

## Errors of Spelling, Capitalization, and Punctuation Marks in Writing Encountered by First Year College Students in Al-Merghib University Libya

Abdusalam Alhadi A Shweba<sup>1✉</sup>, Yan Mujiyanto<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Al-Merghib University, Libya

<sup>2</sup> English Language Education Postgraduate Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

### Article Info

#### Article History:

Received 29 December 2016

Accepted 05 July 2017

Published 01 August 2017

#### Keywords:

*Writing Skill, Error Analysis, Capitalization, Punctuation, and Spelling.*

### Abstract

Writing as the productive skill is considered to be more difficult than any other productive skill. Students face difficulties and commit errors in many different writing skills, especially in mechanics (punctuation, capitalization, and spelling). The study examined the errors of writing skill that face first year English college students of Al-Merghib University in related to the three mechanics. There were thirty participants of different genders in the study. They were thirteen males and seventeen females who studies in the first year of English college in Al-Meghib University. To achieve the objectives of the study, qualitative design was employed. The data was collected using two methods: 1) questionnaire to check the participants' knowledge about the punctuation, capitalization, and spelling usage and 2) a test to analyze these errors in the respondents' written language. To analyze the data, simple statistics description was used. The result of the study found that capitalization error was the most committed one, followed by the punctuation error, and spelling error was the least error committed by the first year English college students. It was concluded that most of the respondents committed some errors because of their lack of knowledge, lack of balance in the curriculum and the influence of mother tongue. Writing classes must engage students with more practices than ask them to deliver lectures. Also, this study provides some helpful suggestions to avoid the identified errors. The study can be used as an insight to the next other researchers and as a reference for similar topics about writing skills. Teachers must pay deep attention to the use of all the punctuation marks, explain the conventions of capitalization, and clarify more about the spelling rules. Students should be encouraged to do home written assignments as much as possible.

© 2017 Universitas Negeri Semarang

✉Correspondence Address:

Asseraj Area Tripoli - Libya 6996

E-mail: [abdo.hadi1993@gmail.com](mailto:abdo.hadi1993@gmail.com)

p-ISSN 2087-0108

e-ISSN 2502-4566

## INTRODUCTION

English is an international language that has an important role in communication by all people to have an interaction with another people in the world who have different languages. As an international language, English is always used direct communication, in almost whole world in a lot of countries. English is taught as a foreign language (EFL), in which students are supposed to master the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). The skill of writing is one of the most challenging areas of language instruction and learning in EFL context (Aljarf, 2007). Writing skill is assessed to be almost the confused one, however it is still the important skill for the English language students to be learnt. Written language wants a reader and spoken language wants a listener, thus, this functions them as a medium of communication in the language.

Writing is a difficult skill for native speakers as well as non-native speakers, because professional writers should master different conventions of writing such as content, organization, purpose, audience, vocabulary, and mechanics such as capitalization, punctuation, spelling. Writing skill is especially difficult for non-native speakers because they are expected to create written products that demonstrate mastery of all the above elements in a new language.

English is taught as a foreign language in Arabic countries in general and Libyan schools specifically. Moreover, foreign language is the language that is not a native language in a country (Richards, Platt, & Platt, 1992). Acquiring the writing skill in English poses a lot of challenges for many Libyan learners. Acquiring the writing skill in English poses a lot of challenges for many Libyan learners.

In addition, some studies highlighted the technical difficulties in the English writing of Arabic speaking students such as punctuation difficulties (Mourtaga, 2004) & spelling difficulties (El-Hibir & Al-Taha, 1992). Also, Macarthur (1999) supported the claim that students who find writing challenging often

struggle with the basic transcription processes involved in writing, including handwriting or typing, spelling, capitalization and punctuation. Therefore, the elements that make written language well are spelling, capitalization and punctuation marks.

In order to fill this gap in research, this study attempted to investigate and identify the most common errors produced by the first year English college students of Al-Merghib University, Libya, in their academic writing. It also investigated the relationship between the writing prompts and the number and frequency of these errors. In particular, the study is important for finding the errors of spelling, capitalization and punctuation marks in writing skill and measuring the frequency of these errors in first year English college students.

The reviews of the related studies, Raja & Zahid (2013) found that capitalization, vocabulary, grammar and organization are the errors that showed in their study which encountered by undergraduate students. Also, Sawalmeh (2013) investigated that capitalization error is one of the most errors in 32 written essay in his study which conducted for preparatory students and these errors were because of the influence of the students' mother tongue. Therefore, Mahmoud (2014) classified the errors of Saudi students' into many kinds: errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, the use of vocabulary and coherence.

There are some studies shed light on the spelling errors targeting Arab students. One of these studies is AlJarf (2010). He mentioned that the reason of his study about students' spelling errors was because of the teachers of EFL did not give a great significant to student's spelling errors and how can they decrease these errors. In addition to that, Fender (2008) identified that most of Arabian pupils commit many spelling errors and as he classified the errors especially in spelling patterns, words and multi-syllabic words, so this proves that the students a weak proficiency in spelling.

Punctuation marks have been used to prevent miscomprehension of expressions and enable the full comprehension of the written

language. In the study of Eroğlu, & Okur, (2014), they illustrated that punctuation marks are different in related to the use and formulation in term of the written language, so punctuation marks start to change since the 2nd century BC and they change from time to time in their use and shape. Also they indicated that the significant of nowadays punctuation marks which used in different written language like, military, religious and literary language were to clarify the meanings of a written language and to prevent the misunderstanding that might occur from the audience to the written language.

Writing skills is difficult not only for the students but also for the teachers when they write in their own language or any target language, so sometimes they commit different errors in their writing especially in spelling, capitalization and punctuation marks. Thus, these aspects, spelling, capitalization and punctuation marks, should every writer be skillful while he/she is writing a language and every writer must get a complete knowledge about the conventions and rules of writing skills. Rice (2008) stated that since the days of Harvard's English, mechanics has been an appropriate term for what pedagogues believed to be actually taking place in introductory writing courses. Students with poor grammar and mechanical skills were sent to the writing clinics in order to have their errors "fixed". According to Zemliansky (2000), 1965 roughly marks are the beginning point of a new attitude toward the value of mechanics in composition. Standard English conventions were seen mechanics as the primary resource of meaning making and tended to equate mechanics with clear communication (Zemliansky, 2000).

Explicit discussions of mechanical correctness started to dwindle. Zemliansky explains that the mention of mechanics and grammar more commonly appeared in rhetorical contexts, such as the question of problem solving, self-expression, or audience persuasion.

Though, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization are classification of mechanics.

Thus English language learners misuse these mechanical writing skills, especially Arab learners. Thus, Nazim and Ahmad (2012) investigated the common writing problems of Saudi students studying in preparatory year at Najran University in order to provide some remedies and suggestions to develop their writing skills. They examined the teachers' opinion about the students' writing problems including conventions, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and other problems related to language use. Generally, the results indicated that the students had major problems in conventions, punctuations, capitalizations, spelling, and language use.

In language learning, learners' error is one of the most common discussions among all other aspects of EFL/ESL environment. If we want to define the relation between learner and error then we will see that it has very close relation. There are different levels of learners who make different types of errors in their language learning process. Many researchers have worked on learners' errors. According to the learners' level, they make different types of errors.

Commonly we can see that learners make error while they are developing their language skills. As we are dealing with EFL learner, it is a vital issue to find out the relation between learner and error, where errors in academic writing are intolerable. In reality we can see that though EFL students, they still face difficulties in writing. We can find the evidence through their production of comprehensive writing where we can discover some common existence of errors.

Sinha (1997) believes that making errors is inevitable in FL/SL language learning. But she also believes that analyzing a student's errors can be a very useful way of showing what students have learnt, and have not learnt. Hence, instead of interpreting errors negatively as a sign of failure we can view them positively as an indication of what still needs to be learned. Sinha (1997) also mentions that in many developed countries, errors are no longer considered 'crimes' but are analyzed carefully

and sympathetically since they can play a major role in the success of a language teaching program.

Fahmida (2010), stated that common error in academic writing where relation between target learners' and their common errors is one of the major issue. In addition our learners' target language is English, which is considered as second language or foreign language.

The study of errors is carried out by means

of Error Analysis (EA). In 1970s EA became a recognized part of applied linguistics, a development that owed much to the work of Corder. Systematically analyzing errors made by language learners make it possible to determine areas that need reinforcement in teaching (Corder, 1974). Pit Corder is the "Father" of Error Analysis.

EA took a new turn with his article entitled "The significance of Learner Errors" (1967). According

to Corder (1974), error analysis (EA) research consists of several steps. He suggests the following steps: collection of a sample of learner language, identification of errors, description of errors, explanation of errors, and evaluation of errors.

Despite the errors that EFL Libyan students encounter in writing, there has not been much research on EFL writing in Libya. Javid et al. (2013) admitted that there has been a scarcity in the EFL writing research. In particular, as Javid et al. informed that there has been a great need for error analysis research in which students' common errors were identified and addressed. This type of research will be particularly beneficial to overcome the errors of first year English college students in Al-Merghib University, Libya, have while they are writing in English.

## METHODS

This study used qualitative data; the qualitative data supported by simple quantification in a form of words of frequencies

and percentages in order to prove the objectives of the study to present the finding of the study. Both the questionnaire and the test analyzed qualitatively and supported by simple quantification. The main data was qualitative while simple quantification was only used as a supportive to the qualitative data. Both data analyzed descriptively. The data was collected by two methods; a questionnaire, to check the participants' knowledge about the punctuation, capitalization, and spelling usage, and a test, to analyze these errors in the respondents' written language then the analysis were simple statistics description. The analysis of data focused on the writing errors done by the first year English college students.

The participants in the study were thirty respondents, mixed with two genders, thirteen males and seventeen females, who study in first year English college students in Al-Meghib University.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

From the samples, different types of errors were identified and categorized according to their types. We know that in error analysis, collection of sample of learners' language and then identification of errors are very important steps. The study aimed to find out the first year English college students' errors in academic writing obtained through the identification, description, explanation and evaluation of the errors, which are the essential parts of error analysis. Then the samples will be classified into different categories such as: errors in capitalization, errors in punctuation, and spelling errors. Different types of errors will be classified following Sinha's (1997) classification of errors.

The following error chart illustrates the different kinds of errors the students have committed. To give general idea about the students' different types of error, Sinha's (1997) classification of errors has been followed here:

**Table 1.** The Errors

Type	Source of Errors
Overgeneralization errors	To use some of punctuation marks in the wrong usage, to not capitalize some words which should be capitalized.
Interference errors	To use some punctuation as it is used in L1, to misspell some words as it is pronounced in L1.
Errors by analogy	Misuse of some punctuation marks because similar to their use rules like (colon and semi-colon).
Spelling errors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Homonym; confuse a word with another word that has similar sound.</li> <li>2. Adding a letter because of wrong pronunciation.</li> <li>3. Deleting a letter because of wrong pronunciation.</li> <li>4. Substitute a letter that has a similar sound.</li> </ol>

The previous table showed the errors and the source of the errors found while analyzing the data.

The Findings of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire consisted of four sections and 23 items which divided into different types of errors that English first year college students encounter in their writing. Therefore, Section 1 analyzed how the respondents can differentiate between some similar punctuation, and it had 4 items. Section 2 investigated how the respondents know the proper use of other punctuation marks, and it contained 5 items. Section 3 conducted to know how the participants can use capitalization, and it had 7 items. Section 4 examined how the respondents can know the patterns of their misspelled words, and it contained 7 items.

All the sections have the four frequency choices: always, sometimes, rarely and never.

Each one of the four sections' results analyzed independently, so the first section which was how the participants can differentiate between the use of some similar punctuation marks and the major number of the participants answered frequency of the respondents was rarely, thus the students' response was rarely they do differentiate between the use of some similar punctuation marks. This means that the participants do encounter errors in their writing in related to some similar punctuation marks.

The second section of the questionnaire revealed that more than quarter of the participants answered sometimes, so 28% of the students know the proper use of punctuation marks.

In addition, the third section showed that the major number of the students responded negatively, they said that they never use capitalization correctly in their writing.

The last section, exposed that very high number of students encounter spelling errors when they write in English, hence, the percentage of the participants who do misspelling in their writing.

The following table illustrates the percentage of the capitalization, punctuation, and spelling errors for each frequency:

**Table 2.** Students' average of responses

No.	Field	Always %	sometimes %	Rarely %	Never %
1.	Capitalization	28	24	27	27
2.	Punctuation	28	25	18	28
3.	Spelling	18	17	28	35

The causes of committing such errors are: lack of knowledge, lack of balance in the curriculum, the influence of mother tongue, carelessness, lack of intensive practice and experience, overgeneralization of the rules and lack of exposure to the target language as it is used by its native speakers.

The Findings of the Test

The test of this research consisted of two sections which divided into different types of errors that first year English college students encounter in their writing. Therefore, Section 1 investigated the given text which is unpunctuated, not capitalized, and misspelled, and the respondents tried to correct these errors. All standard punctuation marks which missed are 20 marks, whereas all standard missed capitalization are 16 letters, and all standard misspelled words are 16 words. The following tables demonstrate each errors types separately:

**Table 3. Capitalization Errors**

Score Error	Frequency	Percentage
8	5	17%
10	8	27%
5	10	33%
12	1	3%
7	6	20%

The pervious table 3. illustrated that 5 of the participants committed 8 errors in capitalization, so the percentage for that was 17%. The other 8 respondents committed 10 errors, and the percentage was 27%. Another 33% of the errors resulted by 10 students who did 5 errors in capitalization, while only 1 participant committed

12 errors, and the percentage was just 3%. Whereas, 20% of the errors committed by 6 respondents who wrote 7 errors in capitalization. The following table explains the errors of punctuation marks:

**Table 4. Punctuation Errors**

Score Error	Frequency	Percentage
15	9	30
13	1	33
10	6	20
18	5	17

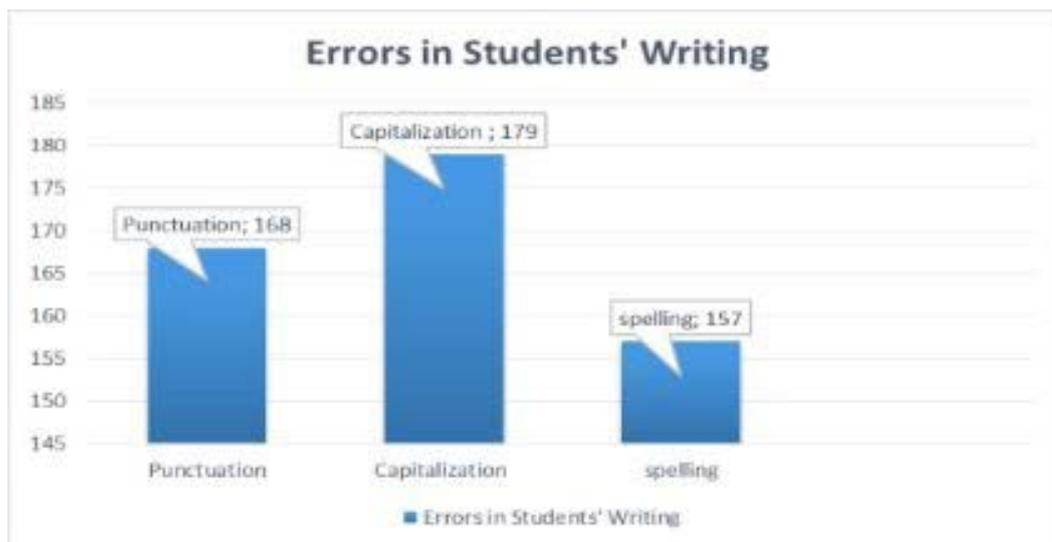
As shown in the table 4. above, the percentage 30% of the errors resulted by 9 students who did 15 errors in punctuation marks, while 10 of the participants committed 13 errors in punctuation, so the percentage for that was 33%. The other 6 respondents committed 10 errors, and the percentage was 20%. Another 5 participant committed 18 errors, and the percentage was 17% in punctuation marks. The next table describes the errors of spelling:

**Table 5. Spelling Errors**

Score Error	Frequency	Percentage
14	6	20
12	5	17
10	7	23
9	5	17
7	3	10
8	4	13

The pervious table 5. illustrated the errors of misspelling words in the given text, therefore, 6 of the participants committed 14 errors in spelling, so the percentage for that was 20%. The other 5 respondents committed 12 errors, and the percentage was 17%. Another 23% of the errors resulted by 7 students who did 10 errors in spelling, whereas, 5 participants committed 9 misspelling words, and the percentage was 17%. Here it is only 10% of the errors committed by just 3 respondents who wrote 7 errors in spelling, and 4 of the participants committed 8 errors in spelling, so the percentage for that was 13%. From the previous tables' percentages which mentioned above, there are errors in punctuation, capitalization, and spelling that encounter first year college students in their writing.

The second section of the test investigated the participants' free writing text errors that focused on punctuation, capitalization, and spelling, so the respondents was given different topic and asked to choose and write freely about just one topic. The following chart will show and proof the most committed errors in the respondents' writing and their percentages.



**Figure 1.** Students' Writing Errors in Punctuation, Capitalization, and Spelling

The chart above explains the participants' writing errors which focused on punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. The highest errors that found in the students writing were in capitalization, so in 30 students' writing were 179 capitalization errors. Then punctuation marks errors were less than capitalization, 168 punctuation marks errors committed in the respondents' writing, whereas 157 spelling errors analyzed in the participants' writing.

Therefore, through conducting this questionnaire and test, findings have been revealed that the errors which face first year English college students in this research are capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. The reasons for those errors mainly because of the lack of knowledge, lack of balance in the curriculum, and the influence of mother tongue.

The present investigator developed and administered the background questionnaire and English general proficiency test. It means that the questionnaire was mainly to know their background while the test was deeper since, it dealt with whether their background met the answers on the test or not.

The Errors of Punctuation Marks in Students' Writing Punctuation is an essential part of language. Peck and Coyle (1999) referred punctuation as the signaling system of language. Many students make awful mess of punctuation, which denotes that their performance in writing

suffers. From the students' writing, the researcher has identified that most of the students encounter and commit punctuation errors.

The findings in the current study revealed that the students were unable to differentiate between the uses of comma and full stop, colon and semi-colon, brackets and parenthesis, and hyphen and dash. For example, the students that stated sometimes could differentiate between the use of comma and full stop less than half. Moreover, they do not know the proper use of: exclamation mark, quotation marks, apostrophe, question mark and ellipses. For instance: 40% said that they never know the use of ellipses. These findings are constituent with the findings of (Ferguson & Mickerson 1992) who stated "Actually, the students are unable to write well in English. The reasons that make the students unable to write well were poor knowledge of punctuation and difficulty in grasping spelling".

It has been discussed in literature review that an aspect of punctuation that usually confused people is the comma. From the students' writing in the test, the researcher has found error of punctuation. In many participants' writing, the researcher has found that students prefer to write long sentence without using a comma. As stated in Fahmida (2010), the participants frequently used 'and' but left out the comma where it was needed.

They did not use comma in their long sentences. Those long sentences became overloaded sentences without proper punctuation.

Another common punctuation error in students' writing is the full stop, where students write incomplete sentence and use full stop. These kinds of punctuation errors are very common in the participants' writing. From the written language of the respondents, the researcher can reveal that students have lack knowledge in using comma and full stop. Most frequent punctuation errors the researcher has and always struggle in the proper use of period, question mark, colon/semi colon and commas while they write. This area should be taken into consideration by the teachers especially when they are correcting the students' writing.

One of the most errors that found while the researcher was analyzing the data is the carelessness of the students. As stated in Darus & Ching (2009), learners' carelessness and lack of concentration cause errors when learners are writing. In most cases, they don't care and are not even bothered to ensure that, for example, they end their sentences with a full stop. It is not something that they do not know, but it might be due to carelessness.

In addition, as stated by (Adas & Bakir 2013), "Several English language learners with Arabic background struggle with punctuation since Arabic has few limitations in the use of commas and periods than English. The semi-colon and the exclamation marks are not very commonly used in students' writings".

This research agrees with the result that found in Kapolo (2013) study. Typically the participants omitted punctuation marks in their writing. Also, from the researcher's experience, different teachers also teach differently. Some put more emphasis on punctuation marks and others do not. Learners apply what they were taught, especially at the early stage of their learning.

The Errors of Capitalization in Respondents' Writing As found in Nazim & Ahmad (2012), learners frequently miss or replace the capital/lower case letter at the start

encountered from the students' writing are misuse of full stop. It indicates that students are unaware of the proper use of this punctuation mark at the end of the sentences which suffers their performance of the writing. This is in line with the finding of Fahmida (2010). Therefore, Fahmida found that students committed errors in writing and the common errors were including punctuation marks especially misusing of comma and full stop.

Nazim, & Ahmad (2012) found that the learners do punctuation errors in their writing of the word/sentence. It seems that the students do not have enough input to differentiate the proper use of capitalization whether or not to use the capital or lower case letter of all proper nouns, title words/phrases and the first word of a sentence while they write. Therefore, in this study, the most errors were regarded to capitalization are capitalizing the proper nouns, capitalizing the important words in title and the ability to use capital letters at the beginning of the sentence. An example for errors more than half of participants said that they rarely capitalize the titles used with the names of people.

The result in category of capitalization corroborates the research of Smith (2002) who highlighted malformation as a specific error in Arab learners' writing. Referring to capitalization errors in students' writing, it is evident that first year English college students commit errors in forming the letters such as (c, f, i, k, l, p, s, and w). During data analysis, the researcher found that the errors in forming the letters are due to unfamiliarity of distinctions between upper case and lower case. These errors have some similarity with the corresponding upper case such as (C, F, I, K, L, P, S, and W).

Similarly, this also agrees with what the researcher has stated previously that writing is a complicated activity as it requires students' abilities such as mastering capitalization, punctuation and spelling. This magnified by the fact that the errors of capitalization are interlingual as well interlingual. This comes to the agreement with Siddiqui (2015) in her study.

She stated that the errors of capitalization are interlingual because orthographic differences of English and Arabic languages contribute negatively in the occurrences of errors. Errors of capitalization are intralingual because Libyan learners, first year English college students, do not transfer rules of capitalization from Arabic language. Mastery in the rules of capitalization maximizes or minimizes the scope of errors. Learners generalize, overgeneralize and overextend in applying upper case and lower case against the established conventions of capitalization.

As the errors that encountered by the students in misusing of capitalization, Nunan (1991) states that writing successfully involves mastering and obeying conventions of mechanics of letter formation, spelling and punctuation. Therefore, this will make the students' writings bad. To be successful writers, they have to do some steps, and each step involves using and obeying the rules of capitalization, spelling and punctuation that lead to a good written language.

The Errors of Spelling Respondents' Writing Spelling error is one of the common errors that students make. Spelling errors has been categorized into different types according to the students' error. Spelling errors has been categorized and grouped into 6. The categories are addition, deletion, substitution, transposition and homonym. The findings of this research found that the spelling errors are similar to the findings of Subhi & Yasin's (2015) study, they have stated that after identifying and categorizing the spelling errors of 30 students writing composition, the total number of spelling errors found in student writing are 344 errors words. The students committed 182 omission spelling errors with a percentage 53% of the total followed by 84 insertion spelling errors with a percentage of 24%. There are 62 substitution spelling errors with a percentage of 18% of the total and only 16 transposition spelling errors with a percentage of 5% of the total. The majority of spelling errors are centralized in omission and insertion with 266

errors out of 344 that forms a percentage of 77% of all the errors committed by students.

The findings of the research supported by the findings of Fender (2008) that showed that Arab students have a lower level in spelling and they have difficulties in spelling patterns, words, and multi-syllabic words. Similarly, the researcher's findings agree with what he suggested in the beginning said that says, "English language learners encounter many errors while learning to write in a second or foreign language beyond mastering capitalization, punctuation marks, and spelling rules".

In contrast, Khansir (2013) has claimed that the minimum number of errors recorded in writing in his study was "spelling". This constituted 14% of errors for spelling. It means that Iranian students do not have many errors in spelling. However, first year English college students in Al-Merghib University, Libya have low- proficiency in spelling and this perhaps due to lack of knowledge; moreover, English language in Libya was not taught at the early stages (it is only taught at the 7th grade). In addition to these reasons, lack of balance in Libyan English curriculum could be one more cause for those weaknesses.

The findings of the current study was similar to Kapolo (2013). The error of spelling is that students lack the skills of fitting phonemes (sounds) and graphemes (letters). Respondents spelt the words based on the sound of the words and they could also not differentiate spelling of words with the same sound but different meanings and different spelling (homophones).

Over the years, spelling errors have been extensively researched in Saudi Arabia countries (Khan & Itoo, 2012; Khan, 2013; Alhaisoni, Al-Zuoud, & Gaudel, 2015). The results of this study lend support to the other researchers who found that Saudi students commit errors in English spelling and particularly with vowels. Therefore, teachers need to be cognizant of the vowel blindness phenomena when dealing with spelling errors in addition to the irregularity of the English orthographic system. Raising the students' awareness to the

differences between the Arabic and English orthography might be helpful in this case. To conclude, the students' responses to the questionnaire and test, and after comparing the findings of the research with the previous studies and other findings, the researcher states that in spite the fact that the sample of this research are first year English college students, they still lack the ability to use correct capitalization, punctuation, and spelling while they are writing English.

## CONCLUSION

The conclusions are drawn from the findings of the study. Secondly, the findings of this study showed that capitalization errors are the most committed errors in students writing, and punctuation marks errors come second, then spelling errors are the less committed. Even if the respondents proficiency in spelling was lower than the others, they still had difficulty in understanding the spelling rules. A big number of the respondents answered incorrectly to the test. This might be because of their lack of knowledge, lack of balance in the curriculum and the influence of mother tongue.

In addition, the study presented a detailed analysis of errors in capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. It investigated their rules, interlingual and intralingual errors, understanding of orthographic differences in English and Arabic languages, and the need of reinforcement of these mechanics at first year college levels. This study has highlighted the errors of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling as an exclusive field of study that needs to be investigated further. The study opens new directions of research with focused analysis of these three mechanic errors in different EFL settings and can find new dimensions in EFL/ESL composition.

Based on the research findings, some recommendations are given below and these recommendations are expected to help the students in future to avoid committing these types of errors.

Writing classes must involve more practice than lectures. Teachers must pay special attention to the uses of all the punctuation marks, explain the conventions of capitalization, and clarify more about the spelling rules. Moreover, teachers must motivate and encourage the learners before actual writing, provide the language support on every single topic, act as a prompter to assist the student at times. Teachers have to stop gradually using their mother tongue in the class. Besides, they have to pay attention to the teaching strategy.

Students should be encouraged to do home written assignments as much as possible. Students must go to look for further information not only depend on the teachers' explanation. In addition to that, the ministry of higher education in Libyan has to make plans to develop English curriculum.

## REFERENCES

- AlJarf, (2010). Spelling error corpora in EFL.SinoUS English Teaching, 7(1).
- AlJarf, R. (2007) Faulty Strategies of EFL Freshman Spellers. Saudi Arabia.
- Corder, S. P. (1967). The significance of learners' errors. IRAL, 5, 161-170.ERIC Document Reproduction Service.
- Corder, S.P. (1974) Error Analysis in Allen, J.L.P. and Corder, S.P. (eds) Techniques in Applied Linguistics. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Darus, S., & Ching, K. H. (2009). Common errors in written English essays of form one Chinese students: A case Study. European Journal of Social Science. 10 (2).
- El-Hibir, B., & Al-Taha, F. (1992). Orthographic errors of Saudi students learning. English' Language Learning Journal,, 5(1).
- Eroğlu, A., & Okur, A. (2014). Teacher candidates' attitudes towards spelling and punctuation used in social communication tools. Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences.
- Fahmida, B. (2010). Bangladeshi Tertiary Level Students' Common Errors in Academic Writing (Doctoral dissertation, BRAC University).
- Fender, M. (2008). Spelling knowledge and reading development: Insights from Arab ESL learners. Reading in a Foreign Language, 20(1).

- Javid, C. Z., Farooq, U., & Umer, M. (2013). An Investigation of Saudi EFL learners writing problems: A case study along gender-lines. *Kashmir Journal of Language Research* (1).
- Kapolo, F. L. (2013). Analysis Of Writing Errors Made By Grade 11
- Macarthur, C. (1999). Overcoming Barriers to Writing: Computer Support for Basic Writing Skills. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, 15(2).
- Mahmoud, M. M. A. (2014). The effectiveness of using the cooperative language learning approach to enhance EFL writing skills among Saudi University students. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 5(3).
- Mourtaga, K. (2004). Investigating writing problems among Palestine students studying English as a foreign language. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 66 (1).
- Nazim, M., & Ahmad, J. (2012). Developing writing skills: A practical remedy of common writing problems among students of writing skills courses at preparatory year, Najran University KSA. *Language in India*, 12(3).
- Peck, J., & Coyle, M. (1999). *The Student's Guide to writing. Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling*.
- Raja, Z. B., & Zahid, R. Z. (2013). Enhancing writing skills: An analytical study of obstacles in writing at BA level in Najran University, KSA. *Studies in Literature and Language*, 7(2), 1-7.
- Rice, J. E. (2008). *Rhetoric's mechanics: Retooling the equipment of writing production*. College Composition and Communication.
- Richards, J. C., Platt, J. & Platt, H. (1992). *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics* (2nd ed.). Harlow, Essex: Longman Group UK Limited.
- Sawalmeh, M. H. M. (2013). Error Analysis of Written English Essays: The case of Students of the Preparatory Year Program in Saudi Arabia. *English for Specific Purposes World*, 40 (14).
- Siddiqui, M. A. (2015). Evaluating Capitalization Errors in Saudi Female students' EFL writing at Bisha University. *Arab World English Journal*, 6(1).
- Sinha, B.S. (1997). Learners' errors, Their Significance in L2 Learning and The Role of Correction. *The Dhaka University Studies*. Vol. 54 (2).
- Smith, B. (2002). Arab Speakers. In Swan. M. & Smith. B, *Learner English: A Teacher's Guide to Interference and Other Problems*. New York: Cambridge University Press
- Zemliansky, Pavel. "Mechanical Correctness of Student Writing in CCC: A Historical Perspective and What It Teaches Us".