*

3-A very recently completed action (often with just): *Mort has just finished his homework.*

4-An action that occurred over a prior time period and that is completed at the moment of speaking: *The value of the Johnson's house has doubled in the last four years.*

5-With verbs in subordinate clauses of time or condition:

-She will not be satisfied until she has finished another chapter.

-If you have done your homework, you can watch TV.

The present perfect tense is a rather important to learn for students, may be because it is mostly misused among EFL learners. Thus, the present perfect tense can be defined as a tense that is used to describe an event that has finished in the past but its effect is still shown in the present.

1.2.3.2. Past Perfect

The past perfect tense is a verb tense used to express an action that occurred in the past and finished before another action in the past. That is to say, it describes a completed activity that happened earlier than another one. For example: *After I had finished revising my lessons, I put out the light.* In this sentence, it is clear that finishing the revision happened before putting out the light. Thus, finishing revision takes place in the past perfect. According to Swan (2006), "The basic meaning of the past perfect is 'earlier past'. A common use is to 'goback' for a moment when we are already talking about the past, to make it clear that something had already happened at the time we are talking about." (p. 397). We are talking about an action in the past and want to talk about earlier past. According to Thomson and Martinet (1986), past perfect is implied and indicated by the use of "before and after" to emphasize the completion of an action. According to Murcia and Freeman (1999, p. 116), the past perfect is used when the writer wants to express the following:

1-An action completed in the past prior to some other past event or time:

-He had already left before I could offer him a ride.

-She had worked at the post office before 1962.

2-Imaginative conditional in the subordinate clause as in *'if sally had studied harder, she would have passed the exam'*.

Thomson and Martinet (1986) claimed that “The past perfect is also the past equivalent of the simple past tense, and is used when the narrator or subject looks back on earlier action from a certain point in the past” (p.127). They have explained it with the following example: “*Tom was 23 when our story begins. His father had died five years before and since then Tom had lived alone. His father had advised him not to get married till he was 35, and Tom intended to follow this advice*”. So, in some specific cases, the past perfect can be used instead of past simple if the writer wants to talk about an earlier event that occurred in the past.

1.2.3.3. Future Perfect

This type of tenses is used when the writer wants to denote an action that will already have happened before a certain time in the future. Swan (2006) explained the use of the future perfect stating that “We can use the future perfect to say that something will be finished or completed by a certain time in the future.”(p.195). He (2006) also stated the form of this tense: *will have* + past participle with the following examples:

- 1- The builders say they will have finished the roof by Tuesday.
- 2- I will have spent all my holiday money by the end of the week.

Murcia and Freeman (1999, p. 116) stated the usage of the future perfect as follows:

- 1- A future action that will be completed prior to a specific future time: *I will have finished all this word processing by 5 P.M.*
- 2- A state or accomplishment that will be completed in the future prior to some other future time or event: *At the end of the summer the Blakes will have been married for 10 years.*

Thomson and Martinet (1986) claimed that the future perfect is used with these time expression beginning with “by”: by then, by that time, by the 24th, stating the following example: “By the end of next month he will have been here for ten years.”(p. 142). It is

also stated that this tense is used for an action which will occur in the past at a given future time, or will just have finished.

Table 1.1.

The Meaning of Perfect Tenses with Examples (Adopted from: Understanding and Using English Grammar, Azar, 1998, p .4).

The Perfect Tenses		
Form: have +past participle		
Meaning: The perfect tenses all give the idea that one thing happens before another time or event.		
Present Perfect	(a) Tom has already eaten.	Tom finished eating sometime before now. The exact time is not important.
Past Perfect	(b) Tom had already eaten when his friend arrived.	First tom finished eating. Later his friend arrived. Tom' eating was completely finished before another time in the past.
Future Perfect	(c) Tom will already have eaten when his friends arrives.	First Tom will finish eating. Later his friend will arrive. Tom's eating will be completely finished before another time in the future.

1.2.4. Perfect Progressive

1.2.4.1. Present Perfect Progressive

Present perfect progressive expresses an action that recently finished or is still going on. It focuses on the duration or the course of the event. Thomson and Martinet (1986, p.125) stated that "This tense is used for an action which began in the past and is still continuing". They also stated the form of the present perfect progressive. It is formed by the present

perfect of the verb to be + the present participle, for example: *I have been working.*

According to Muricia and Freeman (1999, p.118), this tense is used in the following cases:

1-A situation or habit that begun in the past (recent or distant) and that continues up to the present (and possibly into the future):*Burt has been going out with Alice.*

2-An action in progress that is not yet completed:*I have been reading that book.*

3-A state that changes over time:*The students have been getting better and better.*

4-An evaluative comment on something observed over time triggered by current evidence:*You have been drinking again!*

1.2.4.2. Past Perfect Progressive

The past perfect progressive shows that an action started in the past continued up until another time in the past. Like present perfect continuous, we are more interested in the process. According to Eastwood (2002), “We use the past perfect continuous for an action over a period up to a past time.” (p. 93). He gave the following example:

1-*Everything had been going so well up to then.*

2- *The driver who died in the accident had been drinking.*

Thomson and Martinet (1986) claimed that this tense is constructed using ‘had been’ with the present participle of the verb. It is therefore the same for all persons. Muricia and Freeman (1999, p. 118) explained the usage of the past perfect continuous:

1-An action or habit taking place over a period of time in the past prior to some other past event or time:*Carol had been working hard, so her doctor told her to take a vacation.*

2-A past action in progress that was interrupted by a more recent past action:*We had been planning for vacation in Maine, but changed our minds after receiving the brochure on Nova Scotia.*

3-An ongoing past action or state that becomes satisfied by some other event:*I had been wanting to see that play, so I was pleased when I won the ticket.*

1.2.4.3. Future Perfect Progressive

Future perfect progressive tense shows how long something has been in progress by a particular time in the future. Muricia and Freeman (1999) claimed that “Durative or habitual action that is taking place in the present and that will continue into the future up until or through a specific future time.” (p. 119). For example:

1-On Christmas Eve we will have been living in the same house for 20 years.

2-He will have been keeping a journal for 10 years next month.

The future perfect progressive tense is composed of two elements: the future perfect of the verb ‘to be’ (will have been) and the present participle of the main verb (base + ing). It is used by writers in order to denote an action which will already have happened before a certain time in the future, will continue up to the moment and will be going on at that moment.

The following illustrations are taken from the same book of *Understanding and Using English Grammar* (Azar, 1998, p.5)

Table.1.2

The Meaning of Perfect Progressive with Examples

The Perfect Progressive tenses		
Form: have+been+ ing.		
Meaning: the perfect progressive tense give the idea that one event is in progress immediately before, up to, until another time or event. The tenses are used to express the duration of the first event.		
Present Perfect Progressive	(a) Tom has been studying for two hours.	Event in progress: studying. When? Before now, up to now. How long? For two hours.
Past Perfect Progressive	(b) Tom had been studying for two hours before his friends came.	Event in progress: studying. When? Before another event in the past. How long? For two hours.
Future Perfect Progressive	(c) Tom will have been studying for two hours by the time his friends arrive.	Event in progress: studying. When? Before another event in the future. How long? For two hours.

1.3. Students' Problems in Using Tense and Aspect

1.3.1. Learners' Problems in Using Tense

Although tense and aspect occupy a major part in language teaching materials, many EFL learners continue making mistakes even when they are in advanced level studies. Many writers believe that in learning English as a foreign language or second language, learners should, first of all, master the grammar rules. Grammar is one of the language

aspects which are taught to every language learners. It is the basic knowledge learners must have in understanding the English language. Cowan (2008) said that the “use of verb forms is one of the two or three most difficult areas for English language learners to master” (p. 350). As a result, students sometimes make error in the proper use of verb forms as they attempt to express the time of an event in the target language.

The following sentences produced by some Bengali learners of English who have completed secondary education (as cited in Safiur & Maksud , 2015)

The sentences highlight some potential areas in which they make errors:

-When I was entered into the exam hall, I was feeling nervous.

(When I entered the exam hall, I was feeling nervous.)

-I was seen and introduced with many unknown students.

(I saw many unknown students and I was introduced to them.)

Bengali learners seem to make errors in the formation of past expression; these examples indicate that some EFL learners form past tense using an auxiliary and the past participle form of the verbs instead of using the past form of the verbs. This is an area in which learners are observed to face problems in using verbs to indicate past time.

EFL learners are sometimes found to form expression in which time itself is confused. In the following example, a grade 8 level student does not use any auxiliary to indicate whether the time of the action is in the present or the past. This may be due to the L1 language interference because in Bengali language, progressive actions do not require any extra auxiliary.

– I going with my father.

(I am/ was going with my father.)

One major problem for ESL learners in the use of verb tenses is the failure to maintain tense continuity. Godfrey (1980) explained tense continuity as, when using a tense to write about an event in a specific temporal reference which is appropriate with the topic, the same tense should be used until the learner end up writing about this topic. Once a new topic with a new temporal reference requires the use of a new tense, the first tense is no longer used and the new one is initiated.

1.3.2. Learners' Problems in Using Aspect

Apart from EFL learners' problem in tense, sometimes they also have a problem in understanding the aspect of an event. The following examples indicate the nature of the problem those EFL learners have in using aspect properly.

-I am reading every day in the evening.

(I read every day in the evening.)

Although every day indicates that the action is habitual, hence simple in aspect, the Bengali learner of English views it as temporal and therefore progressive in aspect. Here, learners overgeneralize the fact that as she reads every day, the action is in progressive aspect.

- I am studying English for twelve years.

(I have been studying English for twelve years.)

Bengali EFL learners are often seen to produce such sentences. This occurs as within Bengali language temporal progressive aspect (e.g. I am playing football.) is not usually distinguished from the progressive activity that started in the past but extends to the present (I have been playing football for seven years.)

Catford, et al. (1974) stated that the present perfect is among the most difficult tenses for foreign language learners. Another problem learners may have is that they confuse between present perfect and past simple. EFL learners generally use the simple past instead

because both tenses refer to a situation that happened in the past. Eastwood (2002) stated that “The choice depends on whether the speaker sees the action as related to the present or as in the past” (p. 89). He gave the following example:

-The car has broken down. (So I have no transport now.)

-The car broke down. It's still off the road. (It's still off the road).

Both sentences refer to the same action but the present perfect focuses on the result and tells something about the present (I have no transport now.). Whereas, the simple past means a finished time.

1.4. Grammar and Good Writing

The integration of grammar in teaching writing is of great importance. The rules of grammar help to govern the way writing is taking place. Syntax, for example, governs the order of words that are placed in a sentence. If one tries to read in a language in which the word order in a sentence is completely arbitrary, it would be unreadable. In an academic context, writing implies the use of Standard English and high concern with accuracy. Frodesen and Eyring (2000, p. 23) claimed that “a focus on form in a composition can help writers develop rich linguistic resources needed to express ideas effectively” (as cited in Fatemi, 2008, p.10). This means that it is necessary to focus on the form in any piece of writing in order to enhance the writing style and improve grammatical competence.

According to Chin (2000), Effective grammar instruction begins with what students already know about grammar, and it helps them use this knowledge as they write. Teachers have to make a connection between oral language and written language to help them explain the abstract grammatical terminology which results in ameliorating student's writing with better proficiency. Azar (2007 1998) highlights the importance of teaching grammar stating that:

One important aspect of grammar teaching is that it helps learners

discover the nature of language, i.e., that language consists of predictable patterns that make what we say, read, hear and write intelligible. Without grammar, we have only individual words or sounds, pictures, and body expressions to communicate meaning.

Grammar is the weaving that creates the fabric. (as cited in Çağrı Tuğrul, 2013, p. 126).

EFL learners cannot understand grammar rules in isolated sentences. Learning grammar in context helps learners to see how the rules work in sentences. Thornbury (1999, p. 69) stated that “Language is context-sensitive. This means that, in the absence of context, it is very difficult to recover the intended meaning of a single word or phrase”. (as cited in Çağrı Tuğrul, 2013, p. 126) i.e., the proper use of grammar will convey meaningful messages.

Weaver (1996) agreed that some feature of grammar is needed to be taught to help learners produce effective writing, she claimed that: “What all students need, however, is guidance in understanding and applying those aspects of grammar that are most relevant to writing” (p. 16). Grammar has been considered as been of great significant in language learning. According to Raimes (1981, P. 5)

Certain methods of development require certain structures, e.g., a comparison_ contrast task will make the use of comparative and superlative forms necessary, likewise in chronological narration, past tenses and in spatial order, prepositions of place will used.

The integration of grammar in the writing process should be emphasized because it is a necessary and desirable part of classroom language learning. It can be considered that grammar is a prerequisite for good writing especially in academic writing. Grammar

knowledge is indispensable; having a large knowledge about grammar will enable learners to build better sentences in its specific context. But with little understanding of how language functions, learners cannot develop their language skills.

Conclusion

This chapter mainly tackled perfect tenses in accordance to their functions. An attempt was made to explain the different usage of perfect tenses. Mastering tenses is something crucial for EFL and ESL students because the misuse of tenses may affect the meaning of the message being conveyed. In addition, the problems that students may face in mastering tense and aspect have been reviewed. Lastly, this chapter talked in brief the importance of grammar and its effectiveness in improving learners' writing.

Chapter Two: Error Analysis

Introduction

Undoubtedly, second language learning process goes hand in hand with committing errors. In recent years, there has been a growing research interest in the analysis of errors that learners make while learning a second language. This chapter is divided into two major parts. The first part focuses on Error analysis as an important area of research. It provides some points including: definition of error analysis, its scope and branches, as well as its steps and problems. The second part of this chapter deals with errors in second language learning. It starts by highlighting the difference between a mistake and an error. It ends up with a presentation of the types of errors and their sources, in addition to their relevance in language learning and teaching.

2.1. Error Analysis

2.1.1 Definition of Error Analysis

Error analysis (EA henceforth) is one of the major topics in the field of second language acquisition SLA research. It emphasizes the significance of learners 'errors in second language. James (1998) defined it as "the process of determining the incidence, nature, causes and consequences of unsuccessful language" (p.1) i.e., error analysis spots lights on learners' errors and their types and sources that occur when they try to develop the second language. Another concept of error analysis is explained by Brown (1941) when he defined error analysis as "the process to observe, analyze, and classify the deviations of the rules of the second language and then to reveal the systems operated by learner" (as cited in Hasyim, 2002, p. 43). Richards (1971) claimed that, "the field of error analysis may be defined as dealing with the differences between the way people are learning a language speak and the way adult native speakers of the language use the language".(p. 1).

This means that the focus is on the comparison between learners' errors in producing utterances or sentences in the target language and a native's utterances or sentences.

2.1.2. Scope of Error Analysis

Error analysis (EA henceforth) was established in 1960s as a reaction to contrastive analysis. The aim of EA is, first, to identify the strategies which learners use in learning a language, in terms of the approaches and strategies used in both of teaching and learning. Second, EA tries to identify the causes of learners' errors through investigating the motives behind committing such errors. Third, it aims at obtaining information about the common difficulties in language learning, as an aid to teaching or in the preparation of the teaching materials. The study of errors made by ESL/ EFL learner becomes inevitable because the occurrence of errors is an evidence that the learning process is taking place (Richard, et al., 2002),

Before the rise of EA approach, Contrastive Analysis (CA henceforth) had been the dominant approach used in dealing and conceptualizing the learners' errors in the 1950s. This approach focused mainly on L1 Interference and precisely the Interlingual effect. It claimed that the main cause of committing errors in the process of SL learning is the L1. In other words, the linguistic background of learners' language affects their production negatively in the target language. The supporters of CA stated that the similarities and differences between various languages were enough to deal with the problem of teaching these languages. CA focuses on the comparison between two languages in order to find their similarities and differences to facilitate the process of teaching and learning. Wardhaugh (1970) pointed out that the CA hypothesis is classified into two versions: a strong version and a weak version. The former claims that the difficulties of a learner can be predicted by a systematic contrastive analysis and teaching material can then be adapted to meet those difficulties. The latter stipulates that no more than an explanatory role for contrastive linguistics: Where difficulties are evident from the errors made by the learners.

Comparison between the mother tongue and the target language of the learners may help to explain them.

EA approach overwhelmed and announced the decline of the CA approach. According to Richard, et al. (2002), EA came to light to argue that the mother tongue is not the main and the only source of the errors committed by the learners. Cristal (2003) defined EA as a “ technique for identifying, classifying, and systematically interpreting the unacceptable forms produced by someone learning a foreign language, using any of the principles and procedures provided by linguistics”(p. 165). Keshavarz (2012) claimed that EA is “a procedure used by both researchers and teachers which involves collecting samples of learners language, identifying errors, classifying them according to their nature and causes, and evaluating their seriousness”. (p. 168). It is demonstrated that through EA, it is easy to figure out the weaknesses of students and what they have not acquired yet. It is also a source of information which helps specialists in the field of education to choose the necessary elements and appropriate materials to be taught and used.

EA differs from CA. “Contrastive analysis stresses the influence of the mother tongue in learning a second language in phonological, morphological, lexical and syntactic levels. It holds that second language would be affected by first language” (Jie, 2008, p. 36). This proves that the common mistakes made by second language learners are explainable in the first language if there is a relation in both languages. On the other hand, EA does not evaluate the errors with L2 native language, but it compares with the target language. “

2.1.3. Branches of Error Analysis

Keshavarz (2006) suggested that the field of EA can be divided into two branches: theoretical and applied analysis of errors. The theoretical analysis of errors concerns the process and strategies of language learning; it focuses on what and how a learner is acquiring an L2. It tries to discover the problems and issues related to language learning and explore the underlying structures that work in the process of language learning. Also Corder (1974) stated that the theoretical branch serves to “elucidate what and how a learner learns when he studies a second language.” i.e., it investigates the reasons of errors in the process of learning (p.122-125). On the other hand, applied analysis of errors is concerned with devising appropriate teaching strategies on the basis of the findings of theoretical analysis of errors, and designing and organizing remedial materials for solving those problems and issues that are highlighted by the theoretical analysis of error. (as cited in Jabeen, 2015). Corder (1974) stated that the applied branch serves to enable the learner “to learn more efficiently by exploiting our knowledge of his dialect for pedagogical purposes” (p. 123) i.e., it is concerned with the attempt to find a treatment for learner’s difficulties in the TL. Although both theoretical and applied EA differ from each other in some aspects, they share the basic procedures of identification and classification of errors into different linguistic categories.

2.1.4. Steps of Error Analysis

The process of analyzing students’ errors requires different steps to be followed. As Corder (1974) stated there are five steps that a researcher has to follow in conducting such a process. The first one is to collect the sample of learner language. To provide data for the error analysis, the researcher needs to collect a sample of learner language. In this step, the researcher may control the data by narrowly specifying the samples he/she intends to collect. The second step is to identify the errors. The identification of errors involves a

comparison between learners' sentences and native speakers' sentences in the same context. Then, the researcher can identify the problem that occurs in these sentences. The third step relates to the description of errors. It usually employs either linguistic taxonomy or surface structure taxonomy to describe the differences between learner's sentences and native speakers' sentences. The fourth step is to explain the errors; it involves determining their sources in order to account for why they were made. The last step pertains to the evaluation of errors. It is a supplementary stage in the analysis of errors in order to evaluate errors seriousness, i.e., to distinguish which error should get more attention and be taught in class.

2.1.5. Criticism of Error Analysis

Error Analysis theory might have its significance, but it has also its limitations. For that reason it was criticized at the hands of certain linguists. One of EA shortcomings is the overemphasizing of production data (writing and speaking) than comprehension or reception data (reading and listening); which are equally important in developing an understanding of the process of language acquisition. Also Schachter (1974) criticized EA by pointing out that EA misses the strategy of 'avoidance'; L2 learner may find ways to avoid producing L2 difficult structures. Because a learner knows he gets them wrong, he might use structures he is certain he will get right. Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991) stated that EA focuses only on learners' weaknesses; what they did wrong rather than on what they have successfully reached. Another point of criticism towards EA is what Corder (1974) explained, «The recognition of error ... depends crucially upon the analyst [researcher], making a correct interpretation of the learner's intended meaning of the context» (p.127) i.e., with EA, it can be difficult to decide what an error is and what is not. Error interpretation and evaluation really depend on the importance given to an error which

varies from one situation to another. However EA is still used to investigate specific questions in SLA.

2.2. Errors in Second Language Learning

2.2.1. Errors versus Mistakes

When they come to learn a second language, learners sometimes do something wrong, which is either called a mistake or an error. In order to analyze learner language in an adequate perspective, it is crucial to make a distinction between errors and mistakes. They both exist in a learning process. However, mistake and error are to some extent different.

2.2.1.1. Definition of Errors

An error is something made by the learner because of the lack of knowledge about the rules, or the ignorance of the rule. Brown (1980) stated that an error is a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, which reflects the competence of the learner. According to him (1980), an error can be due to wrong acquisition of language rules or because learners still confuse how to apply these rules correctly. He (1980) exemplified, "Learners of English who ask "Does John can sing?" are in all likelihood reflecting a competence level in which all verbs require a pre-posed *do* auxiliary for question formation. As such, it is an error, most likely not a mistake, and an error that reveals a portion of the learner's competence in the target language" (p.226).

In the same vein, Ellis (1997) emphasized that "error reflects gaps in a learners' knowledge; errors occur because the learner does not know what is correct" (p.19). This means that a learner commits such errors because of the lack of knowledge. Moreover, in case of errors, learners show an inability to correct these errors by themselves. Along this line of thought, Corder (1971) stated that errors are the result of failure in competence and they show how much knowledge about a second language a learner has. An error can be found only in L2 learning and cannot be self-corrected.

2.2.1.2. Definition of Mistakes

A mistake is a fault that is made by the learner not because of the ignorance of the rules but as a result of the physical and mental state of the learner like: stress, tiredness, and lack of concentration. Brown (1994) stated that a mistake refers to a performance error that is a random guess or a slip of the tongue, in that; it is a failure to utilize a known system. According to him (1994), mistakes are not the result of a deficiency in competence but the result of some sort of break-down in the process of production. Ellis (1997) stated that “mistakes reflect occasional lapses in performance” (p. 17), i.e., they occur because the learner is unable to perform what he or she knows. He (1997) introduced an example of: “an apparent” mistake ‘in Jean’s speech. He says: the big of them contained a snake .Using the past tense of ‘contain ‘correctly. Moreover, in the last sentence he says: the basket contain a snake .Making what seems to be a tense error, but clearly Jean knows the past tense of ‘contain’. His failure to say ‘contained ‘in the last sentence, then might be considered as a mistake”. (p. 17). Also, Corder (1992) summarized that a mistake refers to a slip of the tongue that is made by learners in both native and second language learning situation and it can be self-corrected. In spite of the differences between errors and mistakes, many linguists use these two terms interchangeably.

2.2.2. Types of Errors

During their L2 acquisition process, students tend to commit errors. There are different frameworks and classifications of errors according to various linguistic levels of description. Researchers in their attempt to analyze learners' errors have developed their own categories.

2.2.2.1. Tavakoli’s Classification of Errors

Tavakoli (2012) claimed that there are different types of errors which he categorized into three main taxonomies: “Language competence taxonomy “,” surface

strategy taxonomy', and error gravity taxonomy'. The second taxonomy "Language competence taxonomy" will be the focus in the practical chapter.

First, 'language competence taxonomy' refers to errors that occur because of gaps in language competence. It specifies errors in terms of linguistic categories and in terms of where the error is located in the overall system of the target language. This type of taxonomy classifies errors according to the language components and the particular linguistic constituent the error affects. This taxonomy is subdivided into two categories: covert errors and overt errors. Covertly erroneous utterances are grammatically well formed at the level of the sentence but unaccepted or incorrect at the level of communication. A covert error is that "Error that is grammatically well formed at the sentence level but not correct in the context of communication; in other words a discourse level error" (Tavakoli, 2012, p.118). On the other hand, overtly erroneous utterances are those incorrect grammatical productions of sentences or utterances by learners, i.e. a sentence level error.

The second taxonomy suggested by Tavakoli (2012) is called 'surface strategy taxonomy'. It categorizes errors according to the way surface structures are changed. Many researchers describe this taxonomy as being based on how learners alter surface structures of the language when they use it incorrectly. According to Dulay, et al. (1982), errors can occur because of change in surface structure in specific and systematic ways. Based on this taxonomy, according to Dulay, et al. (1982), there are four ways in which learners "modify" target forms in specific and systematic ways: omission, addition, misinformation, and improper ordering.

-Omission errors: are characterized by the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance. Although any morpheme or word in a sentence is a potential candidate for omission, some types of morphemes are omitted more than others.

-Additional errors: are the opposite of omission. They are characterized by the presence of an item, which must not appear in a well-formed utterance. Additional errors include double marking, regularization and simple addition.

-Misformation of errors: are characterized by the use of the wrong form of morpheme or structure. While in omission errors the items is not supplied at all, in misformation errors the learners supplied something, but it is incorrect.

-Improper ordering errors: are characterized by the incorrect placement of a morpheme or group morphemes in an utterance.

The third taxonomy suggested by Tavakoli (2012) is referred to as ‘error gravity taxonomy’. This taxonomy is based on “the relative gravity of an error which concerns the seriousness of an error” (p.119). Like the other taxonomies, this taxonomy is classified into: local errors and global errors. A global error “...does not allow the hearer to understand some aspect of the message. Global errors hinder communication, i.e., they prevent the message from being comprehended. Whereas , a local error does not stop a message from being understood and clear, because there is usually a minor contravention of one segment of a sentence that allows the hearer/reader to guess the intended meaning and guess correctly deliberated meaning.

2.2.2.2. Keshavarz’s Classification of Errors

Another linguistic classification of errors was suggested by Keshavarz (2013). He classified them into:

-Omission: the absence of some necessary items of a given structure of the language.

-Addition: addition of irrelevant elements to the utterance.

-Substitution: using some elements instead of others.

-Permutation: disorder the words in a sentence.

In addition to the previously mentioned types of errors, Ellis (1994) defined another type of errors which is avoidance error. Since EFL learners are involved in the process of acquisition, they will meet new structures that have no equivalent in their native language. Learners try to avoid using these structures as a result of the similarities or differences between their L1 and TL. Ellis (1994) stated that:

Learners also avoid using linguistic structures which they find difficult because of differences between their native language and their target language. In such cases, the effects of the L1 are evident not in what learners do (errors) but in what they do not do (omissions) (p. 304).

Ellis (1994) also stated that “it only makes sense to talk of avoidance if learners know what they are avoiding”. That is to say, avoidance happens consciously and if the native speakers of that language would have used it in that particular context.

2.2.3. Sources of Errors

As there are many descriptions for different kinds of errors, it is inevitable to move further and ask about the sources of errors. Many linguists try to find out the causes of these errors. Richard (1971) distinguished two sources of errors namely, inter-lingual errors and intra-lingual errors. Later, Richards (1974) stated that inter-lingual errors are errors caused by the interference of the learner's mother tongue. Errors of this nature are frequent, regardless of the learner's language background. Therefore, inter-lingual errors are caused by interference from native language to the target language that they learn. The other kind of errors is the intra-lingual errors which refer to the negative influence of some aspects of the target language within the target language itself which result from faulty or partial learning of the target language rather than language transfer. In other words, it is the incorrect generalization of some rules within the target language, which is called overgeneralization. According James (1998), it refers to the situation in which one form or

rule of the language is overgeneralized over the other forms. The extensive use of certain forms refers to overgeneralization and becomes the cause of errors in language learning. According to James (1998), the less the learner knows about the target language, the more he is forced to draw upon any other prior knowledge he possesses. It is mostly because the learners do not know much about the target language.

Richards (1974) points that “Intralingual errors are those which reflect the general characteristics of rule learning, such as faulty generalization, incomplete application of rules, and failure to learn conditions under which rules apply.” (p.174). He lists the following intralingual errors on the basis of their characteristics:

1) Overgeneralization: the learner creates a deviant structure on the basis of other structures in the target language. It leads to overindulgence of one member of a set of forms, and the underuse of others in the set, for example: *She goed*. The learner knows *she played, she defined and she traveled*. S/he knows that the rule of simple past is (S+v+ed). So, s/he over generalizes the simple past rule on all verbs. Learners do not consider that there are exceptions to rules which take other forms when conjugating verbs in the simple past such as: *she went, she ate, she wrote* and so on and so forth.

2) Ignorance of rule restriction: In this case, the learner fails to recognize the restriction of existing structures because of the lack of knowledge. Ignorance of rule restrictions is a failure to observe the application of given rules in relation to contexts where they do not apply (Richards, 1974). For instance, *He made me to write it*. In this case, the learner ignores the restrictions on the use of the verb “to make” which is rightly not followed by *to* and a verb. As it is the case in, *He asked me to go*.

3) Incomplete application of rules: In this kind of intra-lingual errors, the learner fails to use a fully developed structure. It reflects the degree of developing rules required to produce an acceptable utterance. For example, “he opening the door.” The verb ending “-

ing” cannot stand by itself. It needs to be to be changed in order to make the sentence acceptable.

4) False concept hypothesized: This intra-lingual error is sometimes called a semantic error. It is the incorrect comprehension of distinction in the target language. For example, “I was going down town yesterday” should be “I went down town yesterday”. These particular errors are usually the result of poor gradation of teaching.

To sum up, these are mainly the main sources of errors committed by learners in the process of second language learning. Those sources are the main concern of the theoretical chapter.

2.3. Significance of Errors in Second Language Learning and Teaching

It has been accepted that errors play an important role in the learning process. The father of EA, Corder (1981) stated “Studying the errors made by learners of a second language needs no justification. It is something which teachers have always done for purely practical reasons.” (p.35). He stated the usefulness of error analysis with regard to three aspects: language teacher, researcher, and the learner himself.

First, while analyzing students’ errors, the teacher will be able to know to what extent learners have achieved objectives i.e. whether teacher can move on to the next item or not. Errors also enable the teacher to know or discover learners’ weaknesses which provide him with feedback on the effectiveness of his teaching materials and strategies, i.e. improving the teaching point (Corder, 1981). Second, errors tell the researchers what type of strategies or procedures learners employ in their discovery of the language. Researchers will be able to understand better how language is acquired by learners. As for learners, errors are of great importance, they enable them to test their knowledge. Learners will decide on what side they are good and what side they are bad. Errors can be accepted as a kind of learning activity for learners.

Conclusion

In short, in this chapter different linguistic concepts that are related to EA theory have been reviewed. First, error analysis definition, scope, branches, steps, and its problems were introduced. An explanation of errors which are considered as important elements in EA theory; a distinction between errors and mistakes, types of errors, and sources of errors were provided. Finally, significance of errors in second language learning and teaching was discussed.

Chapter Three: Data Analysis and Data Discussion

Introduction

The practical part of this research design is an error analysis of some pieces of writing and a grammar test as data collection tools, in order to investigate the misuse of perfect tenses in students' writing. The results are analyzed and are interpreted on the basis of the frequency of occurrence of the correct and wrong usages of these tenses in each of the test and the students' pieces of writing. This chapter focuses mainly on Keshavarz's classification of errors.

3.1. Population and Sampling

The sample selected for this research work consists of 50 students chosen on an immediate convenience sampling basis, from a population of 285 EFL students at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahya University, Jijel. They are all supposed to have studied grammar for two years and have reached a certain level of mastering the English tenses. They have received instructions about the perfect aspect in particular during the second year.

3.2. Description and Administration of the Means of Research

3.2.1. The Students' Test

One of the instruments used for error analysis is a grammar test. The test was administered to fifty students, consisting of different groups who were asked to answer three grammar tasks in forty five minutes. The first task consists of nine sentences, where students were asked to fill in the blanks with the appropriate tense of the verbs between brackets (present perfect, past perfect, and future perfect). In this task, the present perfect should be answered in sentence 2, 4, and 8. The past perfect should be used in sentence 3, 5, and 6. The future perfect also should be used in sentence 1, 7, and 9. In this task, the present perfect progressive should be answered in sentence 2, 4, and 9. The past perfect

progressive is used in sentence 3, 6, and 8. The future perfect progressive also should be used in sentence 1, 5, and 7. The second task also consists of nine sentences, where students were asked to put the verbs in the correct form using the following tenses: Present perfect progressive, past perfect progressive or future perfect progressive). In this task, the present perfect progressive should be answered in sentence 2, 4, and 9. The past perfect progressive is used in sentence 3, 6, and 8. The future perfect progressive also should be used in sentence 1, 5, and 7. The last task was in a form of a paragraph which is taken from a newspaper article, where students were asked to complete this extract using the past simple, present perfect or past perfect of the verbs in brackets. As for task three, both present perfect and past perfect should be used four times. The simple past is used seven times because it can be used interchangeably with past perfect in some cases. The researchers seek to achieve variability in the test through selecting different tasks with different forms of questions. In the analysis of student's errors and mistakes, the focus was on the frequency of occurrence of wrong and correct usage of the perfect aspect with reference to the different functions of each tense.

3.2.2. The Students' Essays

For the sake of reaching reliability and validity, the researchers used a second instrument which is the students' essays of the same sample who answered the grammar test. The essay questions were proposed by the Written Expression teacher to the subjects as kind of an assignment to be marked and they had the choice to select one of these topics and write about it: road accidents, against or with the abolishment of exams, life without mobile phone, and a story about a past experience. It gives validity because it ensures that the participants took the essays writing in a serious way. In the analysis of students' errors and mistakes, the focus was on the incorrect tense usage with regard to the functions of each tense.

3.3. Analysis and Interpretation of the Results Obtained

3.3.1. The Students' Test

3.3.1.1. Analysis and Interpretation of the Results Obtained Per Task

3.3.1.1.1. Task One

In this task, there are three tenses that should be used: Present Perfect, Past Perfect and Future Perfect

Table 3.1

The Distribution of Wrong and Correct Answers in the Use of Present Perfect in Task One.

		Present Perfect							
		CA		WA		NA		T	
Function	Example	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A- a situation that began at a prior in time and continues into the present.	-I did German at school, but I <i>have forgotten</i> most of it now.	12	24%	38	76%	0	0%	50	100
	-What do you think of my English? Do you think it <i>has improved</i> ?	6	12%	43	86%	1	2%	50	100
	-The town is very different now. It <i>has changed</i> a lot.	17	34%	32	64%	1	2%	50	100

B- a very recently completed action.

// // //

C-an action that occurred over a prior time period and that is completed at the moment of speaking.

// // //

Function A

In the first example, the wrong answers show the highest percentage (38; 76 %). The right answers (12; 24%) show a low percentage. The majority of students substituted *the present perfect (have forgotten)* by *the simple past (forgot)*.

Concerning the second example, the majority of students (43; 86%) failed to answer correctly. While only (6; 12%) provide the correct form of the verb. Only (1; 2%) did not answer at all. The majority of student tend to use *the past simple (improved)* instead of *(has improved)*.

As for the third example, Table 3.1 shows that the majority of students also (32; 64%) did not answer correctly. (17; 34%) students gave the correct answer. Only (1; 2%) did not answer. The majority of students substituted *the present perfect (has changed)* by *the simple past (changed)*.

It is noticeable that most of students misused the present perfect. The results revealed that the majority of students commit substitution errors in which they used the past simple tense instead of the present perfect because these two tenses share some uses in specific situations. Those errors result from the students' ignorance of the rule restrictions; they do not recognize the appropriate use of the present perfect.

Table 3.2

The Distribution of Wrong and Correct Answers in the Use of Past Perfect in Task One.

		Past Perfect							
Function	Example	CA		W A		N A		T	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A-sometimes preceding action is implied and indicated by the use of "before,after"	-He <i>had</i> not <i>played</i> tennis before.	9	18%	40	80%	1	2%	50	100
	-The movie <i>had</i> already <i>begun</i> .	10	20%	39	78%	1	2%	50	100
B-an action completed in the past prior to some other past event or time.	-She <i>had made</i> plans to do something else.	5	10%	45	90%	0	0%	50	100

Function A

In the first example, the table illustrates that the highest percentage (40; 80%) goes for the students who did not provide the correct answer. While a small percentage (9; 20%) provided the right form of the verb. Only (1; 2%) did not answer at all. The most frequent error made by students is the substitution of *the past perfect (had not played)* by *the simple past (did not play)*. Since the action takes place in the past, students avoided complex tense and used simple past instead. Others commit an omission error (*had not play*) by dropping out 'ed'. In this case, incomplete application of the rule can be considered as a source for this error.

The second example shows that (39; 78%) of students provided the wrong answer. While low number (10; 20%) gave the right answers. Only (1; 2%) did not answer at all. Most of students made the same mistake which is misformation errors (*had began*); where students failed to provide the correct past participle of the verb (*begun*) because of incomplete application of the rule.

Function B

As Table 3.2 indicates, the majority of students (45; 90%) failed to provide the correct answer. Few students (5; 10%) gave the correct answer. The highest frequency of errors corresponds to the substitution of *the past perfect (had made)* by *the simple past (made)* because students ignore the rule restriction of the past perfect. In the second case, the subjects misused *the past simple (maked)* even if it is not the right tense. Here, overgeneralization can be considered as a source of error.

The majority of students misuse the past perfect. It is found that the most frequent errors in the use of past perfect correspond to the substitution of the *past perfect* by either the *simple past* or the *present perfect*. In addition to omission errors where they omit 'ed'.

Misformation is another type of error where they failed to provide the appropriate past participle of the verb. This type of error can be labeled as an ignorance of the rule restrictions and incomplete application of these rules.

Table 3.3

The Distribution of Wrong and Correct Answers in the Use of the Future Perfect in Task One

Future Perfect									
Function	Example	CA		WA		NA		T	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A- a future action that will be completed prior to a specific future time.	-Call me after 8 o'clock I <i>will have finished</i> dinner by then.	8	16%	42	84%	0	0%	50	100
	-A: will you be free at 11:30? B: yes, I <i>will have ended</i> the meeting by then.	8	16%	35	70%	7	14%	50	100
B-a state or accomplishment that will be completed in the future prior to some other future time or event.	-Ben is on vacation, and he is spending his money very quickly. If he continues like this, he <i>will have spent</i> all his money before the end of his vacation.	4	8%	46	92%	0	0%	50	100

Function A

The first example shows that almost all students under the study misused the future perfect tense (42; 84%). The rest of the population (8; 16%) gave correct answer. The most recurrent type of errors is the substitution of *the future perfect (will have finished)* by the *simple future (will finish)*, may be because they are not aware of the use of future perfect, so they use the simple tense form.

The second example reveals that the lowest percentage (8; 16%) corresponds to correct answer. A small percentage (35; 70%) goes for the wrong answer. Only (7; 14%) did not answer. The majority of students use simple future (*will end*) instead of future perfect (*will have ended*). Others, used the simple past of the future perfect (*would have ended*) because they are not aware of the use of future perfect.

Function B

In this sentence, almost all students (46; 92%) gave erroneous answers. Meanwhile, few students (4; 8%) failed to answer correctly. The majority of wrong answers corresponds to the substitution of *the future perfect (will have spent)* by the *simple future (will spend)*. Others used *the present continuous (is spending)* instead of *future perfect (will have spent)* because they ignore the rule restriction of this type of conditional.

It is clear that almost all students misused the future perfect. 100% of errors correspond to substitution of future perfect by the simple future and others used the present continuous instead. This error can be explained as an ignorance of the future perfect rule restrictions or because they avoid using complex tense and prefer using the easiest one.

3.3.1.1.2. Task Two

The tenses that should be used in this task are: Present Perfect Progressive, Past Perfect Progressive and Future Perfect Progressive.

Table 3.4

The Distribution of Wrong and Correct Answers in the Use of the Present Perfect Progressive in Task Two.

Present Perfect Progressive									
Function	Example	CA		WA		N T			
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A -An action in progress that is not yet completed.	-I <i>have been studying</i> since December.	40	80%	9	18%	1	2%	50	100
	-They <i>have been going</i> for years.	32	64%	18	36%	0	0%	50	100
B -A situation or habit that begun in the past and that continues up to the present.	-It <i>has been raining</i> for two hours.	35	70%	15	30%	0	0%	50	100

C-A state that changes over time.

D- An evaluative comment on something observed over time triggered by current evidence.

Function A

The first example in the above table shows that (9; 18%) of students selected the wrong tense, and (40; 80%) gave the correct tense form. However, few students ignored to answer (1; 2%). This means that most students have mastered the use of this tense. It is found that the majority of students have replaced the *present perfect progressive (has been studying)* by the *past progressive (was studying)* which is an irrelevant tense. This can be seen as a simplification error in which students choose the simplest tense to avoid complex usages; whereas others substituted it by the *past perfect progressive (had been studying)*. This is due to the ignorance of the rule restriction of the present perfect progressive. Students do not know where they use the exact tense.

In the second example, it is clear that the majority of correct answers of the verb form represent (32; 64%). The rest of the participants (18; 36%) misused this tense. The substitution error is the most recurrent one. They substituted it by the *past perfect progressive (had been going)*. Some other students have used another irrelevant tense which is the *past progressive (were going)*. The explanation of this is the same as in the first example.

Function B

The example reveals that almost all the students under the study chose the correct answer of the verb form (35; 70%), and (15; 30%) of them misused the present perfect tense. Most of the students who chose the wrong answer substituted this tense by the *past perfect progressive (had been raining)* and few of them substituted it by *past progressive (was raining)* for the same reasons.

It is clear that most students used the present perfect progressive effectively. Whereas, some of them failed because they substituted it either by “*past perfect progressive*” or by the irrelevant one “*past progressive*”. Students ignore the rule restriction of each tense and sometimes they avoid complex one.

Function A

The first example demonstrates that most of the students gave the wrong answer (30; 60%) and only (20; 40%) selected the appropriate tense form. The majority of wrong answers were the substitution of *past perfect progressive* by the *present perfect progressive* (*have been working*), because they do not know the rule restriction of using the past perfect progressive. Others have used a completely different tense which is *present perfect* (*have worked*) in order to avoid tense complexity.

The second example shows that the percentage of the correct answers (26; 52%) was approximately the same as the percentage of the wrong ones (24; 48%). Some students substituted the right tense by the *present perfect progressive* (*have/has been watching*), because of the ignorance of the rules restriction of each tense. Others have used the *past progressive* (*was watching*) because of its simplicity compared with the past perfect progressive.

Function B

According to the above table, (31; 62%) of students answered with the correct tense form. Meanwhile, (18; 36%) of students provided wrong answer. Hence, only (1; 2%) of the participants did not answer it at all. Some wrong answers were considered as omission errors like (*had looking*) they omitted the auxiliary “to be” (*have been looking*) because of the incomplete application of rules. Some students substituted the *past perfect progressive* (*had been looking*) by the *present perfect progressive* (*have been looking*) because of the same reason mentioned above.

The numbers of Students who have answered correctly and who have misused the past perfect progressive are nearly the same. The majority of them substituted it either by *present perfect progressive* or *past progressive*. Whereas, others committed omission

errors by omitting auxiliary “to be”. This kind of errors is due to students ‘ignorance of the rule restriction of this tense.

Table 3.6

The Distribution of Wrong and Correct Answers in the Use of the Future Perfect Progressive in Task Two.

Future Perfect Progressive									
Function	Example	CA		WA		NA		T	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A-“Durative or habitual action that is taking place in the present and that will continue into the future up until or through a specific future time.” Muricia and Freeman (p. 119, 1999)	- As delegates who arrived early <i>will have been discovering</i> , there have been some late changes to the conference program.	9	18%	33	66%	8	16%	50	100
	- In two years, ‘Time Morneau <i>will have been acting</i> for 50 years, and shows no sign of retiring from the theatre.	13	26%	35	70%	2	4%	50	100
	-This book on Proust is early difficult. On Saturday I <i>will have been reading</i> it for a month, and I am still only half a way.	12	24%	35	70%	3	6%	50	100

Function A

In the first example, it is noticeable that (33; 66%) of students could not answer. Only (9; 18%) were correct answers, and among these answers (8%; 16%) of students have used

the other form of this tense (*will have discovered*). Hence, only (8; 16%) of students did not answer it at all. This can be attributed to the fact that this tense is rarely used, so students could not master its rule. Most of students substituted the *future perfect progressive* by *past/present perfect progressive* (*had/have been discovering*); this means that students ignore the rule restriction of using the future perfect progressive correctly.

The second example reveals that only (13; 26%) answered correctly. Erroneous answers represent the highest percentage (3; 70%). However, (2; 4%) of the rest of participants did not answer. Students substituted *future perfect progressive* by either *present perfect progressive* (*have been acting*) or *past perfect progressive* (*had been acting*) for the same reasons.

The third example shows that (12; 24%) of students used the correct tense of the verb. Meanwhile (35; 70%) provided wrong answer. Hence, (3; 6%) did not answer it at all. Some wrong answers were the same as the previous examples; they substituted *the future perfect progressive* by the *past/present perfect progressive*. In addition, the other type of errors is the omission errors (*will have reading*) in which students committed omission mistakes by dropping out the auxiliary “to be” (*will have been reading*). This is due to the incomplete application of rules.

Almost all students misused the future perfect progressive. Most students avoid using this tense and substituted it either by *present perfect progressive* or *past perfect progressive*. Others committed omission errors by dropping out the auxiliary “to be”. This is may be because this tense is rarely used.

3.3.1.1.3. Task Three

In this task the following tenses should be used: Present Perfect and Past Perfect.

Table 3.7

The Distribution of Wrong and Correct Answers in the Use of the Present Perfect in Task Three

		Present Perfect							
Function	Example	CA		WA		NA		T	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A- a situation that began at a prior in time and continues into the present.	///								
B- a very recently completed action.	-However, they <i>have won</i> only five matches so far for this season.	15	30%	33	66%	2	4%	50	100
	-‘Neil’s attitude <i>has disappointed</i> us recently.	17	34%	29	58%	4	8%	50	100
C-an action that occurred over a prior time period and that is completed at the moment of speaking.	-Aston United <i>have sacked</i> their manager, - Neil Ronson.	10	20%	38	76%	2	4%	50	100
	-Over the last few months, he <i>has spent</i> more time on Spanish beaches than working with the player’s in s ton	2	4%	45	90%	3	6%	50	100

Function B

The first example in Table 3.7 reveals that wrong answers take the highest percentage (33; 66%). Meanwhile (15; 30%) of students provided the correct answer. The rest of the participants (2; 4%) did not answer. The most frequent error is the substitution of the *present perfect (have won)* by the *simple past (won)* because they have nearly the same use. So, students tend to avoid using the complex tense. Others substituted the *present perfect (have won)* by the *past perfect (had won)* because of the ignorance of the rule restriction.

As for the second example, (29; 58%) of students misused the present perfect. (17; 34%) students provided the correct form of the verb. Hence (4; 8%) of respondents did not answer at all. Concerning wrong answers, students substituted the *present perfect (has disappointed)* either by the *simple past (disappointed)* or the *past perfect (had disappointed)*. The interpretation is the same as the first example.

Function C

The first example shows that (38; 76%) of students gave erroneous answers. While (10; 20%) answered correctly. The rest of the participants (2; 4%) did not answer at all. Most of the students substituted *the present perfect (have sacked)* by *the simple past (sacked)*, because of its simplicity compared to present perfect. Others gave *(has sacked)* as a misformation of the subject of the verb.

As for the second example, the above table shows that almost all the students (45; 90%) answered incorrectly. While few students (2; 4%) provided the correct answer. The rest of the respondents (3; 6%) ignored to answer. Students substituted the present perfect *(has spent)* either by the *simple past (spent)* or the *past perfect (had spent)* for the same reason mentioned in the first example.

Table 3.8

The Distribution of Wrong and Correct Answers in the Use of the Past Perfect in Task Three.

		Past Perfect							
		CA		WA		NA		T	
Function	Example	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A-	sometimes preceding action is implied and indicated by the use of "ever, just already, by the time, before, after"								
B-an action completed in the past prior to some other past event or time.	<p>...he heard the news when he <i>had returned</i> from a three-week holiday....</p> <p>-....that it <i>had come</i> as a complete shock.....</p> <p>-....there <i>had been</i> no hint of any problem.....</p>	36	72%	14	28%	0	0%	50	100
		27	54%	20	40%	3	6%	50	100
		31	62%	16	32%	3	6%	50	100

Function B

The first example indicates that the majority of students (36; 72%) answered correctly. Among these answers, (52%) used *the simple past (returned)* which is also considered as correct answer in this case. While (14; 28%) of students provided wrong answer. Students substituted *the past perfect (had returned)* by *the present perfect (has returned)* because they ignore the rule restriction of each tense.

The second example demonstrates that (27; 54%) of students gave write answer. Among these answers, (48%) answered with the other correct tense; *past simple (came)*. Others (20; 40%) answered incorrectly. But only (3; 6%) did not answer at all. Students substituted *the past perfect (had come)* by *the present perfect (has come)* because of the ignorance of rule restriction of these tenses. A group of students answered (*had came*) as a misformation error in which they failed to provide the right past participle of the verb (*come*). Hence, incomplete application of rule can be considered as a source for this error.

The third example reveals that (31; 62%) of students answered correctly. Among these correct answers, (42%) answered with (*was*) which is also considered as a right answer. Meanwhile, small percentage (16; 32%) failed to provide the correct form of the verb. The rest of the respondents (3; 6%) did not answer it. Almost all students committed the same type of errors which is the substitution of *the past perfect (had been)* by *the present perfect (has been)* for the same reason mentioned in the previous example.

3.3.1.2. *Sum of the Results Obtained in the Use of All Perfect Tenses*

Table 3.9

Sum of the Results Obtained in the Use of All Perfect Tenses.

Tense	CA		WA		NA		T	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Presentperfect	79	6,32%	258	20,64%	13	1,04%	1250	100%
Past perfect	118	9,44%	174	13,92%	8	0,64%	1250	100%
Future perfect	20	1,6%	123	9,48%	7	0,56%	1250	100%
Present perfect	107	8,56%	42	3,36%	1	0,08%	1250	100%
progressive								
Past perfect	77	6,16%	72	5,76%	1	0,08%	1250	100%
progressive								
Future perfect	34	2,72%	103	8,48%	13	0,08%	1250	100%
progressive								

This table is a summary of all perfect tenses that have been used in the three tasks. The result focuses on the tenses which are mostly misused by students. The most problematic tenses are ordered from highest percentage to the lowest:

- Present perfect tense (258; 20,64%).
- Past perfect (174; 13,92%) comes in second position.
- Future perfect (123; 9,48%).
- Future perfect progressive (103. 8,48%)
- Past perfect progressive (72; 5,76%).
- Present perfect progressive(42; 3,36%).

3.3.2. Students' Essays Analysis

In order to analyze the findings of the students' essays, the percentage of wrong usage and correct usage of the perfect aspect was calculated. The students' pieces of writing showed that only present perfect, past perfect, and present perfect progressive were used. The following table illustrates the students' usage of perfect aspect.

Table 3.10

Students' Use of Perfect Aspect in the Essays.

Use	N	%
Correct use	17	40,47
Wrong Use	25	59,52
Total	42	100

3.3.2.1. Analysis and Interpretation of the Results Obtained Per Tense

3.3.2.1.1. Present Perfect

Students' essays showed that that there are (35; 83, 33%) uses of present perfect.

Table 3.11

The Distribution of Wrong and Correct Answers in the Use of Present Perfect in Students' Essays.

Use	Function					
	A- A situation that began at a prior in time and continues into the present.		B- A very recently completed action.		C- An action that occurred over a prior time period and that is completed at the moment of speaking.	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Correct	7	41,17	2	100	11	64,70
Wrong	9	56,25	0	0	6	35,29
No	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	16	100	2	100	17	100

Function A

The above table reveals that there were (16; 45,71%) uses of present perfect in this function. (7; 41,17%) were correct answers. (9; 56,25%) answers were wrong where students failed to use this tense in its appropriate function, as illustrated in the examples below of some students' sentences/

-I *studied* hard since I was a small child.

-In my life I *experienced* what some may say is the worst thing.

-Exams *has been* an important part in education system.

-Exams *has* a longtime *been* the only method...

-Human life *have seen* quite a change since the appearance of smart...

-Mobile phones *has* completely *changed* our life style.

-.. Mobile phones *have take* a great importance...

-mobile phone *have brough* many benefits.

- Mobile phone *have* radically *change* the way that we think.

In the first and second examples, students committed substitution error. They used the simple past *studied /experienced* instead of present perfect *have studied/ have experienced*. In this case, ignorance of rule restriction can be considered as source of this error.

The remaining examples show that students developed misformation errors. In the third, fourth, and the fifth examples, students misused the auxiliary “*have*”, where they failed to conjugate it with its appropriate subject “*Exams have been/ Human life has seen*”.

The other examples reveal that students misformed the past participle of the verbs *take/taken* “ *brough/brought*” “*change/changed*”. Here, the source of this error is the incomplete application of rule i.e., students fail to use a fully developed structure.

Function B

The above table also reveals that, there were (2; 5,71%) uses of present perfect in this function. The results show that only two examples have been used correctly in the right function.

Function C

The table reveals that, there were (17; 48,57%) uses of present perfect in this function. (11; 64,70%) were correct answers and (6; 35,29%) answers were wrong where students failed to use this tense in it appropriate function. The following examples illustrate that:

-...but they *have completely forgot* about the dangers.

-to test the knowledge they *gained*.

-... and forgot what he *studied*...

-...they *studied* hard so they don't want to lose the year.

-Although I *have never thought* of this choice before.

-she still gossiping about me using even harsh secrete *I have told* her before.

The first example demonstrates that the student committed a misformation error. The student misused the pat participle of the verb *forgot/forgotten* because of the incomplete application of the rule.

The second, third, and the forth examples show that students substituted the present perfect by the simple past tense "*gained/have gained*" "*studied/ has or have studied*".

In the fifth and the sixth examples, students substituted the present perfect by the past perfect, "*have never thought/ had never thought*" and "*I have told/ had told*". Ignorance of rule restriction is the source of this error i.e., they could not apply the present perfect in the appropriate situation. So they avoided using it and used the simple past or the past perfect instead.

3.3.2.1.2. Past Perfect

Students' essays showed that there were (5; 11,90 %) uses of past perfect.

Table 3.12

The Distribution of Wrong and Correct Answers in the Use of Past Perfect in Students' Essays.

Use	Function			
	A- Sometimes preceding action is implied and indicated by the use of "before and after"		B- An action completed in the past prior to some other past event or time.	
	N	%	N	%
Correct Use	0	0	3	75
Wrong Use	1	100	1	25
No Use	0	0	0	0
Total	1	100	4	100

Function A

The table shows that, there is only one wrong use of past perfect in this function.

-I never *thought* of that at that time.

It is noticeable that the student committed an omission error, where he omitted the first part of the verb “had”. He used “ *never thought* ” instead of “ *had never thought* ” because of incomplete application of the rule.

Function B

The table shows that (3, 75%) correct uses of the past perfect in this function. Whereas, there is only one (1, 25%) wrong answer.

-Exam *had become* a stressful period...

It is clear that student substituted the present perfect *have become* by the past perfect *had become*. Because they ignore the rule restriction of the past perfect; they are not aware about its functions.

3.3.2.1.3. Future Perfect

Table 3.13

The Distribution of Wrong and Correct Answers in the Use of Future Perfect in Students' Essays

Use	Function			
	A- A future action that will be completed prior to a specific future time.		B- A state or accomplishment that will be completed in the future prior to some other future time or event.	
	N	%	N	%
Correct Use	0	100	0	100
Wrong Use	0	100	0	100
No Use	0	100	0	100
Total	0	100	0	100

As the table reveals that the future perfect is not used at all in students' pieces of writing. Some students have used the simple future others did not. 100% of errors corresponds to the avoidance error because students ignore the rule restriction or they do not know where to use it appropriately; in its accurate function.

3.3.2.1.4. Present Perfect Progressive

Students' essays show that there are (2; 4,76 %) uses of present perfect progressive.

Table 3.14

The Distribution of Wrong and Correct Answers in the Use of Present Perfect Progressive in Students' Essays

Use	Function							
	A- An action in progress that is not yet completed.		B- A situation or habit that begun in the past and that continues up to the present.		C- A state that changes over time.		D- An evaluative comment on something observed over time triggered by current evidence.	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Correct Use	0	100	1	50	0	100	0	100
Wrong Use	0	100	1	50	0	100	0	100
No Use	0	100	0	0	0	100	0	100
Total	0	100	2	100	0	100	0	100

Function B

The table reveals that one student used it correctly and in its appropriate function.

Whereas, the other student misused it.

-Exams *has been playing* an important role in our education.

The student substituted the simple present by the present perfect progressive. This sentence expresses a fact, where the present simple should be used. The ignorance of the rule restrictions and accurate uses of tenses is the source of this error.

3.3.2.1.5. Past Perfect Progressive

Table 3.15

The Distribution of Wrong and Correct Answers in the Use of Past Perfect Progressive in Students' Essays

Use	Function					
	A- An action or habit taking place over a period of time in the past prior to some other past event or time.		B- An ongoing past action or state that becomes satisfied by some other event.		C- A past action in progress that was interrupted by a more recent past action.	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Correct Use	0	100	0	100	0	100
Wrong Use	0	100	0	100	0	100
No Use	0	100	0	100	0	100
Total	0	100	0	100	0	100

The table shows that all students did not use the past perfect progressive at all. The majority have used the simple past tense instead. This can be seen as an avoidance error because students are not aware about the uses of these complex tenses and may be also they ignore their rules. Avoidance occurs when students think that there will be a problem with a given form and they have no idea of what the target form is like.

3.3.2.1.6. Future Perfect Progressive

Table3.16

The Distribution of Wrong and Correct Answers in the Use of Future Perfect Progressive in Students' Essays

Future Perfect Progressive

Use	Function	
	“Durative or habitual action that is taking place in the present and that will continue into the future up until or through a specific future time.” Murcia and Freeman (p. 119, 1999)	
	N	%
Correct Use	0	100
Wrong Use	0	100
No Use	0	100
Total	0	100

It is clear that all students have not used the future perfect progressive. This tense is rarely used, that is why student avoid using it may be because they are not aware either of its form or function. The ignorance of its rule restriction can be considered as a source of this error.

3.3.2.2. Sum of Students' Erroneous Use of Perfect Aspect in the Essays.

Most of the perfect aspect errors occurred in the category of substitution (12 errors; 50%). This was followed by the category of misformation (10 errors; 41, 66%) and the least errors occurred in the category of omission with only errors (2errors; 8, 33%).

Table 3.17

Sum of Students Erroneous Use of Perfect Aspect in the Essays.

Perfect Aspect	Substitution		Misformation		Omission		Avoidance		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Present Perfect	9	75	10	100	1	50	0	100	20	6,17
Past Perfect	2	16,6	0	0	1	50	0	100	3	0,92
Future Perfect	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	100	100	100
Present Perfect Progressive	1	8,33	0	0	0	0	0	100	1	0,30
Past Perfect Progressive	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	100	100	100
Future Perfect Progressive	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	100	100	100
Total	12	100	10	100	2	100	100	100	324	100

It is noticeable that the category of substitution consists of the majority of errors with (12 errors; 50%). In this category, the highest frequency (9 errors; 75%) corresponds to the present perfect which is the most misused. Followed by the past perfect with (2 errors; 16, 66%). The second category is misformation with (10 errors; 41, 66%). The most misused tense in this category is the present perfect only with (10 errors; 100%). The last category of omission which consists of only (2 errors; 8, 33%), where students misused both present perfect and past perfect.

First, in the category of substitution *present perfect* is replaced by the *simple past*. For example, in the sentence “I *studied* hard since I was small child/ *have studied*”. Also the substitution of *past perfect* by the *present perfect*, for instance, in the sentence “although I *have never thought* of this choice before/ *had never thought*”. In addition, they substituted the *present simple* by *present perfect progressive*, for example, in the sentence “exams *has been playing* an important role in our education/ *play*”. The errors in the previous examples are due to the ignorance of the rule restriction; maybe they could not differentiate between the different uses of these tenses. Also, sometimes both the past simple and present perfect are used interchangeably in some situations.

Second, in the category of misformation, learners misused the form of certain verbs; for example “human life *have seen* quite.../ *has seen*”. Learners fail to conjugate the auxiliary to “*have*” with its appropriate subject. Also, they could not provide the appropriate past participle of the verb, for instance, “mobile phones *have take* a great importance/ *have taken*” and “mobile phone *have brough* many benefits/ *brought*”. One possible reason of this error is may be the incomplete learning of English rules. Thus, the students fail to develop a correct structure.

Third, in the category of omission, as in “I never *thought* of that at that time/ *had never thought*” where students omitted the first part of the verb “*had*”. The error in the omission

of the auxiliary “*had*” may be due to the incomplete application of the English tenses rules.

Fourth, in the category of avoidance, learners have not used the complex tenses at all, such as future perfect, past perfect progressive, and future perfect progressive. In this case, students avoid using these tenses because they are not aware of its appropriate use. This is due to its difficulty and the lack of basic knowledge of this tense.

3.4. Overall Analysis of the Results

3.4.1. The most problematic English Perfect Tenses

Concerning the grammar test, the most problematic perfect tenses are the present perfect, past perfect, future perfect. As for the essays, the most problematic perfect tenses are the present perfect and past perfect.

3.4.2. The Most Problematic Aspect

The result demonstrates that the most problematic aspect is the simple aspect (present perfect, past perfect, and future perfect) in both test and essay.

3.4.3. Types of Errors

The analysis of these results illustrated that students committed four types of errors in the use of the perfect aspect: substitution, misformation, omission, and avoidance of complex tenses. The analysis of all the correct and wrong uses of perfect aspect in both grammar test and students’ pieces of writing show that one of the major reasons behind the erroneous usage are the ignorance of the rule restriction and incomplete application of the rule. Those are considered as intralingual errors.

3.4.4. The Main Reasons of Errors

Concerning the reasons of difficulties in the misuse of these tenses, it is clear that lack of basic knowledge, incomplete learning of perfect tenses are the most common reasons of misusing of perfect aspect.

The results show that in the grammar test, the majority of answers are wrong whereas in the essays there are fewer errors comparing to the test. The reason behind this is the fact that in the essays, students control the context and avoid using difficult and complex perfect tenses. Indeed, it was noticed that, in students' writings, they tend to use the simple tenses especially the simple past and simple present and that leads to overproduction of simple tenses and avoidance of complex tenses. This limitation was expected because they have the problem of understanding and applying perfect tenses in their appropriate function. Whereas in grammar test, students cannot control the context and that demonstrate the great number of errors in comparison with their essays. Thus, the results obtained shows that both hypotheses of this study are rejected.

It is hypothesized that more imperfection will be found in the use of the past perfect and future perfect than in the present perfect tense.

It is also hypothesized that more imperfection will be found in the use of the perfect progressive aspect than in the perfect aspect.

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to investigate third year EFL students' misuse of perfect aspect in their writing language production and to highlight the most problematic tenses and the major reasons that lead students to commit different types of errors. The first instrument used in this research was a grammar test, which demonstrated that the majority of students committed a number of grammatical errors in the use of perfect aspect. The test results showed that students sometimes use irrelevant tense, replace one tense by others, and also omit "ed" of the past participle or a part of the verb. These three types of errors are substitution, misformation, and omission. The students' essays revealed that they face the same difficulties in using these tenses. They usually avoid using progressive aspect and use only the simple aspect (present perfect and past perfect). The types of errors in the essay are substitution, misformation, omission, and error of avoidance. However, the data gathered illustrated that all these errors are of intralingual errors: incomplete application of rules and ignorance of rule restriction or lack of basic knowledge as main sources of errors.

General Conclusion

1. Putting It Altogether

The fundamental goal of this research work is to investigate the misuse of perfect aspect in third year EFL students writing language production. Each English tense has its different functions which lead students to misuse them, specifically the perfect aspect. This study focuses on the reasons behind misusing perfect tenses. The hypotheses of this study are as follow:

It is hypothesized that more imperfection will be found in the use of the past perfect and future perfect than in the present perfect tense.

It is also hypothesized that more imperfection will be found in the use of the perfect progressive aspect than in the perfect aspect.

To achieve this research aim and test the hypothesis, two key research tools were employed, namely a grammar test and the analysis of students' pieces of writing. First, the grammar test was administered to fifty students from different groups who were asked to answer three grammar tasks in forty five minutes. Second, in order to increase the validity of the data, an analysis of the essays of the same students has been done.

This study includes two theoretical chapters. Chapter one entitled 'Perfect Aspect' covers three main points. First, a comprehensive definition of English tense and definition of English aspect and then provides deep explanation of all English aspect and their functions. Second, it highlights students' problems in using tense and aspect. Last, a brief description of the relation between grammar and good writing is provided. Chapter two, 'Error Analysis' focuses mainly on theories of Errors Analysis. It includes the types, sources of errors and their significance in the process of teaching and learning. It also deals with the steps and branches of error analysis as well as its main problems.

The analysis of the data obtained from these research tools has indicated that third LMD students misuse the perfect aspect tenses. In the grammar test, they commit different types of errors. While in their essays, they tend to avoid using complex tenses and use only the present perfect, past perfect, and present perfect progressive. Hence, the findings revealed that there are four types of errors students have committed. They are ordered from the highest percentage to the lowest as follows: substitution, misformation, omission, and avoidance. The results showed that the most problematic perfect tenses in the test are the present perfect, past perfect, and future perfect, whereas in the essays, the most problematic tenses are the present perfect and past perfect. Whereas, the most problematic aspect is the simple aspect (present perfect, past perfect, and future perfect) in both test and essay. The findings indicated many possible reasons behind the misuse of perfect aspect which are incomplete application of rules and ignorance of some others, or even the lack of knowledge about the functions of the perfect tenses. On the basis of the previous results, it is clear that both hypotheses of this study are rejected.

2. Pedagogical Implications

The present study investigates the problems that EFL students face in the use of the English perfect aspect and the types of errors committed while using it in their written work. More importance should be given to the grammar module, particularly by focusing on the different English tenses and their usages. Students should be made aware of the distinction between “tense” and “aspect”. Also, a deep explanation should be provided about the different functions of each perfect tense because most student confuse between them when they are guided by the context in the writing production. That is to say, students should be taught the grammar functions and how to use the form instead of memorizing the rules that may not serve the context. Grammar should not be taught as a separate module. It is not only the responsibility of the grammar teacher but all teachers of different modules

to consider their students' errors while using the perfect tenses and seek to correct such errors for students. Both oral and written errors should be corrected in order to enable students to use grammar rules effectively.

3. Limitations of the Study

The present study deals with students' errors in the use of perfect aspect is of great importance, but it has some limitations. First, not all students have answered the grammar test sincerely because of time constraints or maybe due to their weak level in grammar. In this research, focus was on all perfect tenses, but the majority of students avoided using these tenses in their essays. Only few students have used the present perfect and past perfect. In addition, the essays' questions were not answered as honestly as one could have expected. Some participants answered in a form of a paragraph where they have to answer in a form of an essay. Since this study is conducted on just 50 students, the sample selected is not representative with regard to the whole population because of time shortage. Furthermore, we made an attempt to design a questionnaire to teachers of written expression in order to know whether they provide feedback about the use of the perfect aspect, but it was eliminated because of time constraint.

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Appendix 01

Students Test

The present test is part of a Master Dissertation. We'll be so grateful if you can complete it sincerely. Your answers will be of great significance to bring this research to its end. Thank you for your collaboration.

Task 1: Fill in the blanks with the appropriate tense of the verbs between brackets.

1. Call me after 8 o'clock... (we/ finish) dinner by then.

2. I did German at school, but I most of it now. (forget).

3. Sam played tennis yesterday. It was his first game, and he wasn't very good at it.

-He (not/play/ before)

4. What do you think of my English? Do you think it (improve).

5. You went to the movies last night .You got there late.

The movie..... (already /begin).

6. I invited Rachel to the party, but she couldn't come.

-She (make)..... plans to do something else.

7. A: will you be free at 11.30?

-B: Yes, I..... (the meeting/end) by then .

8. The town is very different now. Ita lot (change).

9. Ben is on vacation, and he is spending his money very quickly. If he continues like this, (he/spend) all his money before the end of his vacation.

Task 2: Put the verbs in the correct form using the following tenses: Present perfect continuous, past perfect continuous or future perfect continuous.

1. As delegates who arrived early (discover)....., there have been some late changes to the conference program.

2. I started Spanish classes in December. I'm still studying Spanish now.

-I.....since December.

3. I was very tired when I arrived home.

-I (work /hard)..... all day.

4. Our friends always spend their holidays in Italy. They started going there years ago. They (go)..... for years.

5. In two years, 'Time Morneau (act)..... for 50 years, and shows no sign of retiring from the theatre.

6. When I got home; Mark was sitting in front of the TV. He had just turned it off.

-He (watch)..... a film.

7. This book on Proust is really difficult. On Saturday I (read)..... it for a month, and I'm still only half a way.

8. I was disappointed when I had to cancel my holiday.

-I (look)..... forward to it.

9. It is raining. The rain started two hours ago.

-It (rain)for two hours.

Task 3: Complete this extract from a newspaper article using the past simple, present perfect or past perfect of the verbs in brackets.

Aston United(sack) their manager, Neil Ronson. The former England football international (say) that he (hear) the news when he(return) from a three-week holiday in Spain and that it.....(come) as a complete shock. 'There (be) no hint of any problem when I..... (leave) for holiday'. Aston United(appoint) Ronson as a manager two years ago and last season they.....(finish) second in the First Division. However, they (win) only five matches so far this season. The chairman of the club, Peter White, last night,(accuse) Ronson of lack of commitment to the club. 'Neil's attitude (disappoint) us recently. Over the last few months, he (spend) more time on Spanish beaches than working with the player's in Aston.

Résumé

La présente étude vise à étudier les erreurs des étudiants dans l'utilisation des temps anglais (passé composé, le plus que parfait, future antérieure) les plus courantes par les étudiants de troisième année au département d'anglais, Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia, Université de Jijel. L'objectif principal de cette étude est d'identifier les principales raisons des difficultés rencontrées par les étudiants pour utiliser ces temps. Pour vérifier la validité de cette hypothèse, deux moyens de recherche sont utilisés pour collecter des données ; un test de grammaire et une analyse de l'expression écrite des mêmes étudiants. Le test a été administré à 50 participants sur 285 étudiants afin d'identifier les temps anglais les plus problématiques auxquelles ils sont confrontés en utilisant ces temps en clarifiant leurs types d'erreurs. Le deuxième instrument est une expression écrite des étudiants des mêmes groupes afin de déterminer l'usage abusif de ces temps anglais les plus courantes dans les paragraphes. Puis comparez leurs performances entre le test de grammaire et leurs propres expressions écrites. Le résultat obtenu montre que les étudiants de la troisième année font plus d'erreurs au test de grammaire alors qu'ils commettent moins d'erreurs dans leurs expressions écrites parce qu'ils sont tenus à l'écart de l'utilisation des temps complexe.

Mots-clés: temps en anglais, erreurs, erreur d'analyse, test de grammaire.

ملخص

تتمحور الدراسة الحالية حول تحليل الأخطاء الشائعة عند استخدام الأزمنة التامة لطلبة السنة الثالثة قسم اللغة الانجليزية، بجامعة محمد الصديق بن يحي، جيجل. الهدف الأساسي من هذه الدراسة هو تحديد الأسباب الرئيسية التي تقف وراء الصعوبات التي يواجهها الطلبة في استخدام هذه الأزمنة. للتحقق من صحة هذه الفرضية، تم استخدام وسيلتين مختلفتين لجمع البيانات اللازمة، اختبار قواعد اللغة و تحليل التعابير الكتابية الخاصة بالطلبة. تم إجراء هادان الاختباران على عينة من الطلبة، والتي تمثل 50 مشاركا من اجل تحديد أكثر المشاكل شيوعا التي يواجهها الطلاب عند استخدام الأزمنة من خلال تحديد أنواع الأخطاء التي يقعون فيها. الوسيلة الثانية هي التعبير الكتابي لنفس العينة من الطلبة من اجل تحديد سوء استخدام هذه الأزمنة. بعدها تمت مقارنة أداء الطلبة بين اختبار قواعد اللغة و التعابير الكتابية الخاصة بهم. تبين النتائج التي تم الوصول إليها بان طلبة السنة الثالثة يرتكبون عدة أخطاء عند استخدام الأزمنة التامة في حين يرتكب عدد قليل منهم هذه الأخطاء في التعبير الكتابي وذلك بسبب تجنبهم استخدام الأزمنة الأكثر تعقيدا

الكلمات المفتاحية

الازمنة التامة، الأخطاء، تحليل الأخطاء، اختبار قواعد اللغة.

Appendix 2

Students' Essay

Exams are a necessary step in the career of every student. They had become a stressful period on students due to their results that decide their educational fate more than away to test their knowledge that they gained in class. I believe that exams should be abolished because they lack credibility for their results can be manipulated with. As a consequence, they can not reflect the competence of the students.

Exams practiced in educational institutions do not reflect students' level. Although, evaluation and [putting price on elements to measure their worth ^{value}] had been a practice since the early infant civilizations, it cannot be applied to measure a concept as complicated as intelligence that exams are in schools strive to obtain. Students are affected by a lot of environmental and psychological factors that prevent them from delivering their best work for example, nervousness when waiting for the paper and panic when reading it cause the student to experience amnesia and forget what he studied and only remembered but shattered and unorganized role and eventually fail the test.
shattered

Another reason to abolish exams is their lack of credibility. Exams become more of a competition to place students in social groups, it started to push people students to cheat their way into getting good scores. For example, the recent college entrance exam that took place in The United States, where many wealthy families were convicted of paying hundreds of dollars

Chobare Ines GPOL

B-

Today's life has known a big development especially in the field of technology, each day new inventions are created with multi-functions, but the most common invention in our society is the mobile phone, which became a necessary accessory to each individual thinking that it is the most useful thing they have, but they have completely forgot about the dangers that it provoke to our life, personality, and health which I personally emphasize on it.

Firstly, • despite the small size of the mobile phone, it actually contains many electronic components that affect our health and especially our mind, these electronic pieces provoke a slow in our reaction, and it also affect it with a less

Verboil Manal
Cros.

Exams has been an important
gives teachers an evaluation of
However, many people oppose to the
an exams to decide knowledge
is better to know the skills
in the schools and in the classes.

First, exams and tests require
and study at home. If the student
in the school and don't have to
to understand the lesson and the

Exams and tests are getting more and
the progress made by the students
between student's. Therefore, students

abolishment

Dawson H

~~Every~~ Every year students have to decide whether they'll pass or not. ~~the~~ therefore exams ~~are~~ can determine their level, and if they must pass or not ~~are~~ ~~so~~ ~~important~~ are not so important seem to be, and ~~that's why~~ ~~the~~ ~~exams~~ ~~are~~ ~~abolished~~. ~~Exams~~ don't necessarily evaluate students' real level, ^{since they can} and don't give to students fairly. \rightarrow many work

One of the reasons why exams are abolished is that they don't really evaluate students' capacities and real level. They get lazy over the year, and they cheat on the day of exam. ~~but~~ ~~when~~ on the day of exam the students who cheat ~~and~~ make other worked hard lose their chance for a master degree for example, ~~and~~ some other students took

on pinpoints
therefore
of face

and over grammar is score is
must be abolished for many

Exam has been playing an important role
gives teacher a way to evaluate student, the
student's progress, but I am not in of
reasons. In my opinion, there are three
use exams.

firstly, some student are good in class
exams because the word exam is word
and when the person get stressed
results of the student hard work and

secondly, the exams do not define student
→ said "a single paper can't decide my of
skills and capabilities in other field
and capabilities.

third, cheating in exams, many the
way to achieve average by cheating

Road accident

Nowadays, Algeria
different phenomena when

people died through it

is one of them that distric

number - Discovering that

to consideration some sugo

and the absence of experience
are evaluating students individually

There are several educational systems
same aspects, as well as, they do
the crucial issues that may be
system is the exams' pattern. A
system (is ~~one of the~~) has made sports
educational sector. Nowadays
choice in the list of the most
systems in the highly developed
it, an exam-free educational
huge success in countries such
with the abolishment of
reasons.

To start with, abolishing
carriers that keep students
today. I think that, it would

Exams has been a long
only method expressed by many
universities around the global
students' performance and
level in different modules.
people through history had
method into question, but
on this way of evaluation has
often criticized by many, and
for its lack of credibility and
its low outcome, that among
~~now~~ has to be taken into consideration
highest authorities

Today things are better, because we have an invention that's called mobile phone. In my opinion there is no life without mobile phone, and personally I can not live without mobile phone. Mobile phone have radically changed the way we work. mobile phone communication is a real time event. calling messaging, chatting and video are all a real time event.

Mobile phone have many advantages. they have brought many benefits. convenient - we can say that it is convenient - work can be done anywhere as long as we have it. as an example of advantages, it is very convenient we can take it anywhere.

also cause the Solitude and the non-conv

Finally, the use of mobile phone may have consequences like the harassment with is dangerous for them.

On the other hand, Mobile phones between people and help them in many stuff information on their studies, give new recipes, what is happening about the world.

Personally, mobile phone is has our lifestyle - people spend the majority of it forgetting that they do have a family and take care of.

To conclude, even if the tech